

A Revolution in Stages: Subaltern Politics, Nation-State Formation, and the Origins
of Social Rights in Ecuador, 1834-1943

by

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DEDICATION

To the memory of my father, Bayardo Coronel Herrera.

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation on the history of modern Ecuador addresses the conflicts between peasants and landlords at the regional level, workers and emergent class organizations, as well as state agents and institutions over nearly a century, between 1834 and 1943. It traces the effects that regional struggles had on a reciprocal process of national-state and civil-society formation. Throughout this period, conflicts and alliances defined both the rights and privileges of groups and the stability of state authority at the regional level. In a first stage of conflict and negotiations between peasant communities and the state in the nineteenth century (1834-1896), the principal allies of the communities were radical liberals, as these communities resisted state policies of de-corporativization, tribute collection, and attempts to seize indigenous lands. In those conflicts, the ethnic authorities of the communities allied with a new liberal movement to confront the power of the landholding elites. In 1895, a second stage (1895-1906) of negotiations emerged along with an alliance between the peasantry from the coast, indigenous communities from the Sierra, and the Radical Liberal Party, an alliance that mobilized subaltern classes and generated a civil war. In the twentieth century, the key allies of indigenous and peasant communities became urban workers and middle-class socialists. Between 1906 and

1925, there was a process of counter-revolution and economic integration into world markets that sought to sustain itself through authoritarian forms of labor organization and domination of the peasantry. During this third stage of transformation (1925-1945) through conflict and negotiation, a new strategy emerged to reconstitute popular and peasant political power through connections with other urban industrial workers and middle-class circles. Popular movements and democratic political parties thereby emerged with a powerful capacity to pressure and reform the state, and in turn, the state instituted new social rights and distribution policies between 1925 and 1944. Ultimately, this is a study of how subaltern classes confronted internal colonialism and how political contention was crucial in the building of a nation-state that incorporated popular demands for justice, redistribution, and recognition.

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INTRODUCTION

The mobilizations of the indigenous movement in Ecuador during the 1990s constituted an unprecedented rupture in Ecuadorian history according to various authors who have asserted that the genuine political voice of the indigenous peoples had previously been subsumed by the Left. For example, for the Ecuadorian historian Andrés Guerrero, the decade of the 1990s marked the first rupture from the “ventriloquist state” – that is, a rupture from the Liberal Republic that had spoken in the name of the Indians with the mere purpose of differentiating itself from the conservatives, but without being truly influenced by an organic indigenous agenda. For Guerrero, before the 1990s, indigenous political agency could only be found on a local level, where indigenous communities struggled with systems of “ethnic administration” and where they resisted coercion in the framework of their moral economy.¹

¹ See Andrés Guerrero, “Una imagen ventrílocua: el discurso liberal de la ‘desgraciada raza indígena’ a fines del siglo XIX,” in *Imágenes e imagineros. Representaciones de los indígenas ecuatorianos, siglos XIX y XX*, ed. Blanca Muratorio (Quito: FLACSO, 1994), 197-252; see also Andrés Guerrero, “De sujetos indios a ciudadanos étnicos: de la manifestación de 1961 al levantamiento indígena de 1990: la desintegración de la administración étnica,” in *Democracia, etnicidad y violencia política en los países andinos*, ed. Alberto Adrianzén (Lima: IEP - IFEA, 1993), 83-101. In the same vein, see Leon Zamosc, “El movimiento indígena ecuatoriano: de la política de la influencia a la política del poder,” in *La lucha por los derechos indígenas en América latina*, eds. Nancy Grey Postero and Leon Zamosc

However, after the uprising of 1990, the indigenous movement did not propose to represent a single cultural identity within the logic of a politics of recognition.² It worked throughout the last two decades to promote coalitions that would permit the integration of the demands of various actors in a struggle against the politics of deregulation and the dismantling of the welfare state in a neoliberal framework. This process activated new political identities in Ecuadorian civil society and generated a platform for common identifications as the indigenous movement produced its own leadership.

Other actors who were focused on issues related to labor rights, economic redistribution, and sovereignty in the area of natural resource exploitation joined the indigenous movement. They pushed agendas that included a new stage of agrarian reform, environmental reforms, and nutritional sovereignty, as well as demands for the inclusion of diverse racial and sexual identities in Ecuadorian society. The movement constituted a national organization, the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE), and a national political party, Pachakutic. Its capacity for mobilization and electoral successes brought it to the head of regional governments, which in turn generated experiences of “participatory democracy,” such as that of the Assembly of the Cantonal Unit of Cotacachi, the Indigenous and

(Quito: Abya-Yala, 2005).

² Charles Taylor, *El multiculturalismo y la “política del reconocimiento”* (México D.F: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1993).

Popular Parliament of Guamote, and the provincial council of Cotopaxi. Through such organizations, communal processes of consultation and participation grew as they included other social collectivities.³ According to the mayor of Cotacachi, Auki Tituaña, this participatory process was very inclusive and only marginalized those landowners and merchant intermediaries who “had decided not to participate, fearful of accountability.”⁴

In this sense, the indigenous leaders Floresmilo Simbaña and Guillermo Churuchumbi proposed in a forum that peasant leaders had been able to unite with cultural-political collectivities of young urban cultures and collectivities of sexual identities that shared a common identity through the act of resistance. Ten years after the uprising in 1990, Rodrigo Collahuazo reflected that the movement’s capacity to construct an alternative power came from “a path of resistance... the capture of lands, and the increasing integration of organizations into assemblies.”⁵ Collahuazo enumerated the basic propositions of the movement as accessing lands, securing a Plurinational State, transforming Ecuadorian democracy, and convoking a

³ Pablo Ospina, ed., *En las fisuras del poder. Movimiento indígena, cambio social y gobiernos locales* (Quito: Instituto de Estudios Ecuatorianos, 2006). Also see Franklin Ramírez Gallegos, *La innovación partidista de las izquierdas en América Latina* (Quito: ILDIS and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 2008).

⁴ Instituto Científico de Culturas Indígenas *Memorias del encuentro: diez años del levantamiento indígena del Inti Raymi de 1990. La construcción de un país plurinacional Boletín ICCI "RIMAY,"* Publicación mensual, Año 2, no. 20 (noviembre del 2000).

⁵ Ibid.

constitutional assembly to re-write the constitution.⁶

In the constitution of 2008, Ecuador was defined as a Plurinational State. Such recognition implies the broad acceptance of participatory processes, popular assemblies, and the validation of diverse leaderships. However, the new Left “socialistas del siglo XXI” has not been comfortable with this form of inclusion as it has promoted “de-corporativization” of the civil society. The government has considered the model of pressuring the state through negotiation between groups as a limit to democracy and it has supported the idea of representing an un-organized civil society through the political-legal framework of individual citizenship rights.

The evaluation of social corporativism or neo-corporativism is central to the debate in Ecuador over the role of the indigenous movement and popular organized participation in the process of “the return of the state.” Ospina, Santillana, and Arboleda contrast the corporativist relationship with the state in contemporary Ecuador with the “citizen” model, constituted by concepts of individual rights.⁷

In the tense relationship between the indigenous movement and Rafael Correa’s government of the “citizens’ revolution,” there exists a conflict related to the memory of the construction of a Plurinational State. The indigenous memory (not free of

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Pablo Ospina, Alejandra Santillana and Maria Arboleda, “Neo-Corporatism and Territorial Economic Development: the Ecuadorian Indigenous Movement in Local Government,” in *World Development, Special Issue: Social Movements and the Dynamics of Rural Development in Latin America* 36, no. 12 (2008): 2921-2936.

tensions itself) is generally one that projects its own efforts to construct hegemony from below and in response to internal colonial practices. It also highlights the construction of a democratic state that is sustained by organized bases and that has incorporated an organic leadership. In this memory, the indigenous leadership arose from the base level through direct democratic participation. Although this form of memory has clearly been accepted in the current constitution, from the point of view of the citizen's revolution this memory is dangerous insofar as corporativism can only represent particular interests rather than general interests and thus inhibits the exercise of individual citizenship, particularly among the unorganized civil populace. This line of reasoning implicitly questions the demands of the indigenous movement for an integration of its own leaders into the state and for negotiation and regional consensus.

The relationship between political memory and state construction has played a key role in this conflict. In the indigenous discourse on political identity, references to the ancestral origins of the nation have been few relative to references to the conformation of the ethnic groups and nationalities as political collectivities that arose through modern conflicts. In this memory, distinct stages of struggle are emphasized, including recent struggles in the 1980s, but also struggles for land reform in the 1960s and 1970s and struggles for political representation reaching back to the 1940s.

Among other indigenous leaders who reevaluated the situation of the indigenous movement ten years after the Inti Raymi Uprising of 1990, Humberto Cholango argued that the formation of the plurinational state had resulted from processes of communal resistance and negotiation among diverse collectivities and that, therefore, the plurinational state should be understood as a state constructed by diverse experiences of struggle.⁸

Various efforts by academics and organizations that have worked on the theme of memory with indigenous communities have found that political organization and struggle together with negotiation with other political actors appears repeatedly in the construction of the movement's identity. In various collaborative histories between academics and indigenous organizations, the memory of struggles in which the indigenous movement built its identity based on resistance and negotiation has been traced back to the 1930s and 1940s, decades in which indigenous groups confronted hacienda owners, created an indigenous political institutionality, and pressured the state for significant changes.⁹ Reference is sometimes also made to the role of

⁸ Neptali Ulcuango, Floresmilo Tamba, Mario Mullo y Guillermo Churuchumbi, *Historia de la organización indígena en Pichincha* (Quito: Federación Indígena Pichincha Runacunayac Riccharimui y ABYA YALA, 1993). See also *Memorias del encuentro*; Lourdes Tiban, et al., *Movimiento indígena y campesino de Cotopaxi "MICC": Cotopaxi markamanta runakunapak jatun kuyurimuy historia y proceso organizativo* (Latacunga: MICC, 2003).

⁹ Marc Becker, *Indians and Leftists in the Making of Ecuador's Modern Indigenous Movements* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008). Olaf Kaltmeier, "La Universidad

indigenous groups in the Liberal Revolution of 1895, indigenous rebellions against conservatism in 1861, and even to indigenous rebellions in the eighteenth century.¹⁰

Memory lends itself to the search for meaning in the present and to varying interpretations of the origins and legacies of the present. References to a shared political identity based on successful resistance, together with references to the historical legacies present in concepts of a Plurinational State both have organizing effects and suggest present and future forms of collective political action. Thus, the aim of this thesis is to reevaluate the historical meaning of corporativism and reflect on the historical conditions for the emergence of organized popular initiatives towards a corporatist representation before the state in the building of democracy

terratiente. Biopolítica, poder soberano y resistencia indígena-campesina en las haciendas de la Universidad Central en la provincia de Cotopaxi, 1930-1980,” *Procesos* 26, no. II (2007): 73-96. See Raquel Rodas, *Transito Amaguaña, su testimonio* (Quito: TRAMA, 2007); Angus Lyall, *Los usos de la memoria: poder y resistencia en Cayambe* (Quito: FLACSO, Abya Yala, 2010); Raquel Rodas, *Dolores Cacuango. Gran líder del pueblo indio. Biografías Ecuatorianas 3* (Quito: Banco Central del Ecuador, 2005); Christian Büschges, Guillermo Bustos and Olaf Kaltmeier, eds., *Etnicidad y poder en los países andinos* (Quito: UASB, Universidad de Bielefeld, CEN, 2007). For a methodology on collaborative ethnography and the uses of memory, see Joanne Rappaport, *Intercultural Utopias: Public Intellectuals, Cultural Experimentation, and Ethnic Pluralism in Colombia* (London and Durham: Duke University Press, 2005). The reference to Liberation Theology of the 1960s is also crucial in indigenous movement memory and identity. See Carmen Martínez Novo, “Evangelización y movilización étnica,” in *Etnicidad y poder*. See also José Antonio Figueroa, *Realismo mágico, vallenato y violencia política en el caribe colombiano* (Bogotá: ICANH, 2009).

¹⁰ Miguel Angel Carlosama, “Movimiento indígena ecuatoriano: historia y conciencia política.” *Boletín ICCI "RIMAY,"* Año 2, no. 17, (Ago 2000).

before the universalization of suffrage. I hope this work contributes to the contemporary debate on the origins and conditions of participatory democracy in Ecuador and the roles of conflict, negotiation, and corporativism within this construction.

Corporatist democracy in Ecuador is a social construction that has been forged throughout the life of the republic and in particular through various stages of transformation between 1834 and 1945. As I propose in this dissertation, between 1834 and 1896 indigenous community and peasant resistance to an exclusionary version of the republic led to the formation of an alliance with an emergent political movement –the early Liberal Party– that lasted through the civil war and ended with the formation of the Liberal State. This alliance shaped one of the founding premises of the Liberal State – namely, the inclusion of a language of reparation, thus integrating one of the main demands of indigenous communities for state support and for state reparation of the privileges enjoyed by the landlord elite. Though it was later distorted, this demand supposed the beginning of a special status for Indians in the republic and initiated a battle over the development of this special jurisdiction. After a period of commercial capitalist expansion and land concentration between 1906 and 1924, during which important regions of the country were affected by rural conflict and violence, the Liberal State fell and a very little studied historical period in Ecuador began in which a deepening and consolidation of democratic traditions took

place. There began a reevaluation of democratic traditions based on organizational and political struggles for recognition *vis-a-vis* the state. In particular, I emphasize the period from 1925 to 1945, during which social rights opened the door to the integration of a special jurisdiction for indigenous and other subaltern groups in everyday political practice. This is crucial for understanding the historical legacy of relations between the state and civil society in Ecuador. It also contributes to understanding the contemporary search for a new form of corporatist democracy that is based on the presence of indigenous and other organized social movements in the building of a plurinational state.

I reevaluate the formation of a state in constant negotiation with civil society and organized subaltern positions. Such a reevaluation is essential for recovering the origins of participatory democracy and the contemporary popular movement, as well as for questioning the long-accepted paradigm in Ecuadorian historiography in regards to the “*Junker Road*” to modernization.¹¹ In the Ecuadorian literature, there do exist novel interpretations of each stage of the Republic’s history, including complex interpretations of class and race relations in different regional contexts. Nonetheless, this thesis engages in a broad reconstruction of state and civil society

¹¹ In debates on the agrarian reform in Ecuador, since the 1970’s the idea that the landowning elite had taken the lead in agrarian transformation and state modernization in Ecuador has predominated. We discuss the bibliography regarding Ecuador’s “*Junker Road*” to modernization in the following chapters.

formation and embarks on this process by comparing regional experiences and analyzing the position of the state in regional power struggles. Based on this research, I analyze the emergence of the popular movement as a political actor through a long-running dialogue between the central state and local and regional actors and, in turn, I interpret consequent transformations of the state and of civil society on a national scale.

In that sense, this thesis represents a detailed analysis of the accumulation of regional experiences that formed both the social movement and the state during one hundred years. In this analytical framework, I observe the construction of a revolution that took place in distinct stages, linked through the accumulation of organizing experiences and memories of conflict and negotiation. Three specific stages stand out during which indigenous, peasant, and popular political activity resisted the conformation of an internal colonial system of territorial and social administration and during which, consequently, forms of dialogue were developed between organized popular sectors and the state.

Three Stages: A Proposal for Periodization

Our analysis begins with a look into the conditions that indigenous communities imposed on the new republican state as they resisted policies of de-corporativization and of communal land dispossession. According to our analysis,

this resistance led to a crucial stage of negotiation between 1845 and 1851 during which a rising group of liberals discovered a powerful alliance with indigenous communities of the central Sierra. Through this alliance a common identity was forged in opposition to the political direction of the landholding elite of the Sierra. A concept of nation was generated that included the peasantry, thus taking into account the social reproduction of indigenous communities of the central Sierra in the life of the nation. The challenge that this alliance represented, however, sparked the renewal of the landholding elite, who in their own right united into inter-regional alliances, ultimately producing the government of García Moreno in 1861. Yet, the experience of negotiation with a responsive liberal state had already marked the political memory and the material conditions of indigenous communities. By the end of the nineteenth century, popular peasant sectors in various regions of the country came together to support the Liberal Revolution.

Therefore, between 1845 and 1896, the Republic experienced a first stage of democratic political identity-formation through a negotiation between communities and republican leaderships. Such formation took place during a transition from a colonial pact to a republic capable of recognizing the existence of the indigenous communities within the nation. Such a transition included negotiations in regards to issues such as land possession, tributary taxes, political representation, and access to the justice system. Through this analysis, the capacity of communities to take

positions of resistance in regional power struggles with regional landowners and, consequently, transform the state becomes apparent.

The experience of bringing regional struggles to the attention of the central state and thus forming alliances between indigenous communities and “the democrats” (*los democráticos*), represented by President José María Urquina and the March Revolutionaries (1845-1861), lasted in the memory of indigenous communities and was incorporated into their political identities. As I will demonstrate in this thesis, this memory informed their participation in the liberal army and civil war of 1895. Peasant communities from various regions, along with the merchant bourgeois and the radicals, who constituted the Liberal Party, came together into a national alliance led by the Liberal Party.

The offer of indigenous and peasant communities to fight against the concentrated political power among the landholding elites of the Sierra resulted from persistent regional conflicts involving the expansion of the hacienda into community lands, challenges to the autonomy of communities, and the lack of community access to the justice system.

With respect to this period of resistance and alliance formation, I will highlight the political alliances that were constructed between free communities, *conciertos* [needs brief definition here, the first time you mention the term], and peasants who in different moments were called *forasteros* or *arrimados* (internal immigrants and

landless peasants who were linked through kinship and services exchange with Indian peasant communities). The latter were fundamental in the social networks of peasant populations and their political mobilizations under the leadership of ethnic authorities or new indigenous leaders. Another crucial alliance that I will analyze in depth was that achieved between incipient peasant movements and representatives of democratic liberalism who sought to take control of the state from the periphery of political power.

This stage, during which the regional landscape was the key battleground in the construction of the state, has been the object of analysis in Latin American historiography in other countries, particularly in Peru and Bolivia in the Andean region, where the literature speaks of national projects with community bases.¹²

¹² The debate over popular nationalism in Peru in the nineteenth century has been important for the entire Andean region. In particular, we should highlight the work of Nelson Manrique, *Campesinado y nación, las guerrillas indígenas en la guerra con Chile* (Lima: Centro de Investigación y Capacitación and Editora Ital Perú, 1981); Heraclio Bonilla, ed., *Los Andes en la encrucijada. Indios, comunidades y estado en el siglo XIX* (Quito: Ediciones Libri Mundi, EGL and FLACSO, 1991); Florencia Mallon, *Peasant and Nation: The Making of Postcolonial Mexico and Peru* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995). Mark Thurner, *From Two Republics to One Divided. Contradictions of Postcolonial Nationmaking in Andean Peru* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1997); Cecilia Méndez, *The Plebeian Republic: The Huanta Rebellion and the Making of the Peruvian State, 1820-1850* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2005). For the case of Bolivia, the reevaluation of the role of the peasantry as negotiator with the state and actor in the state's construction is represented by a vast literature, including the work of Tristan Platt, "La experiencia andina de liberalismo boliviano entre 1825 y 1900," in *Resistencia, rebelión y conciencia campesina en los Andes: siglos XVIII al XX*, ed.

Studies of early processes of popular participation in the configuration of the nation have been important for understanding slave participation in negotiation and military activity in the Caribbean as well. In the literature from the Caribbean it is clear how the war of independence was affected by popular militias who joined the struggle for emancipation with the goal of constructing popular sovereignty in the new republics.¹³

The Ecuadorian case also demonstrates a process of negotiation between communities and the state over the definition of the republic.¹⁴ A comparison

Steve Stern (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1990). See the section dedicated to “Alliance and Repression in the Tributary Republic 1826-1926” in Forrest Hylton and Sinclair Thomson, *Revolutionary Horizons. Past and Present in Bolivian Politics* (New York: Verso, 2007). Also see the comparative effort of Brooke Larson in *Trials of Nation Making: Liberalism, Race, and Ethnicity in the Andes 1810-1910* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

¹³ See the classic work of C.R.L. James, *The Black Jacobins. Toussaint L’Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979). For a key study in the theoretical formulation of anti-slavery rebellions as a factor in emancipation and political reform, see Rebecca Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba: the Transition to Free Labor, 1860-1899* (Pittsburgh: University Press of Pittsburgh, 1985). Also see Ada Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba. Race Nation and Revolution, 1868-1898* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999); Thomas C. Holt, *The Problem of Freedom. Race, Labor and Politics in Jamaica and Britain, 1832-1938* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992). For an important comparative study, see Frederick Cooper, Thomas Holt and Rebecca Scott, *Beyond Slavery. Explorations of Race, Labor, and Citizenship in Postemancipation Societies* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000).

¹⁴ Barrington Moore Jr., *Orígenes sociales de la dictadura y la democracia* (Barcelona: Península, 1976). This debate refers us to Ada Ferrer’s study “Rustic Men, Civilized Nation: Race, Culture, and Contention on the Eve of Cuban Independence,” *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 78, no. 4 (Nov., 1998):

between the Ecuadorian case and other Latin American experiences of popular participation in this moment of conflict and redefinition leads to a more general debate in the area of historical sociology with respect to war – that is, to contested violence – in the conformation of states as democratic or authoritarian regimes. Among the most classic works in this area of research is the comparative study of Barrington Moore Jr. on the landholder-peasant conflicts that led to the configuration of democratic and authoritarian states on various continents. This work allows for the interpretation that the most important factor in state transformations is the entrance of merchant capital. Other interpretations would emphasize the role of conflict in state configuration. The debate among Moore’s students Charles Tilly and Theda Skocpol has clarified this theory.¹⁵

In that debate, Tilly proposed a very influential thesis in the tradition of Latin American studies – both historical and contemporary – on social movements. This

663-686.

¹⁵ Charles Tilly, *Contienda política y democracia en Europa: 1650-2000* (Barcelona: Hacer, 2007). From the same author, *Social Movements, 1768-2004* (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2004) and “¿De dónde vienen los derechos?” *Sociología 55* (2004): 273-296. See also Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow and Charles Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001). For an opposing position, see Theda Skocpol, “Why I am an Historical Institutionalism,” *Polity 28*, no. 1 (Autumn, 1995): 103-106, who emphasizes the manner in which language and mechanisms for the incorporation of social identities determines the form of action of civil society. See also *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995).

thesis stated that the great state transformations that began the internal wars in European states revealed that the capacity for actors to pressure and to generate conflict and even violence is the fundamental factor in state regime configuration. Tilly maintained that the political use of violence – that is, the capacity of mobilized actors to fight for state recognition – is the origin of rights. This proposal, based on the study of European processes, included medieval experiences, the rise of the labor movement in the twentieth century, and contemporary social movements that have been capable of exercising pressure through war or other methods. In this sense, the concept of political struggle in the work of Tilly and in his work on contemporary social movements is relevant to the role of popular militias in the configuration of nation states in Latin America. His conceptual framework has aided us in conceiving the bridge that various authors have already suggested between historical struggles and social mobilization in the formation of participatory democracies.¹⁶ Although the closest followers of Tilly seem skeptical with respect to the importance of the wars in

¹⁶ Among the skeptics, see Miguel Angel Centeno, *Blood and Debt. War and the Nation-State in Latin America* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002). See another use of the concepts of Moore and Tilly in the comparative field of historical sociology in Latin America, in Fernando López-Alves, *State Formation and Democracy in Latin America, 1810-1900* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000). Also Allan Knight, “Democratic and Revolutionary Traditions in Latin America,” *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 20, no. 2 (2000); “Social Revolution: A Latin American Perspective” *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 9, no. 2 (1990); “The Mexican Revolution: Bourgeois? Nationalist? or just a Great Rebellion?” *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 4, no. 2 (1985): 1-37.

Latin America, the historiography in various countries has proven that popular classes involved in wars and pressured for state transformation even in those countries where internal wars were more important than international wars.

In this theoretical framework, the roles of political contention and popular mobilization come together as an important factor for state change. Questions do remain, however, about the efficiency of mobilization and the possibility of measuring its true impact on state transformation. In interpretations of regional cases, such as that of Ecuador, interpretations of state formation have emphasized processes of modernization and institutionalization from above. The impact of subaltern pressure, as various authors have suggested, is determined by accumulation, a legacy of different stages of struggle, as they periodically create openings for confrontation and, in turn, change. Thus, our analysis of the first important stage of negotiation between the state and indigenous communities in Ecuador will prove fundamental for interpreting later processes of confrontation and transformation.

The second historical stage I will analyze (1906-1924) demonstrated processes of resistance, legal and other forms of confrontation, and collective mobilization that various peasant actors and fragments of the artisan working-class fomented in three regions of the country. These three areas were essential to the maintenance of the oligarchic liberal state. In Pichincha, the central Sierra, and Guayas, I observe the manner in which, between 1906 and 1923, the urban artisan sector attempted to

produce an inclusive leadership at the same time that the elites sought to take advantage of commercial expansion to reinforce forms of internal colonialism. Consequently, peasant and indigenous communities sustained constant regional conflict, converting these regions into areas of power struggle characterized by conflict and even violence that drew the liberal state into contradictions through its unproductive use of force. Ultimately, the liberal state remained fragile until it collapsed in 1925. This second stage of revolution was characterized by tensions between hierarchy construction by urban and rural populations and racial hierarchies tied to internal colonial domination. It was also characterized by the existence of multiple scenarios of popular conflict and resistance that developed in various radicalized regions that would later unite through Gramscian national-popular discourses after the fall of the liberal regime.¹⁷

The third stage of transformation began during the conflicts that led to the downfall of the oligarquic state. Between 1925 and 1945, we can identify a period marked by alliances between mobilized peasant communities in different regions of

¹⁷ On the concept of internal colonialism, see David Forgacs, “National-Popular: Genealogy of a Concept,” in *Formations of Nation and People* ed. Formations Collective (London: Routledge, 1984), 83–98; Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, eds. and trans., Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1971) and *The Southern Question* (Toronto: Guernica Editions, University of Toronto Press, 1995) and Ranajit Guha, *Dominance Without Hegemony: History and Power in Colonial India* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1997).

the country, worker organizations, and a new and diverse group of state reformers, including military officers and the young Socialist and Communist Parties. As result of a more radical and powerful strategy of popular struggle that was able to pressure and condition the state to make profound transformations, during those twenty years demands for social rights and for a special jurisdiction for workers, together with land redistribution, were all integrated into the state. Along with economic redistribution, the period was marked by the formation of a national-popular movement and the empowerment of the Left, which supported this movement within the political system.

In this third stage, I observe the legacies of identifications with popular liberalism and the emergence of new alliances between peasant societies and a wide range of workers' organizations as they came together and developed class identities through conflict and resistance. These alliances were supported by the Left, which provided important resources for struggle. However, by this period the Left was *joining* the resistance; it was not constructing the resistance. This Left promoted a transformative dialogue between popular groups, communities, and unions through new state agencies that supported policies of redistribution and assistance for popular classes. The Left later aided in the construction of a powerful popular movement constructed horizontally among organizations through assemblies and institutions of popular representation. This movement demonstrated the capacity to pressure the

state into pacts and to support popular organizations in opposition to oligarchic and *gamonal* (landlord) capital. It was also able to pressure the state to create mechanisms for political representation that would recognize segments of organized civil society that still did not enjoy voting rights. This dissertation demonstrates that the accumulated experiences of conflict in regional power struggles and of negotiation with the state led to the formation of alliances and political movements among popular groups that definitively forced their recognition by the state and within the nation. In this dissertation, I will defend the idea that a revolution by stages in Ecuador led to an important transformation in the 1930s, a moment in which social rights were recognized in various countries in Latin America. Throughout these broad processes in which rights were being recognized, we can identify the roots of contemporary political processes that point toward a model of democracy with popular bases.

The second two stages of this revolution in corporatist democracy lead us to a discussion that goes beyond the involvement of popular sectors in the national wars of the nineteenth century. They lead us to a crucial stage in Latin American history marked by the confrontation of popular sectors with programs of internal colonialism that had become more sophisticated in reaction to the emergence of popular republicanism in the nineteenth century and due to the opportunity for capital expansion in the area of agrarian exports. The confrontation with internal colonialism

and the possibility for constructing nations through popular political processes in the first decades of the twentieth century until the end of World War II has been an object of analysis among the founders of Latin American socialism and remains a key piece in the debate over the origins and nature of Latin American democracies.

The works of Allan Knight and of Greg Grandin coincide in the fact that democratization processes before the Cold War were associated with dynamics of decolonization and with the involvement of indigenous and peasant communities in alliances with diverse internal movements of the Left that sought to reform the state. These processes were later hidden by opposing notions of democracy and socialism that emerged during the Cold War.¹⁸

Allan Knight has proposed that democracy in Latin America does not go hand in hand with individual citizenship since citizenship has been restricted. The revolutions in Latin America shared certain dynamics and led to important changes that included the organization of popular insurgencies and other strategies that promoted popular organizations to present their demands within oligarchic states, demands that included, according to Knight, calls for social rights (over land, labor, and the integration of notions of class into the nation).

¹⁸ Alan Knight, *Revolución, democracia y populismo en América Latina* (Santiago: Ediciones Centro de Estudios Bicentenario, 2005). Gregory Grandin, *The Blood of Guatemala: A History of Race and Nation* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000).

These authors have renewed a thesis of the founders of Andean socialism such as José Carlos Mariátegui in the 1930s or René Zavaleta Mercado in the 1970s. This thesis was also shared by the Mexican Socialist Arnaldo Córdova in the 1970s and mostly recently by Peruvian Alberto Flores Galindo. These socialists traced the profound impacts of processes of collaboration and dialogue between the Left and popular classes. Studies of the relationship between socialism and indigenous peasants can be found in various authors. Zavaleta's analysis of the alliance between peasants, workers, and military members in the conformation of unity among heterogeneity in the Bolivian revolution is one of these examples. Also the studies of Arnaldo Córdova on the role of *cardenismo* and his corporatist policies for organizing popular bases for the state among these invite us to question the nature of Ecuador's revolution in the 1930s. In Ecuador we can observe a productive union between peasants, Indians, workers, military members, and socialists in a profound reform of the relationship between the state and civil society.¹⁹ These studies light the way for a reevaluation of the role of alliances between the Left and a popular

¹⁹ José Carlos Mariátegui, *Siete ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana* (Lima: Biblioteca Amauta, 1928). Arnaldo Córdova, *La política de masas del cardenismo* (México: ERA, 1976). René Zavaleta Mercado, *Lo nacional-popular en Bolivia* (México: Siglo XXI Editores, 1986). Alberto Flores Galindo, *La agonía de Mariátegui* (Lima: Instituto de Apoyo Agrario, 1989); and *Obras completas V* (Lima: SUR Casa de Estudios del Socialismo, 1997).

movement in the reform of Latin American states and in the search for democracy from below.

As Alberto Flores Galindo has observed in the case of Peru and Marc Becker has traced in his recent studies of Mariátegui's influence on communism in the Ecuadorian Andes, the Left in both countries had no other option than to look to indigenous peoples and the peasantry as its principal support, despite the dictates of the Third International.²⁰ Beyond a theoretical decision about the protagonism of the proletariat and without diminishing the prominence of that debate in the press of the period, we could say that based on both studies the Left joined the popular movement and supported it with its own skills and tactics in distinct areas, including in the legal field, in the field of public opinion, in local struggles, in national representation, and in the formation of a national-popular culture. In Mariátegui's Peru, socialism in the universities collaborated to produce a new national voice; however, this socialism could only subsist in connection with indigenous resistance and forms of community political organization.

The Peruvian Left did not follow a classic party scheme that captured the attention of anonymous workers but rather it joined the social movement of peasants. A similar process took place in Ecuador and in other countries in Latin America, such as Bolivia, and these processes resulted in important alliances that produced popular

²⁰ Flores Galindo, *La agonía de Mariátegui*; Becker, *Indians and Leftists*.

fronts. These processes also affected legal transformations that led to the recognition of class and ethnicity in frameworks of justice and redistributive policies, though they were not accompanied by the spread of voting rights or political citizenship. Other more intricate mechanisms had to develop, one of which [which one?] I will explore throughout this dissertation, before political citizenship was attained.²¹ The Left and the social movement in Ecuador in the 1930s and 1940s maintained their strength through mobilization rather than through formal electoral competition, in a manner that was more consistent than experiences in Peru and perhaps similar to those of Bolivia or of Cárdenas' Mexico.²²

Another effect of this specific exchange between popular movements and the Left was the difficulty it presented in regards to national leadership development. In the case of the popular-military pact in Bolivia (1938-1952) or the popular-military pact in Ecuador between 1925 and 1945, popular leadership was delegated to the militaries. In Ecuador, the problem of leadership led to a very inconvenient and contradictory pact in 1944 with José María Velasco Ibarra, who began to persecute the Left and the popular movement just one year after he was handed the presidency

²¹ Laura Gotkowitz, *A Revolution for our Rights: Indigenous Struggles for Land and Justice in Bolivia, 1880-1952* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007).

²² For Cardenas' regime in Mexico, and corporativism and the articulation of popular-state through the sindicalism see Córdova, *La política*. Also see Mary K. Vaughan, *Cultural Politics in Revolution: Teachers, Peasants, and Schools in Mexico, 1930-1940* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1997)

by a vast democratic front in one of the most inclusive constitutional processes of the twentieth century in Ecuador.

Studies of corporativism, populism, and democracy in Latin America are more well-known in the cases of Argentina and Brazil.²³ However, in Bolivia and even in Mexico we can observe processes of national-popular revolution that did not rely on a style of leadership but rather on tense and negotiated relations between organized popular actors and the state. I intend to highlight similar processes in the case of Ecuador.

This study falls within the historiography of moments of popular struggle that have impacted social and political realities in current memory in Andean countries.²⁴

As Mallon has proposed in her comparative work on hegemony, consensus, and

²³ See, for example, Daniel James, *Resistencia e integración: el peronismo y la clase trabajadora argentina 1946-1976* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1990). On labor trajectories in those countries, see Charles Bergquist, *Los trabajadores en la historia latinoamericana. Estudios comparativos de Chile, Venezuela y Colombia* (Bogotá: Siglo XXI Editores, 1988).

²⁴ For efforts in this sense, see Marc Becker and Silvia Tutillo, *Historia agraria y social de Cayambe* (Quito: FLACSO, 2009); Olaf Kaltmeier, *Jatarishun. Testimonios de la lucha indígena de Saquisilí (1930-2006)*, Colección Popular 15 de Noviembre (Quito: UASB, Universitat Bielefeld and CEN, 2008); Pablo Ospina, “Neo-Corporatism.” Also see Hylton, Patzi, Serkulnikov, and Thomson in *Ya es otro tiempo el presente. Cuatro momentos de insurgencia indígena* (La Paz: Muela del Diablo editores, 2005). Also see reflections on memory and contemporary political history in Florencia Mallon, “Reflections of the Ruins: Everyday Forms of State Formation in Nineteenth-century Mexico” in *Everyday Forms of State Formation. Revolution and the Negotiation of Rule in Modern Mexico*, eds. Gilbert Joseph and Daniel Nugent (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994).

coercion in the political formation of Mexico and Peru, this represents an attempt at the archaeology of political institutions: “[A]s the products of previous conflicts and confrontations, institutions have embedded in them sediments of earlier struggles.” In fact, as she has argued, revolutions are not knock-out punches, but rather “the accumulation of hits that put an end to an old social order.”²⁵

Analytical Concepts

To conclude this introduction, I would like to highlight three theoretical elements that I have mentioned but that require greater explanation before entering into the study at hand. The first is the concept of class, the second is the concept of internal colonialism, and the third is the concept of hegemony.

Criticisms of modernization theory in the Latin American paradigm of modes of production has helped me to recognize the colonial link that articulated the totality of heterogeneous forms of labor and unequal development on the continent. In this sense, authors such as Assadourian were the first to call attention to the political character of the class construction. For this author, the task was to observe the relations of various forms of labor that characterized colonial space and describe the

²⁵ Mallon, “Reflections:” Knight, *Revolución, democracia y populismo*. See also Emilia Viotti da Costa, *The Brazilian Empire: Myths and Histories* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985).

hierarchies between them.²⁶ The most profound aspect of his interpretation was that the matrix of the social order was maintained through the political construction of colonial ties and not as a result of a dominant economic system. His conclusion was that the transformation or destruction of colonial ties could therefore be produced as an effect of political articulations.

This interpretation opened the door to reflections on processes of internal colonialism and processes of political organization among popular sectors in what came to be called in the Gramscian tradition the constitution of hegemonic processes. In the field of internal colonialism, the debate has been extensive, although rather dispersed as well. In the 1970s, Pablo Gonzales Casanova and Rodolfo Stavenhagen proposed the concept of internal colonialism to describe the manner in which the complex class hierarchy, tied to heterogeneous labor regimes, could develop within republican orders. They argued that in these contexts, classes were constructed not according to modes of production but rather as positions hierarchically integrated into a simplified structure whose matrix was fundamentally maintained as a policy of colonial domination. In this sense, Gonzales Casanova introduced a historical interpretation that took into account many factors in the establishment of colonial

²⁶ Carlos Sempat Assadourian, “La producción de la mercancía dinero en la formación del mercado interno colonial,” in *Ensayos sobre el desarrollo económico de México y América Latina (1500-1975)*, ed. Enrique Florescano (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1979).

relationships, including the cultural construction of forms of domination as subordinate sectors have been characterized as racially and culturally incapable of beginning a development process. Such analyses of internal colonialism emphasized that the construction of colonial ties was political and, therefore, the key for changing such ties was also political. These analyses also invited researchers to look into the manner in which culture, economics, and power came together in the construction of hierarchies and how subaltern classes and their allies managed to confront their colonial antagonists. In a more contemporary article, Gonzales Casanova reconstructed the debates that motivated theorists of the 1970s: Neither the proletariat nor the bourgeoisie would change; de-colonization required a political union of the peasantry with other classes in such a way that it could construct strong coalitions with hegemonic capacity. Internal colonialism “evolves throughout the history of the nation-state and capitalism; and it relates to emerging systemic and anti- systemic alternatives.” In particular these concern “resistance” and “the construction of autonomy” within the state, as well as “the creation of ties (or the absence of them) with movements and national and international forces of democracy, liberation, and socialism.”²⁷

²⁷ Pablo Gonzales Casanova, “Sociedad plural, colonialismo interno y desarrollo,” in *América Latina*, Revista del Centro Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales año VI, No. 3 (1963); and “Colonialismo interno [una redefinición]” in *La teoría marxista hoy. Problemas y perspectivas*, eds. Atilio A. Boron, Javier Amadeo, and Sabrina

Interpretations of the writings of José Carlos Mariátegui on national processes in Peru and interpretations of the writings of Antonio Gramsci on national processes in Italy were important for these authors who sought integrated interpretations of the configuration of regional inequalities, the racial problem, and other factors in play in the constitution of the state. Both Mariátegui and Gramsci contributed with interpretations of oligarchic states maintained with colonial ties and parasitic special hierarchies, as well as with interpretations of the possibilities for transforming such states through processes of politicization among subaltern classes capable of generating hegemonic consensus and, in turn, new state formations. For these authors of the 1930s, this process was tied to the project of oligarchic state transformation and the search for state reforms that might lead to welfare states. In the 1970s, the national problem was reevaluated given the evidence of underdevelopment in Latin America. The persistence of the colonial legacy returned to the fore after twenty years of modernizing policies directed by international organizations in the western hemisphere. Within the debate over how to confront “underdevelopment,” these theories suggested that the subaltern classes who had been formed through internal colonial relations should become the agents of true transformation rather than the receptors of mere palliative measures offered by modernizing agencies.

González (Buenos Aires: CLACSO, 2006). Rodolfo Stavenhagen, *Conflictos étnicos y estado nacional* (México D.F.: Siglo XXI Editores, 2000).

Contemporary Latin American literature has picked up this theme once more in studies of the relationship between cultural constructions of race and labor regimes. The work of Rebecca Scott, for example, has contributed to the study of class formation in Latin America insofar as she has also been concerned with internal colonialism (although she does not use this title, she observes the political construction of race as a factor in the labor order) and processes of political emancipation that seek to break down colonial ties, allowing for other articulations of identity.²⁸ In Latin America there exist many studies that treat the issue of labor in the construction of internal colonialism. Other studies have gone further to discover the relation between racial hierarchy and the construction of spaces of internal colonialism described as a form of administering populations and territories.²⁹ Seemin Qayum has observed how a rigid frontier was erected between urban civilizations that spoke of democracy and rural areas constructed as territorial peripheries in which, according to the logic of a territorial construction of internal colonialism, “social relations are marked by significant ethnic and class divisions and

²⁸ Rebecca Scott, *Slave Emancipation*.

²⁹ Mary Roldán, *A sangre y fuego. La violencia en Antioquia, Colombia 1946-1953* (Bogotá: Instituto Colombiano de Antropología e Historia and Fundación para la Promoción de la Ciencia y la Tecnología, 2003). Ann Farnsworth-Alvear, *Dulcinea in the Factory, Myths, Morals, Men and Women in Colombia's Industrial Experiment, 1905-1960* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000). John D. French and Daniel James, eds., *The Gendered Worlds of Latin American Women Workers: From Household and Factory to the Union Hall and Ballot Box* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999).

ideologies of racial discrimination.”³⁰

The reason it is necessary to take up this discussion once more is that it helps us to question several concepts that have been taken for granted in Ecuadorian historiography. In the first place, it allows us to question stances on the relationship between internal colonialism as a continuous and natural presence and obliges us to ask about its formation in regional and local contexts characterized by social tensions. Neither the hacienda nor the expansion of debt labor in exchange for land use – known as *concertaje* – was natural in the Ecuadorian Andes. They were constructs sustained by political and cultural investments that were able to temporarily impose themselves in contexts marked by considerable tensions and antagonisms. Such tensions accumulated and were expressed through languages and collective actions, particularly under conditions of alliance, and their impact can be observed through changing conditions for the negotiation of conflicts. These premises allow us to understand why the proposal for a centralized, redistributive state seems insufficient to the contemporary indigenous movement (together with women’s movement and the environmental movement in Ecuador, among others) and why the demand for a Plurinational State is valid. Popular organizations and political mobilization

³⁰ Seemin Qayum, “Nationalism, Internal Colonialism and the Spatial Imagination: The Geographic Society of La Paz,” in *Studies in the Formation of the Nation State in Latin America*, ed. James Dunkerley (London: University of London and Institute of Latin American Studies, 2002).

historically have been crucial in the slow conquest of social justice in Ecuador. Ecuador has a long history of collective negotiation. Individual communities in the middle of the nineteenth century and formal political organizations that opened political spaces for a “civil society” in the 1930s and 1940s have been among the principal promoters of a participatory democracy in Ecuador.

Studies of the Caribbean seem particularly relevant for all of Latin America in this sense as they explore labor emancipation and ruptures of colonial ties. The work of Rebecca Scott (1985) on the insurrection of slaves and wars of independence in Cuba and her evaluation of the state’s reaction to this politicization through a transitory regime has been very important in Latin American historiography. It has supported a more historical rather than structural look into economic and political changes in the region.³¹

Criticisms of modernization theory and its consequences for the political history of social classes and economic and state systems must be taken into account in historical analyses. Historians constantly run the risk of assigning evolutionary terms to processes of change without remembering the fundamental role of conflict in change. Thus, in this thesis I have examined processes of struggle against servile labor and processes of demanding labor rights from the state not as a result of urbanization or of the development of capitalism, as other authors have argued, but

³¹ Rebecca Scott, *Slave Emancipation*.

rather as a result of the “relational” process of struggle against colonial ties or, in other words, against internal colonialism. The factors that have produced transformation in economies characterized by internal colonialism and in oligarchic states towards more inclusive economic and state configurations in Latin America have not appeared spontaneously. To the contrary, such transformations have been promoted by resistance as organized sectors have applied sufficient pressure to force change. The motor that has driven revolutionary processes in Ecuador has been the politicization of working classes and their capacity to form strategic alliances, to organize themselves, and to modify the political landscape. Relationships between the peasantry and other social classes have been fundamental in Ecuadorian history in shaping democratic political change.

With respect to the concept of class, I draw on the synthesis that Jeffrey L. Gould has offered for this complex theme and for the difficult experience of naming the actors whose roles are analyzed in this study. The choice of identifying temporary migrants as indigenous peasants was difficult. Equally difficult, I faced the problem of identifying artisans as workers. For this reason, the way I have identified subaltern classes (another difficult concept) throughout the following chapters is not altogether consistent. It changes in accordance with the conception that they had of themselves during processes of representation with respect to other classes and the state. I identify them with their public, albeit changing titles. Thus, along with Jeff Gould, I

have been led to wonder about the formation of class and ethnic identities, as well as of the nation, as a result of dialogue and conflict with other actors who mutually define one another as classes in processes of resistance. Gould has stated that what is relevant to observe is how distinct actors form a class discourse during concrete political processes: “classes, rooted in communities, may emerge in ‘relational terms’ in opposition to established classes or elites.” From structuralist discourses in peasant movements that this author has studied in Nicaragua, he has observed the manner in which “regardless of their individual roles in the relations of production in the countryside, the participants came to view themselves as members of one social group in conflict against another and eventually they began to speak of their class in opposition to the landholding class.”³²

In this sense, although we owe much to Barrington Moore Jr. for highlighting the relationship between the peasantry and landowners in the transition towards a commercial economy and the configuration of democratic or authoritarian paths to modernity, in the Latin American experience political conflict seems to be a crucial factor in social and political change. I understand this conflict within the dynamic of struggle against internal colonialism and for the constitution of a popular nation [term is okay?]. The class identities that seem to arise from conflict call for a redefinition of

³² Jeffrey L. Gould, *To Lead as Equals: Rural Protest and Political Consciousness in Chinandega, Nicaragua, 1912-1979* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990)

the nature of those links which internal colonialism employs to exclude. In contrast to processes of internal colonial formation, the popular building of a nation links heterogeneous groups through languages of conflict and of negotiation. In that sense Gramsci's writings on popular unity as well as the questions presented by Ranajit Guha with respect to proportions between coercion and consensus in the construction of Hindu nationalism are crucial to our understanding of Ecuadorian history.³³

An entire branch of Latin American historical studies follows from this tradition, productively appropriating the concept of hegemony. Among these studies, the work of Florencia Mallon stands out and the theoretical reflections of William Roseberry are important for understanding how [cut?]: the concept of] hegemony and the potential unity of popular classes in democratic constructions correspond to a political notion of social class. Roseberry has established that in this process of hegemonic construction both the state and political subjects are transformed.³⁴

E.P. Thompson's interpretation has been important insofar as it offers a theoretical-methodological approach to understanding class formation. He proposed that classes form as part of historical processes in which identities originating from popular discourses accumulate and conflicts lead to identity transformations based on a dialectical exchange between elites and popular sectors who dispute dominant

³³ Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison*; and *The Southern Question*; Ranajit Guha, *Dominance without Hegemony*.

³⁴ Roseberry, "Hegemony and the Language of Contention," in *Everyday Forms*.

meanings. This framework denies any essentialist or structural conception of preexisting classes and it has aided understanding of how popular cultures and ethnic organization in Latin America have acted in regional spaces to form organizations, alliances, and coalitions within processes of political conflict.

The work of reconstructing resistance to colonial ties and identifying in that resistance hegemonic processes assumes an interpretation of a slow and complex process that involves more conflict than consensus (as William Roseberry has also observed). If history permits, such conflicts accumulate in a single political society. As Roseberry observes with respect to Gramsci's work, the failure of the bourgeoisie to form a national state in Italy made the national program a difficult proposition in terms of bringing together the subaltern classes that were by definition separate (due to the heterogeneity and the inequality of the territorial and social relations between workers in the complex social formation of Italy). Whereas the bourgeoisie had failed in the construction of consensus and sustainable coercion in order to establish its leadership as a hegemonic actor, the unity of the subaltern population implied a long process of conflict against domination and the unification of subaltern classes outside of fascism through the construction of consensus and references to universal identity (as well as through coercion from the social movement). Yet, as Roseberry explains, unity requires control of the state. Insofar as subaltern classes are not the state while they remain in a state of conflict against internal colonialism and they do not control

legal, political, or cultural apparatus, the formation of a unified popular movement represents a revolutionary construction.

Historiographic Discussion and Sources

Throughout this dissertation, I refer to the interpretations that have been presented in distinct epochs of Ecuadorian historiography. In the first three chapters, ethno-historical studies that describe the social and spatial complexity of indigenous communities and the traditional historiography that provides an understanding of the identity of political parties were both very important sources. In the second part of the study, which corresponds to the liberal state, I have posed a challenge to structuralist interpretations of the factors that determined the Liberal Revolution and the rise of the commercial bourgeoisie, as well as the causes of the crisis of the liberal regime. This challenge is based on a political interpretation rather than a structural interpretation of classes and regional power struggles that led to the fall of the liberal state. The last two chapters, which cover political reform and the creation of the popular movement that configured a corporatist democracy (1925-1945), take issue with historians' de-valorization of the changes that took place beginning with the contentious alliances between peasants, workers, military officers, and the Left, and questions the theories of populism in Ecuador that are too focused on styles of leadership and do not take into account the historical formation of the social

movement.

For this thesis I use many different sources ranging from public registries in which regional conflicts can be observed between communities, landholders, and the state to correspondence between communities, national assemblies, and political parties. I work with documents from provincial, cantonal, and parish governments in the central Sierra in the first two chapters. The third chapter is based largely on memoirs of the Liberal Revolution and also on the letters sent to the liberal government by various actors. Chapters four through six draw on sources from three distinct regions, allowing us to compare reactions in each region with respect to political and economic changes and the manner in which these changes affected conflicts between classes in formation. In these regions, I specifically look at documents from trials that involved peasants, landholders, and the state, the press from the period, and the workers' press and records of their weekly meetings.

The regional analyses that I present in this dissertation achieve a considerable degree of detail about the conflicts between classes in formation, particularly among indigenous communities, peasants, and landholders, as well as among labor and artisan sectors. Throughout the study, this regional analysis is intended to maintain comparative and general perspectives with respect to the sustainability strength of the state. The regions in this study contrast with one another whereas national processes reveal points of convergence between them. The central Sierra, composed of four

provinces (from north to south: Cotopaxi, Tungurahua, Bolívar, and Chimborazo), was historically a region in which indigenous communities and haciendas coexisted in conflict for a long time. Its location at the heart of the country and close to the historic access to the coast made it a particularly dynamic commercial zone and provided for indigenous participation in interregional merchant networks. The second zone that the study takes into account is Pichincha, in particular during the Liberal period. This province, headed by the capital of the republic, was dominated by powerful landholding elites who sought to diversify their portfolios by moving from production into commercial capital. In Pichincha, the indigenous communities located in the southeast valleys of Quito and in the region of Cayambe to the north had to develop radical strategies to confront the powerful presence of these elites. Finally, I also include an analysis of the changing conditions in Guayas during the Liberal period in order to understand how even in this zone, characterized by cacao exportation between 1880 and 1923, rural conflict rather than commercial actions determined cycles of state response. Historically, Guayas has been the principal port of Ecuador and the commercial and financial epicenter. However, it has also been the site of a complex and diverse rural area that has included zones of monoproduction, spaces dominated by traditional community economies, and zones characterized by oil exploitation. My approach to analyzing these regions has been to maintain a great attention to detail in the attempt to make sense of a long period of

transformation in local and national scenarios as they interacted. However, I hope to have been able to demonstrate the diversity and complexity of the regions while still offering a compelling interpretation of how processes in these regions affected the central state.

The final two chapters benefit from the extraordinarily rich archive of the Ministry of Social Welfare and Labor (Ministerio de Prevención Social y Trabajo or MPST), which contains communications between workers, peasants, and the state between 1925 and 1945. In each documented trial in the MPST, one can find documents provided by the communities or haciendas from earlier or on-going conflicts over lands (the archive carries information until 1963). For the last two chapters I also access some very interesting and little-explored archives, especially newspapers and correspondence, generated by militants of the Socialist and Communist parties, which reveal memories of their links to the popular movement and also contain memories of their presence in state institutions and in international political organizations.

My work recognizes three stages in the formation of the state and civil society that are crucial for understanding political memory in Ecuador. I elucidate the formation of the political identity of the Ecuadorian social movement and its constitution within relational processes of class and national identity – that is, in processes of conflict and alliances between diverse classes in regional contexts and

their roles in attempts to establish national projects. I also reevaluate the importance of social conflict and popular resistance in the construction of democratic models and in the impositions that the state limit and diminish internal colonialism. Finally, I explore the nature of the popular movement, and of the indigenous peasantry as a protagonist within this movement, during state reforms of the twentieth century and, in turn, the historical legacies rather than theoretical proposals that nourish the contemporary project of the plurinational state.

The stages that I will describe in detail led to process of state transformation due to popular pressure that has gone largely unexplored by historians. The historical process that I analyze in this dissertation reveals the manner in which indigenous communities and later unions and popular federations managed to present their demands to the state even before obtaining the right to vote. This process advanced in three particular moments of popular pressure that reflect the complex nature of the Ecuadorian state, which historically has had to develop mechanisms to integrate popular sectors and to recognize popular organizations as legal and political actors.

Some of the most important results of this integration have included the state's recognition of social rights and certain guarantees, including the recognition of indigenous communities, the issuance of the Labor Code, legislation recognizing land as a collective good (and not only as private property), a national *indigenista* rhetoric, and the recognition of Kichwa as a national language. Moreover, the massive political

activation of popular organizations led to the formulation of popular organizing as a right to be used to benefit popular sectors either through legal processes or collective mobilization. The emergence of mass organizing as a form of negotiating with the state represents a significant historical change – a revolution, which occurred in stages. The origins of participative democracy in Ecuador are located historically in periods prior to the universalization of citizenship, but these origins were indeed radical in terms of the degree of popular political representation that was earned through popular organizing. Thus, my historical analysis suggests that it is highly probable that any de-corporativization program in Ecuador will threaten the democratic fabric of the nation and generate new stages of conflict.

CHAPTER 1: The Risks of Privilege: Indigenous Strategies for Dismantling the Aristocratic Republic.

This chapter documents the response of indigenous communities of the central Sierra to legal changes introduced in the Republic after 1840. At that moment the Republic initiated an aggressive campaign to auction off so-called “vacant lands” that were in fact used by indigenous communities. At the same time, the state attempted to apply a tributary tax to indigenous communities, which had previously been exempt. This chapter demonstrates the important role that indigenous resistance played in the political theater. Through everyday resistance strategies, critiques of state procedures, non-cooperation, and collective mobilizations in which communities and other actors came together, indigenous communities and their associates unveiled the weaknesses of state strategies to establish the state’s authority by mere imposition rather than negotiation.

This analysis will help us to understand a largely unrecognized struggle between social classes on the regional level in this early period and to understand their relationship to the state in formation. This analysis highlights the changing positions of indigenous communities and peasants with respect to the elite class in two moments in particular. First, I will interpret a period of privilege for regional elites under General Juan José Flores’s regime, which accompanied the expansion of

the *hacienda* and the imposition of the tributary tax and which ultimately concluded with the failure not only of the tax, but of the state in general.³⁵ A second moment of change is known as the nationalist period. It was characterized by the first true experience of negotiation between indigenous communities and the state under the regime of the March Revolution (1845-1861). This moment produced the negotiated transformation of the indigenous population's regional position and brought about the first experience of a popular political coalition that can be qualified as liberal republicanism. This coalition, in turn, came up against the first political and strategic formations of conservatism.

In more general terms, this chapter documents how the state's refusal to recognize the economic strategies of indigenous communities organized around a division of labor between *llactayos* (peasants with land and obligations) and *forasteros* (those with ties to community lands, *gañanes* of the *haciendas*, or small merchants, among other trades complementary to the communal economy) led to a perception of the "personal contribution of indigenous peoples" as one of forced or even irrational

³⁵ Flores was a military officer from Venezuela who was named colonel by Simón Bolívar. In his role as representative of Gran Colombia he favored the succession of the *criollo* elites and landholders of Ecuador. He was president of Ecuador on three occasions between 1830 and 1845. He also supported the intention of the elites to maintain the institutions of slavery. Under his government, he also supported initiatives to dissolve the landownership of indigenous communities and apply a tributary tax. In this work, we reference regional processes that occur principally during his government between 1843 and 1845.

imposition, thus generating a political response that brought an end to the tax. The analysis reveals how the state's refusal negotiate with indigenous communities and with the governor of the Indians was symptomatic of the political weakness of the state institution to question the privileges of the whites and, specifically, of regional elites, who demanded the concession of goods and the irregular use of force to expand *haciendas*. The privileges of the elites included tax evasion, the use of force to take resources, and certain controls over the population, all of which put at risk the sustainability of state authority at the regional level. Such arbitrary privileges in the region were imposed on state decision-making as the *hacendados* themselves were also senators of the republic. They were able to pull Flores along with them, given that he was an outsider, dependent on the regional elites. The consequent failure of state negotiation led to a definitive political crisis. This chapter suggests that from the point of view of regional processes in the central Sierra, the state was actually much less reasonable and much less powerful, whereas indigenous communities were much more active in regional and national power struggles than what has generally been described in Ecuadorian historiography on the nineteenth century.

The analysis of collective mobilization and negotiation processes following the fall of Flores' regime in the context of the March Revolution of 1845 suggests that the configuration of the republican state depended in large part on its capacity to respond to the peasant agenda on regional and national levels. Either through negotiations that

integrated demands and recognized indigenous people as political actors or through the actions of a class in opposition to peasant interests, the central state was forced to respond to pressures originating from indigenous communities on a regional level.

1.1 Where Did the Rebels Go? Historiographic Views of the Ecuadorian State and Indigenous Communities in the Nineteenth Century.

This chapter discusses a historiographic tradition that has disproportionately emphasized a view of the republican state as a coherent and stable state, constituted by a landholding elite that was able to impose the elite's vision efficiently on distinct regions of the country where processes of hacienda expansion were experienced, indigenous taxation persisted, and the idea of a Catholic nation was spread without resistance among the Indians. This historiography, which generally concentrates on the Garcian regime (1861-1875), has been constructed on the premise of the general political failure of indigenous communities of the eighteenth century and leaves us with a vision of indigenous passivity, immobility, and lack of political will. In the literature, indigenous peoples are often characterized as subjects of disciplinary practices and not as actors in conflict over the regional and national order. However, we will take another look at the dynamics of regional conflict and in this context reevaluate the capacity of the state and its allies to impose particular visions of order. Our research concentrates on a period and a region in which the resistance of

indigenous communities and their capacity for mobilization was evident and in which the strategies of communities for coming together with a variety of populations and in a variety of regional spaces were manifest. This analysis demonstrates how indigenous communities blocked the imposition of a “personal contribution” or tax on Indians. It reveals how they impeded the expansion of the hacienda and how, through practices and discourses, indigenous communities and distinct state actors prevented forceful domination in the central Sierra.

Thus, this chapter clarifies how, from an early period of the Republic, communities impeded the development of a regime of imposition that would deny the formulation of regional and national pacts and the integration of indigenous and peasant agendas. In reality, communities forced the generation of spaces for negotiation and, in turn, the construction of a negotiated political order. In contrast to what the literature suggests, we can observe how these conflicts produced a fragile state. The state lacked autonomy with respect to a landholding elite that itself ended up in a profound crisis as the state was forced to open up to negotiations and pacts with regional actors. The discussion in this chapter is inserted into a more general discussion about the influence of indigenous communities on the negotiation of the political order, on the incorporation of indigenous agendas, and on state conditions and mechanisms for dealing with conflicts.

By the end of the eighteenth century, the indigenous communities of the

Audiencia de Quito mobilized in an insurrection that brought together broad social networks. From communities nestled in the mountains, parish centers, groups of *trajinantes*, and informal settlements of Indian *forasteros* to the *criollo* masses in capitals like Latacunga, Riobamba, Ambato, and Quito, many distinct segments came together in response to attempts by the Bourbon Empire to modernize colonial administration.³⁶ Measures such as counting Indians, implementing taxes on commerce, and imposing control over the colonial subaltern population to incorporate them into tributary taxation were readily identified by indigenous communities and their authorities, the Indian governors, as threats to strategies for social diversification that had permitted them to survive with a certain autonomy from colonial impositions. The Bourbon measures ignored visions of inter-ethnic integration that were negotiated in the late colonial period and they were associated with violence and privation, as if “they [were] going to take our children to send them to Chile to work in the mines.”³⁷

³⁶ Martin Minchom, “People of Quito, 1690-1810: Change and Unrest in the Underclass” *Dellplain Latin American Studies* 32 (1994): 275-29. Segundo Moreno, *Las sublevaciones indígenas en la Audiencia de Quito* (Quito: Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador, 1985). Rosemarie Terán Najas, *Los proyectos del imperio borbónico en la Real Audiencia de Quito* (Quito: Abya Yala and TEHIS, 1988). Piedad Costales and Alfredo Costales, *Historia Social del Ecuador*, vol. XVII of *Llacta*, Tomo I (Quito: Instituto Ecuatoriano de Antropología y Geografía, 1964)

³⁷ Segundo Moreno, *Las sublevaciones*. See also Karen Powers, “The Battle for Bodies and Souls in the Colonial North Andes: Intraecclesiastical Struggles and the Politics of Migration,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 75: no. 1 (1995). Valeria Coronel, “Santuarios y mercados coloniales: lecciones jesuíticas de contrato y subordinación para el colonialismo interno criollo,” in *Los Jesuitas y la modernidad*.

The attempt to reinsert forcefully a diversity of actors identified as Indian *forasteros* into the payment of tributes threatened the reproduction strategies of communities. It also threatened their capacity to coordinate diverse populations in which the power of the ethnic authorities had been established. According to what has been shown in the work of Karen Powers in Quito, it was crucial for the governor of Indians to coordinate informally dispersed settlements. The fundamental social difference was that between *llactayos* – those with access to lands and with *mita* and tributary obligations – and *forasteros* – those lacking lands and therefore with no *mita* or tributary obligations. The latter group offered their labor as *arrimados*³⁸ on the lands of the *llactayos* or as internal migrants for other niche economies between the cities and the haciendas. In turn, they had access to goods and found a political and symbolic space within regional indigenous society.³⁹

1549-1773, eds. Manuel Marzal and Luis Bacigalupo (Lima: IFEA y PUCP, 2007), 187-225. These studies oppose a reading of the late colonies as “protonational.” For a reading of the political culture in the Baroque epoch and protonational images, see David A. Brading, *Los orígenes del nacionalismo mexicano* (México: Ediciones Era, 1980); and Serge Gruzinski, *La guerra de las imágenes. De Cristóbal Colón a “Blade Runner” (1492-2019)* (2nd ed., Mexico D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1994).

³⁸ Landless peasants who depended on families with land, either as free communities or under the *concertaje* regime.

³⁹ Karen Powers, *Prendas con pies. Migraciones indígenas y supervivencia cultural en la Audiencia de Quito* (Quito: Ediciones Abya-Yala, 1994). Also see Gerardo Fuentalba, *Forasteros y concierto para fines del siglo XVIII y principios del siglo XIX* (Master’s thesis in Andean History, FLACSO, 1988). These studies show how the *forasteros* maintained ties of dependency and reciprocity with the communities in a

A diversity of popular actors and identities could be included in the category of *forasteros*.⁴⁰ However, as testimonies about the insurrections around Riobamba indicate

very similar way to the international Ecuadorian immigrants today, permitting them to complement the economy of the social group with remittances, in exchange for access to goods and political membership.

⁴⁰ According to the studies of Tristan Platt, *forasterismo* in the case of Bolivia characterizes an internal division in the Andean community in which the term *forastero* is applied to those descendants of migrants who had inherited rights to cultivate, along with corresponding obligations; minors from large families who no longer found enough land and were obligated to establish themselves at the unoccupied margins of the lands of less numerous groups; and sons- or daughters-in-law of the original families. Others are in a transitional age, waiting to reach maturity. See Tristan Platt, “The Andean Experience of Bolivian Liberalism, 1825-1900: Roots of Rebellion in 19th Century Chayanta (Potosi),” in *Resistance, Rebellion, and Consciousness in the Andean Peasant World, 18th to 20th Centuries*, ed. Steve Stern (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987). In the case of the *Audiencia de Quito*, *forasterismo* appears to have been a social process of indigenous specialization, a tactic to manipulate the legal-social categories that identified subjects in relation to caste membership. In an “indigenous community,” sometimes in a single *ayllu*, certain descendants were denominated as *llactaios* – original members – while others were designated as *forasteros* or *mestizos*. The *mestizo* appeared as a social actor who defined his or her identity dynamically, integrated into the indigenous community as well as into urban society. Not being legally registered in any community and supposedly lacking lands, mestizos were exempt from the tributary obligation and from participating in the *mita*. They were not even in the official registries.

However, in many cases, certain goods, inherited or rented, were still possessed by the community. The *caciques* offered outsiders access to the original lands in the title of the resources of the community, in exchange for which they complemented the communal economy with what they received in money for community labor on the haciendas, in workshops, in urban work, or through the commercialization of domestic handicrafts. Powers argues that this strategy was an early way to achieve population control on behalf of the indigenous community. It was an institution with a certain advantage amidst the permanent competition for labor that existed between private companies and the colonial state. See Karen Powers, “Señores dinámicos e indios vagabundos: riqueza, migración y transformación reproductiva de los cacicazgos de

Quito, 1600-1700,” *Revista Marka* 45 (1991). At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the state re-elaborated its mechanisms for taking a census with the purpose of accessing this *forastero*. This is the era of the staff-bearing (*varajuc*) ethnic lords in the *Audiencia de Quito*. Cacique Pedro de Zámbriza began a campaign in this context to submit the *forastero* population to the control of the colonial authorities. This permitted him to continue his political career and intervene effectively in lawsuits in defense of community lands. Success meant some level of compliance with the requirement of community tribute, the quotas of obligatory work, and the protection of private and communal resources. Salomon finds that the descendants of families linked to the Inca were displaced by local lineages closer to networks of social mobilization. See Frank Salomon, “Don Pedro de Zambiza, un varajuj del siglo XVI,” *Cuadernos de historia y arqueología* 42 (1988): 288. The effectiveness of the project and cacique control over the population is shown in the demographic increase registered in official documents in 1615. In the eighteenth century, on the one hand indigenous communities still cohered solidly among *forasteros*, *llactayos*, and *mestizos*; on the other hand, the state was losing tributary taxes and *llactayos* slowly. See Segundo Moreno, *Las sublevaciones*, 48. Also, see Gerardo Fuentealba, “La sociedad indígena en las primeras décadas de la República: continuidades coloniales y cambios republicanos,” in Vol.8 of *Historia del Ecuador*, ed. Enrique Ayala Mora (Quito: Corporación Editora Nacional, 1989). The invisibility of ample sectors of the indigenous population in the eyes of the state (that is, their absence from the state registries) was a practice widely recognized at the local level. According to the calculations carried out by Segundo Moreno with regards to the data available before the rebellions of Cajabamba, Riobamba, and Calpi, in 1781, 64.78% of the tributary population was *forastero* and scarcely 35.21% was *llactaya*. The *forasteros* came from 12 villages pertaining to the jurisdiction of Riobamba, such as the regions of Latacunga, Chimbo, Ambato, Cuenca, Quito, Otavalo, Alausí, and Macas. Distinguishing the *forasteros* who were residents in Villa by the “cape and *balona*” dress and who exercised a variety of roles: they were barbers, carpenters, cobblers, dyers, handymen, and printing-press operators, a whole range of salaried people. In their eagerness to recuperate political and economic control over the colonies, the Bourbon kings introduced measures that altered local conditions. The workers’ economy in the central Sierra was affected by restrictions on the plantation of vineyards and on the construction of wool workshops, with the purpose of breaking all possible competition with Spanish wine and clothing trade from Castilla. While the central Sierra entered into crisis, the complex relationship between the hacienda and the workshop was forged in the northern Sierra and its markets were replaced. Terán Najas, *Los proyectos*, 88. Also see Carlos Marchan, “El sistema hacendario serrano, movilidad y cambio agrario,” *Cultura* 19 (1984).

with respect to the populations of Guano, Licto, and Pungala, the *forasteros* were known as a clearly defined and differentiated group within regional indigenous society. Moreover, this sector had the capacity to mobilize with communities of Indians possessing land to achieve common ends.

This closeness between *llactayos*, *forasteros*, and those “Indians dressed as Spaniards” and named with disdain “*cholos*” became fundamental for the indigenous rebellions of the central Sierra. On March 7, 1764, the government planned to proclaim an edict that demanded that purported *forasteros* who were in fact landowners present their titles and that they “be obligated to the common service that is of their nature, and held by *llagtayos*, joining the *Caziques* and *Parcialidades* ... and that by not complying, their lands should be taken away and awarded to others.”⁴¹

Although in the eyes of the state the *forasteros* did not have a governor, they constituted a differentiated sector within the communities and in regional indigenous society. Thus, they were recognized in certain contexts as “*Inga de Forasteros*,” who acted in alliance with the governor of Indians. The “*Inga de forasteros*,” meaning “Inka

Among the restrictions that the crown imposed on the workshops was the elimination of the corvée labor draft or *mita*. But the *mita* had already been restructured before the decree; the workshops of Riobamba had substituted for it a system of direct contract. The growth of *forasterismo*, prior to the reduction of the *mitayos*, had been parallel to the growth of “free contracts.” *Forasterismo* required a relatively high salary determined by a supposed disentanglement from land, the competitiveness for labor, and *forasteros*’ progressive specialization in artisan labors. However, as has been noted, it was part of a wider, comunal network. See Fuentealba, *Forasteros*, 28.

⁴¹ Moreno, *Las sublevaciones*, 50.

of the *forasteros*,” was as a symbolic leader. The “*Inga* of the *forasteros*,” as Thomas Amaguaya was called for his participation in the rituals of Corpus Cristi, assumed real political leadership in the context of uprisings around Riobamba. According to witnesses, it was his calls for insurrection that brought things to a head.

He [the *forastero*] who was the *Inga* in the Festivals together with Thomas Amaguaya, and Diego Challi, the last wearing the *tuto*⁴², declared in loud and intelligible voices that they should rise up, because the collectors were coming to offend the Indians, and the *Mestizos* too.⁴³

The work of Segundo Moreno recovers a series of sources that speak of an important alliance between ethnic authorities and *forastero* leaders who mobilized an ample social cross-section for an insurrection. Such insurrections provided the *criollo* elite with the opportunity to seek an alliance with the new governing dynasty in the Bourbonic administration and to re-group as a colonial noble class in the interest of re-conquering indigenous populations.⁴⁴ The *corregidor* of Riobamba claimed in response to the general insurrection in the province that occurred in 1781.⁴⁵ For him, this insurrection

⁴² A symbol of distinction in Inca dress known as the *borla* headgear.

⁴³ ANH/Q, Corte Suprema Collection. Autos criminales sobre la sublevación de los indios de Riobamba, 1764.

⁴⁴ Moreno, *Las sublevaciones*. See also Christian Büschges, *Familia, honor y poder. La nobleza de la ciudad de Quito en la época colonial tardía (1765-1822)* (Quito: FONSAL, 2007).

⁴⁵ The *corregidor* was a provincial magistrate. He also was “*Justicia mayor y lugarteniente de capitán general*” because he was in charge of local justice and held military rank.

sought the destruction of the nobility and was impossible to contain through force alone: “[Quito is] a conquered Nation in which there is no love for the sovereign conqueror.”⁴⁶ In effect, the great cycle of indigenous rebellions (1765-1806) allowed the white elite to seek out state recognition as members of the frontline of a conquest that had never ceased despite more than two hundred years of co-habitation. Therefore, corregidor Francisco de Vida y Roldán sought to use force rather than trust or a possible pact as a basis for domination. In his evaluation of the rioters in Riobamba, he argued that the group’s strength lay in the *criollos*’ and Spaniards’ inability to understand their social relations, the ties that brought together such apparently disperse collectivities, and the great failure to maintain the frontline of the Conquest:

Their force lies in their mass, close to 20,000 men and a greater number of women. It also consists in having at their disposition the fields, sheep, haciendas, the keys to our houses, the safeguard of our fortunes and that of our children and, in a word, our lives and haciendas with everything in their trust. Add to these strengths the facility of coming together. They are not going to lose this capacity and they will be a flying army, like a swarm of Bees that moves, comes together, and nests in the hills, in the fields, and anywhere else; and they do not lack spirit to forge ahead with tenacity, as has already been witnessed, without fear of death.⁴⁷

The corregidor Vida y Roldán was commissioned to pacify the indigenous uprisings

⁴⁶ ANH/Q, Indígenas Collection, box 82, 9-IV-1764. *Pesquisa y sumaria hecha sobre la sublevación de indios sucedida en esta villa de Riobamba en los días siete y ocho del mes de marzo de 1764*. Corregidor Francisco de Vida y Roldan was commissioned by the king to put down the uprisings.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

and sought to be recognized as a more efficient and rational colonizer. In a public document, he criticized the local nobility (*nobleza*) for having become lazy while he praised himself as an attentive military man. He called upon nobles to take up arms to re-assert their domination over the territories. According to him, it was indispensable to distance themselves from the values of co-habitation with the Indians and trust with respect to them and the *mestizos*, who were “the children of Indian Mothers who raised them and live at their expense.”⁴⁸ Vida y Roldán argued that the fourth and fifth generation since the Conquest had lost their consciousness of being Conquistadors.

Even the memories were lost and they were living in an unknown nation, rigorously yoked and with more and more trust, they gave themselves lethargically to leisure time, to greed, and to pusillanimity (*sic*)...always watching in the skin of a sheep, the Lion that was in the house.⁴⁹

Judging by the harsh manner in which the insurrections were confronted in Guano in 1803, bellicose discourse triumphed as a vehicle for pacifying them instead of negotiating a resolution to the crisis. Was the call to re-conquer so effective that these communities found themselves completely immobilized throughout the nineteenth century and the reconfiguration of the Republic, as the literature would suggest? Was the Republic established as a state of effective domination without negotiation or

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ ANH/Q, Indígenas Collection, box 82, 9-IV-1764.

was there “a lion in the house”? Legal reforms that promoted the transfer of community lands into the hands of *hacendados* during the Republic and established the taxation of Indians were actions carried out by the simple use of force without any negotiation or recognition of indigenous representatives.

Yet I argue that the rebellions were not conclusive, but rather were part of a struggle that manifested itself under distinct conditions and with relatively distinct results throughout the period of study that this thesis covers. The rebellions demonstrated that the indigenous communities were fundamental actors in the dismantling of orders imposed from the outside and in pressuring for democratization that would create necessary conditions for negotiations and pacts, in turn generating a more sustainable framework for the state itself. While this chapter explores resistance to force and reveals indigenous strategies for political alliance, the following chapters explore links that these communities were later able to forge to pressure for the formation of regimes that would negotiate with them. Communities efficiently pressed for the recognition of their regional importance and at the same time offered a means of support to the state that would permit it to take its first steps towards obtaining relative autonomy from *gamonal* power. The Ecuadorian historiography, like that of other Andean countries, tends to describe the first half of the nineteenth century as a period in which transformations threatened Indian communities and the colonial institutions of indigenous slavery and tribute were still very much active. In

addition, community lands were declared “vacant lands” to be submitted to public auction. The declaration of popular sovereignty in the constitution was accompanied by the exclusion of Indians. Yet ethnic systems of social coordination became necessary to make the tributary tax function. Although this situation seems a lot like that of other countries in the Andean region, this chapter aims to show that this moment in Ecuador was unique. The Ecuadorian historiography in general contrasts with that of the rest of the region given that the literature on Peru and Bolivia speaks of states that were not consolidated and were threatened by persistent indigenous mobilization against internal colonialism. The historiography on Ecuador, on the other hand, focuses on the state as an institution that directed modernization from above.

In Bolivia and Peru, historians believe that communities resisted policies of liberalization implemented by the first republican governments. The literature describes conflicts, legal disputes, and political alliances among communities represented by community members or by new ethnic elites and *caudillos* of various political identities, thus revealing tense and negotiated processes forged in the new republics.⁵⁰ The literature of the southern Andes describes the formation of political alliances among communities and *caudillos* who sought to mount state projects and

⁵⁰ Larson, *Trials of Nation Making*; Laura Gotkowitz, *A Revolution for our Rights: Indigenous Struggles for Land and Justice in Bolivia, 1880-1952* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007); Hylton and Thomson, *Revolutionary horizons*.

integrate the regions.⁵¹ According to Cecilia Méndez, this was the case of Huanta in Ayacucho, where indigenous communities dedicated to commerce were able to develop political alliances with distinct social strata and participate in political power. This participation first took the form of the defense of a pact with the monarchy and later the project of a Bolivian-Andean confederation, as this liberal proposal favored the integration of peasant sectors into the base of the republican state.⁵²

By contrast, the characterization of the Ecuadorian state describes the state trajectory in the nineteenth century as having passed from a period of *caudillo* rivalry to one of the conformation of a successful central state that emerged from the “national” vision of the landowning class. In this context, communities and indigenous *cacicazgos* increasingly affected by the “vacant land” policies, the expansion of the hacienda, and the persistence of the colonial tribute appear to have been demobilized and then denied their place in the Republic.

Juan Maiguashca has described a state institution in the nineteenth century that was determined to create a coherent society. Thus, the state was “the principal motor

⁵¹ Mallon, *Peasant and Nation*. Also see Alejandro Diaz Hurtado, “De Sambambé a la “Comuna de Chalaco.” La multivocalidad de montoneros piuranos durante el tardío siglo XIX,” *Revista Andina* 37 (2003): 137-180. Also see Charles Walker, *Smoldering Ashes: Cuzco and the Creation of Republican Peru, 1780* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1999).

⁵² Méndez, *The Plebeian Republic*, xvi and 343. The literature in this area is vast. To mention only a few fundamental works: Nelson Manrique, *Campesinado y nación, las guerrillas indígenas en la guerra con Chile* (Lima: Centro de Investigación y Capacitación and Editora Ital Perú, [1981]); Mallon, *Peasant and Nation*.

of the process of national integration during all of the nineteenth century.”⁵³ Along the same lines, Silvia Vega Ugalde maintains that “from the early Republic, particularly since 1835, there existed a clear and conscious attempt by the landowning class to bring the nation together, from the central State to the broader society, thus subordinating and using local powers and the power of certain corporations, such as the Church and the military, under state political direction.”⁵⁴

In this conceptual framework, the regime of Gabriel García Moreno (1861-1875) has attracted the majority of attention on the period and has been seen as an example of a centralized state. This regime has often been described as a paradigmatic case of Catholic modernization that was able to combine the modernization process of state institutions with a revitalization of ethnic controls of colonial origin.⁵⁵ The state’s encouragement of the construction of civil works through a forced mobilization that renewed the indigenous *mita* and the offering of personal services in the form of subsidiary work have been described in recent literature as an exemplary form of

⁵³ Juan Manguashca, ed., *Historia y región en el Ecuador 1830-1930* (Quito: CEN, FLACSO and CERLAC, 1994). The state in this approach is referred to as an institution (bureaucratic apparatus), differentiating it from a national system of social domination.

⁵⁴ Silvia Vega Ugalde, *Ecuador: crisis políticas y Estado en los inicios de la República* (Quito: FLACSO and Abya-Yala, 1991), 18

⁵⁵ See Derek Williams, “Assembling the ‘Empire of Morality’: State Building Strategies in Catholic Ecuador, 1861-1875,” *Journal of Historical Sociology* 14 (2001): 149-74. See also, Marie-Danielle Demelas and Yves Saint-Geours, *Jerusalén y Babilonia: religión y política en el Ecuador* (Quito: Corporación Editora Nacional, 1988).

modernizing indigenous servitude.⁵⁶

Rafael Quintero and Erika Silva have characterized the regime as a landowning state sustained by the regionalization of power and proposed that it be understood as a *gamonal* regime, reflecting the thesis of Richard Graham in the case of Brazil. According to his thesis, internal class dynamics on large estates produced a political regime that configured local power. For Quintero and Silva, “We ought to understand the large estate not as a simple form of production, but rather as a great territorial property in which various forms of production could co-exist, and, most importantly, it constituted the base of regional power.”⁵⁷ This image cannot be attributed only to the historiography given that it was imbedded in the discourse of the Conservative Party during the twentieth century. Conservative intellectuals of the time maintained that the hacienda was one of the civilizing institutions that built bridges between customs, regional order, and national civilization in Ecuador.

There are many studies that project an image of Ecuador as the scene of a coherent and articulated domination, including studies of Catholicism and modernization and detailed analyses of a legal apparatus that predominated over ethnic authority in the realm of local control. Other studies have focused on the advance of

⁵⁶ See Larson, *Trials of Nation Making*; Jacobsen and Aljovín de Losada, eds., *Political Cultures*.

⁵⁷ Rafael Quintero and Erika Silva, *Ecuador, una nación en ciernes* (revised ed, Quito: FLACSO and Abya Yala, 2001).

the white-*mestizo* population in the administration of the parish as a strategy for attaining more efficient local control. The most influential vision of the position of indigenous communities with respect to republican power is that presented in the work of Andrés Guerrero. According to Guerrero, the hacienda was the source of practices of ethnic administration and it was only within its semantics, marked by an unequal exchange between *patron* and community, that we can recognize indigenous resistance.⁵⁸

Guerrero describes the hacienda as an institution with two heads. The indigenous community at the interior of the hacienda (the wider *huasipunguero* family) guaranteed its own existence through work on various fronts. Service to the *hacienda* provided it with access to a plot of land and to indispensable resources for agriculture and herding. The work of the *arrimados*, family members settled on a single plot, was directed toward the subsistence of the family unit and periodic enrollment in hacienda activities. The *arrimados*' work in the villages outside of the hacienda provided an income for important events. The handicrafts of women and children were sold for subsistence and, at times, for a small profit. Beginning in the colonial period, these *forasteros*, tied to indigenous families with lands, contributed complementary income for social

⁵⁸ Andrés Guerrero, *La semántica de la dominación: el concertaje de indios* (Quito: Libri Mundi, Enrique Grosse-Luermern, 1991). León Zamosc, "Luchas campesinas y reforma agraria: un análisis de la sierra ecuatoriana y la costa atlántica colombiana," *Revista Mexicana de Sociología* 52 (1990): 135-145.

reproduction.

According to the interpretations of sociologists Andrés Guerrero and Fernando Velasco with respect to bonds of dependence between the community and the traditional hacienda in Ecuador, the wider indigenous network did not entirely guarantee the material conditions for the hacienda's reproduction and, therefore, the hacienda recruited informal workers who could be considered a proletariat, if there existed a proper labor market. It was a distorted form of proletariat formation in which the pre-capitalist relationship was not dissolved and which permitted the landholding economy to take advantage of “loose” workers at the same time that it conserved the structure of dependence between communities and haciendas.⁵⁹

In his work on the “law of customs,” Guerrero proposes that the landowning state integrated into the legal organizational chart a parish deputy, a functionary that substituted for the old corregidor of Indians in the function of delivering justice in conventional cases and imprisoning Indians who reacted against the impositions of the *patrón*. This was reinforced by the state's capacity to mobilize a national police force in support of local regimes of ethnic control.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Andrés Guerrero, *La hacienda precapitalista y la clase terrateniente en América Latina y su inserción en el modo de producción capitalista: el caso ecuatoriano* (Quito: Escuela de Sociología, Universidad central. 1975). Germán Colmenares, “La hacienda en la sierra norte del Ecuador: fundamentos económicos y sociales de una diferenciación nacional (1800-1870),” *Procesos* 2 (1992).

⁶⁰ On *gamonalismo* as a concept, see Andrés Guerrero, “Curagas y tenientes políticos:

For Guerrero, the ethnic authorities had survived during the republican regime precisely due to their function as the machinery of local power, subordinated to the political deputy as the most peripheral branch (in the parishes) of the Ministry of the Interior and the police. At the same time, for reasons of lesser import, they formed part of the national legal body. In an atmosphere dominated by the hacienda, the *Cacique* governor helped maintain the conditions for the payment of the indigenous tributary tax, of which the state depended until the 1860s, as well as the conditions for population control, the administration of land use, and the administration of payments. Also, the *cacique* oversaw the mobilization of the population in the construction of public works.⁶¹

The impact of this conceptual framework on the Latin American literature is reflected in books such as that of Brooke Larson who, in a comparative study of liberalism and ethnicity in the Andes, describes the Ecuadorian case based on secondary sources and proposes that this country constituted a particular case of state

la ley de la costumbre y la ley del estado (Otavalo 1830-1875)," *Revista Andina* 2 (1989): 321-366; and from the same author, *Administración de poblaciones, ventriloquía y transescritura* (Perú: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, FLACSO Ecuador, 2010). On justice in the regional and national space, see the classic work of Mariátegui, *Siete ensayos*; Manuel Burga and Alberto Flores Galindo, *Apogeo y crisis de la República Aristocrática* (Lima: Rikchay, 1991). For the case of Brazil, see Richard Graham, *Patronage and Politics in Nineteenth Century Brazil* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990).

⁶¹ Quintero and Silva, *Ecuador, una nación en ciernes*. Linda Alexander Rodríguez, *Las finanzas públicas en el Ecuador (1830-1940)* (Quito: Banco Central del Ecuador, 1992).

centralization, colonial renewal, and indigenous and peasant immobility. Following Guerrero, Larson finds that Ecuador entered the twentieth century as the only Andean nation that had not experienced a militant grassroots movement of community-based peasants who challenged government policies of land divestitures.⁶²

The first chapter of this thesis treats the political conditions of indigenous communities in the Ecuadorian central highland provinces and the nature of the state in the nineteenth century. It rejects the temptation to think about territory as a homogenous reality dominated by the hacienda and it calls attention to regional processes like those of Tungurahua and Bolívar, which benefited from the persistence of indigenous communities external to the hacienda, some of which were historically involved in commerce and maintained dialogue with the state and with political movements. These regional processes ultimately promoted the formation of a militant and active peasantry.

1.2. The Vacant Lands Policy and Territorial Conflict.

Ecuador was founded as an independent republic under the direction of the Venezuelan military leader Juan José Flores. After the death of Antonio José de Sucre,

⁶² Larson, *Trials of Nation-Making*, 125. Also in León Zamosc we can observe an interpretation of indigenous communities in Ecuador as resisters, but not political in a classic sense. *Peasant Struggles and Agrarian Reform: The Ecuadorian Sierra and the Colombian Atlantic Coast in Comparative Perspective* (Latin American Issues, monograph series number 8, Allegheny College and University of Akron, 1990), 75.

Flores took various steps supported by regional elites to make Ecuador independent of Gran Colombia and to re-establish the tributary tax that had been abolished by Colombian legislation.

The historical pact of July 19, 1834, between federalists and centralists represented respectively by Vicente Rocafuerte and Juan José Flores, gave way to a combination of liberal measures and a legal framework that guaranteed the survival of colonial institutions, both economic and political, in which the privileges of the elites were well-established.⁶³ State intervention promoted the ownership of large properties and established distinct legal mechanisms for controlling communities located on them.⁶⁴

The policy of de-corporatizing community lands, that led to the practice of auctioning “vacant lands” was already present in the law of October 11 1821, and it was taken up once more by legislation of the new Republic of Ecuador in the decree of September 30 1833, under the first government of Juan José Flores. The vacant land procedure subjected Indians to a new process of land reduction. The county corregidores were put in charge of measuring and evaluating lands, leaving a part for family use, and designating remaining lands to be sold at public auction. According to Costales “All the comforts necessary for their work should be given to the Indians –

⁶³ Vega, *Ecuador: crisis políticas y Estado*.

⁶⁴ Yves Saint-Geours, “La sierra centro norte (1830-1925),” in *Historia y región*, ed. Manguashca.

that is, give them water, land, and mountains, entrances and exits, farming, and a cooperative of a league in which the sheep should graze.”⁶⁵

According to legislators, this initiative was meant to gather the funds necessary to save the Indians from “ignorance and rustic living, to which the colonial system had reduced them,”⁶⁶ through the establishment of primary schools. However, in practice neighbors were “given incentives” to declare vacant lands in exchange for 7% of their worth at public auction. In the meantime, military personnel throughout the countryside were demanding non-existent funds from the treasury with which to pay salaries and living expenses. Thus, the actual and irregular processes of land auctioning in the central Sierra revealed the true reasons for auctioning to have been much less progressive than those that had been formally expressed.⁶⁷

The procedure of auctioning lands was full of irregularities and even violence. Ultimately, auctioning only served the treasury, as displaced indigenous communities frequently denounced irregularities with respect to the declaration of their lands as vacant. Many expropriations and expansions along the frontiers of the haciendas are likely to have taken place without legal oversight, as the archives of the old

⁶⁵ Costales and Costales, *Historia Social del Ecuador*, vol. XVII of *Llacta* tomo I.

⁶⁶ Decretos de Juan José Flores, 16.I.1833 in Piedad Costales and Alfredo Costales, “Recopilación de las leyes indígenas de 1830 a 1918,” in *Historia social del Ecuador*, vol. XVII of *Llacta*, año VI., tomo III, 597.

⁶⁷ ANH/Q, Indígenas Collection [Fondo Indígena], box 174, 9.VII.1849, “Defensa de tierras de la comunidad de indígenas de la parroquia Caguasquí contra Mercedes Villegas.”

Chimborazo province produce too few examples of auctions to account for all of the lands expropriated from Indians in the first half of the nineteenth century, nor, for that matter, are the records of public income or land registry taxes present. This lack of documentation was denounced at the time by the national collector, to which the authorities of Chimborazo responded with the pretext that “fire and floods had destroyed the provincial archives.”⁶⁸

The central Ecuadorian Sierra was a space of great contrasts. The southwest strip of Chimborazo Province was a sector prominently populated by haciendas with a great quantity of *concierto* labor. Its agricultural production was oriented to commerce in the lowlands and circulated along the Alausí-Yahuachi road, where the railway began functioning during the government of García Moreno.⁶⁹ By contrast, the area of Ambato County was characterized by the existence of free communities with complex strategies for territorial control achieved through various legal mechanisms and population divisions meant to prevent the formation of haciendas. In the southwest strip of the province, where the populations of Licto, Punín, and Pungala were located, the presence of free communities was predominant. There were also many *forasteros*, *mestizos*, and settlers with access to lands in multiple ecological zones and complex strategies for ethnic identification. The county of Bolívar was, for its part, a zone of

⁶⁸ ANH/Q Informe de un recaudador. Ministerio de Hacienda, box 108.

⁶⁹ Clark, *The Redemptive Work*, 225.

indigenous communities specialized in “*trajines*” or carriers for trade that controlled commercial circuits between the central Sierra and the coast. The indigenous communities of this zone were muleteers and merchants, and for a long time they carried out internal migrations as part of a complementary economic strategy. The dynamic adopted by the coast after the first cacao boom gave a new impulse towards internal commerce that was reflected by the intensification of migration and, in turn, by rivalries over the possession of valuable lands next to roads. With respect to the communities subjected to “vacant land” policies, the control of space for social reproduction, of the road, and of migration to the coast were fundamental elements in the conflicts that resulted from vacant land policies in this sub-region. Responses to these policies were also generated in the northern region of the province, particularly in Guano.⁷⁰

Several haciendas exported products to Colombian and Peruvian markets. Others tried to control handicraft and agricultural production to supply demand created by growth on cacao plantations, whose first period of growth, from 1779 to 1842, coincided with the governments of the military leaders that supported the expansion of the hacienda in the Sierra.⁷¹ This impulse toward expansion sought to convert the

⁷⁰ At the beginning of the Republic, the new territorial jurisdiction named Riobamba became provincial capital of Chimborazo, reuniting the old territories of the corregimiento of Riobamba and the settlements of Ambato and Guaranda.

⁷¹ Manuel Chiriboga, *Jornaleros y gran propietarios en 135 años de exportación*

hacienda into the productive monopoly of the Sierra, to control internal commerce, and to set merchandise prices.

This situation placed free indigenous communities in imminent danger. According to these logics, such communities would be destined to produce within the paternalistic relations of the hacienda and under the banner of progress. This regime annulled indigenous rights and cooperative property without giving indigenous people an alternative to integrating into servile relations.⁷² Pressure on communities was exercised through distinct legal mechanisms, including the auction of “vacant lands” laws that made peasant mobility impossible, imprisonment for debts, the dismissal of communal authorities, and the taxation of indigenous people.⁷³

Communal lands were declared vacant lands so that they could be auctioned and, in addition, the *Ley de la Recopilación de Indias* was maintained, according to which Indians were impeded from transferring property and, therefore, were obligated to watch their lands auctioned off without having the option to obtain property deeds themselves even for their erstwhile lands. The decree of July 1, 1843 established that “in new villages [*reducciones*] and in those that have been

cacaotera (1790-1925) (Quito: Consejo Provincial de Pichincha, 1980).

⁷² Colmenares argues that the only feudal system in Ecuador can be located in the nineteenth century. Out of this process came legislation written by landowning governments that sought to integrate the peasant community at the interior of great properties. See Colmenares, “La hacienda en la sierra norte.”

⁷³ Costales y Costales, “Recopilación,” 597.

established up until now, lands of individual property will not be able to be awarded to indigenous people. Thus, this legislation made the economic autonomy of communities less sustainable and instituted obstacles to the participation of its members in processes of commercialization. The law did not recognize community authorities nor did it propose a formal replacement.⁷⁴

The law said that no community could have communal lands in two parishes. Therefore, communities that had traditionally occupied various settlement niches in a “maximum number of ecological zones” would be broken up and no longer assigned to ethnic authorities.⁷⁵ During the colonial era the communities resolved the problem of settlements or community lands isolated from one another by placing communal patrimony under the custody of the syndic of the parish. Ethnic authorities used the coexistence of various rights and jurisdictions to maintain their role as coordinators of community access to discontinuous geographic niches.⁷⁶ In some cases settlements

⁷⁴ Decree of José María Urvina of November 23, 1854. In article 44: “The older indigenous people do not need intervention from the *Protector*, guardian nor defender to appear in judgments, celebrate contracts, nor for any other legal, civil, or political act, and consequently they have the same personnel and legal capacity as is common to all Ecuadorians, remaining suppressed the destiny of the Protector.” In article 46: “Law 27, title 1, book 6 of the Indian Collection is repealed and therefore the indigenous people freely transfer their goods.”

⁷⁵ For a fundamental study on the functioning of the *cacicazgos* in the northern Andes as coordinators of dispersed settlements see Frank Salomon, *Los Señores étnicos de Quito en la época de los Incas* (Quito: Abya Yala, 1980).

⁷⁶ On the use of various rights and superimposed jurisdictions in the colonial period, see Kimberly Gauderman, *Women's Lives in Colonial Quito: Gender, Law, and*

and communal lands pertained to distinct parishes, while indigenous authorities assumed the duplication of obligations with the purpose of maintaining possession of these lands and legal authority over the groups involved.⁷⁷

This procedure can be observed in the case of the lawsuit presented by Gabriel Guanoluisa, a peasant from the parish of Guanando, with respect to lands called Chazo that were declared vacant despite having been given over to the community by the church of the Guanando parish.⁷⁸ Guanoluisa proposed that this land had belonged to the church and that “as a result... the possession of these lands corresponds to the indigenous people.”⁷⁹ Yet, in 1834, when the hacendado Javier López declared these to be vacant lands and took possession of them, indigenous people lacked legal status and could not appear in lawsuits representing the interests of the church (which were their own interests in this case).

On January 4, 1844, the empty lands of Ambato County were put up for sale. These lands included the tops of the *anejo*⁸⁰ of Puatur (belonging to the parish of

Economy in Spanish America (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003), 177. Also Frank Salomon, “Indian Women of Early Colonial Quito as seen through their Testaments,” *The Americas* 44, no. 3, (1988): 325-342.

⁷⁷ ANH/Q, Tierras Collection, box 222, Expediente seguido sobre división del curato de Perucho, 24.XII.1846.

⁷⁸ This parish is close to Penipe and Guano, in the province of Chimborazo.

⁷⁹ ANH/Q, Tierras Colecction, box 224, Suit by Gabriel Guanoluisa over lands called “Chazo,” 10.7.1849.

⁸⁰ Minor rural community tied to the parish. Some times the indigenous community is also named *anejo*.

Patate), the *páramos* of Aloa of Punachinsag, the hills over the *hacienda* of Pedro Erdoiza, the side of Limpi hill, sites in Cosaguaico, and the lands of Chacapamba, all in the parish of Quero. In addition, lands on the Puñalica hills in the parish of Mocha were sold. According to the law, certain restrictions applied and consultations and evaluations were completed. Nonetheless, these were nothing more than formalities given that the lands had already been identified and their potential buyers were likely already known.⁸¹

The studies carried out by Joaquín Sánchez, corregidor of the parish, produced results contrary to the wishes of the government and regional interests, who wanted a quick auction of these lands. In addition, they served as the basis for the corregidor's general criticism of the vacantland policy and of the regional government. The performance of his duties in effect represented an obstacle for the auction's true objectives.

On January 4, 1844, the vacant lands of Ambato County were put up for sale. These lands included the heights of the annex⁸² of Puatur (belonging to the parish of Patate), the high plateau (*páramos*) of Aloa-Punachinsag, and the hills above the *hacienda* of Pedro Erdoiza, the side of Limpi hill, sites in Cosaguaico, and the lands of Chacapamba, all in the parish of Quero. In addition, lands on the Puñalica hills in the

⁸¹ ANH/Q, Copiadores de Oficios, Especial Collection, 4.I.1844.

⁸² The annex was a minor rural community tied to the main parish. Sometimes the indigenous community was also named *anejo*.

parish of Mocha were sold. Pursuant to the law, certain restrictions applied and consultations and evaluations were completed. Nonetheless, these were nothing more than formalities given that the lands had already been identified and their potential buyers were likely already known.⁸³

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On January 14, 1844, Joaquín Sánchez addressed the government of Chimborazo to deny the existence of such vacant lands: "I have not found other [lands] than those that several indigenous peoples with community or communal titles possess, and being thus, such vacant lands do not exist in this county."⁸⁴ In addition, he warned that such an order would contribute to worsening the existing difficulties in the collection of the tributary tax and could even provoke insurrections, such as those that had occurred previously. His argument went beyond declaring his disagreement with usurping in the name of the state lands belonging to Indians, whom he described as

⁸³ ANH/Q Copiadores de Oficios, Special Collection, 4.I.1844.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

legitimate owners:

Moreover, if that which has been proposed by you must be carried out precisely, allow me to observe that it would be very difficult to do. First, because it would not be normal to take away from the miserable indigenous people who can barely count on the little help of these lands to pay their contribution, as they say publicly. Second, because since they are not vacant lands, the indigenous peoples are legitimately landowners, observing that the old law of ownership attends to them. Finally because this class would be moved in an irresistible manner until they might arrive at such an extreme exasperation such as that which happened in the year 42, the municipal mayors having attempted this same thing.⁸⁵

The corregidor had experience with respect to the limits that the authorities ought to observe and the risks to which the local authority was submitting itself if it harassed the population or operated in an arbitrary manner. Nonetheless, the central government, supporting those who wanted to appropriate the land, decided to proceed by force. The Minister of Government accepted the political deputies' declaration of vacant lands, thus granting greater priority to *hacendado* interests than to those of the local government. Although the corregidor warned the central government of the potential for conflict that an arbitrary entry into community lands would cause in the region, the governor attempted to use force nonetheless.

When, in my note of January 4 of this year, the order to sell the vacant lands pertaining to the parishes of Tisaleo, Quero, Mocha, and Patate was given, it was because their deputies reported that such lands were vacant lands; now, the

⁸⁵ Ibid.

corregidor of Ambato claims that they pertain to the communal class and that some difficulties would be caused that might compromise the public order. It is necessary that you make this corregidor understand the following: 1. That the news that these lands are vacant lands has been given by the deputies themselves. 2. That to proceed to expropriation it must be understood by the few owners of these lands that they ought to prefer the sale and that thus they can improve their condition, since from being uncertain owners they would become owners with the faculty to sell. 3. That he ought to procure the execution of the sale. 4. That the corregidor employs all possible tact.⁸⁶

According to the law of June 1, 1843, the Indians could not buy their lands and, therefore, this proposal was clearly fallacious. Although they had been authorized, the auction of vacant lands was a process of open violence.

The resistance of the corregidor was based in part on his knowledge of past experiences of insurrection caused by taking *páramo* lands in the same province. In Guaranda and in Píllaro, insurrections were produced when military leaders from the wars of independence had been repaid with lands from communities and with public offices that they used to increase their land access. In 1824, one of these was the so-called insurrection of the “Chilintomos,” which sought to defend community lands in the mountains of Zapotal that had been taken by Colonel Carlos Araujo, governor of Guaranda. He was subsequently killed in the parish of Catarama by indigenous people.⁸⁷ These lands were located along the road between Guaranda and Vices,

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Oswaldo Albornoz, *Las luchas indígenas en el Ecuador* (Guayaquil: Edit. Claridad, 1971)

where the indigenous people had maintained control of the flow of mail, travelers, and merchandise since the colony, for which they had been exempt from paying contributions.⁸⁸

Colonel Carlos Araujo died in 1824 at the hands of the “Chilintomos” for having attempted to appropriate the road. However, Flores replicated this scenario with respect to a road that united Guaranda with Babahoyo in the province of Los Ríos. This road was also under the traditional control of indigenous merchants and muleteers and was declared vacant in 1843. This initiated a heated dispute between the neighbors who had declared it vacant through the political deputies, on the one hand, and the indigenous community, on the other hand.⁸⁹ In 1843, Pío Flores declared the communal lands of the San Antonio parish of Tarijagua to be vacant lands. These were lands located along the road between Guaranda and the coast. The authorities approved the auctioning process.⁹⁰ In exchange for its “care,” the investor asked for the right to tax, which was equivalent to one *real* on all liquor, textile, and china

⁸⁸ Barón de Carondelet, president of the *Audiencia* at the end of the eighteenth century and one of the most important activists of the Illustrated project in the *Audiencia*, systematized the branch of roads and observed that the only form of sustaining them was to protect the indigenous people so that they might conserve control of the paths. He even ordered the payment of those indigenous people who were principally in charge of this task. Jorge Juan y Antonio de Ulloa, *Relación histórica del viaje a la América meridional*. Tomo I, Libro IV, Cap. X (Madrid: Fundación Universitaria Española, 1978), 278

⁸⁹ Costales, “Recopilación,” Letter from the *Prefectura del Departamento del Ecuador al Contador General de la República de Colombia* 25.V.1830.

⁹⁰ ANH/Q, Ministerio de hacienda Collection, 12.8.1843

merchandise headed for the Coast, as well as on all merchandise that which was being transported towards the Sierra.⁹¹

The priests of San Lorenzo denied that these lands were vacant as the neighbors, including Pío Flores, claimed. They were communal lands of the old parish. However, the board of the ruling council that was in charge of the roads until 1844 received the neighbor's proposal instead of accepting the priests' and Indians' declaration: The council was open to using force in an irresponsible manner, as had happened leading up to the insurrection in Ambato. However, the council did not have much time to implement the ruling given that, in addition to threatening community lands, the government had simultaneously decided to extend a tributary tax as well.

1.3 Tribute: From Strategic Evasion to Insurrection.

In this section we consider the nature of the tributary tax's crisis in the middle of the 1840s and the main reasons for its defeat. This succession of events brought about insurrection in the time of Flores and, as we will later see, forced the abolition of the tax in the times of Urvina. In the same way in which the vacant land policy was to be imposed by force and despite the warnings of local authorities who recognized the danger in this process for the government, the tributary tax was

⁹¹ ANH/Q, Tierras Collection, box 230, Expediente seguido entre el fisco y varios interesados sobre terrenos baldíos del cantón Guaranda, 21-XI-1861.

allowed to cause a slow loss of legitimacy for the government in rural areas. If, as we saw at the beginning, tactics of evasion formed part of the strategy of indigenous communities and allowed them to pay a substantial part of the tributary tax without bankrupting their economy, this situation changed with the increasing harassment that the communities suffered with respect to their lands and contradictory attempts to pursue tax evaders so that they might pay over-due debts.

Other authors have observed that the crisis of the tributary tax was long and agonizing.⁹² This chapter proposes that such agony resulted not only in the crisis of the treasury, but the crisis of the state as a regional political apparatus as well. Such loss of legitimacy resulted from imposed and threatening initiatives and the refusal to negotiate with indigenous communities. This non-collaboration clearly put at risk the viability of the state at the local level and put an end to a regime of imposition that had not developed mechanisms for negotiating with indigenous and peasant communities.

The *hacendados* did not pay the tributary tax for their *conciertos* nor did indigenous authorities maintain the communities under instrumental population control to charge the tax as other authors have sustained (particularly with a focus on local power during García Moreno's regime). Better yet, the evidence more

⁹² Mark Van Acken, "La lenta expiración del tributo indígena en el Ecuador," *Cultura* 16 (1983).

closely approximates the model proposed by Karen Powers, according to whom the most frequent survival strategy of the Andean community - *forasterismo* - was threatened to the point that communities shifted from evading the tax to non-cooperation, insurrection, and finally the formation of alliances with the regime's opposition in order to abolish the tax.⁹³

Together with the suppression of the tributary tax, the Bolivarian Law of October 4, 1821 officially eliminated the role that the indigenous authority had played in the colonial state and rescinded the titles of honor previously conceded by the Spanish government.⁹⁴ However, in 1828, due to the Treasury's need, the tributary tax was reinstated together with the governor of the Indians, who then became a special employee of the corregidor. The deteriorating possibilities for maneuvering that the indigenous authority had, given its subordinate role, added to the growing power of its old rivals, the landholding elites, and forced the governor to seek out such alternatives as evasion, resistance, boycott, and insurrection in response to imposition.

The reports of the General Accounting Office of the Republic in December, 1843 speak of optimism in the regime with respect to the possibility of getting what it needed

⁹³ In his work on the law of custom and the law of the state, Andrés Guerrero proposes that the indigenous authority was functional for charging the tributary tax and for population control. The work of Karen Powers, *Señores dinámicos e indios vagabundos*, proposes a more complex analysis of popular strategies for living in colonial conditions and of forms of evading taxes and forced work, also coordinated by the ethnic authority.

⁹⁴ AFL, leyes de Colombia 1821-1827.

from the indigenous peoples linked to commerce in the county of Bolívar.⁹⁵ In Bolívar, a tax of 2,600 pesos was levied that, compared to the calculation for the county of Quito with a much larger population, was clearly an exaggerated sum. A sum of 1,800 pesos were collected from Quito and 1,000 pesos from Latacunga and Ambato - both counties much larger than Bolívar.⁹⁶ From any point of view, these expectations were unfounded. The state's attempt to impose such a high sum on Bolívar was meant to recuperate the *rezagos* (unpaid debts) of the *forastero* population and the Indian traders.

However, there existed a series of evasion tactics: the cacique represented certain sectors of the community so that they would not appear as contributors; the contributors themselves mimicked *mestizos* or *forasteros*; the authorities updated letters of payment when in reality the *rezagos* remained intact, etc. Evasion expanded when the loss of indigenous lands made it for communities impossible to pay.

One of the most efficient strategies that permitted communities to respond to the state and at the same time sustain themselves on limited territorial resources was the rent of communal resources to *forasteros*.⁹⁷ When these *forasteros* were called upon to pay the tributary tax along with the so-called *llactayos*, one of the most efficient strategies for social reproduction and even for the financing of the state was put at risk. The

⁹⁵ ANH/Q, Especial Collection, box 314, Comunicación del Ministro de Hacienda Francisco Xavier Aguirre, 13.XII.1843, note 81.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Powers, *Señores dinámicos*.

growing number of *rezagos* in the registers made clear the incapacity of the state to stem population flow.

The village of Licto and its appendage Pungala, represent an exemplary case with respect to this tense process initiated by a threat to the demographic political strategy of the *cacicazgo*. The corregidor of Bolívar county, Manuel Ontaneda, directed a series of communications to the government of the province of Chimborazo, from which we can extract very valuable information with regards to the state's bid to collect the tributary tax from communities and its aspirations for extending the tributary tax to *forasteros*. The reflections of Ontaneda on the tense situation that he occupied in society, as a representative of the state confronting debtors, were very expressive of the main problem that led to the definitive crisis of the tributary tax. Obligated to charge three segments of Riobamba county – Licto, Riobamba, and Guano – corregidor Ontaneda described the difficulties associated with arbitrary territorial divisions made in the county and how these made levying the tributary tax problematic.

I confess that the divisions of this county are cruel for being disproportionate and anomalous. Of the three fractions, only that of Licto can give a rent capable of compensating the work of the employee; the other two will be of course served, but an honorable collector will suffer the punishment of being contracted when anything else could be more productive for him.⁹⁸

⁹⁸ ANH/Q, Ministerio de Hacienda Collection, box 104, El Gobernador de Chimborazo al Ministro de Hacienda, Bolívar, 10.I.1844.

Although the governor of Indians of Licto agreed to pay for the population of *llactayos*, he did not recognize other populations that had been exempt from payment as new debtors. This was the case of Pungala, which was not found mentioned as a settlement in any of the parishes. In effect, Licto and Pungala depended on the very same governor of Indians, named Llamaico, who maintained a pact, according to the corregidor, with the inhabitants of the other side of the river in order to hide them from the landlords.

Pungala is found in the southeast of Licto and Licto is between Pungala and Riobamba. Pungala would be the continuation of Licto and would form a single village if the land were not crossed by the riverbed; the two villages are face to face. The people of Pungala cannot leave this natural reduction, limited to the back by the western cordillera, without stepping on the lands of Licto, and it is easy to deduce what would be its relations and what would be its necessities.⁹⁹

Though the tax on the village of Licto had been regular, this community refused to extend it to the inhabitants of Pungala, who depended on the cacicazgo but were exempt from the tributary tax. After they were included in the parish tax of Licto, and the corregidor arrived in the village of Pungala on the January 26, 1844, the Governor Llamaico refused to collaborate.

Pungala defined itself as a population that did not pay the contribution as part of the community's survival strategy. According to Cristiana Borchart, in the 1740s the

⁹⁹ Ibid.

cacique of Licto attempted to re-orient the community towards agriculture in response to the workers' crisis. The concentration of textile production in the community's workshops had relegated community lands to rental, but this workshop crisis turned them toward agriculture. The caciques of Licto first attempted unsuccessfully to recuperate their control over the cornfields in the Tunchi valley. Cacique Buesten attempted to buy the land with money acquired from the sale of the community workshop, money that he had as a deposit, but he failed in this attempt.¹⁰⁰

After this failure, the *Cacique* informally took possession of the lands of his old jurisdiction on the other side of the river Achambo, where the descent towards the Amazon begins, and in that valley he established several social networks that were under his jurisdiction and hid them from the tributary tax. In 1794, discontent and insurrection took place along the road between Licto and Pungala against the application of a tax on commerce. Three years later, the village of Chambo rebelled against the registration of Indians that sought to resolve the problem of applying the contribution to *forasteros*. The rebels demonstrated an apparently inexplicable obsession with destroying the bridge over the Achambo river.¹⁰¹

Licto and Pungala had shared interests to hide from fiscal controls. The caciques

¹⁰⁰ Christiana Borchart de Moreno, "Las tierras de comunidad de Licto, Punín y Macaxi: Factores para su disminución e intentos de Restauración," *Revista Andina* 2 (Dic. 1988).

¹⁰¹ Moreno, *Las sublevaciones*, 295.

of Licto had found in Pungala the space to extend the community territorially and politically. Only the community members of the western side of the Achambo river – after the change in identity – would have land titles and would be exonerated from the tax. The bridge thus symbolized a relationship that needed to remain hidden. It was possible to maintain the population of Pungala hidden and at the same time coordinate exchanges with the population of *llactayos* from Licto who permitted the governor to charge the tributary tax and at the same time sustain the living conditions of the community. Once the people of Pungala were registered as tributaries the community of Licto would have had to pay increasing amounts each year and, in addition, assume the unpaid taxes with which the government of Flores was obsessed. Flores even named a National Collector and regional tax collectors of the “*rezagos*” to pursue internal immigrants throughout the countryside, although with little success. From then on, the governor of Llamaico was determined not to recognize the Indians of Pungala as tributaries or *rezagados*, given that the government could not find a tax-collector or Indian assistant to carry out the job.

The parish of Guaranda found itself in the same difficult administrative situation, also divided between the corregimiento and their condition of “naturally” pertaining to the tax umbrella of Guano. In this parish, the refusal to pay for the *forasteros* was just as strong as in Licto. The state’s view was unchanged: “*rezagados*” ought to pay their tributary taxes. The task was particularly difficult to carry out in Guaranda because, as

we have seen, this was a zone of merchants and travelers that facilitated the adoption of the *forastero* identity and the growth of migrant populations. Thus, the corregidor of Guaranda suggested to the Minister of the Hacienda that he review the situation and note that between 1839 and 1842 only a fraction of those from Guaranda were charged the tributary tax:

Uncharged because they proceed from individuals whose existence cannot be found out... because there are Indians who find themselves absent on their travels and also because the very same Indians contribute to this delay without being able to remedy it in any way.¹⁰²

As more taxes were levied on the goods of indigenous peasants, internal migration increased and it became even more difficult to collect the tax. The corregidor of Sicalpa and Cajabamba also refused to respond appropriately to state pressure to charge tributary taxes as there was resentment against the state for the concurrent processes of land auctioning: “the indigenous peoples are without industry, without work, and without property.”¹⁰³ The parish deputy ratified this position, saying that he did not only answer to him, but rather to the entire community as well and that in Guamote, for a lack of lands, they could not pay the tributary tax. The new tendency was to migrate outside of the zone in which the tax was being applied.

¹⁰² ANH/Q, Ministerio de Hacienda Collection, box 104, Comunicación con nota del Corregidor de Guaranda, 8.VI.1843.

¹⁰³ ANH/Q, Ministerio de Hacienda Collection, box 104, Teniente de la parroquia Cajabamba y Sicalpa al Colector, 1.IX.1844.

It results in an overall insolvency, in which the indigenous peoples find themselves due to the total poverty of the moment, and that they do not have abundant resources to satisfy the contribution payment and that in the financial difficulties of not having to pay, they disappear down various roads in order to evade payment and because there are many indigenous people who, without their own salary on which to stand, lack even the smallest amount.¹⁰⁴

Beginning in 1843, the period of the yellow plague on the coast, the situation became critical. Death and misery among the merchants brought the communities to a deplorable state. This is what the corregidor of Bolívar County reported to the Ministry of Finance, asking the state to decrease pressure on the community and even telling the state that it was obliged to return the tributary tax to widows.

Given the considerable blow that the indigenous peoples have suffered for this charge along with the horrible epidemic from Guayaquil where all of the indigenous people of this county (Bolívar) go, [and] given that you are aware that the widows are pressed to pay again for the debts of the indigenous people who have payed the contribution ahead of time and then died.¹⁰⁵

Collector Ontaneda, himself from Riobamba County, observed in his general report from 1844 on the Licto, Punín, and Cajabamba parishes that migration had become the most frequent response to state pressure on indigenous peoples in precarious conditions. This migration was no longer a strategy of the communal economy or a social division

¹⁰⁴ ANH/Q, Ministerio de Hacienda Collection box 104, Teniente de la parroquia de Guamote, 1.X.1844.

¹⁰⁵ ANH/Q, Especial Collection, Del Corregidor del Cantón Bolívar al Gobernador de la Provincia, 18.II.1843. ANH/Q, Ministerio de Hacienda Collection, box 104, Al ministro de estado en el despacho de hacienda, 23.XII.1843.

of labor, but rather an expression of social crisis.

We have yet to charge the unfortunate Indians 2,000 pesos; the most poor and miserable of their class those who hide from us migrating to more or less great distances, and abandoning their women and children at the merciless speed of those who exploit the tears of these ill-fated people.¹⁰⁶

In Riobamba County, to the north of the province and towards the eastern and western flanks of the central Sierra, the sustainability of the tributary tax depended almost entirely on free indigenous communities and their economic strategies for responding to the imposition of the treasury and maintaining their own economy. In 1849, even after various decades of hacienda expansion, in Guano there existed over 1,733 contributors: 718 were free Indians; from San Andrés, 377 were free and 83 were hacienda *concierto* workers; from Cujibies 133 were free and none were *conciertos*; from Minial, 91 were free and 123 were *conciertos*; from Penipe, 79 were free and 33 *conciertos*; from Puela, 9 were free and none were *conciertos*; from Guanando, 22 were free and 13 were *conciertos*; and from Napo, 32 were free in total. That is to say, from a total of 1,733 contributors, barely 252 were *conciertos*, while 1,717 were free (the rest were church officials, caciques, and sick people who were exempt from payment).¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ ANH/Q, Ministerio de Hacienda Collection, box 104, Manuel Ontaneda al Gobernador de la Provincia de Chimborazo, 4.X.1844.

¹⁰⁷ ANH/Q, Ministerio de Hacienda Collection, box 105, Plan de coste y tanteo de la contribución personal de indígenas del cantón Guano presentado por su jefe político Mariano Bustamante a la Gobernación, 24.I.1849.

By contrast, in the county of Alausí in the south of Chimborazo, the hacienda was the predominant productive unit in the region. There, according to the law of 1832, the indigenous *conciertos* were obliged to pay the tributary tax to the *hacendado*, who acted as the tax-collector and, in turn, had to pay the treasury. However, despite all the privileges that they received, the *hacendados* did not collaborate much with the state. Alausí was governed by powerful sectors of regional politics that placed representatives in the National Council; however, not even as representatives of the aristocratic republic were these sectors moved by the crisis of the tax-collection. They even contributed to confusing the registries. One of the more frequent practices was to charge Indians the tributary tax and then defraud the state: “The hacienda was taking from them (the Indians) the corresponding utility, without registering it in another book to make manifest the charge.”¹⁰⁸

The governor of the province entered the house of the collector of the indigenous personal contribution in order to revise his accounts. He noticed the tremendous fraud that had been perpetrated by the *hacendados*: “They had not saved any fund for the indispensable formality of liquidating the accounts... as was customary, and in other [accounts] the names of haciendas [appeared] without any account of any Indian.”¹⁰⁹

Thus, how was the amount of the contribution in the haciendas determined, if the

¹⁰⁸ ANH/Q, Ministerio de Hacienda Collection, box 104, Manuel Ontaneda al Gobernador de la Provincia de Chimborazo, 19.3.1844.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 22.XI.1844.

accounts of the *conciertos* were not established? Apparently, between the collector, the *hacendado*, and the political deputy there existed an agreement with respect to what was the least amount of money that they needed to give to the treasury. Therefore, in the name of the contribution payment, they could tax productive work and then defraud the treasury.

Hacendados mandate to retain Indians in the *hacienda* and declared *conciertos* who payed the hacendado their tax. The treasury required the *hacendado* to account for all Indians: “the indigenous people who are registered in the haciendas and have fled, have to be accounted for by the property owners before the political administrator”¹¹⁰

Hacendados were put in charge of the contribution of indigenous people because this gave him the capacity to take away their independence and also take the money otherwise destined for the contribution. One of the first conditions was payment in commodities. The *hacendados* paid the state through indigenous *jargón*, woolen cloths, and goods at prices they established. The Governor recommended this practice:

I have the honor of elevating to the Supreme Government... a petition... that in light of the importance of the goods that have been supplied by the garrison of this capital, the tributary tax should be abandoned this year, and may I take the liberty to recommend this to the Supreme Government since nothing is more just than forgiving Sr. Mancheno the debt of the tributes of the present year...¹¹¹

¹¹⁰ ANH/Q, Ministerio de Hacienda Collection, box 105, Al Ministro de Hacienda del Gobernador de Chimborazo, 20.I.1849.

¹¹¹ ANH/Q, Ministerio de Hacienda Collection, box 104, Informe del Gobernador al Ministro de Hacienda, 13.IV.1844

And the supreme governor could not have been more enthusiastic:

A complement has been given to the decree by the Supreme Government in the request of the Sr. Commander in charge of the forces stationed in this position, making the column of infantry 600 and some reams of coarse cloths that it needed for blankets, and I have ordered that one thousand two hundred and forty be completed in addition to a ream that they have demanded in the budget produced by the Colonel of the corp, negotiating with the owners of the workshop.¹¹²

Although the governor wanted to regulate prices, it was the state itself that fixed prices, indicating that “the price of the wool cloth should be fixed by the board of the hacienda, paying attention to the quality of it so that it could be given in place of forty of the tributary tax.”¹¹³

The second condition imposed by the *hacendados* of Alausí on the state, and which inhibited the state from forming registries, was that the state not take control of the payment of the contribution of “*arrimados*.” That is to say, if the *hacendados* encroached upon community lands and thus benefited from the deterioration of free communities, they expanded their access to labor as well and were not willing to share the earnings that this implied. Landlords were not willing to formalize the relationship with this population as *conciertos*. The latter remained as *arrimados*, and as such they

¹¹² Ibid., 28.X.1843.

¹¹³ Ibid., 23.XII.1843, and ANH/Q, Especial Collection, Resolución del Gobernador de la Provincia, 17.I.1844.

were exempt from all regulations.

The landlords would not respond to the symbolic order that the state had given to capture the Indians since they were not willing to pay the treasury for this new, large population that was working on the plantations. This confused the tax-collection since it added one more category to the list of indigenous people exempted from payment. The corregidor complained again about the *hacendados*:

Among the haciendas there are indigenous people who, without being *conciertos*, serve in them with the status of *arrimados*. As the landowners believe themselves to be obliged to pay for their *conciertos*, this collection office finds insurmountable the obstacle of making the collection effective among these so-called *arrimados*... there are no caciques with whom this collection office could attend...I hope you rule that if the work of these Indians be that of *conciertos*, they ought to be reclassified thus... since otherwise the collection becomes impossible and the treasury suffers the damage.¹¹⁴

Despite how evident this fraud was, the general accounting office of the state took care not to bother the *hacendados* and rather insisted on protecting them: “[unclear: Taking charge of]the Indians who are not subjects and who can work freely wherever they want, the hacendados will become angry.”¹¹⁵ The fiscal resolutions at this time were to impose all of the burden on the *gañanes* or the workers of the *haciendas*: “The indigenous people who find themselves on the haciendas as *arrimados* cannot assume

¹¹⁴ ANH/Q, Ministerio de Hacienda Collection, box 104, Informe del corregimiento a la Gobernación de la Provincia, note 452.

¹¹⁵ ANH/Q, Ministerio de Hacienda Collection, box 104, De la Contaduría General de la República al Gobernador de Chimborazo, 16.IV.1844.

the debts.”¹¹⁶

Apart from any moral consideration that may have produced this unjust position by the state, the effect of these decisions could be considered suicide for the state. If the expansion of the *hacienda* was being promoted and the elite were exempt from all obligations, it is evident that the treasury would go bankrupt. The *hacendados*' principal way of evading obligations was the use of fiscal privileges like this one. The lack of a counterweight to the regional elites caused them to put the state apparatus at risk.¹¹⁷

The political administrator of Alausí realized how the privileges and fraud of the *hacendados* were affecting the accounts, which were in a critical situation. In anxious communications to the government of Chimborazo, he stated:

As the political administrator of this county, the personal contribution of the indigenous peoples is my responsibility. I received from the *hacendados*, through their *conciertos*, several items in kind of “good quality” which the haciendas owed, and for the security of the consigned people, it was necessary to give them receipts for such items for proper accounting. As various of these *hacendados* refused to liquidate their accounts during my time, they conserved in their power the reserves that I awarded them from the partial payments, whose total sum figures as part of the charge on my accounts.”¹¹⁸

The state that privileged them was put at risk. The same people who contributed to the

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 18.III.1844.

¹¹⁷ There is abundant evidence of wealthy sugarcane *hacendados* who did not pay the indigenous contribution or taxes. ANH/Q, Ministerio de Hacienda Collection, box 104, Al gobernador de la Provincia de Chimborazo, 28.IX.1844

¹¹⁸ ANH/Q, Ministerio de Hacienda Collection, box 106, De la Jefatura Política a la gobernación de Chimborazo, 20.VII.1854

crisis of the treasury's income received salaries from the state as senators of the Republic. Among the biggest debtors for the personal contribution of their *conciertos* were three of the four senators of Chimborazo who were *hacendados*. The corregidor threatened: "When these accounts are liquidated by the interested parties, I will seek legal judgments to pay that which corresponds to them according to the respective liquidation."¹¹⁹The state placed at the disposition of Dr. Antonio Andrade the force of the military to collect tributary payments from the Indian *conciertos*, but those taxes had already been paid and it was, in reality, the untouchable *hacendado* who was defrauding the treasury.¹²⁰ Thus, in 1844 the exasperated corregidor pressured the *señores* to comply with the payment of the *conciertos*' contribution. The army that had been dressed and fed by the textile *hacendados* found itself now under the direction of the corregidor. The corregidor had to assume the dangerous task of representing the interests of the state in the context of the Flores regime's *gamonal* alliance.

To the note which you transcribe, the disposition of the Supreme Government demanding those 700 pesos that are missing to complete the amount for this month, I am sorry to tell you that after having spent the entire week going through the villages of this territory, I have not been able to collect even one hundred pesos... This very day I have had to ask you for help from the armed forces in order to complete my orders, and so that they not suffer the resistance that a

¹¹⁹ ANH/Q, Ministerio de hacienda Collection, box 104, Informe del Corregidor, 18.IV.1843.

¹²⁰ ANH/Q, Ministerio de Hacienda Collection, box 104, La Gobernación, 29.4.1843.

landowner of the place has presented.¹²¹

For the local authorities it was increasingly difficult to collect since their debtors were also their superiors. The incoherence of the methods used to resolve this conflict made the situation worse due to the state's unconditional backing of the landowners. In turn, conflicts arose on the municipal level.

The functionaries in charge at the regional level, who were made responsible for carrying out the collection under threats of sanction from above, experienced daily friction. At the municipal level, the situation of the mayor of the Indians (*alcalde de indios*) was even more complex than was that of the state tax collector. They could not negotiate on behalf of the communities with an intransigent regime. In addition, they lacked recognition from whites at the regional level. The mayor's function was to accompany the *corregidor*, who was in charge of the year's collection and the registries of contributors. At the same time, they were independent of the Tax Collector, a functionary of the Ministry of the Hacienda who was in charge of unifying the current tax with the outstanding *rezagos* or debts not paid by *forasteros* and fugitives. In the attempt to overcome this collection crisis, several little functionaries argued over the decree.

¹²¹ ANH/Q, Ministerio de Hacienda Collection, box 104, Comunicación de Manuel Ontaneda (*Corregidor del cantón Riobamba*) al Gobernador de Chimborazo, 24.VIII.1844, note 213.

Initially, the corregidor would choose someone trustworthy and assign him the office of collection assistant (*cartacuentero*). His reliance on this person in order for the collection process to run smoothly led him to defend the assistant and demand his legitimacy in the organization of the state and in regional jurisdiction. The corregidor would divide his own salary in order to pay the cacique first, and then would request a salary for the collection assistant. The corregidor attempted to save the cacique and assistant from the ambiguity in which they found themselves in the new state order. Eventhough the caciques were indispensable for the tax collection process, ethnic authority was persecuted in *gamonal* surroundings, because the *hacendado* had the administrators under his control. He revealed the manner by which hacendados defrauded Indians who sought a subsistence living on the *hacienda* and a means of payment of the tributary tax. According to the corregidor, who had to defend the position of the indigenous authorities cacique and cartacuentero, this social conflict required immediate attention since it meant a loss for the state.

If the hacendado has the attribution of ordering the imprisonment of indigenous debtors, administrators of the haciendas or other owners, Indians hide from collectors, and defraud the state of their taxes. Either because the Indians are absent or because they have growing debts or because those unfortunate people perish in prison, the treasury loses sums every day.¹²²

¹²² ANH/Q, Ministerio de Hacienda Collection, box 104, Del Corregidor del cantón Bolívar al Gobernador de la Provincia, 25.II.1843.

The incident that led to this consultation by the authority was that the previous day Dr. José Joaquín Chiriboga, a *hacendado* from Bolívar county, had insulted and ignored a *cartacuentero* in the office of the corregidor because the hacendado had had an extremely indebted Indian taken into custody. Before the second municipal court, the *hacendado* mistreated the indigenous authority cacique and cartacuenteros and publicly ignored their political standing. This was an attitude of superiority and contempt that affected not only the Indians, but also the corregidores themselves and, in turn, the state. Chiriboga had said that if the “cartacuentero did not possess the jurisdiction nor the authority, that in this case the corregidor should suffer also insults and that the office of the corregidores was not a dignified office, that it was not worthy of any public respect nor did he occupy an employment dignified of consideration that he as corregidor should do anything whatsoever.”¹²³

The corregidor defended the power of the state to tax versus the power of the *hacendado*. Although it might seem paradoxical in the context of a consideration of the tributary tax, the corregidor revealed the political risk that existed in the imposition of force on indigenous communities. To govern the majority of the population, the government depended on ethnic authority, without which and despite the contempt that it received in public offices, the state was nonexistent.

¹²³ *Ibíd.*

It is impossible for the corregidor to fill his duty when particularly in this county that has around two thousand contributors. If the cartacuenteros are disrespected the corregidor would have to take care of trivialities for which it has always been custom to put the cartacuenteros in charge because they are the only ones capable of carrying out this task.¹²⁴

The power that Dr. Chiriboga showed vis-a-vis the state was undeniable and state authority was diminished. The response of the collector revealed an attitude that supported the regional landowning powers over the interests of the state or the authority of its own functionaries. In effect, the general collector confirmed the impossibility of the state penetrating the domain of the hacendados.

Chapter 6 of the instructions for corregidores for the arrangement of the collection of the indigenous contribution authorizes them to be able to reduce to imprisonment the delinquent Indian defrauders; and as the corregidores cannot carry out said collection without their subaltern agents being valued as the indigenous governors and the cartacuenteros are, in practice this immemorial practice means that the indigenous payers should be reduced to imprisonment by announced agents, at least if they are *conciertos*. In this case the collectors ought to direct themselves to the owners of the haciendas to which the debtors belong, and require them to find a quick solution to the debt. With that said, the question of the Governor of Chimborazo with regard to what happened between the cartacuentero of the corregidor of Riobamba and Dr. Chiriboga seems resolved. Moreover, Your Excellency will follow what justice deems right.¹²⁵

As we know, the division between *conciertos* and *forasteros* linked to the communities was gray. It is also clear that the *hacendados* did not answer for their *conciertos* and

¹²⁴ *Ibíd.*

¹²⁵ ANH/Q, Ministerio de Hacienda Collection, box 104, De la Contaduría general de la República, 6.III.1843, f. 21r.

moreover tried to avoid that the *arrimado* Indians acquire the title of *conciertos* in order to avoid any type of obligation or contract. The Indian who was to be taken off the *hacienda* by the *cartacuentero* of the county, in fact, had an ambiguous categorization. If he was a *concierto*, the *hacendado* was responsible and the worker lost his ties to any cacique; if he was a *comunero*, temporarily tied to a *hacienda*, the intervention of the cacique made sense. Throughout this lawsuit, the transition from *comunero* to *concierto* was defined. The conflict forced such discrimination in the identity of the subject in legal terms. These documents affected the community as well and limited the action of the treasury agents.

The power of the *hacienda* elite and the senators was so great that it was impossible for caciques to gain recognition and jurisdiction as functionaries of the state. The transformation depended on the local character of community land loss in the nineteenth century, which limited community access to collective and peripheral lands. This led *comuneros* to seek protection in the private space of the hacienda and led political deputies to accumulate a power that threatened to displace completely ethnic authority in zones of hacienda expansion, such as Alausí or Cayambe in Pichincha.¹²⁶

¹²⁶ Andrés Guerrero, *De la economía a las mentalidades* (Quito: Editorial El Conejo, 1991). Marta Moscoso, “La tierra: espacio de conflicto y relación entre el Estado y la Comunidad en el siglo XIX,” in *Los Andes*, ed. Bonilla. And Silvia Palomeque, “Estado y comunidad en la región de Cuenca en el siglo XIX. Las autoridades indígenas y su relación con el Estado,” in *Los Andes*, ed. Bonilla.

1.4 The Uprising of Three Pesos: an Action for or Defense Against Linking Indians with *Mestizos*?

In the face of the regime's political crisis, Flores asked the National Convention that had met in 1843 to sum up a series of measures that would cement his power, among them a proposal oriented to resolving the problem of the *rezagos* of the tributary tax and that of the internal migrations through which people were evading the tax. The convention extended the duration of the presidency to eight years and restricted the citizen's rights to those who were literate and who had property or two hundred pesos or exercised a profession or useful industry without being the employee of another citizen. In addition, it extended to the entire population the obligation to make a payment called a "personal contribution" of three pesos annually.

This measure produced a series of uprisings that have been the subject of various interpretations. For Andrés Guerrero, these uprisings ought to be understood as the white and *mestizo* subaltern population's rejection of being considered equal to the indigenous population, since in this "distinction" they had placed their only aspirations for status and progress.¹²⁷ In the same sense, Alezee Sattar reconsiders the work of Guerrero to show that the protest over the "general

¹²⁷ Andrés Guerrero, "The Administration of Dominated Populations under a Regime of Customary Citizenship: The Case of Postcolonial Ecuador," in *After Spanish Rule: Postcolonial Predicaments of the Americas*, ed. Mark Thurner (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 272-309.

contribution” was carried out by the white-*mestizo* poor who did not want to be considered the equals of the indigenous population.¹²⁸ For Galo Ramón, this variation in the tributary custom definitively broke the already corroded argument according to which the tributary payment supposed a pact, the right to take possession of Indian lands: protection of the Indian land base, but also supposed a bid on behalf of the state to count on the poor white and *mestizo* sector to act as an intermediary between the rural and urban zone and thus exercise new forms of local power over the community.¹²⁹ For these authors, the general tax was an attempt to bring under the state’s umbrella the popular white and *mestizo* population, thus excluding the indigenous population. For Guerrero and Sattar, the poor whites preferred to choose a code of difference and distinction from the Indians, showing their profound insecurity with respect to the concept of citizenship.¹³⁰ For Guerrero, Sattar, and Ramón, these uprisings served to emphasize the difference of the *mestizos* from the Indians, a gesture that showed the depth of discrimination even among the most marginalized sectors of the *mestizo* strata.

By contrast, the studies of Powers, Fuentealba, Borchardt, and Ibarra witness in these uprisings a sign of exasperation among the Indians and their relatives when the

¹²⁸ Alizee Satar, “To Kill a Cacique: Caciques, Communities, State Formation. Chimborazo, Ecuador. 1830-1845” (Draft of paper prepared for delivery at the 2000 meeting of the Latin American Studies Association, Miami: Hyatt Regency, 2000)

¹²⁹ Galo Ramón, “Los indios.”

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

tributary tax was extended to sectors that had strategically fled the tribute. That is, *forasteros*, *arrimados*, and poor *mestizos* saw themselves threatened by the new demographic aspect of the contribution, since this threatened the customary strategies for achieving autonomy on the hacienda. While for Guerrero, *mestizaje* is a form of subalternity, a subaltern way of being white; for Fuentalba, Powers, and Ibarra, *mestizaje* had more democratic tones and constituted an indigenous tactic of social diversification or, alternatively, an access road to rights that had been denied social corporations *de facto* since the enactment of post-independence liberal policies.¹³¹

The implications of this debate are important for understanding subsequent processes, such as the consolidation of the hacienda and its later dissolution. For Ramón, the Indians took refuge at the local level and constituted a society against the state, only later to reemerge at the end of the twentieth century with projects to reconstitute ethnic territories.¹³² For Guerrero, the overall process tended toward the consolidation of the *hacienda* structure and the stamping of an agreement of asymmetric reciprocity at the local level that impeded the peasants from bursting into the political sphere. For Guerrero, the overall process tended toward the consolidation of the hacienda structure and an agreement of asymmetrical reciprocity at the local level that impeded the peasants from entering the political

¹³¹ Powers, “Señores dinámicos;” Fuentalba, *Forasteros*; Borchart de Moreno, “Las tierras de comunidad.”

¹³² Galo Ramón, “Los indios.”

sphere. By contrast, the work of Ibarra on the nineteenth century, as well as that of Clark and Becker on the first decades of the twentieth century, show that rural and urban indigenous people had adopted new, more malleable identities, such as “*cholos*,” “*mestizos*,” “mixed Indians with access to legal knowledge,” small merchants, and herders. Such identities had sought to break the tremendously unequal local field of power in which *patrons* dominated Indians and constituted a diversification “from below” or from the parish level.¹³³

The governor of Chimborazo expressed surprise in the face of the insurrection provoked by the law of three pesos, as if he had never heard the warnings presented by the parish corregidores, nor of the disbanding of the militias. Effectively, the uprisings in Chimborazo followed the course of the daily tensions that we have mentioned in the parishes of Chambo, Licto, Punin, and Guano. This rejection came from populations that had already expressed resistance and had not collaborated with attempts to impose the tributary tax on *forasteros* and *arrimados* since their diversification strategies would be affected by this imposition.

¹³³ Hernán Ibarra, *Indios y cholos. Orígenes de la clase trabajadora ecuatoriana* (Quito: Editorial El Conejo, 1992). See also Hernán Ibarra, “La Comunidad campesino/indígena como sujeto socioterritorial,” *Ecuador Debate* 63 (2004): 185-206; Kim Clark, “Nuevas estrategias de resistencia en la sierra ecuatoriana: acciones y discurso campesino, 1930-1950,” *Revista Memoria* (1999); Marc Becker, *Indigenous Communists and Urban Intellectuals in Cayambe* (Ecuador: IRSH 49, 2004).

When all of the precedents suggested the continuation of a perfect calm in this province, it was unfortunately disturbed by a rebellion that, presented itself in the parish of Chambo in the attempt to impede the publication of the law and right of the general Contribution. Also, in Licto, Punin, and Guano there have been movements. The Government in these circumstances has taken all the measures that it has believed necessary to impede the progress of an evil that could produce fatal consequences, in addition to having called for indispensable expenses in terms of provisioning the militias in the barracks of this capital, and in terms of resources for the militia from San Miguel in the county of Guaranda, that has been sent toward this capital to put down this disturbance in some way, and demonstrate at the right time that the government has plenty of resources to repress and punish the excesses of citizens.¹³⁴

During the rebellions and other smaller conflicts also in response to the tributary tax, the news of uprisings and the militias' lack of resources came out simultaneously.

Regional functionaries issues statements such as "I believe it to be difficult to comply with the expected tax payment, as these villages are found in a new state of commotion,"¹³⁵ and offered rigorous analyses. They not only stopped sending diminished contributions to the central government, but also shipments of money requested to pay the troops. As the corregidor of Bolívar Sr. Ontaneda pointed out with a certain irony, one of the most interesting zones of strategic ethnic diversity in the country, due to its key place in inter-regional commerce, was closely linked to the uprising and could no longer be counted on for collaborators. Thus, the *mestizos* showed they were capable of alliance with the Indians.

¹³⁴ ANH/Q, Ministerio de Hacienda Collection, box 104, note 162.

¹³⁵ ANH/Q Informe del Gobernador de Chimborazo, Ministerio de Hacienda Collection, box 104, note 196.

With this day set by the Supreme Government for the auction of the *rezagos* of the contribution of indigenous peoples of this province, I must tell you that no bidders have come forth, although they have been called upon with posters... I have not been able to realize the collection. I find myself reorganizing the dues, which is difficult largely because they are part of the *rezagos*, and secondly because it is well known that the rioters freed more than 400 indigenous people from the prison of this city alone without counting those who had been in the parishes.¹³⁶

During the tremendous crisis of 1843, the regime attempted to retake control of the collection by putting the indigenous governor in charge of the tax and insisting that this governor pursue old debtors, collect the *rezagos*, and hand over the debtors' names to the tax registry. In this contradictory resolution, the state stirred up the conflict once more. The measure was insufficient and contradictory, much like the entire framework of Flores's regime which attempted to sustain the state while it supported the privileges of actors who diminished its sovereignty and impeded a rationalization of political power. Once more corregidor Ontaneda sent an analysis of the situation to the governor of Chimborazo. He argued against the foundations of the tax, revealing the ambiguities that were produced by attempting to restore colonial domination through a voluntary contribution based on social consensus.

Sr. Governor, there are powerful arguments that go against the supreme

¹³⁶ ANH/Q, Ministerio de Hacienda Collection, box 104, Comunicación del Gobernador de Chimborazo sobre remate de la contribución, book 166, note 189. ANH/Q, Ministerio de Hacienda Collection, box 104, Informe del Gobernador de Chimborazo remite informe del Corregidor de Bolívar, note 186.

disposition, and are deduced from a practice taken from knowledge of the facts... And it is with this motive that I have the honor of addressing myself to you in order to give certain explanations of my view... There is a principle of eternal truth in logic, a sort of axiom, that no one can serve two lords. There is another truth known to us, and it is that the class of indigenous people, the bottom of the society... lives at our orders, obeys us and serves us not out of love or good will, but rather by force of our fathers, whose condition we have inherited and converted into our legitimate patrimony. It follows that the indigenous people must serve us and must obey us in all that which they cannot avoid, our tyrannical domination. The grave, certain, and inevitable inconveniences that are offered in our case place the indigenous collection agents in the complicated conflict of obeying two authorities...God himself cannot obligate contradictory things.¹³⁷

The corregidor's analysis expressed in a very lucid way that the personal contribution of the indigenous people was not based on consensus, had stopped being legitimate, and had become an imposition of force. His discourse recalls in a sad rather than indignant tone the same analysis that corregidor Vida y Roldan made at the end of the eighteenth century, when the Indians rose up against being census-taking for tribute. In Ontaneda's analysis the domination that was imposed on the Indians through the tribute was colonial. Therefore, it needed to be applied with an efficient use of force and not confused with a hegemonic relationship or consensus about the voluntary payment of tributary taxes to the state. It was not a pact, but rather a tyrannical form of domination. Thus, it was not necessary for the governor to convince the Indians politically of the necessity of payment when such necessity did not exist or had stopped existing.

¹³⁷ ANH/Q, Ministerio de Hacienda Collection, box 104, Nota de Manuel Ontaneda, Corregidor del cantón Riobamba al Gobernador de Chimborazo, 4.V.1844, note 499.

The corregidor analyzed the contradictions in the state collection system. A national authority existed, represented by the collector, that lacked the capacity and the county corregidor himself, head of the parish deputies and the indigenous authorities, was in control of the current collection. The collector was dependent on these regional authorities since they elaborated lists of contributors, and in cases of resistance, they constituted the only force available at the local level. Given the stated considerations and once the colonial origin of the tax imposed on the Indians was recognized, the proposal of the corregidor was to make the ability of the state to impose force more efficient. His vision was that of a system of corregidores in each parish throughout the country. Remember that the same corregidor had previously called for reinforcing the authority of the *cacique cartacuentero*. However, it seemed clear at this moment and after the insurrections that only the systematic use of force held the promise of imposing order. Thus, the *cacique* – who had earlier acted as the intermediary between his people and the authorities – appeared to have been converted into the patrimony agent of the whites. If the state had stopped being paternalistic and was exercising a despotic function, the governor of the Indians could no longer be a legitimate intermediary between state and community. In effect, he was the least appropriate figure to deal with the collection. The Ministry of Finance, however, rejected the corregidor's report:

The conduct that has been observed is very notable and strange, qualifying as unjust the personal contribution of the indigenous people since, being decreed by a current law of the Republic and being an employee of the nation, he cannot

condemn the tax nor say as much to the government..”¹³⁸

To reveal the incapacity of a collector named by the central state, he presented a hypothetical situation. What would happen if the regional authorities, the deputies, and the *caciques* were to refuse to help the collector?

The corregidor to whom the parish deputies are subordinated, makes them fulfill their orders because he has sufficient power. The collector is not attended to because he does not have coercive jurisdiction over debtors. He deals with the civil authorities within his own jurisdiction, who are obliged to help him but not to obey him. The government ought to be circumspect so that every tax corresponds to a corregidor, and that if it should be divided, it should be provided to other corregidores who have the means to make themselves obeyed.¹³⁹

The proposal of the corregidor to overcome the lack of control of the registries depended on combining the rent collection with the recognition of the regional experience of social mobility. Mestizos were a sector of the population that it was not convenient to harass if the authorities wished that the other part of the indigenous population pay. The alternative to recognition of indians' condition was the use of systematic force. They could not ask the *Cacique* to exercise control over landlords, nor was it sufficiently clear that the treasury had the strength to face the landowners and demand that they take care of their *conciertos' rezagos*. To make the tax feasible, the

¹³⁸ ANH/Q, Ministerio de Hacienda Collection, box 104, Respuesta del Ministerio de Estado en el despacho de hacienda al Corregidor del cantón Bolívar, 4.I.1844.

¹³⁹ ANH/Q, Ministerio de Hacienda Collection, box 104, Corregidor del cantón Riobamba al Gobernador de la Provincia de Chimborazo, 16.III.1844.

corregidor proposed forgiving the older debts – that is, the *rezagos* -- opening new registries of contributors and re-registering the fugitives with old debts. They would be re-registered in the records of contributors and they would start anew in order to re-establish the collection. The general collector, by contrast, demanded that the accounts of *rezagos* be maintained and even accused the corregidor of acting without orders or papers, having begun in an informal manner the practice of opening new records for the tributes. In his defense, the corregidor gravely asserted that nobody knew what was owed.

The truth is that I have included those with old debts in my account because reason and the needs of the state dictate that I do so. It is reasonable to proceed in this way because the collector of *rezagos* must take care of the collection of these recorded debts and cannot qualify as debt an illiquid and non-finalized account. He who enters the system of contributions pays for the first time, and he who pays for first time and he who is not a recognized debtor cannot be qualified as *rezagado* and he who is not *rezagado*, does not enter into the jurisdiction of the collector . It is convenient for the collection process to proceed in this way because the indigenous person is in charge of his payment sheet, and when a newcomer obtains his first sheet in this collection, no one else has knowledge of his debt. The only payment of this year cancels that which he owed before, since no one, I repeat, no one knows that which he owed before. So if I am required to give a reason for that which is owed with the newcomer, I refuse to give it.¹⁴⁰

The principal argument was that nobody knew who owed *rezagos*, but everyone could be converted into a “newcomer” (*advenedizo*). The project presented by corregidor Ontaneda had a realistic vision of the state’s limited possibilities of regional control. The

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 15.II.1844, note 406 and 409.

options of the state were either a powerful reconstruction of the system through force or a pact with the indigenous peoples and the masses to re-establish a tributary link.

Ultimately, it was inconceivable for an aristocratic state to establish a pact with the indigenous people or the masses. The General Accountant of the Republic, Pedro José de Arteta, expressed the following opinion as he condemned Flores's government.

I am of the sentiment that the corregidores of the old county of Riobamba ought not to be mixed up in collecting *rezagos*, but this prohibition cannot be extended to the indigenous newcomers. In any case, if they should be limited to charging them only for the current year, it would give way to a thousand harmful confusions without doubt [because they could not include such Indians in the *rezagos*, and the case should not go against them. It seems to me, therefore, that the best order would be that the tax demands the collectors themselves to remain in charge of the formulation of the registries and of taxing the new-comers, and charge them all that they should have paid earlier.¹⁴¹

The collector and his fragile legal apparatus were suspended in order to hand over all responsibilities to the corregidor, and, nonetheless, the state insisted on charging *rezagos*. The defeat of the tribute at the local level revealed clearly the weaknesses of the state. The arguments of the corregidor based on experience were not sufficient for a government such as that of Flores in which the state had not been able to develop even minimal levels of autonomy with respect to arbitrary decisions based on privileges of the *hacendados*. As we have seen, these same *hacendados* who defrauded the tributary tax impeded the slightest pact between the communities and the government. Their

¹⁴¹ ANH/Q, Ministerio de Hacienda Collection, box 104, Contaduría General de la República a la Gobernación de Chimborazo, 12.III.1844, note 406.

power weakened rather than fortified a state that could not make a restored pact and could not generate a regime based on taking parish territory by force either. The militias were as desperate over the neglect as the communities were. The level of absurdity was such that the regime decided to take up the tax of the *rezago* once more among the *hacendados*.

The resistance to payment was such that at the end of Flores's second period, the only bidder who presented himself for the auction of *rezagos* in the county, Tomas Betancour, demanded substantial changes in the clauses of the contract. He could not risk giving ahead of time two-thirds of the debt to be charged. The Finance *Junta* in the city of Bolívar, having come together on October 1843, had communicated that, for the purpose of the deposit, the auctioneer ought to satisfy two thirds of the 6,859 pesos of the *rezago* of the free Indians and two-thirds parts of that which was owed by *concierto* Indians. To the benefit of the auctioneer would remain the income from "the indigenous people who become indebted and whom the registries do not include."¹⁴² Betancourt proposed paying 2,000 of the 8,000 pesos that supposedly would be collected. The *Junta* consulted the Government, pointing out that in addition to these conditions.¹⁴³

Just as the collector supposed erroneously that the tributary tax could be sustained simply by legal obligation, the Minister of the *Hacienda* was deaf to the corregidor and

¹⁴² ANH/Q, Ministerio de Hacienda Collection, box 104, El gobernador de Chimborazo informa al Min. de Hacienda, Bolívar 10.X.1843, notes 208-209.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

all signs that the tax was illegitimate and unsustainable. The governor of Chimborazo reacted bitterly.

It is scandalous that a collector of public rent should present himself surrounded by the apparatus of the armed forces when there is no evidence that resistance would have been offered to the payment of a contribution to which Indians are accustomed and that they should just let those who for idleness or abandonment have not acquired sufficient means not pay it.¹⁴⁴

Any conviction about the stability of domination in this period would be mistaken, especially if we consider that there was not even enough income even to cover the food or clothing of the battalions. The collector general of the *rezagos* reported the following:

The treasury finds itself absolutely exhausted in circumstances of having to face growing daily expenses that occur in the military... Constantly, I receive threats from the chief of the columns that denies his responsibility in case the troops should commit extortion in the villages for not receiving daily rations. The *rezagos* that are left to be charged in this county are so difficult to collect that in no way can they count on us to attend to the subsistence of the fourth campaign that is found there. I have the honor of bringing it to your attention, relieving it now from my responsibility.¹⁴⁵

The Flores regime had arrived at its end. Its functionaries quit their posts because they were unable to carry out their tasks, and the armed forces were lost and hungry in a

¹⁴⁴ ANH/Q, Ministerio de Hacienda Collection, box 104, Respuesta del Ministerio de Estado en el despacho de hacienda al Corregidor del cantón Bolívar, 4.I.1844.

¹⁴⁵ ANH/Q, Ministerio de Hacienda Collection, box 104, Colector general de *rezagos* de Guaranda al Gobernador de Chimborazo, 27.VII.1844, note 193.

society that absolutely refused to collaborate with them under coercion. The loss of state support in the Province of Chimborazo was fully expressed in the general uprisings already mentioned. The suspension of the law and the fall of the regime that followed in the counties of Bolívar and Riobamba were a result of resistance to an unacceptable combination of hacienda expansion and an attack on the economic and political strategies of communities.

The explanation that we have proposed for the crisis of the collection questions the readings of authors such as Andrés Guerrero and Juan Manguashca, who have explained the three-pesos tax as a demonstration of liberal sentiments and of Flores's democratic consciousness. They have explained the popular reaction as a show of racism against the Indians. In our analysis, this taxation process appeared in a context of state weakness and was expressed in the form of collective action (which daily forms of evasion already expressed). The indigenous communities united with other sectors that the state wished to capture through the "universalization" of colonial impositions. Their resistance to the tax was a reaction in defense of pacts with the community and not an expression of racism. In addition, the aristocratic doctrine was not ultimately backed by the force of a state with the capacity to make demands.

The villages where insurrections took place had provided signs of their consciousness through forms of daily resistance to impositions. The ethnic authorities of Guano and Licto, two populations in which insurrections began simultaneously, had

already expressed resistance. Both villages maintained the indispensable requirement of being able to bring together two distinct populations -- *llactayos* and *forasteros*. Guano, being bigger and closer to the hacienda zones, had witnessed an aggressive expansion into their lands. The communities of Matus had had conflicts in the *páramos* of Chazo as a result of the vacant lands policy. In Guano, the majority of the tributary payments were from free *comuneros*. In the case of Punin, Licto, and Pungala, we can observe through lawsuits over land ownership the influence that Licto had among communities of distinct ethnicity and strategic location. The autonomy of the community before the hacienda had been challenged, but had engendered resistance.

Not only did the communities stop sending money to the central government, but the dispatch of money was requested for paying troops. Regional society mobilized as the rebels came to control this territory.

On the remission of the contingents, I must say that the quantity remitted by the corregidor of Alausí in the previous month could not pass beyond this corregimiento due to the danger that it should be overtaken by groups along the road to Ambato, and there has been investment in the two campaigns of the battalion for not having sent to Cuenca the corresponding quantity. The corregidores ask, that they be aided with 1,000 pesos until the agitations and riots be dispersed. Given that not a single peseta exists in the treasury, from where are the necessary resources to be taken?¹⁴⁶

No one dared to sustain the contribution tax in such a difficult situation. The

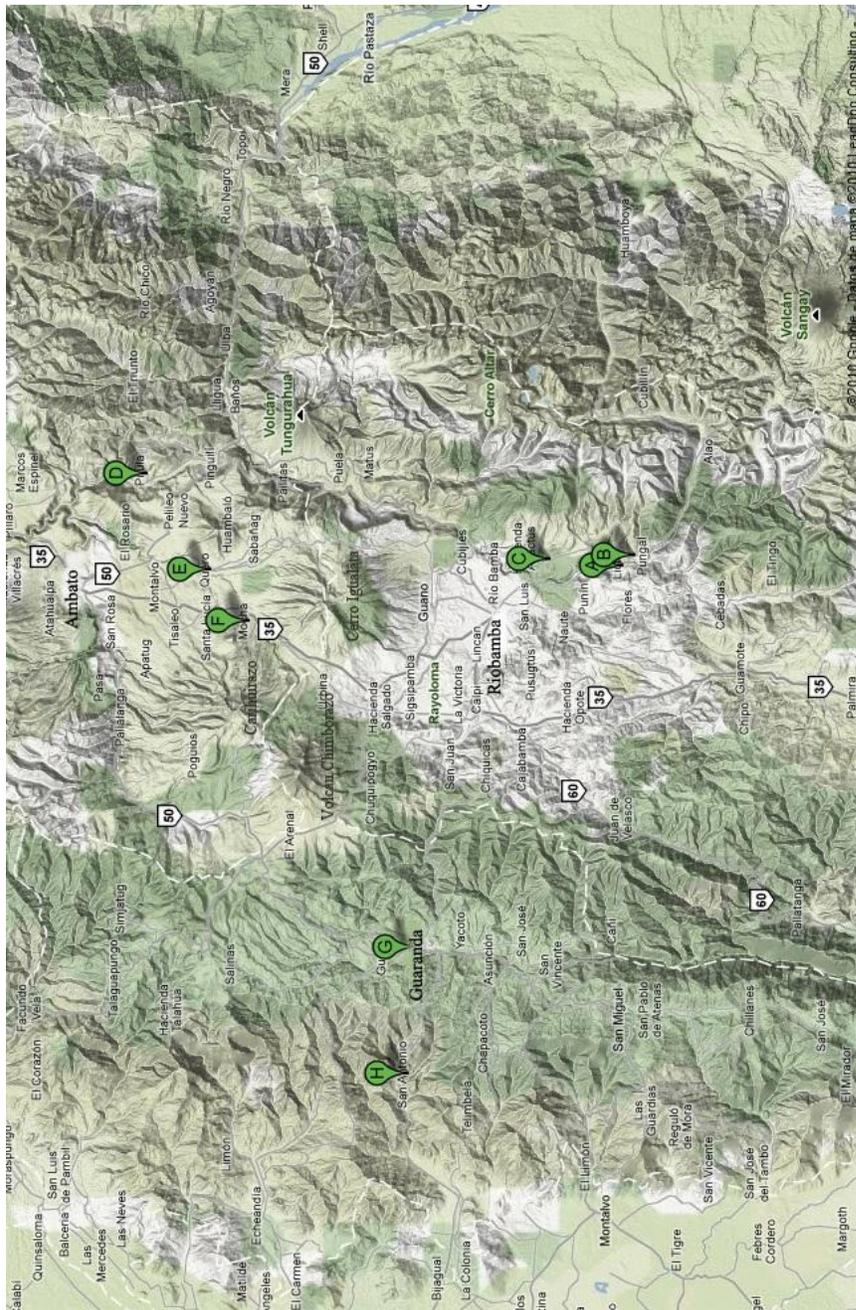
¹⁴⁶ ANH/Q, Min. de Hacienda Collection, box 104, Informe del Gobernador de Chimborazo, note 206.

impossibility of imposing it by force was evident. The state did not attempt any type of negotiation. The functionaries withdrew their troops due to the impossibility of exercising the collection even by force. The Flores government came to an end for its intransigence and lack of understanding of the social relations that had sustained social and political reproduction at the regional level.

The support that was offered Flores by powerful families was substantially less than the privileges that these families received from the regime.¹⁴⁷ Despite the complaints presented by regional authorities – corregidores and governors of the Indians – with respect to tax evasion and arbitrary actions by public officers, the state was shown to have been weak and dependent. This dependence was revealed by paternalistic decisions that had as their only objective that of benefiting the regional aristocracies that surrounded the governor. These were accompanied by attempts to forcibly draw other populations under the state’s umbrella. With the declaration of vacant lands, elites attempted to establish themselves in the countryside with internalized populations under their dominions. The harassment of community lands involved the white middle-classes as well “townspeople who declared vacant lands that were largely inhabited. These

¹⁴⁷ In Guayaquil the Icaza, Garaicoa, and Caamaño; in Quito the Jijón, Váscones, Montufar; in Chimborazo the Chiriboga, see references to these processes and a summary in a comparative context in Latin America in Marta Irurozqui, and Víctor Peralta, “Elites y sociedad en la América andina: de la república de ciudadanos a la república de la gente decente 1825-1880,” in *Creación de las repúblicas y formación de la nación*, ed. Juan Maiguashca, vol 5 of *Historia de América Andina* (Quito: Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar y Libresa, 2003)

adelantados (white middle classes) were the first to meet with conflict and benefited marginally from land distribution perhaps accessing auctioned lots. This process of expansion was accompanied undoubtedly by violence, as reflected by the fact that there could be in a single parish 400 Indians imprisoned by *hacendados* when they wanted to move elsewhere or by the political deputies who imprisoned them for debts. Local authorities, those who knew the minimum conditions for legitimacy, offered reflections about local resistance. They were ignored by the state and they were unable to collaborate with it. In these conditions, Flores's regime had restricted its own possibilities to establish viable ties and pacts, and thus lacked legitimacy on the regional level. In effect, in the region that we have studied, state authority came undone through its attempt to apply unsustainable fiscal impositions.



Map 1 – Conflicts between 1831 – 1845.

Symbol	Province	County	Parish	Place
A	Chimborazo			Licto
B	Chimborazo			Pungalá
C	Chimborazo			Achambo
D	Tungurahua	Pelileo	Patate	Puatur-Patate
E	Tungurahua	Ambato	Quero	Quero
F	Tungurahua	Ambato	Mocha	Puñalica-Mocha
G	Bolívar			Guanando
H	Bolívar			San Antonio de Tarigagua

Table 1 - Conflicts between 1831 – 1845, Map 1.

CHAPTER 2: Negotiated Transformations: Communities and State During the Regime of “Democratic Republicanism,” 1845-1861.

In response to the laws dictated by the National Convention of 1843 and to the contradictory measures Flores implemented to deal with the political and economic crisis of his regime, popular discord transformed from non-collaboration to rioting in various regions. In the central Sierra, the dismantling of state operations was imminent and land conflicts were common. From Guayaquil came the proclamation of a provisional government that would represent Quito, Cuenca, and Guayaquil. Guayas was the first province in which an urban social class, educated and linked to new economic spaces (such as international trade), declared rebellion. The so-called “March Revolution” brought down the Flores regime in March of 1845. It was headed by businessmen from the port of Guayaquil, Vicente Ramón Roca and Diego Noboa, who opposed the aristocracy of the Sierra. This aristocracy in turn dismissed them as social climbers, citing their supposed mixed blood and “undignified” businesses. The March revolution benefited from the figure of José Joaquín de Olmedo, a well-known and highly-regarded *criollo* poet.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁸ Olmedo lived between 1780 and 1847 and was senator for Guayaquil before the courts of Cádiz, where he gave a long and elaborate appeal to suppress the Mita (21 of October, 1812). In Jorge Núñez, *Ecuador: El aporte masónico al estado republicano* (Unedited, 2000), we see the membership of Olmedo in a political

The provisional government established in Guayaquil proclaimed that it was necessary to get rid of “foreign militarism” and its circle of privileges in the Sierra. As a complementary measure to the proclamation of the new nationalist regime, a national assembly was formed with a site in Cuenca and it sought to make itself known in the regions affected by the Flores regime, thus gradually adding counties to its support base in order to build a force to bring down the *padre de la patria* and his circle of influence.

Although these episodes have been dealt with thoroughly in the traditional historiography without reference to actors who participated in regional processes, there are some references to actors who participated in regional riots in Alausí, Guano, Loja, Cuenca, and Cayambe, among other towns.¹⁴⁹ The country lacked strong party structures and was regionally fragmented. However, various county senators attended the assembly in Cuenca, demonstrating that regional conflicts were being repeated throughout the country and revealing the will of an ample social sector to aggregate its forces for a change of the state. From the province of Chimborazo, the following number of representatives attended the National Assembly on December 15, 1845: From Alausí, 5 representatives for 14,628 inhabitants; from Bolívar, 31 representatives for

network identified with democratic liberalism, together with Jose Mejía Lequerica, through the masonry lodge "Integridad N° 7"

¹⁴⁹ Jorge F. Villalba, S.J., “Los gobiernos marcistas o la reacción antifloreana,” in Vol. 6 of *Historia del Ecuador* (Barcelona: Salvat, 1980). Carlos Larrea, *El pensamiento económico de los ministros de hacienda del Ecuador durante el siglo XIX* (unedited). The study of Ayala Mora contrasts with historical visions, however it does not include analyses of regional social processes.

92,118 inhabitants; from Guaranda, 7 for 22,384 inhabitants; and Macas, with 581 inhabitants, did not send any representatives.¹⁵⁰ If the discontent in the regions had not been similar throughout the country, it would have been difficult to weave together a general uprising against Flores, but ultimately the triumph of the March revolution of 1845 was not difficult as it gained the support of various battalions of the army, such as those battalions stationed in Riobamba and Bolívar that had waited in vain for years for some message from the state and were therefore practically disbanded.

The Provisional Government that was proclaimed on March 6, 1845 evoked the principles of liberty and equality that clearly contrasted with those of the Flores regime, but beyond this image, the March revolution found real possibilities for sustaining a regime and constructing a political theater that would be much wider and more inclusive than that previously offered by the aristocratic circle. The period of the revolution extended for fifteen years between 1845 and 1860 (with the exception of 1849, when Vice-President Manuel de Ascásubi, an aristocrat from the Sierra, took power). This entire period was governed by new political actors: businessmen from the ports and members of the military who had been excluded from power during Flores's regime. These new actors weaved alliances and sought to extend them in order to confront the regime of privileges.

¹⁵⁰ ANH/Q, Especial Collection, box 312, Asamblea electoral de la Prov. de Chimborazo, Bolívar, 15.XII.1845.

As we will see, the governments of José María Urvina (1852-1856) and Francisco Robles (1856-1859) presented a legal framework to take power away from the landowning aristocracy and to fortify the state through social alliances at the regional level. Radical measures such as the declaration of “vacant lands” as national lands (1849), the abolition of slavery (1851), the pardoning of the *rezagos* or overdue debts (1851), the general abolition of the tributary tax (1857), the issue of water and lands to peasant communities and the expulsion of the Jesuits (1851) promoted alliances that widened the range of state dialogue and integrated into the regime’s supporters the freed population, indigenous communities, and other Latin American regimes with a “democratic” tendency, including that of the Colombian president José Hilario López.

This chapter documents a process of negotiation that was without precedents in the Republic between a peripheral faction of the elite that took control of the state apparatus (the *republican* and *democratic* government of the March revolution) and the indigenous communities of the central Sierra that were able to negotiate the inclusion of critical elements of their agenda within a process of state reform. Indigenous communities were able to participate in transformations already underway, modifying the process of land liberalization and citizenship definition.

In the period that followed the downfall of the Flores regime, the Republic saw a foundational moment of negotiation along with language of negotiation among

factions emerging from the state, indigenous communities, and other peasant groups. The regional level of negotiation led to a balancing of the scales, as the indigenous and peasant agendas began to carry weight vis-a-vis the landowning class. Some unexpected consequences resulted, including population growth, political support for the regime, and the generation of popular identification with democratic liberalism. Although the alliance between the state and the indigenous communities was expressed at the regional level and not through popular national organizations, nonetheless its impact was evident in the modification of the state. The negotiations that began with the new regime impacted both the political formation of the indigenous communities and the formation of the Liberal Party. From that moment on, competition with landowning regional elites took place within a search for hegemonic articulations.¹⁵¹

¹⁵¹ The use of the terms coercion and hegemony, or domination and negotiation, that we use throughout this work comes from Gramscian tradition. A process of hegemonic construction within Gramsci's work supposes the political articulation of differences, the negotiation of political power and consensus. Hegemony differentiates itself from domination insofar as it substitutes objective colonial articulation for a political articulation. The concept of hegemony supposes the emergence of an imaginary of equivalences that can be found at the base of a national popular imaginary. See Gramsci, *Selections*, and *The Southern Question*. In this chapter we observe the negotiation of a regional hegemonic language, though not a process of national hegemony since his was not able to emerge in the nineteenth century. Two notable studies that use this interpretive framework are attentive to the tension between internal colonialism and hegemony at the moment of constructing national states in the Third World. These are the works of Mallon, *Peasant and Nation*; and Guha, *Dominance without Hegemony*. They demonstrate clearly how the

The nationalist regime's search for alliances opened opportunities to fortify the position of communities in their respective regions. This chapter explores a new and important facet of the relationship between community and peripheral populations as well. *Arrimados*, *forasteros*, other peasants without land, and peasants with peripheral lands were all able to access deeds equal to those of other *comuneros* or they could demand them, which introduced new conflicts surrounding political hierarchy and the legitimacy of land possession within communities. The discourse on equality proclaimed by the *democrats* helped the communities participate in processes of change to confront the expansion of landowners in the central Sierra. The same discourse and the opportunities that it seemed to open for the *arrimados* put at risk the coordination of the representative of the community since, while the *arrimados* received state lands, they were no longer pursued as tributary contributors (at least until 1861) and they were offered citizenship. Thus, new conflicts arose within the community with respect to the authority of the *cacique*, as *comuneros* sought a closer relationship with the state.

As James Sanders observed in the case of the Colombian Cauca in the times of José Hilario López, specific alliances were established among rival factions of

articulation of communities to a process of hegemonic construction transcended the traditional forms of mobilization and transformed the political identities of the subjects, since they put into practice in the organizing process the language of consensus and of negotiation of interests.

political society and a diversity of subaltern actors entered onto the political stage with their own agendas.¹⁵² Urvina was able to involve a diverse population in the war against the Flores regime, including a mulato population and emancipated slaves, having offered them permanent integration into the army and the total abolition of slavery. These freed slaves supported Urvina's militia and once in power he fulfilled his promises. This group, referred to as the "canónigos," had settled in the rural area of Taura, a province of Guayas, after the abolition of slavery. They formed an important part of the army. According to many authors, this militia had been composed to scare the elite of Pichincha, Imbabura, and Loja, slave provinces that had charged the state large amounts for the emancipation of its slaves, but that reacted in horror before the image of blacks in uniform.¹⁵³ The entrance of freed slaves into the army constituted much more than a gesture of racial affront. Urvina began a campaign in which he informed the country that there would no longer be any forced enlistments and offered the popular classes the opportunity to enter the army as a form of fortifying the Republic and at the same time acquiring citizenship. In this sense, Urvina was seen as a model for the later triumph of the radical Liberal Party when, between 1880 and 1897, the evocation of the memory of Urvina served liberal

¹⁵² Besides the authors already cited, see James Sanders, "Contentious Republicans," *Popular Politics, Race and Class in Nineteenth-Century Colombia* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004); and Williams, "Assembling the Empire of Morality."

¹⁵³ Simón Espinosa, "Presidentes del Ecuador," *Vistazo* (1989). Wilfrido Loor, *Eloy Alfaro* (Quito: Talleres Gráficos Minerva, 1982)

circles of the coast and the Sierra to convoke *montoneras* and peasants to fight the armies of radical conservatism.¹⁵⁴

Urvina had won the obedience of this militia of freed slaves through the abolition of slavery, which in effect constituted a nucleus of military reform of the Liberal Party.¹⁵⁵ Since slavery had only represented a small portion of the country's labor supply, the abolition of slavery was a radical gesture that influenced more profound alliances that came later, in particular with respect to the indigenous peasant sector.

James Sanders has observed that the emancipated slave population of Cauca, Colombia, began to identify itself with political liberalism in the eighteenth century. In the meantime, indigenous communities interested in sustaining the privileges that colonial political discourses offered them tended to seek a renovation of these pacts under the protection of republican conservatism. The indigenous communities in Ecuador, in contrast with those of Cauca, became allied with Jacobin liberalism after 1845, once the state began negotiations over land, tributes, and political

¹⁵⁴ Camilo Destruge Illingworth, *Urvina el presidente: biografía del general José María Urvina* (Quito: Banco Central del Ecuador, 1992). The *montoneras* were military armies of liberalism, composed by popular strata of society, especially from the coast region.

¹⁵⁵ On the Afro-ecuadorians of Taura as a central component of the liberal army organized in the times of Urvina, see Ayala Mora, ed., vol. 7 of *Nueva Historia del Ecuador*, 195.

representation.¹⁵⁶

This analysis of processes in the central Sierra coincides with that of Derek Williams in Imbabura, where indigenous communities also joined the Liberal Party.¹⁵⁷

Whereas the landholding elite of the northern Sierra had found an unconditional ally in the Venezuelan general Juan José Flores, the indigenous communities found their own allies in the governments of José María Urvina and Francisco Robles, who supported the demands for participation in the political power of the business elite of Guayaquil, but first had to take on the challenge of forging social alliances throughout the countryside in order to establish a tie between the state and civil society that would take power away from the landholding elite. Indigenous communities – *cacicazgos*, families, and individuals – recognized in this alliance the opportunity to participate in change for better conditions and thus began identifying themselves as supporters of liberalism.

After constructing a political force capable of rivaling the landholding elite of the Sierra, Urvina presented a narrative that spoke of a nation in which the peasantry nourished the markets of the coast. In this discourse, he clearly favored the peasantry. The negotiations over land possession, tribute, and citizenship counter-acted the

¹⁵⁶ James Sanders, *Contentious Republicans*.

¹⁵⁷ Derek Williams, “Indian Servitude and Popular Liberalism: The Making and Unmaking of Ecuador’s Anti-Landlord State, 1845-1868,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 83, no. 4 (November 2003): 697-733.

incipient expansion of haciendas on the regional level and the generalization of *concertaje* in the areas under study.

The regime proclaimed the necessity for ending the rental of institutions – “the heirs of the colony” – and with certain monopolies in order to guarantee freedom of internal circulation. The regime sought out various mechanisms to impede the control of prices on behalf of the elite in the Sierra. In the same way, the regime implemented protectionist policies for agriculture and manufacturing oriented toward supplying the internal markets of the coast. In the debate over customs duties in the chamber of representatives on November 26, 1847, the regime announced that it was in favor of moderate protectionism.

The refusal of rebates in the goods mentioned [wheat, liquor, gun powder, wax, olive oil, and a large variety of textiles from bale fabric to fine silks] was founded on the necessity to protect the industry of the country, which also produces these items, although not with the perfection of foreign [industries]. Being unable to sustain their place in the market if the taxes levied on foreign goods are dismissed, it was evident that the producers of the country would abandon this type of industry and ultimately the pueblos would remain with nothing to which to dedicate themselves... If the absolutely prohibitive system has pernicious consequences for the nation that adopts it, the same things do not happen when it is moderate and circumscribed to the limits that, according to the particular circumstances, prudence advises. In this manner they have practiced [protectionism] in England and other wealthy countries of Europe, whose weavings would not have arrived at the perfection in which they are found, if when they were still in their infancy, they should have permitted the free introduction of goods better manufactured than their own. The truth is that modern economists, attentive only to their rational theories, have openly spoken out against the prohibitive system, no matter how moderate it might be; but it is not less certain that logically true principles may produce false results in their

application, given the diversity of circumstances that modify them, as experience demonstrates.¹⁵⁸

At that time in 1870, this proposal was still considered viable¹⁵⁹ and it constituted the economic discourse of the March revolution. Yet, political discourse weighed more in the decisions of the senators and the judges who constructed the nationalist regime. At the same time, the regime pushed forward processes of national land redistribution, supported the formation of agricultural cooperatives, and assisted communities.

In the zones where *concertaje* was more extensive, as in the northern Sierra, the negotiations presented by Urvina consisted in facilitating *concierto* mobility.¹⁶⁰ In 1854, Urvina's regime legalized the right of the *conciertos* to change *patrones*, which was perceived as a threat to the economy and the social hierarchies. The *hacendados* wished to assure that the labor supply remained tied to properties. The Indian peasants, subjected to a work regime by debt – *concertaje* – sought the right to move between *patrones* in the attempt to enable themselves to negotiate better working conditions in a context of a scarce labor supply; in extraordinary cases, they wished to buy their liberty from *concertaje*. Thus, article 51 of the *Ley de Indígenas* of 1854 established that “all Indian *conciertos* attached to *haciendas* or workshops would no

¹⁵⁸ *El Nacional*, Quito, viernes 26 de noviembre de 1847, 2252.

¹⁵⁹ Larrea, *El pensamiento económico*.

¹⁶⁰ Williams, “Indian servitude.”

longer be obligated to pay off their debts with their labor.”¹⁶¹

For Williams, this law redefined *concertaje* as a debt relationship and not one of bondage or indentured labor. It placed the authority over such matters in the hands of governors nominated by the president (and not in those of local authorities tied to landholding power). The law established the conditions for the emergence of demands from the peasantry to the state in the interest of protecting their rights – in this instance, the right to abandon the hacienda. In the words of Williams, “The political climate of *Urvinismo* did open up the customarily private negotiation between *peon* and *patrón* to public scrutiny and broadened the space for *peones* to pursue their legal rights.”¹⁶²

In what was a measure in favor of the possession of lands on behalf of indigenous communities and in favor of the formation of a peasantry, Urvina enabled communities to buy lands that were in principle controlled by the ethnic authorities, but later disputed by indigenous families who converted themselves into a base of peasant support for the liberal state. This measure contrasted with the process of hacienda expansion that Flores wanted to facilitate within a legal framework that dissolved the right of corporative possession and at the same time disabled the

¹⁶¹ The pardoning of the *rezagos* took place in the decree of November 23, 1854, in Art. 50, promulgated by José María Urvina. The suppression of the tribute took place in the decree of October 30, 1857, promulgated by Francisco Robles.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 707-709

Indians as actors in the market.

Until 1844, the Flores regime showed itself to be a political regime without the capacity for negotiation, which ultimately led to rioting and boycotts. The period of 1845-1861 demonstrated that the process of transformations could be negotiated. In effect, the commercialization of the land and attempts at constructing a new state continued, but these initiatives included subaltern sectors that found opportunities to legalize their possessions, to emancipate themselves from personal domination, and to utilize a more inclusive national narrative to their benefit. Both the commercialization of lands and state transformations were tactics beneficial to liberal competition with the landholding elites, but they involved marginalized sectors in new ways, such as providing private land deeds of lands and new options for attaining citizenship, in effect offering a more direct relationship with the state.

This analysis demonstrates that the absence of insurrections during this epoch was not due to the efficient imposition of power by the landholding elite, but rather it was due to the negotiation and incorporation of an indigenous agenda in processes of change. Negotiations over their re-insertion into civic life, the end of the tributary tax, and land possession began to strengthen communities with respect to the elites. Conflicts between communities and regional elites and riots against the state decreased substantially as a consequence of decisions made during the governments of Urvina and Robles since, during these governments in particular, great strides were

taken to promote popular participation in processes of regional change.

2.1 Abolition of Indian's Tribute, Negotiation, and Reinsertion into Civil Life.

In 1847, the chamber of representatives rejected the attempt of regional elites to take up the theme of the tributary tax once more in order to deal with the fiscal crisis. Firstly, according to the economic rationality of the new regime, they needed to tax capital. Secondly, the regional elite who wanted to be paid for charging the tributary tax were recognized as “greedy spectators” who defrauded the treasury and used force against the indigenous people, diminishing the state’s authority. When the province of Chimborazo proposed re-establishing the tax collection, the secretary of the chamber of representatives clearly pronounced the change in political winds that was taking place in the country and the motives for rejecting such a response in honor of the principles of humanity, justice, and philanthropy:

There is, sir, a general clamor against this contribution which not only attacks the bases of a rational and just equality, but entails an inverse rationality of commodities and resources, against all rules established as principles in the economic sciences. It could be said that Ecuador is one of the few countries where direct contributions weigh down the most miserable part of society, and even the indigenous people from the coast are exempted for being more well-off and civilized than those of the interior [of the country]; thus, the lack of resources and of public necessities are almost the only bases that have been brought up to conserve this tax, which is very unjust under any consideration. But if to increase the injustice, violent means are used in its execution, if instead of alleviating the state of the unfortunate indigenous people, the legislators should come to worsen their situation, putting them at the mercy of greedy spectators, Ecuador will suffer a setback not only in its credit, but also in the principles of humanity, equality, and

justice in which its institutions are based. Renting out the personal contribution of the indigenous peoples would be, to a certain point, equivalent to establishing the feudal system of the time of the Conquest and thus undermining the fundamental principles of our constitution.¹⁶³

José María Urquina's opposition to the law of 1854 was one of the political positions that most clearly reflected the new regime's outlook. The abolition of the *rezago* (over-due debts) in 1854 and the definitive abolition of the indigenous people's personal contribution in 1857 not only reflected the desire to fill the treasury by taxing the cacao industry, as the literature tends to suggest. In fact, the wealth of the treasury was greatly diminished after having compensated the owners of slaves after the abolition of slavery, proclaimed by Urquina in 1851 and ratified by the National Assembly of 1852. The great leader of liberalism Eloy Alfaro himself was denounced by some radicals at the end of the nineteenth century for not having acted as radically as Urquina (For example, whereas Urquina had abolished slavery without gradual mechanisms and despite the unwillingness of the elite of the Sierra, Alfaro prolonged the legal mechanisms that permitted the unpaid work of communities subjected to *concertaje*).

The search for alliances and the growth of "nationalism" constituted two principal scenarios in which political benefits for subaltern classes were negotiated. In the same year that the Flores regime fell on 1845, the National Assembly proclaimed a

¹⁶³ AFL/Q, Secretaría de la Cámara de Representantes, Quito 23.IX.1847 "Tercero de la Libertad."

measure that favored the urban masses: the suspension of the tax on “artisans of the Republic, to recognize their patriotism and cooperation in the re-establishment of freedom.”¹⁶⁴ With this measure, the Assembly revealed its reading of one of the decisive points of conflict. The artisans who paid the personal contribution of Indians were obviously not whites. They belonged to the urban population that originated from recent waves of internal migrations and had, nonetheless, reacted in alliance with indebted Indians. The pardoning of the *rezagos* and the suspension of the contribution for artisans favored these internal migrants or *forasteros* who had also reacted against multiple attempts to expand the tax registry.

The negative view of the tributary tax among those actors who had witnessed its effects first-hand caught on in the new regime, which condemned the tributary debt of *forasteros* that the state had maintained since 1830. It offered a general pardon of the *rezagos* in 1854, thus constructing new bridges between the state and regional actors. In 1854, the senate announced that “for all of the indigenous people who owed their contribution in years up to and including 1851, their debt is dropped, and the charge of the *rezagos* will only be made for those that are found after the year to which is referred.”¹⁶⁵

The Ministers of Hacienda were opposed to the contribution and pointed out that

¹⁶⁴ Decree of February 9, 1846. Promulgated by Vicente Ramón Roca.

¹⁶⁵ AFL/Q, Senado y Cámara de representantes del Ecuador reunidos en congreso, Art. 50, 26.X.1854. Promulgated by José María Urvina.

competition was only possible under conditions of “equality.” This position was expressed by the “pardon of the *rezagos*” in 1854 and later by the elimination of the tributary tax in 1857, which was replaced by a capital-gains tax.

The construction of a new registry served to establish a new pact between the state and the population. It was accompanied by regulations that favored land possession for communities. Legislators even demanded that indigenous people sign letters confirming that they were not still being charged for *rezagos*. It was prohibited that they pay debt with work and they were given the backing of a parish deputy who would certify the annulment of a contract if the Indians solicited him to do so. Furthermore, in article 51 of the same law, legislators established the freedom of the indigenous *concierto* to leave the hacienda.

Urvina proved himself to be dedicated to forming a pact with the indigenous population through this law and in particular with article 50, which was oriented to favoring the Indians over the *hacendados*. This article spoke of the special conditions that would cause the public treasury to favor the landowners who had debts and it denounced collectors who did not fulfill their duties, having allied with landholders. To the regime it was very clear that the *hacendados* had been defrauding the treasury and that public power at the local level was fragile with respect to the power of this class with “private interests.”

It is enough to consider that if [the *hacendados*] have always put up a tough resistance to paying the pension of the *gañanes*, there is more than enough reason

to believe that they are going to be the beneficiaries, not the class that is trying to be favored. It is important to sanction the rebellious debtors of the State. In addition, it is impossible to foresee the cunning of many property owners who easily would return in its favor by simply charging in their books the quantities that they owe for the tribute of the Indians. Easily they will find such owners mocking the new judges of the majority of the counties, whose stupidity and ignorance of the laws place them in the impotence of doing no more than warning and upsetting the sordid management of these private interests.¹⁶⁶

Urvina warned about the reach of the *hacendados* who were able to trick the state and were asking it to reinstate the tributary tax after having charged Indians without paying the treasury: “Not having maintained any right whatsoever against the indigenous people, they will make demands of the treasury and indigenous people will have to make large payments in the condition of poverty that it suffers.”¹⁶⁷

The new regime warned that the county judges were not able to contain the power of the regional elites. The laws to be applied required treasury agents who were inspired by contemporary political changes and strong enough to upset the custom of benefiting local, private interests.

Urvina feared that if the Indians were entirely exempted from the payment of tributes, then the population movement leaving the haciendas would be so large that the *hacendados* would come to charge the treasury for the loss of labor supply. In effect, the abolition of slavery in the same year had translated into a tremendous loss of money for

¹⁶⁶AFL/Q, Objeciones de J.M Urvina al proyecto de ley de 1854 en su artículo 50. Quito, Nov 10, 1855, 686.

¹⁶⁷Ibid., 686.

the state as it compensated ex-slave owners. According to this reasoning, Urvina extended his pardon of the *rezagos*, but delayed the abolition of the tributary tax for a set period of time.¹⁶⁸

By 1856, the collection of the indigenous contribution was declared unchargeable once more. The political administrators quit their offices, despite Congress' offer in 1856 to give them four percent of what they collected. The treasury of Chimborazo did not even have enough money to sustain the army there. The definitive suppression of the tributary tax was carried out in 1857 during the government of the radical Francisco Robles. It was a political decision, but not a voluntary one. The *rezagos* had appeared once more and, as we saw earlier, were not taxable, as the governor of Chimborazo ratified before the Minister of Finance in 1857:

The *rezagos* from 1852 to last year have not been presented, and those from earlier years are diminished to such a confusion that it is true chaos: with everything I would employ all of my force so that the Supreme Governor should place in my hands the registries of all the *rezagado* Indians; without this requirement, the treasurer will lack that income, and disorder in this branch will continue indefinitely.¹⁶⁹

It was clear that the registries could not deal with population flows and that it was this tactic of evasion that led to a political decision on behalf of the state. In the context of

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 688.

¹⁶⁹ ANH/Q, Ministerio de Hacienda Collection, box 107, Informe del Gobernador al Ministerio de Hacienda, 77.

Urvina and Robles, the state declared that the tributary tax on the Indians was contrary to the *fundamental bases of association* and in addition it was economically irrational. It was an imposition that distinguished between citizens and between classes of subjects solely based on their social and regional origins; and, in effect, it had been allowed to oppress helpless people and benefit the powerful.

That in the same class they should make distinctions between individuals and between provinces, mockin the equality of rights and duties among all of those who are associated through a pact of association; that others should place on agriculture a weight that brings it down; that others tax articles of primary necessity for life, making subsistence expensive and difficult for a large number [of people]; and lastly, that all should be to pay tribute to the poorly disguised wealthy. But these taxes are not only contrary to the fundamental bases of association, but also they are condemned by the most obvious principles of economic science.¹⁷⁰

The statistics presented by the Ministry of Finance in the 1857 are particularly eloquent. Those who earned twenty pesos annually in over valued products paid 150,000 pesos in tributary taxes, while those who had 50,000 pesos paid 19,000 pesos altogether. Making a comparison between the tributary tax of 1831 that reached 205,652 pesos and that of 1857, which was only 147,289 pesos, this functionary arrived at the conclusions that “Decrease shows either that the unfortunate race is becoming extinct or that it is migrating in any way possible. The loss of population is a fact.”¹⁷¹

¹⁷⁰ AFL/Q, Decreto derogando la contribución personal de indígenas, 21.X.1857, 745.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 655.

In order to replace this contribution, it was necessary to integrate the Indians and tax capital, not race:

Ecuador may be the Nation that most needs free arms, free work, free production, and an inexpensive life for its prosperity. When in my earlier report I asked that you free the most unfortunate class of Ecuadorians of the tribute... I censured myself bitterly because it was supposed that a Minister of Finance should not ask for the elimination of a tax that was going to leave a considerable deficit for the public treasury; and in the shadow of this affirmation, the ruin of agriculture, the stupidity and the laziness of the Indians, and their desire to pay the tribute were all invoked. It could be that I might not comprehend well the duties of the Minister of Finance; but I believe that his obligation consists in procuring the observation of the fundamental laws, having justice as a norm and gratitude towards his country as an object. And will there be equality, will there be justice, will there be freedom, with the numbers that reflects taxes in Ecuador?¹⁷²

According to the criteria that “all Ecuadorians ought to contribute to the expenses of the state,” the indigenous peoples remained tied to the obligations of all citizens; however, due to the law of November 25, 1854, they were exempted from merchant and property taxes. This measure was directed at taxing the large landowners and liberating the indigenous population.

According to various contemporary authors, the objective of this liberation was to free up a larger labor supply for the coast.¹⁷³ However, due to the way in which these

¹⁷² Ibid., 745.

¹⁷³ Irurozqui and Peralta, “Elites y sociedad en la América Andina;” Enrique Ayala Mora, *Historia de la revolución liberal ecuatoriana* (Quito: Corporación Editora Nacional, 1994).

negotiations were complementary to the abolition of the personal contribution, it is evident that the recuperation of this “lost” population also involved the political recuperation of fugitive populations in the same central highland provinces.

Such complementary measures reflected a manner of negotiating that cannot be observed in the period of Flores. There was a policy to support the formation of regions dominated by recognized free communities with collective and peasant lands. During this period, many auctioned “vacant lands” were returned to the communities and there was perhaps an even more significant issuance of lands to internal migrants, *forastero* Indians, and *arrimados* that surpassed the norms of distribution and established hierarchies within the community order. The nationalist regime issued lands to peasants who were not tied to indigenous communities, promoting the creation of agricultural cooperatives tied directly to the protection of the state for the first time in the country's history. Finally, the state itself sought to consolidate republican institutions as sources of political identity and in this sense disputed the power of regional elites and the power of the church (particularly the Jesuit order that was expelled in this process under the accusation that it had formed a republic within the Republic).

The republican notions of state and citizenship upheld in the period were accompanied by policies that sought both to construct a popular citizenship, thus reinforcing the rule of law, and to improve the situation of popular sectors through

redistribution. Urvina and Robles proposed that the state intervene to generate equality among subjects disproportionately differentiated in the social hierarchy. The state appeared as a protector of the Indians with respect to powerful private interests that were conceived of as corrupt. The discourse on equality was cited to justify a series of political decisions that tended to strengthen the Indians as members of a civil society that was independent of the landholding elites and that in regional areas was uniting through the state. This series of decisions that the regime made contributed to establishing a strong tie between the state and subaltern populations. The state affirmed that this tie would help strengthen the republican institution in opposition to the personal powers of the landholding elites. Some of the decisions seemed to signal this objective directly.

The mistrust that strong state decisions produced in the population was resolved in ways that reflected the state's intention to establish bridges for negotiation with communities. The law that abolished the personal contribution of the indigenous peoples caused riotous reactions among the indigenous communities of Riombamba county that, according to the Minister of the Interior, corresponded to the suspicion that their exemption from the tributary tax meant that they would be subjected to general contributions that would weigh on their commercial activities or that they would be forced to perform services for the state.

The indigenous peoples were suspicious, in the shadow of the reparative law that

freed them from the unjust subjection [to taxes]... They began to view the benefit that the legislature had given them as an act of true oppression and, exasperated, they gave clear signs of dislike to the point of considering arming themselves.¹⁷⁴

According to national authorities, such signs of sedition presented themselves more forcefully in Chimborazo, where the governor feared that indigenous peoples would again prepare a plan with “the cooperation of all of their race.” The governor called upon the same images that had brought about counter-revolutions since the eighteenth century, but this time the regime did not respond to this call with force. Urquina demanded that the governor of Chimborazo personally go to the conspiring parishes and establish an agreement with the communities after pacifying them.¹⁷⁵

The governor, who had been a distant figure up until that moment in the parishes and even more so in the indigenous communities, was obliged to attend to the parishes and make indigenous peoples accept the state's word that the abolition of the personal contribution did not oblige them to pay taxes on their commerce (in addition to informing them that joining the army was now voluntary). By opening up to negotiations, the state stemmed the possible rebellion of this group of artisans, peasants, merchants, and businessmen.

¹⁷⁴ AFL/Q, MIM 1858, Exposición del Ministro del Interior dirigida a las Cámaras legislativas del Ecuador en 1858.

¹⁷⁵ AFL/Q, MIM 1858, Exposición del Ministro del Interior dirigida a las Cámaras legislativas del Ecuador en 1858, I

The democratic regimes of Urvina and Robles in particular legalized and guaranteed the participation of indigenous groups in the already inevitable process of transformation. In contrast with Flores, who excluded the Indians from land ownership and commerce, this group of democrats declared the Indians as valid actors in civil transactions. They did not require special protectors because *the state had been converted into the protector of communities*. Thus, the segregation originally established by colonial residential policies that considered the indigenous settlements as irregular was dismantled. The Indians were given the capacity to possess and administer private property.

In our republican system, all [people] are equal before the law, without any difference between indigenous people and whites to acquire and possess lands without distinction and live domestically the latter in the villages of the former, and in the process ignoring the Laws of the Indies that prohibited it.¹⁷⁶

This step formed part of a process of deeper transformation of the relationship between Indians and the state, as *los democráticos* proposed a gradual transition towards schemes of civil equality. The measures that they combined included support for the communities so that their members could construct a class of peasant citizens. The state recognized the representatives who attended the courts in the name of the communities. At the same time, however, all of the components of the community were enabled to transmit

¹⁷⁶ ANH/Q De la Corte Superior de Justicia, Tierras Collection, box 223, 11.IX.1849, f. 78.

ownership of lands. The call to citizenship and compensatory measures were accompanied by a decided attack on the judicial *protectorías* of the indigenous peoples, who were viewed as part of a false system of institucional protection that the new regime wanted to replace. Thus, President Diego Noboa told the nation in 1851 of his intention to substitute the *protectoría* of the indigenous peoples for a regime of protection inspired by the concept of philanthropy.

The Indians are the ilotas of Ecuador. They make the lands fertile through their work; they provide great contributions for sustaining the harvest and the national treasury and in return they do not gain from the social order anything but a very limited sum of goods. Still, the laws dictated to protect them have benefited them, given their disadvantages of being imperfect and poorly calculating; and it takes the enlightenment and philanthropy of National Representation to blind one of the sources of humiliation that weighs down this class... The protectors, far from being the defenders of the rights of the Indians, have converted themselves into their most difficult oppressors, without the plentiful rights that they demand; they give them the least benefit.¹⁷⁷

That which in 1851 was scarcely articulated, became one of the central objectives of José María Urvina's regime. He asked for reports from the governors about how they were operating these *protectorías* and if they were fulfilling their function. In his communication with the governors, Urvina walked a line that would guide his policy: The figure of the *protectoría* had served to support the type of plundering characteristic

¹⁷⁷ AFL/Q, Recopilación de mensajes por Alejandro Noboa, Tomo II, Guayaquil, 1901, 195-197.

of the aristocratic republic's legal regime given that it had been an absent figure, having guided justice for the benefit of the white elite. The parish, where the political deputy and the landowner imposed their regime by force, did not conceive of the presence of protectors of the Indians. To appeal to the protectors of the Indians assumed a high cost for any *comunero*. This form of protection was totally outside of the reach of common Indians, who had been unprotected in the midst of local powers and thus impeded from defense in trials.

The protectors have become not only useless but also harmful to the Indians and opposed to our system of liberty and equality. They are useless because it would be possible to cite protectors in each parish, where little Indian disputes are agitated, who cannot attend or do not want to attend [to their duties] without being sufficiently paid. They are harmful because there is no civil act to which they do not respond, establishing a serious charge and an interminable protection. Thus, they are opposed to our system of liberty and equality because [protection] is prohibited to a large part of our citizenry that is not able to negotiate and to appear in a trial freely and without obstacles.¹⁷⁸

Although in principle we could suspect that behind this assertion there lay the interest to oblige the Indians to sell their lands – a less forceful vehicle oriented to the same objective of expropriating them – regional processes and the development of the situation of the communities of Licto and Tarigagua showed that such legal reforms facilitated a process of community participation in change. Various representatives

¹⁷⁸ *Ibíd.*, “Mensaje de Jose María Urvina, presidente de la república, pidiendo la supresión de las protectorias de indígenas. 25 de octubre 1854, 10 de la Libertad.”

sought to buy lands that formed part of their territorial patrimony. In 1851, the representatives of Licto had already deeded the lands of Pungala in order to sustain the reproduction of social networks. In fact, a large part of the legal changes legitimated practices of strategic access to private lands combined with the protection of common land, therefore fortifying the position of the Indians when they had to resolve conflicts before the judges.

In 1856, the *Protectorado de indígenas* was suppressed after the implementation of the indigenous peoples' right to choose their representatives in the courts and to intervene directly in cases of lesser importance and those cases involving the negotiation of goods.¹⁷⁹ This decree did not lead to Indian exclusion -- to the contrary, it facilitated a process of land appropriation because it allowed the *caciques* and community legal representatives (*ayllu apoderados*) to use different law codes and even buy some of the lands in conflict.

A positive good will be done for the indigenous class if, believing that they possessed sufficient good sense to manage their own interests, they should be conceded the faculty of making available freely their properties without needing the authorization of a functionary... It is doubtless that individual interest always watchful and perceptive in all men who have advanced to the age of judgment and reflection gives him the discernment necessary to direct his interests with certain and happy success; it is enough the simple combinations of which common sense is capable. Nature has placed it in sufficient doses among the elements that constitute rationality.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁹ Already anticipated by the legislation of 1854.

¹⁸⁰ Mensaje de José María Urvina, October 25, 1854.

2.2 Land and Community-State Negotiation.

The communities took the democratic regime's offer and considered these conditions of justice more favorable for their agendas. Therefore, there were several cases in which changes in the conception of Indians as subjects with civil and political rights could be observed. In the case of the community of Licto and the lands of Pungala, the conditions of negotiation varied between the two periods. The lands of Pungala were put up for auction in the times of Flores around 1843, but the indigenous peoples had not known of the auction and impeded Antonio Rovalino, the buyer, from taking his recent acquisition. Apparently, the police force had not been very effective at securing the property. In a trial opened by Rovalino in 1852 against the representative Alonso Llamaico, he stated that "for some simple protests unrecognized by right, his property had remained in doubt."¹⁸¹

In 1851, the *cacique* of Licto decided to take out titles of private property for the lands of Pungala, taking refuge in the modern right that would help him avoid future conflicts over the legitimacy of ownership. In 1852 various actors who had taken out titles in Pungala came into conflict over land. In his trial, Sr. Rovalino attempted to undermine the testimony of the principal representatives, claiming that they did not

¹⁸¹ ANH/Q, Tierras Collection, box 225, Causa seguida entre el ciudadano Pedro Antonio Rovalino y los Indígenas de la doctrina de Pungala sobre terrenos, 6.VII.1852.

testify as individual property owners, but rather as community authorities. His representative, attorney Bermúdez, argued that the communities no longer had legitimate representation. Maybe Sr. Rovalino thought that the conditions had not changed substantially since the times of Flores and that the new regime would recognize his titles. However, the democratic government would not favor Rovalino's arguments. The treasury Minister severely criticized the logic by which the justice system had operated previously insofar as it had assumed the whites to have been discerning subjects who could be trusted and other subjects were considered to have been incapable of objectivity and guided by the particular interests of “the Indians.”

It is about invalidating the testimonial evidence... the lawyer Bermúdez, classifying the indigenous parties as having special interests [and] supposing that they cannot be impartial in an issue involving individuals of the same class; such that under this principal so advanced, those who are denominated Spanish or whites can no longer be suitable witnesses in the cases that pertain to their class; to what abyss does the enthusiasm for litigation lead and how many errors does a bad cause produce!¹⁸²

The treasury Minister of the new regime did not rescue the legitimacy of the ethnic authority as the political representative of a collectivity, but rather he defended the right of any citizen to participate in litigation, give testimony, and demonstrate the reason for his demands. From 1854 on, the *cacique* Llamaico was able to divide the lands among the *comuneros* of both sides of the Achambo river according to the private deeds

¹⁸² Ibid., f. 111.

recognized by the treasury, thus avoiding that they be declared vacant lands. Through this movement, the representative of the Indians of Licto, Alonso Llamaico, was able to deny Antonio Rovalino the lands he believed to have purchased at auction. In this case we can see how the Indian community used liberal laws in defense of land and strategically used the language of citizenship to preserve social networks.

Something similar happened in the parish of San Miguel de Pillaro, where José Antonio Calderón pronounced the lands of Montugtusa as vacant lands. Calderón asked the governor of Pichincha to do what was necessary so that these lands could be auctioned publically, according to the laws of 1841. On the December 20, 1842, the governor declared the lands as vacant and asked that they be auctioned publically. To have some idea of the size and type of the acquisitions that this auction generated, we have to take into account that Pedro Sánchez and his family bought 5 *caballerías* at 1,000 pesos; Pablo Luis de Saa – lawyer of the justice tribunals – bought 6 *caballerías* for 1,200 pesos in the name of the Barahona and Sevilla families; and Colonel Ramón Aguirre bought 2 *caballerías* at 400 pesos and 4 *caballerías* more at 1,500 pesos. The Commander Gabino Espinel negotiated other *caballerías* of land for third parties, including Colonel Aguirre. According to documentation, the lands obtained by auction were divided among the *criollo* elite, who were already owners of haciendas, and among members of the military. The priest of Pillaro gave his testimony that the old lands of the indigenous communities were not vacant; however,

they were declared vacant lands in 1841.

On November 13, 1846, the Judicial Power declared that the lands of the community of Montugtusa were property of the community and not of the state that had declared them vacant lands in 1841. The resolution was ratified by judges of the Supreme Court in 1852.¹⁸³

Of course, it was very significant that the case of Montugtusa brought to the courts by the Indians of Pillaro arrived at the Supreme Court. The case was too significant to have been resolved by common judges because ultimately the debate centered on the status of the Indians before the state and the status of their lands, which were neither private nor *realengas*.¹⁸⁴ In other words, the questions of concern were how to define the role of collective social entities, such as indigenous communities, before the state, as well as what to do with lands that lacked legal status. All of these were themes to be studied by the executive and the national assembly given that they touched upon the issues of whether or not Indians were incorporated into the national order, whether or not they could combine their status as citizens with their status as members of social corporations with representatives, or, alternatively, whether or not they were actually members of “another nation,”

¹⁸³ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 178, Antonio Gómez de la Torre and Lorenzo Espinoza de los Monteros on October 21, 1851, and in a third instance on February 9, 1852, f. 177-202.

¹⁸⁴ Community lands guaranteed by the crown.

incorporated into the republic by coercion alone. Accordingly, the courts would decide whether or not collective lands should pass from the possession of indigenous corporations and the crown to become private property, either to be excluded from indigenous ownership or not, depending on their status. Should the Indians be viewed as both members of a special population and citizens before the state or was it necessary to choose one of the two categorizations? The answer did not come easily given that this would affect how the state dealt with the most discriminated and most well-organized sectors of Ecuador.

Flores had attempted to conserve the community formally as an entity marginalized from the process of land commercialization, while the hacienda, with the backing of local authorities, attempted to advance against the indigenous population coercively. By contrast, democratic republicanism opted for the constitution of a political pact with the indigenous population. The state did not define itself simply as a facilitator of private property, but rather it integrated a political memory into its own institutional formation. The Republic substituted the colonial state by defining land as a good for political transactions and the democrats maintained the legitimacy of the state possession of *national lands* based on the idea of popular sovereignty. Several local examples will be cited in the remainder of this chapter.

The discourse on *liberty* was complemented in a significant way by the

discourse on equality and the necessity to protect certain populations to achieve that equality. These discourses were taken into account at the moment of making decisions about the redistribution of national lands. Whereas the aristocratic republic delegated power to regional elites, the democrats sought to strengthen the state as the referent for political representation and in this sense it was favorable for them to fortify *civil society*. While the Flores regime divided lands between military members and regional elites, communities and internal migrants were those who benefited most from the redistributive policies of the regime.

The convention of 1851 established a new land partition for family and other communal land use in order to sustain livestock. The property “left-overs” that used to be considered corporative goods belonging to guilds or indigenous communities, were given over to the Public Treasury.¹⁸⁵ In the law of November 25, 1854, article 56 indicated that once the common quantity of land and “the excess of possession, in addition, above the absolute dearth of others” were determined, the government authority would be called upon to order a repartition. From there, the old communal lands would not be auctioned to the highest bidder, but rather the state would rent them to individual indigenous people or divide them into small portions among the peasants

¹⁸⁵ AFL, El Senado y Cámara de Representantes del Ecuador, Reunidos en Congreso, 11. Nov. 1854.

in order to form “agricultural associations.”¹⁸⁶

The relationship with indigenous communities had two aspects. The state recognized them as collectives –that is, as special populations that demanded a particular backing from the state to achieve equality someday, and, on the other hand, the state permitted the Indians to participate as individual subjects in litigation, lawsuits, and land purchases. This change of policy from the Flores regime coincided with the expectations of communities that had opposed the auctioning processes and the expansion of haciendas.

At the time of the auctions, the argument that indigenous communities used most frequently to defend themselves from harassment was that they had possessed the lands in question since ancient times. The rupture of ancient parameters of legitimacy had led indigenous authorities to go so far as to falsify titles, in spite of the threat of imprisonment for falsification. In contrast to state actions under Flores, there were various cases under the republican regime in which the Supreme Court defended the interests of the community despite having determined their titles to have been falsified. In 1855, Agustín Andrade demanded that his ownership of indigenous lands be recognized given that the titles of the indigenous defendants had been falsified, but his request was denied in favor of the community. Municipal authorities were put in charge

¹⁸⁶ ANH/Q, Indígenas Collection, box 174, Causa seguida entre los indios de Guaytacama y Oñas y Faces de Saquisilí, 9.IX.1854.

of collecting information about other complaints presented by indigenous groups in defense of these lands. They cited the restitution that took place in 1713, the pronouncement of their ownership in 1802, and the sale of village lands in 1823. In its final pronouncement, the Supreme Court recognized their ancient ownership and the titles that attempted to legitimate this possession, since, although they were false, they functioned in the defense of legitimate owners.

And even when beyond their merit [he refers to the documents that have been accused of being false], the Court of the District of the South should not have spoken the sentence that it mentioned, it would be enough [to prove] their robust possession not only due to the passing of so many years, but also for the deference that it has obtained in distinct legal acts such that [these documents] should serve them as an unalterable deed.¹⁸⁷

The argument with regards to the ownership of lands “since ancient times” functioned so well that several communal authorities attempted to re-constitute extensive territories. These attempts took place mostly in *realengas* lands due to the ambiguity that characterized them: They did not belong to anybody except for the king and they had been shared without boundaries by free communities, tenants, or Spaniards. In the colonial epoch, they could be used, but not owned. This was the case of the Indians of the Magdalena in Quito, who challenged the ex tenants of these lands:

¹⁸⁷ ANH/Q, Tierras Collection, box 226, Causa seguida entre el ciudadano Agustín Andrade contra los indígenas de Llaqueo sobre terrenos, 6.VI.1855, f. 174.

The cooperatives are not of the number of the lands that they call their own: nor are they of the state and if they were rented for the benefit of the Municipal government it was because a special, precarious grace of the King of Spain conceived of their use of the absolute power of which he is vested, and that for a motive of imminent necessity that temporal concession denaturalized them, [but] they always conserved their intrinsic quality of being common to a population.¹⁸⁸

In the villa of Guano, *the indigenous people of the common of Matus* that was located in the parish of Penipe and headed by Mariano Inga Cayetano and Joséfa Guamán, demanded the return of their ancient possession that, since 1840, had been occupied by Pedro García. According to Pedro García, Francisco Cordero had possessed it thanks to the king of Spain and had maintained it in “tranquil and timeless ownership” until his descendents acquired the right to sell it. In testimonies presented by witnesses it is evident that Pedro García was a buyer who had taken advantage of the auction of these lands. The community cited various arguments to justify their ownership. Firstly, they cited the territorial continuity of these *realengas* with communal lands. That which was for Pedro García an old corral for the livestock of the Spaniards, was for the indigenous representative Manuel de la Cruz Chunata the communal *páramo*, where a cave called *Pillco machay* was located.¹⁸⁹

For García, the Indians used the forest and the pastures of the *páramos* as renters

¹⁸⁸ ANH/Q, Tierras Collection, box 221, Causa seguida entre el colegio Seminario de San Luis y el ciudadano José Pintado sobre terrenos y aguas, 30.V.1845, f. 139.

¹⁸⁹ Translations from Quichua can be cave of the bird or a concept related to drunkenness. Both cases carry ritual connotations.

who paid with their labor and use of tools. The indigenous group, for their part, maintained that nobody had charged them because, although the *hacendados* wanted to charge, their ownership was so old and certain that in all lawsuits the public use of the lands had been re-affirmed.

Such ownership is so old and certain that even now, thirty-one years after they were stripped by José Antonio Lisarzaburu, they obtained their just restitution as the documentation indicates... The lands and the mountains disputed are of the community in the denunciation of Marcelo Tumaelli; do not impede the transit and the path through its places... Its restitution was disputed at the cost of its divestiture: The evidence left some doubt that in all light manifested the truth that those lands and mountains are of the commons and not of García, since repeatedly it has been declared thus, and even by the confession of the same person, who with his hand has signed the act cited.¹⁹⁰

The Indians wished to escape from servitude through a re-composition of the territory, bringing together the western slope where they had settled in an ecological level called *ceja de montaña* with the *páramos* to which they had access. These communal lands of the *páramos* bordered with those of the Indians Miguel and Lorenzo Chunata, with the river of Matus, and with the gully of Aulabug that sloped into the river Calpi. If the *páramos* were recognized as theirs, they would not have to pass through the hacienda nor pay high taxes for doing so.

In 1856 these lands were awarded to the community with a special deed and it was

¹⁹⁰ ANH/Q, Tierras Collection, box 226, Ramón Delgado Procurador del Sr Pedro García en autos con los indígenas del Común de Matus en la parroquia de Penipe sobre despojo de terrenos, 27.II.1856.

declared that these lands could not be identified as vacant again. Also, in this year lands in Chazo were returned to the indigenous peoples of the parish of Guanando in response to demands of the *cacique* Guanoluisa. The appropriation of these lands that had been ratified by judges under the Flores regime was revoked by the Urvina regime in 1854.

The judgments of Licto, Montugtusa, Guanando, and Matus were favorable for the Indians of the commons through a process characterized by efficient measuring and a public policy that promoted the collective ownership of lands, a situation that had no precedent in the country and that marked a milestone with regards to negotiations over lands. From then on, the state would oppose processes of privatization meant to benefit the landholding elite in order to gain social support for the republic set in contrast to a common enemy.

The expectation that generated this favorable tendency towards collective ownership led to the mobilizations of resources, including of those indigenous people who had previously lost communal lands and had only found “a way out” through *concertaje* or indentured work on the hacienda.

The possibility that the *comuneros* would convert themselves into tenants assumed that the lands had already passed into the hands of the *hacendado* and that the *comuneros* had no other option than to cede to these pressures. However, during Urvina’s rule, communities of indigenous *concertaje* attempted to regain control over hacienda land. This was the case of the lawsuit between the indigenous people of

Chumblin and Agustín Celis with respect to the hacienda of the same name. Ancestors of Agustín Celis had stripped the indigenous peoples of their lands in Chumblin with legal backing. The indigenous plaintiffs had considered this a lost cause, ultimately entering the hacienda as *conciertos* and *arrimados*, but in the context of the liberal government they decided to re-open the trials over these lands and demand titles from the authorities. Agustín Celis responded, “it does not favor them, nor any other deed, in the same way that the *gañanes* have never deserved to call themselves owners of the land on which they serve, having possessed *huasipungos* on the same land.”¹⁹¹ Despite Celis' demands, the defender of the indigenous people was able to force the return of the lands according to the following arguments:

...when none of them (the previous decrees) affirm to be the site in question of the property of Dr. Celis and as indicated by the evidence verified by me that the indigenous peoples have been in possession [of the land] since ancient times without being beaten in trials in a definitive way... For all of these antecedents that indicate the official documents... such as those considerations, in all times they have been worthy [of the lands] according to their ID's and other legal documents to the effect, and having in consideration *that the fate of more than 200 individuals useful to the state is going to be decided, that they remain with the production of the site that is being disputed...* V.E. official document having been appealed.¹⁹²

With this discourse, the defender of the indigenous people was able to strip the hacienda

¹⁹¹ ANH/Q, Tierras Collection, box 226, Causa seguida entre el Dr. Agustín Celis y los indígenas de Chumblin sobre la entrega de la hacienda del mismo nombre, 15.VIII.1855, f. 42. Huasipungos refer to lands for subsistence given over to families in *concertaje*.

¹⁹² *Ibíd.*, 50

of the lands under question and the indigenous people were able to take possession of them, breaking their relations of servitude. The indigenous people of Chumblin were able to re-constitute their ownership and return to being a free community. We emphasize that the argument of the defender included the necessity to rescue those individuals who were *useful* to the republic, thus justifying the need to end conditions of servitude and recognize the peasant community's ownership of these lands.

It is evident that the occupation of territory was under negotiation. That is, not only was the hacienda not being consolidated, but lawsuits that had arisen in Flores' period were being reversed as the new logics of justice offered peasants new opportunities in a democracy in construction. The risk of losing two hundred people to the subjection of a landholder was important enough to the state. In effect, to hand over these lands to this group meant at the same time to recover them for society and for the state.

In 1852, when Fernando Borja pronounced the lands of Tambillo and Malpote as vacant lands before the governor of Chimborazo, the *cacique* Crisóstomo Trujillo, declared their legitimate ownership of the property and presented the corresponding titles. Trujillo had stopped an auction in 1840 and had been able to have the lands of the community registered as communal property. Having received the titles, he precluded the possibility of future auctions, but he lacked the deed for one strip of land called Tangalama. Later, the Supreme Court of the District in effect declared Tangalama to have been vacant and ratified the auctioning of it. Yet, far from benefitting the plaintiff,

the court cited the law of Public Credit, which had been reformed and indicated “other ends” for the investment of vacant lands. Other ends included the recuperation of populations. Thus, the regime facilitated the community's access to a deed for Tangalama as well.¹⁹³

One of the critical aspects of this process of reconverting space involved the parishes. As we know, several rural parishes arose from the modern process of appropriating Indian lands that the Flores government had promoted. Several *ex comunero* Indians latched onto the process of creating parishes in order to access titles; however, the relationship between the Indians and their lands under the Flores government was so fragile that these lands could be declared vacant lands by an interested neighbor. In this nationalist context the titles generated in the formations of parishes were re-used as elements of defense before the auctions of new lands.

They no longer belonged to the treasury and were awarded to the indigenous people before the reduction in such a way that the right to property and true dominion with which they have possessed it is indisputable and thus could not be attacked by any authority – that is, it could be attacked neither by the governor of the province nor by the judge to put up for auction.¹⁹⁴

This chaos reflected the dramatic change in how the vacant land policy was

¹⁹³ ANH/Q, Indígenas Collection box 174, Causa seguida entre el fisco y los ciudadanos Crisostomo Trujillo y Fernando Borja sobre denuncia de terrenos, 7.X.1854.

¹⁹⁴ ANH/Q, Indígenas Collection, box 174, Defensa de la comunidad de indígenas de la parroquia Caguasqui, 9.VII.1849.

implemented. The ethnic authorities and communities were able to give the policy the meaning they wished as they sought titles. They had found themselves in such conditions that, sooner or later, the communal lands would be divided and if the *comuneros* did not take the initiative, others would appropriate their lands. That is, the *cacique* preferred to obtain titles as a defense tactic, in contrast to what Marta Moscoso proposed in the case of Cuenca, where the Indians refused to enter the process, boycotting the functionaries in charge of measuring the land.¹⁹⁵

For the republican state, decisions about land seem to have been based on political considerations and only secondarily on economic considerations, although the senate did include among its arguments for recognizing peasant lands the public utility of forming an internal market in the central Sierra to supply lower prices to the markets of the coast. Still, in the moment of decisions-making, their considerations were politically motivated. When the state emitted some legal measure or handed out justice, the predominant argument in state language of the time was that of the “recuperation of populations.”¹⁹⁶

The agreement between indigenous communities that perceived a return of their lands and the state that sought to recover populations implied the integration of the communities as subjects in territory in which the state was the recognized authority and,

¹⁹⁵ Moscoso, “La tierra,”

¹⁹⁶ ANH/Q Ministerio de hacienda Collection, 12.8.1843.

in turn, the source of political identity. This will to recuperate populations as a premise for state decision-making was expressed in the case of the resolution of conflicts along the San Antonio path of Tariguagua in Bolívar country.¹⁹⁷ A group of bandits had been identified that made merchants pay tolls and charged the *arrieros* for passing with their mules through public lands; they were also dedicated to theft and contraband. Flores had attempted to salvage the situation through the auction of lands and the administration of the road which passed through the hands of the *hacendado* Don Pío Flores.¹⁹⁸ The priests protested in 1844 that the lands along the path of San Antonio were not vacant lands, but rather were common lands of the old parish. With this memory and knowledge of Urvina's legal reforms, indigenous communities of Tariguagua decided to re-open the trial. They went to the priests of San Antonio to confront the neighbors who asserted that before Flores' administration, the road had been surrounded by vacant lands. However, Urvina's regime considered the roads national lands. The state offered to resolve the conflict, but only by dealing with the communities directly, not through the parish church.

The communities were asked to assume the control and maintenance of the roads in association with other sectors, breaking with the competition between white neighbors and indigenous communities in order to form an experiment composed of

¹⁹⁷ Juan and de Ulloa, *Relación histórica*, Libro IV. Cap. X, 278.

¹⁹⁸ ANH/Q, Ministerio de hacienda Collection, 12.8.1843

indigenous *comuneros* and also *arrieros*, peasants, and *mestizos* of the region to resolve the problem of land ownership as well as the problem of itinerant and irregular populations and populations otherwise absent from the census and parish registries.¹⁹⁹

In the case of the road, the solution became a key issue not only for winning over the indigenous *comuneros*, but also for achieving the re-insertion of internal migrants and bandits. In this sense, the state financed the establishment of an *agricultural colony*. The associates were provided with a medium-sized property of two *caballerías* deep and two to four meters wide along the road.²⁰⁰ This convocation was directed to the entire family that decided to settle along the road and helped to regulate and supply the itinerant populations. In the trial over the road in Tariguagua, the position of the merchant Indians was disputed. After the elimination of the tributary tax in 1857, the indigenous peoples decided not to give themselves over to work that had been obligatory and they demanded salaries.²⁰¹ The Colonial Pact was broken. In this sense, the end of this imposition was negotiated and the state was obliged to pay a salary for specialized work.

The case of the Tariguagua road in Bolívar can be understood better in the

¹⁹⁹ ANH/Q, Tierras Collection, box 230, Expediente seguido entre el fisco y varios interesados sobre terrenos baldíos del cantón Guaranda, 21-XI-1859.

²⁰⁰ A *caballería* is, according to the Mexican measurement, 4,279 areas; according to that of Puerto Rico, 7,858 areas. Two *caballerías* are around 2 hectares. Each block has 125 meters.

²⁰¹ ANH/Q, Tierras Collection, box 230, Expediente seguido entre el fisco y varios interesados sobre terrenos baldíos del cantón Guaranda, 21-XI-1859.

framework of the policies of colonialization that were initiated in the nineteenth century. There existed processes of colonialization that sought to expand the white population of the parishes for the conquest of irregular spaces and spaces peripheral to the nuclei of white and indigenous settlements. Throughout the Sierra there were irregular settlements of internal migrants and *forastero* Indians, such as that of Pungala towards the east of Chimborazo or Tarigagua towards the west or Sigsig to the east of Azuay or the lands of Zamora to the east of Loja. These lands, as we have seen in the cases of Pungala and Tarigagua, were settlements of populations linked by ethnic authorities.

The expansion of colonies of neighbors over these lands during the period of Flores was met by various forms of resistance by communities and their representatives. There are countless petitions to the treasury on behalf of white colonizers in various regions, attempting to take possession of the lands of the *ceja de montaña* and those that provided access to the coast and the eastern region, which seemed promising for the rubber and husks *boom*. In this sense, they solicited that the division of “vacant lands” be practiced among the founding families of the new colony and that the service of indigenous families be awarded to them, offering the families, in turn, the right not to pay the tributary tax over a certain period.

Since it is preferable the increase of a village to the small rent of which temporarily the government would do without, conceding the exemption of the tributary tax to a determined number of people and for a limited number of

years; that is, while the products of their industry can attend to common burdens.²⁰²

Even when the colonizers were congratulated for their civilizing initiative, the government tended to deny their requests to exempt the Indians from payment of the personal contribution circumstantially. The argument was that without guarantees of the tribute and the threat of imprisonment it was impossible to take the indigenous people from their lands or obtain extra free labor. In contrast, during the Urvina regime, a political negotiation was proposed that included negotiations with inhabitants and negotiations with a wide array of internal migrants. In the discourse of the nationalist regime the colonies were to prefer the *comuneros* that could cite old ownership and that later the lands were to be divided into equal parts *among the poor* of each parish.

In the case of Tarigagua at the end of the period of the March Revolution (1859), some of the colonial lands were declared vacant lands once more by descendents of one of the neighbors who, in the 1830s, participated in the auction of vacant lands. The defense of agricultural association members against these descendents centered around the absence of an evaluation and investigation of the lands for declaring them vacant in the first place. The members of the agricultural association defended the previous existence of some communal lands belonging to indigenous peoples of Tarigagua. Later they were supported by the *Ley de Colonos* of November, 1849, which was meant to

²⁰² BAEP, *Gaceta del Ecuador*, 8 de enero de 1843.

establish order by dividing such lands so that “by justice” they passed into the hands of the treasury. This was resolved by re-establishing the ownership of the parish of San Lorenzo (priests and *comuneros*), of the Telimbela mill, and of the lands mentioned above.

The changing policies between Flores' regime and the nationalist regime can be understood by observing how different decisions influenced regional conflicts. Peasants initiated a process of integration into national policies through projects, such as that of the agricultural association of Tarigagua, which sought to guarantee the presence of the state at the regional level. The objective of bringing together populations cannot be understood simply as a result of the application of democratic political theories by the governors. It was also about the eagerness of the state to overcome the crisis left by the interactions between Flores and regional powers and to bring under control the power of large landholders. To do so, the state had to promote processes of democratization with its legal and military resources.

Instead of forcefully displacing indigenous and *mestizo* populations to the peripheries of the hacienda and handing over lands to the “neighbors” and the *hacendados* themselves – considered the only possible market agents in the Flores regime –, the new regime enabled the Indians as equals for participating in land conversions “without any difference between indigenous peoples and whites for

acquiring and possessing lands.’’²⁰³ However, this measure was not accompanied by further land expropriations through the promotion of land sales, but rather by redistributive policies for administrating national lands. The consignment of collective lands, the validation of titles of ancient community ownership, and the issuance of titles to indigenous families for lands at the margins of community lands were all part of this process. At the same time, floating populations were recovered to produce wealth and state control. The process made both populations participants instead of victims of property constitution. Far from favoring the neighbors who would declare vacant lands, the justice system often decided to lend a political use to national lands. Thus, the regime favored the formation of parishes that would attract productive populations instead of the traditional parishes that were brought together by the church and in effect remained hidden from the eyes of the state. Regional justice proclaimed the necessity to resolve conflicts in such a way that they should come to light before the state rather than remain under the blanket of the church or Indian representatives:

The governor knows that religion unites men like an animal instinct; thus the best way to increase a growing population by a more direct reason than of the means of subsistence is to form parishes, so that the rural areas are populated by men useful for agriculture.²⁰⁴

²⁰³ ANH/Q, Tierras Collection, box 223, De la Corte Superior de Justicia, 11.IX.1849, f. 78.

²⁰⁴ ANH/Q, Tierras Collection, box 222, Expediente seguido sobre división del curato de Perucho, 24.XII.1846.

As we have seen in the last chapter, the state was not sustainable without the alliances that the nationalist regime began to weave in the period between 1845 and 1859. However, the negotiation of state backing for the popular sectors threatened by large landholder expansion was oriented in a clear way towards the strengthening of the state. Thus, although alliances with indigenous communities helped these communities resolve their conflicts, the fundamental vision that informed such backing was the conformation of potential nuclei of civil society at a local level and not the strengthening of community political representatives. The seeds of democracy for the regime were not political representatives, but rather the *new republicans or citizens recovered* from subordinate populations that were, for lack of organization and representation, deeply dependent on the political identity, protection, and justice that the state offered them.

The composition of a mixed agricultural association along the Tarigagua road permitted negotiating the return of collective lands to the indigenous community. Thus, clearly the indigenous people of the nineteenth century were already an organized social actor with political representation that had confronted the landholding elites and was capable of establishing pacts and of setting limits on the imposition of force. From that moment on, if any single actor was capable of supporting an upstart faction with aspirations of constructing a state, that actor was the indigenous population, due to their capacity to coordinate diverse groups, their great presence in the countryside, and their ability to create exchange networks.

In the period of the democrats, the state negotiated lands in conflict and processes of colonization. It supported the continuity and articulation of community networks, including members of peripheral populations such as internal migrants and *forasteros*, who, in turn, fortified the state pact with this emergent civil society and created internal tensions in a population that had previously been integrated around the figure of the representative of Indians.

The *democratic* regimes attempted to extend their alliances toward less organized sectors, claiming that reforms in favor of the formation of a peasantry with lands and legal protections was not due to pressure from the peasantry, but rather to their natural rights as citizens. Such was the experience of this regime on the eastern and western flanks of the *cordillera*. It was a significant change because the regime was opening its doors to a population less organized and less dependent on state protection. The presence of the state began to compete with the political power of elite members of the indigenous community. The communities were evidently favored by the new regimes and in turn demonstrated their alliance with the government, but so too did the *arrimados*, *forasteros*, and colonizers. The unforeseen effect of issuing land titles among *arrimados* and *forasteros* was the initiation of tensions between *arrimados*, *llactayos*, and the representative of the community, as we will later see.

The favorable negotiation that the peasants without lands made with the state opened up a new path for integration that at first was viewed as complementary to the

historical – and hidden – path tied to the role of ethnic and community authorities, the traditional articulators of social and ethnic diversity since the colony. The first arguments in defense of agricultural associations and their presence in the countryside were that these lands belonged to indigenous communities; however, it was very significant that the law of colonizers of 1849 was also cited in terms of the benefit for a new less communal peasantry. The state was attempting to establish bridges with other, less organized populations.

The results of the recuperation of populations to be formalized and offered credit could be measured in a change in the registries. The *marcistas* began by pardoning the *rezagos*, giving certain guarantees to the artisans, guaranteeing popular and indigenous participation in commerce, and issuing land titles to communities and internal migrants. All of these measures positively affected the survival strategies of the community at the same time that they permitted the settlement and regulation of populations that had been previously hidden from the state census. New migrations, particularly towards the region of Bolívar, were added to the formalization of already established internal migrations, which until then had been the object of competition between indigenous representatives and haciendas.

These factors contributed to a recuperation of the population within the registries that expressed a demographic behavior in Chimborazo that contrasted with that of other provinces. Between 1840 and 1858, the population of this province grew from 83,965

inhabitants to 120,314. This contrasted clearly with regions more populated with haciendas, such as that of Imbabura, whose populations shrank, given that Imbabura, for example, passed from having 84,741 inhabitants in 1840 to 75,285 inhabitants in 1857.²⁰⁵

One of the factors that could explain this growth was the fact that before 1854, when the pardon of the *rezagos* of the tributary tax was proclaimed, a large portion of the population was hidden from the registries. In the registries, the success of the evasion tactics of many indigenous people interested in maintaining themselves free of the personal contribution was evident. In addition, there existed internal migrations that moved populations during dry spells to the zone of Babahoyo in order to sell their products or work as planters for a lapse of up to 6 years – the lapse of the growth of the cacao plant – after which they returned to the Sierra with money with which to negotiate the access or purchase of lands (even today this practice can be observed in the province).²⁰⁶

The registries prior to the nationalist period did not measure the contribution to the

²⁰⁵ Hernán Ibarra, *Tierra, mercado y capital comercial en la sierra central: el caso de Tungurahua 1850-1930* (Quito: FLACSO, 1987). Alexander Rodríguez, *Las finanzas públicas*.

²⁰⁶ Hugo Burgos, *Relaciones interétnicas en Riobamba, dominio y dependencia en una región indígena ecuatoriana* (México: Instituto indigenista interamericano, 1970); Carola Lentz, "De regidores y alcaldes a cabildos. Cambios en la estructura sociopolítica de una comunidad indígena de Cajabamba Chimborazo," *Ecuador Debate* 12 (1986): 189-212; Chiriboga, *Jornaleros y Gran propietarios*.

population of migrants coming from the zones most congested by haciendas, such as the northern Sierra. The studies of Germán Colmenares demonstrate evidence of the migrations of the northern Sierra to the central Sierra. Between 1838 and 1858, the annual growth in the central Sierra and the south was, according to this author, 1.8 percent, while the northern Sierra grew just 0.2 percent.²⁰⁷ The impression that this region provided was that there existed few mill owners and *hacendados*.²⁰⁸ The indigenous people and the *mestizos* of the northern Sierra directed themselves to the central Sierra, seeking out new possibilities for liberty and equality. They were attracted to this region by the notion of communities and peasants with lands, merchant circuits, and a co-existence between *mestizos* and Indians.

A change in the relations between the state and civil society permitted a measurement of population growth between 1854 and 1858 that reflected why it had previously been beneficial for a segment of the population to hide itself. We should recall the phrase of the corregidor of Riobamba that “no one knows where the Indian *rezagos* are.” The migrants, *forasteros*, and *mestizos* maintained a situation of anonymity with respect to the State, but that changed in the *marcista* period. The pardon of the *rezagos* and the elimination of the tributary tax meant an official recognition of these sectors as active subjects in the production of regional wealth. Attempting to

²⁰⁷ Colmenares, "La hacienda en la sierra norte."

²⁰⁸ ANH/Q, Ministerio de Hacienda Collection, box 104, Del cantón Bolívar al Gobernador de Chimborazo, 21.VI.1844.

guarantee internal circulation, certain municipal policies also contributed to the resolution of practical problems, such as the construction of shelters and hospitals in the villages of the coast that facilitated the business of indigenous merchants from the Sierra.²⁰⁹ This political atmosphere transformed anonymity into an alliance that was measured by statistics in the registries.

These indices provide nuances to the historiography that reflect an internal migration between regions of the Sierra in the nineteenth century that were distinguishable according to the opportunities that they offered peasant sectors. The indices demonstrate that internal migrations also existed towards zones that were more politically favorable for peasant settlements among the provinces of the Sierra.²¹⁰

2.3 Democratization and Internal Community Disputes.

Indigenous representatives were better able to maneuver in the political conditions that favored negotiation with the state and the reinforcement of the community with respect to the landholding elite. In this framework, the relationship between state and communities did vary significantly. The state no longer made impositions by force, as the corregidor Ontaneda had observed, but rather negotiated and arrived at agreements.

²⁰⁹ AFL/Q, Informe de Ministro del Interior del año 1846 a la nación.

²¹⁰ Quintero and Silva, *Ecuador, una nación en ciernes*; Robson Brines Tyrer, *Historia demográfica y económica de la Audiencia de Quito: población indígena e industria textil, 1600-1800* (Quito: Banco Central del Ecuador, 1988)

This situation produced, as we have suggested, a population growth that led to the unveiling of an otherwise obscured segment of the population that had been articulated only through the ethnic authorities and had always been at risk of capture on the haciendas. The growing registry also led to an internal migration that contributed to forming a regional peasantry.

The first initiatives to provide titles for lands were effectively taken by the community representatives and formed part of a strategy for collective reproduction. Even before the law directly enabled the *comuneros* to own land and promoted the formation of agricultural associations, representatives such as Llamaico had already begun to transform lands of lower ecological levels given to *forasteros* of Pungala into private properties. Thus, when the law facilitated it, they were able to do much more. The purchasing of their own lands and the distribution of titles among social networks was a strategy to legitimate and strengthen the position of the community. The titles gave advantages to the community in the face of the *hacendado* pension for accumulating lands. Therefore, they represented an interesting alternative for communities and peasant families. However, this pact brought new challenges as well.

The deeded lands fell into hands of segments of the community in accordance to a calculation about conditions of collective reproduction and the responsibilities of the authority to the other members of the community. The community was not, however, a homogeneous unit and internal differences were shaken under these new conditions.

Land titles and the discourse on citizenship were factors that modified the position of differentiated members of the community and brought into plain view the question as to whether or not the dependence of the *arrimados* on the lands of the community ought to continue as such or whether the titles ought to be total and effective. In this sense the *comuneros* also questioned the continuity of their traditional representative before the state. There are plenty of cases that show Indian peasants who declare - in front of the governor their will to abandon their identity as protected Indians and become citizens. Among these documents we were able to find also members of the Indian political elite who prefer to be recognized as sons or daughters of mestizo mother than as descendents of a Cacique kinship.²¹¹

The new conditions opened up by the state were in part the effect of community resistance of attempts to expand colonial impositions to the peripheral members of indigenous society. It was on these members that the reforms facilitated by the democrats had the most evident impacts. *Forasteros* and *arrimados* had accessed titles to lands that would constitute part of the community patrimony and that were entrusted to the representative as the legal representative of property. In the documentation, it is evident that the property titles to which the *comuneros* accessed were not processed individually or by family, but rather according to the representative that received the

²¹¹ ANH/Q. Indígenas Collection, box 147, 1849.31.I; 1847.I.XI; 1847.20.X; box 174 1849.6.VII; 30.VI.1847; 15.IX.1847; 12.I.1848; etc.

form. Thus, in effect the issuing of titles to *arrimados* made them equal to the rest of the *comuneros* in terms of being landowners. In the same way, the *forasteros* passed from being hidden from the state to being viewed within the new discourse on equality and citizenship that located the peasant in a relevant position and reflected the regime's desire to form alliances. Although the aristocratic republic sought to break down the model of social differentiation in the community, in effect it was only able to strengthen solidarity between Indians and *forasteros* or *mestizos* still in rebellion. The regime of the democrats was more efficient at dealing with the nuances of social differentiation in order to distribute land and search for legitimacy, and ultimately contributed to the questioning of hierarchies within indigenous communities.

The representative was indeed the key figure for the administration of lands and the articulation of populations of diverse status, both formal and informal. When the representatives had the ability to purchase lands, they combined the ownership of national lands for *llactayos* with the purchase of land that they tactically put in the name of individuals, among them community *arrimados* in order to keep such lands together, since, as we have seen, diverse populations and resources consciously formed part of the communal strategy.

The process of partitioning deeded properties and the discourse on citizenship that in part brought them into a distinct category enabled them to achieve greater legitimacy in a scenario in which the state and the elite fought over the construction of civil law.

The so-called *forasteros* had been tied to the community as tenants of the land in a politically dependent status. This arrangement, which could have reflected a consensus within the community, particularly in the threatening environment of the Flores period, was renegotiated when it did not give way to a general atmosphere of democratization and of negotiations such as that which marked the relationship between the democrats and the indigenous communities.

The internal pressure on deeded lands put at risk the role of the political representative of the community. One of the most frequent causes of internal conflict was the aspiration of families with titles that belonged to the category of *arrimados* and sought options for dividing them and distinguishing them from the community patrimony. The first lands under dispute were those that covered various ecological floors or lands in discontinuous settlements, usually at the periphery of the community.

This was the case of the conflict among *those of the common of Guaytacama* in the valley close to the city of Latacunga. The authority (political power) to which they were articulated was settled in Saquisilí between the elevations of 2,900 and 4,200 meters.²¹² The *comuneros* of Guaytacama appealed to the law over communal land

²¹² The Franciscan order had established Saquisilí as an ecclesiastic parish from where a reduction would be convoked among populations settled in diverse ecological zones. The principle *cacique*, *don* Bartolomé Sancho Hacho Pullupaxi, would have been able to establish his authority in this parish after 1608 when he arranged access to water for the settlement. Saquisilí is a place of exchange to which very diverse populations went, including those of Guaytacama, Toacaso, Tanicuchí,

division, seeking to separate themselves from the *cacicazgo* of Oñas and Faces Saquisilí and thus legitimate their property. Those of Guaytacama accused those of Saquisilí of possessing their community lands. Guaytacama was in the valley while the ethnic authority was in the *páramo*. If the *cacicazgo* of Saquisilí from the times of the *cacique* Sancho Hacho had been recognized for his capacity for articulating various populations, those of Guaytacama described this relationship as illegal and inconvenient while they sought the division of the lands. With this objective they tried to untie themselves from the *cacicazgo* and identify themselves as a rural parish of Latacunga. In this process the *comuneros* of Guaytacama challenged the indigenous authority and specifically his role as the organizer of populations settled in different ecological zones. They looked for the support of the treasury, seeking protection under the category of “needy families” so that the state might partition the lands.

It is not allowed to own diverse lands in two parishes; it follows that those from Guaytacama have had to and must divide themselves in accordance with the new law among the needy families, respecting the beneficial principal that the legislator wanted to make available such division of common lands into small proportions.²¹³

Having been in a subordinate situation in the community, these peasants of the lowlands decided to partition the lands that they had used as tenants. The *comuneros* who viewed

Sigchos, and Pastocalle.

²¹³ ANH/Q, Indígenas Collection, box 174, Conflicto entre los indios de Guaytacama y Oñas y Faces de Saquisilí, 9.IX.1854.

more advantages in privatizing lands joined them. The populations of the valleys foresaw a better economic situation for them than that of the highland Indians, if these lands were assigned to them as property.

Despite the attempts at recuperating lands, including through purchase, the *comuneros* were often not able to recuperate lands from the hands of their tenants.²¹⁴ In many cases the *comuneros* who were absent due to serving as *gañanes* in an hacienda and who left their lands with *arrimados* ended up losing their rights. When the tenant did not remain on all of the land, it was at least divided among the parties.²¹⁵

However, the communal authorities knew of the risks and they were immersed in numerous trials in order to demand the return of their lands. That was the case of the lawsuit opened by Antonio Espinosa against Vicente Criollo and María Gañan in 1854 in Mulalo, near Saquisili and Latacunga in the central Sierra. Espinosa established that the defendants had informally inherited the lands of Antonio Villalba, a *forastero* Indian who had established himself as an *arrimado* on the lands of *llactayos*. For 59 years the agreement between the *llactayos* and the *arrimados* had been maintained. The *llactayos* left their lands in order to serve as *gañanes* – that is, *conciertos* on an *hacienda* –, but they maintained the agreement to divide up the goods produced by the lands that were rented to *forasteros*. However, with the new legislation that permitted the recognition of

²¹⁴ ANH/Q, Indígenas Collection, box 174, 16.VI.1856.

²¹⁵ Among other cases in Cotopaxi Mulaló see ANH/Q, Indígenas Collection, box 173, Indígena Antonio Espinosa contra indígena Vicente Criollo y María Gañan, 1834-1854.

the *forasteros*, exempting them completely from the condition that had obliged them to evade the census and helping them to obtain titles for lands informally possessed, the *arrimados* attempted to break that agreement with the *llactayos* and assume the ownership of the lands in question.

Despite attempts to recuperate the lands, the *comuneros* were not able to because the county judge of Latacunga favored the *arrimados*. The notion of an autonomous peasantry, integrated into the urban and coastal markets, along with the search for a strong central state that did not require corporatist representation, affected the strategies for articulation among populations that had been politically and economically managed by *llactayo* Indians and their political authorities.²¹⁶

The lawsuit between the Pinancota brothers and the Anrango brothers, this time in Imbabura, provides a very interesting example. The Pinancotas complained to the Supreme Court of Justice that they had been violently stripped of their lands by the parish deputies in order to return their lands to the descendents of the *cacique* lineage. The parish deputies declared as legitimate the ownership of the Anrangos, who had been the grandchildren of the indigenous authority of old. The Anrangos argued that the Pinancotas were *arrimados* obligated to take care of the sowing season and divide the production, and that they had claimed to use the plots only as a pretext for installing themselves as owners and demanding titles from the state in 1857. “Under the pretext of

²¹⁶ ANH/Q, Indígenas Collection, box 174, 16.VI.1856.

planting, splitting our mother [earth], Petrona Tallana took the medium of building a small house only as a pretext for taking care of the seeds; this weak circumstance was the reason for alleging that she has won ownership.”²¹⁷

Throughout the trial there were various testimonies that demonstrated opposition between the community and the ex-tenants. The old collector of the tributary tax, Tomas Pinancota, functioned as a witness that the Pinancotas, his family, did not have the right to the lands, but rather the Anrangos, the descendents of Francisca Imbaquingo of *cacique* lineage, had rights over the lands. According to this testimony, Imbaquingo had associated with the Pinancotas as an *arrimado*, but by the time of the lawsuit she had three grandsons serving the priest and the judges of the parish and, therefore, the lands, he argued, needed to be given to them. Trying to recover the lands, the Anrangos argued that community land ownership was reversible. Therefore, the law by which possession would generate ownership for the occupants, such as the case of colonized lands, did not apply. The Anrangos argued the following:

They [the Pinancota], calling themselves owners, have profited for several years, fraudulently not paying our parents and not having any deed whatsoever, as in reality they do not have since the lands are reversible so that the right to own them is communal for all of us who serve the government and its authorities.²¹⁸

²¹⁷ANH/Q, Indígenas Collection, box 230, Conflicto por el terreno Potrero Pata, 17.I.1861.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

According to the witnesses, the Pinancotas already owned 20 additional blocks of valley lands. Those who had worked with the Anrangos were only a section of the extended family. However, some witnesses reflected more generally on the convenience of partitioning the lands rented to *forasteros* and *arrimados*, and other witnesses were more inclined to revert to collective administration. In favor of partitioning, the Pinancotas argued that they possessed lands, which ought to be distributed with *a certain sense of social equality* in the area in which they were settled, independently of whether or not they as a family had lands elsewhere. On the other hand, they proposed that they constituted a group with a capacity for pressuring to *make itself heard*.

Without the futile pretext that we have had more than the adversaries, since communism has not been established to introduce such a scary disorder, and since, being lands of reversion, there is no other [option] than to take them away from the current owners. Being this conduct so contradictory that if the Anrangos want to recover the ownership that their great-grandparents had, supposing it hereditary with more reason than we have for retaining it, *without which no one should have been able to strip us without hearing from us first*.²¹⁹

The meaning of the transformations of space no longer appeared only as an effect of external pressures, but also as a consequence of undoing institutions. Thus, the final agreement to which these opponents arrived was that they would face each other in June during a ritual battle to resolve the conflict.

Returning to the case of the central Sierra, we have observed the process

²¹⁹ Ibid.

experienced in the community of Licto and Pungala with respect to land issue and the diversity of legal frameworks that were used by opposing parties. The conflict over lands in Pungala between three half-brothers, Felipe and Maria Cargoaitongo and Pedro Castro -- all children of Maria Cargoaitongo --, permit an examination of the complex process that the community lands went through as they were manipulated with new legal mechanisms. Pedro Castro, the product of a marriage between Maria Cargoaitongo and a white neighbor of Licto, wanted the land to be handed over as private property to his son (grandson of Maria), Mariano Castro. With this objective, Pedro Castro reconstructed the history of the titles that landed the possession of the property in the hands of his mother. He sought out witnesses that would recount the successive interventions of the community *Cacique* in Licto who had had to confirm the passage of ownership from one *comunero* to another. Paradoxically, he spoke of the strategic manipulation of titles that the *Caciques* had performed in order to secure his objective. The testimonies provided valuable information in the sense that it was evident that the ownership of the lands did not transfer from one *comunero* to another through a simple buy-sell transaction. The *Cacique* always intervened, confirming this transfer and paying money from the communal chest. The deed entailed not an individual transaction, but rather a political, economic, and demographic calculation made by the representative.

Just as the *Cacique* Llamaico intervened in the administration of lands and

populations between Licto and Pungala, the governor Santiago Paula, the principal *Cacique*, confirmed a transfer of lands located in Pungala between María Cargoaitongo and her son Pedro Castro. This transfer did not take the form of an inheritance, but rather a contract of sale and purchase that led to the son obtaining the deed.

In the Village of the glorious apostle San Pedro of Licto, in the jurisdiction of the villa of Riobamba on October 29, 1843, the governor don Santiago Paula appeared before me as the principal cacique on behalf of his majesty, my God keep him; María Cargoaitongo appeared present and put up for sale by right of inheritance and perpetual transfer a plot of more or less four of the so-called Blocks for Pedro Castro and for his legitimate wife, Ignacia Soria, for the price and quantity of eight pesos and four reales that have been received from the hand of the seller mentioned above.²²⁰

In this transaction, María Cargoaitongo handed over her lands to her son only through governor Paula. His role was complex because María and the governor appeared as *the sellers*. It was not a direct transaction in which the individual receives or sells lands personally. In each transaction, the governor was recognized by the parties involved as the seller and as the figure that confirmed the transaction with his authority. This complexity generated a tie between the actors to whom the titles were given and the representative of the collectivity. It reflected the complex adaptations of the community to the legal framework of republican civil rights. This process was generated in 1843, one of the critical years during the vacant land campaigns. We can assume that this

²²⁰ ANH/Q, Tierras Collection, box 221, Caso Carguaitongo, 26.VI.1854.

process was meant to manipulate civil rights in order to assure the inalienable right to private property and to prevent auctions.

Through this procedure, lands were sold time after time to different members of the community. Thus, in the testimony it surfaced that before the intervention of *cacique* Paula, the lands had been administered by the *cacique* Don Francisco Buesten, who had acquired lands in Pungala with money from the communal chest and later sold and gave over property titles to the already deceased Jose Cargoaitongo, who was María's father. María's father already had titles and nonetheless María turned once more to the *cacique* as the seller to hand his possession down to her son Pedro.

This information speaks to us of the antiquity of the *cacique* method for manipulating private property, but at the same time confirmed that the figure of property remained under the political control of the *cacicazgo*. It was not until 1856 when María's grandson, Mariano Castro, sought control of the property without the intervention of the *cacique* authority that this arrangement was questioned. Mariano Castro asked to dissolve this tie or verbal agreement and remain in total ownership of the land.

In this context, the other sons of María Cargoaitongo, Felipe and Ignacio, who had a much closer relationship with the community due to their category as illegitimate, fought the intentions of their nephew Mariano to privatize the lands, arguing that they were inalienable since belonged to the community. They denied the legitimacy of the

caciques that had manipulated the titles.

The defenders of the unit of communal patrimony in 1856 found themselves in an unfamiliar situation and had to use other resources to defend community lands. If the manipulation of the figure of property served to defend the lands of the community before an aggressive exterior agent, the atmosphere of the *marcista* regime favored the formation of an autonomous peasantry through a discourse of citizenship, public credit, and, above all, the stimulation of the formation of an indigenous market. In that context, Felipe and Ignacia had to turn to the justification of the indivisibility of communal lands and they had to deny the legitimacy of the operations carried out by the *caciques*. The emergence of an autonomous peasantry from the community meant that to appeal to private property played against the community.

Felipe and Ignacio had to dissociate themselves from the *cacique* of the community and deny the legitimacy of their debts. In this sense, their witnesses ratified that the *caciques* of Licto had committed many frauds and the property documents signed by them were not trustworthy. The parish deputies testified in favor of the *comuneros*. Certainly, the descendents of *comunera* María who aspired to become autonomous from the community had had to chose between the land on the one hand and the community on the other.

Such independence from the community formed part of the discourse on colonization; however, as we have seen, to colonize was not easy in a territory

characterized by multiple social networks and legal jurisdictions over the land. In this sense, the offer to integrate the peasantry into the nation was conditioned to arrangements between these “peasants” that included a long memory of strategies of adaptation for collective reproduction. The promise of an internal peasant market promoted by the state, although attractive, still remained at a very abstract level since the countryside was populated with communities that articulated populations and played strategically with available legal resources. This experience, though it spoke to the political success of the community and its admirable flexibility for appealing to distinct resources to sustain a complex social network, also spoke to the internal conflicts and limits of the image of the community characterized by a total hegemony. Better yet, it reflected the fact that this too was a society in which the hegemony was negotiated. The tension that the *cacique* authority suffered can also be observed as an effect of the process of democratization, this time at the interior of the community. This case demonstrated the aspirations of some members of the community to subvert its hierarchy. It revealed the tensions at the border between *llactayos* and *arrimados* before the constitution of an external discourse that pronounced equality. In this context new subjects were formed within indigenous society as they explored new options for social reproduction as peasants. Social conflict inside the Indian community should be complemented with evidence about the use of a language of equality in further interpretation.

This exploration took into account new expectations that had been generated by the regime with respect to equality and liberty. These expectations ran up against the limited capacity of the state to assert itself into the confrontation between indigenous peasants and local landowners. In the following chapters of this thesis, we observe how the aspiration to construct a liberal peasant citizenry constituted an abstract ideal that in practice covered fundamental collective negotiations for sustaining the state, which in turn depended on social pacts at the regional level with indigenous communities articulated by *cacicazgos* in the nineteenth century and then by unions and *communities* tied to political organizations and leftist parties in the beginning of the twentieth century. All of these negotiations were measured by organization and not by the existence of a universal citizenry that included Indians and peasants. The indigenous community negotiated political pacts that favored a social sector that was beyond the capacity of social articulation of the *cacicazgos*. In this sense, the *cacique* authority was subjected to a certain tension and was re-negotiated in contexts in which the pressure exercised by the communities had had success against coercive modes of state imposition. However, in the long run it was the indigenous community in dialogue with political organizations that had to negotiate the conditions under which the political regime would respond to conflicts involving the peasantry at the regional level. More than the capacity of the state to guarantee citizenship and civil, social, and political rights, the social reality was affected by the interaction of forces between indigenous communities, the state, and the

landholding elite.

2.4 *Garcianismo* as Counter-Revolution.

The symbolic and legal construction of a nation disposed to represent the interests of the indigenous peasantry and of an army populated by freed slaves that arrived on the scene between 1845 and 1860 clearly alarmed the landholding elite. They were alarmed not only by the images that these policies evoked, but also by the redistributive practices that this scenario introduced and by the diffusion of a political discourse on liberty and equality that opened the door to a series of negotiations with communities and even political representation as an ample social sector sought new opportunities.

After failing to impose conditions at the local level, as described in the first chapter, the landholding elite was able to reconstitute itself after fifteen years. As Ayala Mora argues, “when *Urvinismo* provoked a certain popular mobilization, even the notables of the coast felt the danger close and preferred to withdraw their support... not even the dictatorship was able to detain the dispersion.”²²¹ In lieu of the declaration of disobedience of various governing bodies of the country, Urvina attempted to move the capital to Guayaquil. However, his successor in the same radical line, Francisco Robles, went unrecognized, having come to the fore in a

²²¹ Ayala Mora, ed., vol. 8 of *Nueva Historia del Ecuador*, 194.

country with four governments: the military boss of Guayaquil was proclaimed the supreme chief with the backing of Castilla and Peruvian arms; García Moreno and the conservatives stepped forward in Quito; the vice-president Jerónimo Carrión was proclaimed the supreme chief in Cuenca; and the federal district of Loja was formed to the south and directed by Manuel Carrión.²²² As Williams notes, the rejection of popular or populist liberalism on behalf of the regional powers resulted in the division of the country into four territories as they announced that they did not recognize a central state that did not represent their interests. This division was the scenario for negotiating class identity that found expression in the government of García Moreno.²²³

García Moreno, together with General Flores, who returned to the country after his exile, called upon the unity of the opposition to “the reds” from distinct regions of the country and, united in a constitutional national assembly in 1861, they put García Moreno in charge.²²⁴ The landholding elites reacted to liberal republicanism with an interregional unity that in effect transcended the indigenous communities' capacity to organize. Urvina's army was targeted with punishments and

²²² *Ibíd.*

²²³ Juan Maiguashca, “El proceso de integración nacional en el Ecuador: el rol del poder central, 1830-1895,” in *Historia y región*, ed. Maiguashca; Williams, “Assembling the Empire of Morality.”

²²⁴ *Epistolario diplomático del presidente Gabriel García Moreno, 1859-1869* (Quito Ediciones Universidad Católica, 1976).

executions.

Juan Maiguashca has highlighted that the constitution of 1861 was the last constitution inspired by the democrats and that represented the federalist program of the Liberal Party, which attempted to generate voting practices from the parish to the provincial level for the election of governors. In contrast, García's regime expressed its vision of order in the constitution of 1869, which established the executive's prerogative to name and remove the governors, (county) political administrators, and parish deputies.²²⁵

According to Andrés Guerrero, substantial elements of political power in Ecuador were configured during García's regime. The state reinforced the power of parish deputies, who supported a renovated process of *hacienda* expansion and exercised the coercive power complementary to the paternalistic power exercised by the *hacendados* over the peasant populations, which Guerrero has called *the ethnic administration of populations*. García's state represented the unity of the landholding elites, the articulation among local powers, and the organization of the central state, the governor of Indians and the political deputy being particularly relevant in this scheme. In local space, the *gamonal* power (a racial power strongly symbolized in paternalistic language) characterized the *ley de la costumbre*.²²⁶ In Guerrero's

²²⁵ Maiguashca, ed., *Historia y región*, 364.

²²⁶ Larson, *Trials of Nation Making*; Guerrero, "Curagas y tenientes políticos."

proposal, this law survived on the local level even when the republican regimes after García's government introduced democratic discourses of representation once more.

In the interpretation offered by Maiguashca, during García's regime there was a process of state consolidation as a result of a tension, “an intermediate place between two extreme positions”.²²⁷ Maiguashca referred to the underlying conflict between two groups, the first characterized by the alliance forged during Urvina's regime between the indigenous peasantry and the liberal party and the second by the origins of the conservative party of which García Moreno became its historical leader and which resulted from the unity between landholding elites that reacted against the articulation of the first group and in response to the failure of their own strictly local strategies of control.²²⁸

In effect, the García regime served as an example for those who attempted to portray the state as a mirror of the interests of a class, in this case of the landholding class that configured a central state even more sophisticated than that which existed in the Flores period. The García regime was accompanied by powerful narratives about the Catholic nation that would have to redeem the Indians from their exclusion through submission to salvation at the hands of the landholding elites and the church,

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 369

²²⁸ Francisco Salazar, *Encuentro con la historia: García Moreno: líder católico de Latinoamérica*, eds. Margarita Borja and Yanko Molina (Quito: Apostolado de Nuestra Señora del Buen Suceso, 2005)

while in the meantime the state unleashed a repressive apparatus that lacked precedent.

In the period of 1861 to 1875, a clear attempt was made to block the social processes and overturn the legal process negotiated by Urquina in the legislation of 1854, especially with respect to the freedom of mobility of the *conciertos*.

Also, declarations of empty lands continued once more. In direct opposition to the legislation of 1854, the García regime established regulations to control work and impede the mobility of *conciertos*. The regime also backed the return of labor themes to municipal jurisdiction. Even the southern railway that was initiated during the García regime reflected the re-orientation of the alliance of the landholding elite. The state would try to replace the San Antonio road of Tarigagua, the natural access road between the central Sierra and the coast which had experienced processes of democratization, with a bridge between the zone of *haciendas* of Alausí and the coast in order to articulate the regions. The regime wished to weave an alliance between the agro-export elite of the coast and the landholding elite of the Sierra that would be directed under the guiding principles of Catholicism.

This display ought to be understood as a reaction in strict competition with alternatives of hegemony – particularly with a popular republicanism -- with serious implications with respect to the definition of power and property. We cannot understand García's regime and its legacy as a modernizing evolution of the

landholding elite with regards to expanding world markets. The immediate suppression of slavery, the pardon of the *rezagos*, the suppression of the tributary tax, and the organization of militias, such as those of Taurus, had all been objects of fear and had promoted the political organization of the conservative elites and the coastal elites.

This regime represented the sophistication of a state that imposed itself on the indigenous peasantry without negotiation. The regime re-activated the obligatory service of the indigenous peoples for the construction of public works and reinforced the collection of tithes for the church, while the *hacienda* expanded under the banner of “vacant land” declarations. The most notable encounter of García's state with indigenous communities occurred in the central Sierra in Cacha and culminated in the execution of Fernando de Daquilema, the presumed king of Cacha (near Riobamba), along with other insurgents.²²⁹

2.5 Conclusions.

The Flores' period produced a political regime without the capacity for negotiation that culminated in its dismantling through a process of resistance and then

²²⁹ Albornoz, *Las luchas indígenas*, 50-54. See about Fernando de Daquilema, Piedad Costales and Alfredo Costales, “Fernando Daquilema,” in *Llacta*. Año I, no. 2 (Quito: Instituto Ecuatoriano de Antropología y Geografía. 1964). Hernán Ibarra, *Nos encontramos amenazados por todita la indiada: el levantamiento de Daquilema, Chimborazo 1871* (Quito: Centro de Estudios y Difusión Social, 1993).

uprising that proclaimed the illegitimacy of the regime. The period of the democrats or *marcistas* (1845-1861) demonstrated that the transformations taking place that involved the formation of a republican regime and a land market could be – or even had to be – negotiated processes that involved agreements with indigenous communities for the re-constitution of regional space and of the relationship between the state and regional populations. The absence of insurrections in this epoch was not due to the defeat of indigenous communities with respect to a triumphant and overbearing landholding elite, but rather due to the negotiation of a peasant position within processes of change. Negotiations about a re-insertion into civic life, the end of the tributary tax, land ownership, and even Indian citizenship began to strengthen the communities before the precarious projects of the landholding elites.

Indigenous communities can be viewed as highly organized social networks in the local arena that had representatives capable of presenting lawsuits and actions in favor of the commerce of the community. They were able to negotiate with the state since they were capable of articulating populations and mobilizing them, but they also used current and legitimate legal categories at their convenience. In addition, the communities identified the change in political winds and were able to ally themselves with certain national elites in order to take on a common enemy. The *marcista* regime that was at first only a weak, regional group saw in the indigenous communities and informal populations a potential source of support that was expressed not only

through their alliance and the fall of Flores, but also in the re-insertion of populations and the creation of agricultural associations with state backing. If the popular backing for this regime could not be measured by electoral means, since the majority of illiterate people of the country could not vote until the 1970s, the backing could be measured by the lack of riots and insurrections during the period, the tendency to favor peasant interests *vis-a-vis* the *hacendados* in local trials, and the popularity of new identities tied to discourses on citizenship and liberal republicanism.

When the discursive environment of the state did not offer a pact for integration, as had happened during the Flores regime and once more during the regime of García Moreno, community ties grew stronger. The regimes of liberal democratic orientation, such as the radical liberalism and democratic republicanism of the nineteenth century, sought out negotiations with communities that were ultimately the most organized sector of “civil society” and the most capable of offering support for the state to insert itself in regional power. The communities could mobilize political support, move resources, and take territorial control. The agreements with democrats always entailed a danger as the state sought to place itself at the center of political referents and loyalties. The democratic environment established expectations among the peasants before the state, but unexpectedly weakened the alliances between peasants and *comuneros*, *llactayos*, and *arrimados*, who had all served to exercise pressure to take down the regimes that had been maintained by force and exclusion. In this way, the democrats created their

own crisis since they generated the union of their adversaries while to a certain degree they divided their own bases.

More than the state's capacity to guarantee citizenship and political, social, and civil rights for the peasantry, it was the interaction of forces among indigenous communities, the state, and landholders that marked a significant social and political change. In fact, this process of empowerment of indigenous communities had unexpected effects in the long run on the conditions of negotiation between the peasantry and the state. The issuance of titles to indigenous *comuneros* that would be a negotiated strategy between the governor of Indians and the liberal regime to avoid further auctions, produced the formation of a group of peasants with titles that in certain areas of the central Sierra coexisted with indigenous communities articulated by *cacicazgos*, such as those of Licto, Pillaro-Montugtusa, and Guano, among others that, as we will see in the following chapters, participate in the negotiation of power in the decades after the formation of the national state. The unforeseen effect of the issuance of titles among the *arrimado* Indians and *forasteros* was the outbreak of conflicts and, to a certain extent, the erosion of the ethnic authority within the community, which led some *comuneros* to leave the community and offer their allegiance to the state from a considerably more vulnerable position as individuals who aspired to the rights of citizenship. Certainly, the descendents of *comunera* María, who wanted autonomy from the community, had chosen to distance themselves from the community to seek other

opportunities as independent peasants.

The tensions inside the indigenous community, however, did not destroy the community nor did they suppose the entrance of these actors into relationships of dependency within the hacienda. The process in the central Sierra led to the emergence of a peasantry that coexisted with the communities, particularly in the areas where there was a relatively strong and autonomous peasantry with respect to the *haciendas* that could seek alliances with the community to weave regional strategies of resistance, according to the historical pattern we have described.

Peasants, indigenous communities, and haciendas coexisted in an unresolved tension in the central Sierra and always sought to support and negotiate support from the state, marking clear political cycles of the progress and regression of their respective agendas. The processes we have described in the central Sierra in the nineteenth century greatly affected this region that was later characterized by the presence of peasants and communities that coexisted in a sustainable way and in a better position for resisting the expansion of the *haciendas* than in other regions of the country. Not even in the decades in which the conservatives predominated were the processes of *hacienda* expansion successful in the zones of Tungurahua and Bolívar.²³⁰

Communities were regenerated through resistance and pacts in the central Sierra, as they formed social networks of diverse populations and social settlements in

²³⁰ Ibarra, *Tierra, mercado y capital*.

“archipelago.” Tensions within the community often led to the conformation of a peasantry that at times renounced ethnic identity, declaring themselves citizens.²³¹

However, this peasant political activation was not able to articulate itself into a hegemonic project. The challenge of weaving alliances among peasant communities through an inter-regional political organism would be assumed later in the twentieth century. The peasant mobilization and pact previously described awoke the reaction of the landholding elite of various regions in the country against that which was viewed as the advance of freed blacks and Indians, themselves freed from the tributary tax and called upon to create an internal peasant market. In this sense, recent literature highlights the fact that García's state innovated and strengthened the landholding elite in reaction to a popular republicanism that had integrated liberal leaders, indigenous communities, and peasants. This interplay between communities, peasants, and the state was carried out at the regional level. The indigenous communities and peasant associations and individuals that supported the democrats' program were not in the conditions to weave together a social network on the national level. In addition, their elite allies were divided and the liberal party could not weave together a national network either.

In the short term, the most important effect of the process described was the reaction produced between the landholding elite of various provinces. This reaction

²³¹ ANH/Q Indígenas Collection, box 147, 1849.31.I; 1847.I.XI; 1847.20.X; box 174, 1849.6.VII; 30.VI.1847; 15.IX.1847; 12.I.1848.

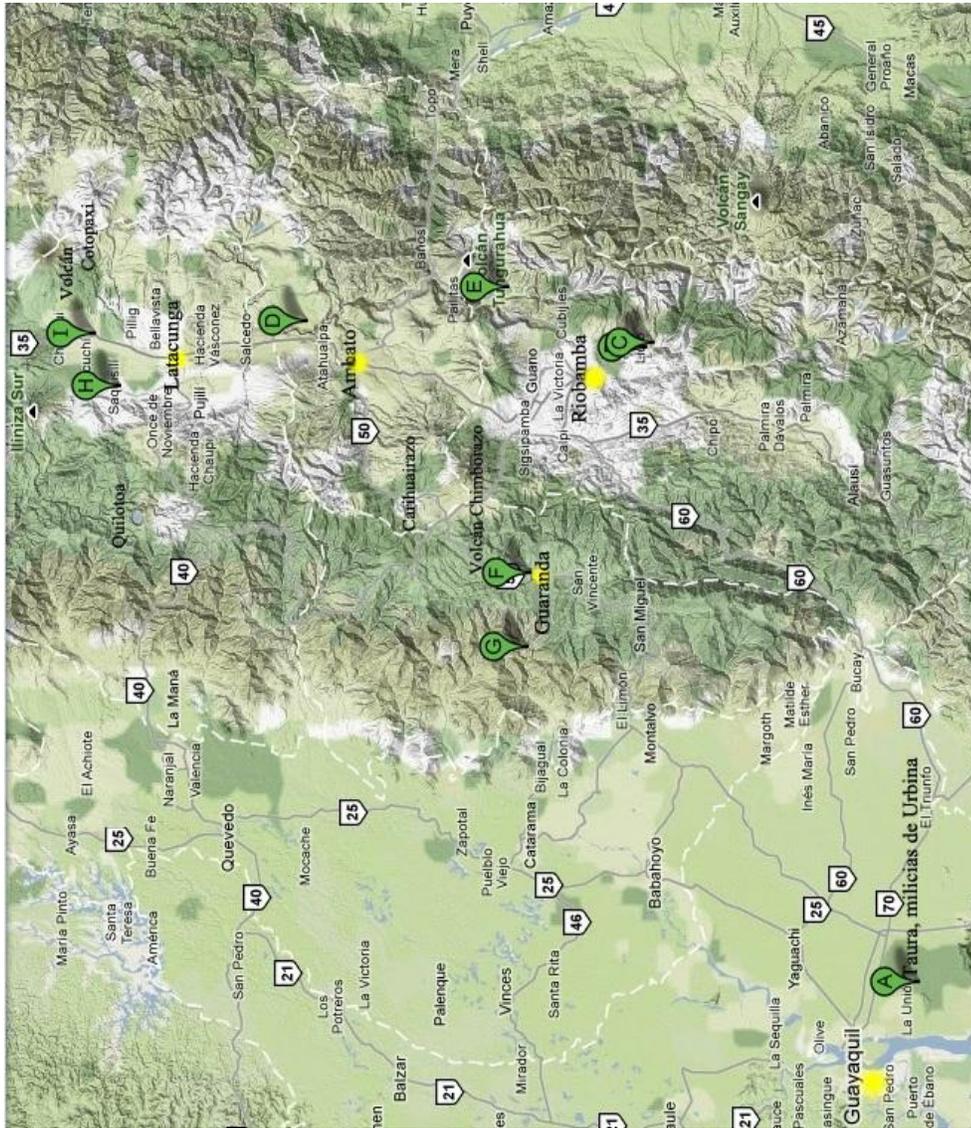
produced an authoritarian state based on a colonial articulation of the indigenous population. The reaction that popular liberalism produced can be observed in the documentation that questioned the entrance of the Indians into an alliance with Urvina as a danger not only to agriculture, but also to morality and civilization. Images of the Taurus as a racial threat can be viewed in documents that describe them as sowers of terror who looked like cannibals.²³² However, these images of fear required something more than a discursive analysis to show the threat that constituted popular mobilization. The territorial possibilities of these threatening alliances were fundamental to show that the state institutionalization that arose in reaction to this threat was in constant tension with a more democratic version of republicanism. The process we have described left a double legacy. It created the conditions for and the memories to justify the formation of new, even more profound articulations between the liberal party and indigenous communities of the central Sierra.

On the other hand, the legacy also marked the regional limit of pacts between the state and the well-organized sector of civil society. Neither the liberal party nor the

²³² For a study about the role played by racism in the repression of liberal radicalism in Esmeraldas in 1913 Ecuador see José Antonio Figueroa, “Guerrilla y montoneras afro-descendientes en la revolución liberal,” in *Colección Bicentenario* (Quito: FLACSO, 2010). The work of Mercedes Prieto describes the mobilizing role of anti-popular reactions that fear played among the liberal and conservative elites, this time in the period of 1896 on, when the liberal revolution began to institutionalize (theme of chapter two): *Liberalismo y temor: imaginando los sujetos indígenas en el Ecuador postcolonial, 1895-1950* (Quito: FLACSO Ecuador and Abya Yala, 2004).

indigenous communities were able to generate organizations with national scope. They were not able to impose a hegemonic force with national impact in order to sustain the pacts and deepen the transformations without losing control of the state. We should insist that indigenous communities constructed alliances with democratic factions of the political regime in order to introduce a peasant agenda into republican policies. This generated processes of democratization, as will be further clarified in chapter three. However, these alliances that demonstrated significant experiences of transformation did not achieve a national transformation and suffered from processes of counter-revolution. After a second attempt to retake power, which took place with an alliance between radical liberals and peasants between 1888 and 1897 (theme of chapter three), the regional elites once more came together to prevent the formation of a democratic hegemony as they opened a path for so-called *gradual democracy* and thus opened a regional space for the liberal party as they impeded any profound transformation in the Sierra. They strengthened their municipal power and attempted a top-down modernization that did not take into account the peasantry. The consequent crisis will be the topic of chapter four.

Ultimately, the attempt at constructing a democratic hegemony was not possible in the nineteenth century, but, as we will continue to demonstrate, its emergence in the 1930s and 1940s was made possible by a long history of interaction and cooperation between leftists, indigenous communities, and peasants.



Map 2 – Negotiated Transformations (1845 – 1861).

Symbol	Province	County	Parish	Place
A	Guayas	Guayaquil	Taura	Taura
B	Chimborazo			Licto
C	Chimborazo			Pungalá
D	Tungurahua	Pillaro	San Miguel de Pillaro	Montugtusa- Tasinteo
E	Chimborazo			Matus
F	Bolívar			Guanando
G	Bolívar		San Antonio	San Antonio de Tarigagua
H	Cotopaxi	Pujilí	Saquisilí	Guaytacama
I	Cotopaxi	Latacunga		Mulaló

Table 2 - Negotiated Transformations (1845 – 1861), Map 2.

CHAPTER 3: *Montoneras*, Radicals and Indians: Popular Contention

Integration and Negotiation over State Sovereignty during the *Liberal Revolution* (1884-1897).

This chapter observes the breakdown of the conservative regime and of its fragile and ultimately failed program of modernization. “*Progresismo*” (1875-1884) was another process of change in which the peasantry played a crucial role as a group that pressured for state reform. Military alliances between radicals and peasants were woven that led to the formation of a radical liberal political movement and subsequent confrontations throughout the countryside against the conservative party. This chapter concludes with the description of a complex process of post-war negotiations between the liberal army, whose military heads and intellectuals formed the Constitutional National Assembly, and the civil populace, including members of indigenous communities, *conciertos*, and free indigenous people, as well as peasants from several regions between 1896 and 1897. We will observe how the radical army made alliances on the coast and in the Sierra that allowed it to constitute itself as a movement. In the second part of the chapter, we observe how the contrasting nature of class relations at the regional level impacted negotiations between revolutionary groups and the state. The configuration of regional elites and the position of communities and peasants at the regional level, as well as the positions that both

classes occupied during the war, were important elements in the moment of negotiating post-war pacts.

The chapter examines the peasant involvement in the liberal wars as a factor that modified the possibilities for negotiation of a state modernization “from above” during the processes that immediately followed the military triumph of the liberal army (1895) as the National Assembly attempted to negotiate peace at the provincial and national levels between distinct social circles involved in the liberal regime.

The chapter documents indigenous strategies for influencing the liberal regime during this post-war negotiation. They sought to air their own regional conflicts with the traditional landholding enemy and at the same time negotiate their political backing of the liberal regime in order to establish a new type of sovereign state. Varying opportunities arose in provinces of diverse political and social composition -- Pichincha and Azuay were characterized by a high concentration of haciendas and a dedicated political militancy for the conservative cause; in Tungurahua and Bolívar the hacienda did not have a dominant presence, but rather still competed with the peasantry and free communities. In these two provinces elites also found themselves divided and circles of liberal elites from provincial cities stood out as possible allies of the regime. The chapter concludes with a discussion about the legacy of post-war negotiations beyond the successes or failures of the National Assembly.

The legacy of this process has only been partially understood. The state was defined as the restorer and protector of subaltern classes with respect to the *gamonal* threat, which was painted as a *public enemy*. Beyond the focus on protectionism that many authors have written about, this discourse reflected a negotiation between communities and the recently founded liberal state about how to reduce the influence of the landholding elite in the justice system. It also reflected notions of land as a collective and national patrimony (not only as private property) that could be subject to civil rights considerations. The concept of reparations arose from practices of real negotiation that the peasant communities had with the state in formation. This state became viewed as a potential source of “positive discrimination” for communities harmed by internal colonialism. The meaning of this reparation function with which the liberal state was described from 1896 until its crisis in 1922 varied notably in later periods as the following chapters indicate. The discourse on protection was an answer to the weight that regional elites had acquired in Pichincha, as well as in Guayas. In the 1910s, the legacy of the state as a repairing entity was associated with Public Assistance haciendas. Yet, these haciendas engaged in labor-for-debt, which constitutes a lesser-known practice during the promotion of liberal and conservative urban *obrerismo* that ran contrary to political alliances with the peasantry (a theme of chapter 4).

Nonetheless, the conception of the state as a *repairing* entity constituted a

legacy of the republican experience of the nineteenthth century that promoted expectations of an advancement of sovereignty with a popular base in the 20th century. As this thesis will seek to prove in its final two chapters, this discourse in turn created the possibility for a dialogue on social rights between indigenous communities, workers, and peasants, on the one hand, and leftists parties and the state, on the other hand, during the period between 1926 and 1945. This dialogue ultimately resulted in legal reform and opened opportunities for productive negotiations over land access and thus contributed to a political democratization with organized bases.

3.1 Historiographic Perspectives.

Ecuadorian revisionist historiography has understood the Liberal Revolution within a broader narrative in which transformations in the Ecuadorian state have been explained as the effect of capitalist pressures and the elites' capacity to process these pressures.²³³ Within this narrative, the Liberal Revolution represented the displacement of the conservative elite of the Sierra from state control. It also represented the gradual rise of the commercial and financial bourgeoisie who were linked to the cacao industry and who had begun to modify the state in 1875, leading to its fall in 1895. From the point of view of the *Nueva Historia del Ecuador*, the

²³³ Quintero and Silva, *Ecuador, una nación en ciernes*.

political process and not just economic pressures was also crucial to the beginning of modernization. Yet, this reading only considers political decisions made *from above* to have contributed to state transformations.²³⁴ In this framework, the year of 1895 is considered the moment in which the “landowning state” evolved into an “oligarchic state” in its classic conception²³⁵: a state that facilitated agricultural exportation and attracted foreign investment and in which large agrarian properties persisted along with a heterogeneous labor supply. For Juan Maiguashca, the Liberal Revolution was a period of state centralization that, instead of contradicting the “landholding state” entirely, continued the legacy of centralization from García’s regime.²³⁶

According to Enrique Ayala’s thesis, the agro-export elite had maintained the aspiration to access control of the state during a good part of the nineteenth century, but only achieved that control when the bourgeoisie – the commercial sector of the agro-exportat economies – constituted a *national class*.²³⁷ In this reading of “who were the reds,” he describes the bourgeoisie as an urban group that controlled the

²³⁴ *La Nueva historia del Ecuador* is a collection of volumes that attempts an alternative interpretation of the country’s history to that which historicism had offered. Its immediate antecedent is the sociology of the 1970s in which the agrarian reforms of 1963 and 1974 were predominantly studied along with the implications of debates over dependence in the context of the Ecuadorian modernization. *La nueva historia*, with Enrique Ayala Mora leading the way, offered a series of analytical and critical monographs on the role of the elites and their support to the construction of a modernization constructed from above.

²³⁵ Quintero and Silva, *Ecuador, una nación en ciernes*.

²³⁶ Maiguashca, ed., *Historia y región*.

²³⁷ Ayala Mora. *Historia de la revolución liberal*.

commercial capital, importers and exporters, and bankers linked by their origins to the great cacao landholdings, but who had established relative autonomy and even economic hierarchy over the agro-exporters.²³⁸ For this author, they had the capacity to bring together – in a hegemonic exercise – a national army that integrated a diversity of actors, permitting them to take the capital after having traversed the country and constructed a new regime with their own cultural and political matrix: secularism. In this sense, the army and the secular state have been characterized as the parents of the Liberal Revolution.

In this perspective, the greatest change that the Liberal Revolution brought was the conformation of a system of coercive peasant mobilization, on the one hand, and a state that generated more impersonal and modern measures through which a democratic middle-class could act, on the other hand. In the meantime, liberal discourses came to substitute Catholic confessionism. For Ayala, secularization permitted a separation between civil society and state, generating necessary conditions for the origins of civil rights.²³⁹

This reading is found in Ecuadorian literature along with the tendency proposed by other authors that forms of domination did not change substantially.

²³⁸ Chiriboga, *Jornaleros y gran propietarios*.

²³⁹ Enrique Ayala Mora, *Lucha política y origen de los partidos en el Ecuador* (Quito, Edit. Universidad Católica, 1978). Agustín Cueva also argued along these lines, *El proceso de dominación política en Ecuador* (Quito: Editorial Voluntad, 1973)

Highlighting an agreement between liberal elites and landholding elites of the Sierra, these authors have stressed continuity.²⁴⁰ Andrés Guerrero's thesis in part subscribes to this vision, although within a distinct theoretical framework. He has maintained that although there existed a transformation of state rhetoric that was no longer repressive and began to represent the state as a source of protection for the Indian race, nonetheless true power, which lay at the local level, continued to be held by landholding elites. In his reading, to speak in the name of the nation that included indigenous peoples constituted a mechanism of ventriloquism that merely served to legitimate a new elite class in control of the state, but this did not lead to a change in the position of the Indians neither with regards to society nor with regards to the state. Through a rather quick deduction, Guerrero has assumed that there were no indigenous or peasant political movements between the nineteenth century and the 1990s and, therefore, indigenous resistance can only to be identified inside the hacienda and in the language of the moral economy.²⁴¹

For Guerrero, the discourse on the abolition of *concertaje* and the redemption of the Indian race was a rhetoric that served to affirm the legitimacy of the state regime of the coastal elite, while forms of ethnic domination were maintained outside

²⁴⁰ Quintero and Silva. *Ecuador, una nación en ciernes*.

²⁴¹ Guerrero. "Una imagen ventrílocua." This vision also integrates the early work of León Zamosc, who compares the peasant mobilization in various countries of Latin America: "Luchas campesinas y reforma agraria."

of state circuits and within personal relationships in rural spaces. Mercedes Prieto, Juan Maiguashca, and Kim Clark have proposed that liberalism did introduce a new national narrative, mechanisms for social integration, and state centralization.²⁴² Prieto suggests that this transformation, together with expressions of cultural transformation like the emergence of a scientific and legal debate over the institution of *concertaje*, would have to be understood as a response to the peasantry's threatening presence. In other words, the liberal regime had something very important in common with García's state – it encountered peasant mobilization and formed a state in reaction to it (based on fear, Prieto suggests).²⁴³

The paradox of the liberal state for Prieto is the opening of a path for the peasantry's hierarchical integration: a protectionist discourse and the allegorical appearance of the Indian in the narrative on origins of national identity, which was, nonetheless, combined with a series of discourses that characterized the Indian as a racial enemy. For Prieto, although the Indians were present in the civil wars and to a certain point they forced a discussion over the forced work of the *concertaje* in the liberal assembly, the colonial frontier was re-established during the era of the Liberal Republic. The protectionist discourse of the state in this sense was a foundational myth of the liberal state whereas colonial frontiers were left to revitalize themselves.

²⁴² Prieto, *Liberalismo y temor*; Maiguashca, "El proceso de integración nacional;" Clark, *The Redemptive Work*.

²⁴³ Ibid.

From this perspective, the Liberal Revolution gave political power to a bourgeoisie that was not industrial and that did not imagine converting the masses into producers and consumers; a process of state secularization advanced that permitted the formation of an urban middle-class with a democratic political culture; and at the same time it guaranteed the landholding elites control of the peasantry, thus defrauding one of its key allies during the war.

The arguments of Ayala and Prieto are well sustained on empirical evidence of a liberal state that created an institutional modernization and activated a series of urban, liberal circles, but other arguments are needed to respond to Guerrero's question about whether the peasantry entered into politics with the Liberal Revolution or maintained the exact place it had held during the García regime – in the *gamonal* local sphere. A look into the Liberal Revolution from the point of view of the complexity of the composition of the parties involved and the entrance of the peasants into war and post-war negotiations is indispensable. The entrance of peasant *guerrillas* of the coast -- *montoneras* for the liberal army -- helped shape how we interpret the radical orientation of the Liberal Party. The military and political options for radical liberalism had to incorporate a growing and complex range of popular actors that acted as *guerrillas* between 1884 and 1895, with two episodes of general confrontation in national territory in 1884 and 1895. The transformation required the integration of more forces than those that the political regime had been willing to

integrate up until that time and supported the construction of new, national political identifications. This process formed the political culture of the radical circles and of the *montoneras*.

The coalition between the radical liberal army and the indigenous communities of the Sierra was particularly significant since the capacity of liberalism to triumph in the Sierra and to weave a national political strategy depended on it. This chapter explores the fundamental elements of negotiation between indigenous communities and peasants of the Sierra and the National Assembly in the first year of post-war organization. Of course, these indigenous communities found themselves in diverse situations. Some were subjected to a regime of *concertaje* within the haciendas, while others were external to the haciendas. However, both groups were besieged by the landholding elite. The free *comuneros*, as we have seen, linked rural and urban settlements and in some specific cases *trajines*. The communities were ethnically diverse and integrated peasants and *forasteros*. What were the fundamental challenges that the state had to assume in this early moment of reform in order to strengthen their peasant allies politically, and what were the observations that the communities themselves made? Through the negotiation of several conflicts in distinct regions, we will observe how the social composition of the provinces was taken into account by the state. In the same way, this chapter documents how negotiations generated a model of conflict integration and of gradual and selective

democratization comparable to other Latin American cases. This will help to explain the protectionist image of the liberal regime and clarify – over a much longer period – the options available to actors that pressured for the democratization of the state system from below.

As Alan Knight has posited, the mobilization of a complex diversity of actors of various class identities with differing regional and national political loyalties cannot be evaluated according to ideology.²⁴⁴ Revolution creates “windows of opportunities even when whether such opportunities were going to be taken advantage of would depend on later events that would themselves be the product of social and political conflicts.”²⁴⁵ In this analytical perspective, the Ecuadorian Liberal Revolution was not an aborted revolution, but rather a key moment for longer, but persistent processes in which subjects of colonial relations entered the political arena.

The process described here is, in addition, a case of gradualism in the sense that the transformations the peasantry demanded were not entirely fulfilled, but rather the peasantry pressured for adaptations and transformations that the state and “third parties” processed through institutions of gradual integration, redistribution, and emancipation. In the case of the civil wars in the Caribbean at the end of the nineteenth century, Rebecca Scott has posited that the participation of the slave

²⁴⁴ Alan Knight, “The Mexican Revolution.”

²⁴⁵ Joseph and Nugent, eds., *Everyday Forms of State Formation*.

population in militias was substantial since – independent of the immediate or gradual result of the abolition of slavery – it signaled the overturning of social relations. In accordance with the theory of means of production and particularly the work of Carlos Sempat Assadourian, the means of production in Latin America (characterized by a heterogeneity of forms of work linked through colonial ties, the politization of slaves, and the dispute over emancipation and the construction of the sovereign state) determined the rationality of the ties that integrated the social totality.²⁴⁶ Along the lines signaled by Assadourian, Scott's work gives us the key for evaluating the revolutionary process as a process in which the primordial factor for breaking colonial ties is political. Politics represent another principle of totality introduced into the Latin American context from the popular position.²⁴⁷ From Scott's work arose a series of historical reflections about the relationship between fights over labor emancipation and the development of the political field in Latin America that are important to put into perspective questions about the Liberal Revolution and the value of the indigenous peasant politization in Ecuador at the end of the century.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁶ Carlos Sempat Assadourian, *Modos de producción en América Latina* (Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI Editores, 1975), 7-21; 47-56 and 71-77.

²⁴⁷ Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba*.

²⁴⁸ For example, the work of Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba*. In the Caribbean as well, Mimi Sheller, *Democracy After Slavery. Black Publics and Peasant Radicalism in Haiti and Jamaica* (London: Macmillan Education Ltd., 2000); Mallon, *Peasant and Nation*. For an account of one of the most memorable wars of the Andean region, the war of one thousand days in Colombia, see Gonzalo Sánchez and Mario Aguilera, eds.,

As it has been observed in other Latin American contexts, the civil wars were scenes in which a certain degree of revolutionary transformations were experienced. In these processes, the subaltern populations were shaken and their intervention in political negotiation was legitimized. Various authors have signaled how this scenario constituted a crucial moment for observing the political empowerment of the peasantry and how they were constructed as national subjects with rights, despite the harassment they suffered at the hands of republican institutions at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Their participation in processes of mobilization and collective action were processes that left them with a capacity for pressuring that ultimately they did not give up. However, a period of institutionalization followed this collective mobilization and thus requires a close analysis of continuities, transformations, and opportunities that the revolutionary process inaugurated.²⁴⁹

The historiography of various Latin American countries has identified how popular involvement in the militias during civil wars across the continent between the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century substantially modified the capacity of subaltern classes to negotiate fundamental themes, including

Memoria de un país en guerra, los mil días 1899-1902 (Bogotá: Planeta, 2001). A work on the incorporation of the peasantry, state reform, and authoritarianism, see Richard Turits, *Foundations of Despotism. Peasants the Trujillo Regime, and Modernity in Dominican History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003).

²⁴⁹ In Rebecca Scott see the two periods in the mobilization and the configuration of the institutions installed for “gradual transition.”

labor emancipation, the integration of the political community, and land redistribution. The pressure that they could then exercise in various countries after having mobilized as troops and *montoneras*, resulted in the transformation of states as they generated reactions in response, such as an increase of coercion, the creation of intermediate institutions to slowly transform labor relations, and the repression of the expansion of citizenship rights. Alternatively, specific paths of modernization were opened that led to the democratic or authoritarian incorporation of peasants and popular classes into structures of political representation.²⁵⁰

In dialogue with Fernando López-Alves, who wrote of Uruguay and Colombia, we could say that in the Ecuadorian case, parties played a key role in the configuration of the state.²⁵¹ The political parties and not a national army or a prolonged and successful *caudillista* process constituted the focus of an articulation of national hegemony. These organizations were those that formed significant alliances with the peasantry and settled the conditions for the reconfiguration of the state. In this sense, the peasantry forced the repositioning of other actors and, as a consequence, the transformation of a correlation of forces that characterized tensions between de-colonization and counter-revolution in colonial states.²⁵²

The Ecuadorian Conservative Party, in power since the counter-revolution of

²⁵⁰ Mallon, *Peasant and Nation*; Turits, *Foundations of Despotism*.

²⁵¹ López-Alves, *State Formation*.

²⁵² González Casanova, "Colonialismo interno."

García in 1861, found itself divided in 1875 between a more fundamentalist conservative tendency and a tendency that sought to negotiate for a state better oriented towards the agriculture export industries and that would selectively integrate new regional elites. The Liberal Party represented a movement of circles of regional elites tied to a broad Latin American movement with liberal ideology. They sought to carve out a political space for the movement in a country that had long been characterized as an authoritarian state. That search required momentary alliances and, later on, compromises with other social classes that wished to be constituted as subjects with rights. The colonial casts and a vast peasantry supported the movement in an armed process, punctuated by the confrontation of 1895. In effect, the most elitist circles of liberalism could not control the peasant integration that aided Alfaro's military campaign, nor could they negotiate with the extreme factions of conservatism that were willing to make war against the *masonry*. The negotiations proposed by the progressive elite of conservatism were not acknowledged because the peasantry had acquired better promises from the liberals and had thus converted themselves into the base of the liberal army in the Sierra, in turn converting the liberal movement into a national one. The process of conflict transformed the composition of liberalism and once the war was over, these actors sought their place within the new political community.

The most significant characteristic of the Liberal Revolution was the

integration of diverse collectives of popular republicans with their particular conflicts and visions of transformation under the flag of the party of *national regeneration*. Indigenous peasants, given their regional differences, coincided in their fight against a regime of privileges for large landholders that included forms of forced labor based on perpetual debt, hacienda expansion over indigenous lands, the capture of the legal apparatus on behalf of local power, and the political segregation of post-colonial subaltern casts.

Documentation exists that reflects the aspirations that motivated indigenous and peasant communities in the conflict and during the construction of the new political order. This documentation tells us of how the liberal state maintained regional arrangements with distinct social classes and how the central state affirmed itself in the territories immediately after the war and throughout negotiations with these social factions.

In the case of Pichincha and Azuay, provinces characterized by a powerful conservative landholding presence, the alliance between the peasantry and the liberal army was crucial. The cases of Tungurahua and Bolívar were characterized by a weaker competition with large landholders who harassed the communities but did not represent public enemies to the liberal regime. In these cases, although free indigenous communities and peasants substantially aided the liberal campaign, they did not generate a radical response of support for the peasantry. Moreover, the

democratization of lands that operated in the central Sierra in part due to alliances with political liberalism in the mid-century, influenced the second part of negotiations of liberal transformation. Landholding elites of the zone were weaker and there was a greater presence of indigenous communities free of hacienda captivity, and so the results of the conflict were less defined for both sectors. Therefore, the alliance was less radical between the peasantry and the liberal state, which preferred to negotiate a change in political influence in the urban nuclei than to recognize the *hacendados* as public enemies and ally with the peasantry.

From the point of view of the post-war negotiation in a moment in which possible regional arrangements were not yet defined, the so-called “oligarchic state” could not be characterized simply as a unified reaction against regional outbreaks of popular liberalism that established the right conditions for agro-exportation, as the literature suggests. As Negretto observed, what was important was not the persistence of conflict, but rather the role that the conflict had in the configuration of the post-war state. “The divorce between liberalism and democracy in Latin America was the unintended outcome of the formal and informal institutions created by the liberal elite in the process of consolidating national unity and lowering the levels of conflict in the competition for power.”²⁵³

²⁵³ Gabriel Negretto, “State Formation and Democracy in Latin America, 1810-1900,” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 34, no. 1, (Feb, 2002): 168-170.

3.2 Progress or Revolution: Origins of Radical Liberalism.

After the death of García Moreno, a large sector of the party known as *progresismo* sought to re-negotiate the authoritarian line that had characterized their leader. The threat of the liberal peasantry seemed to have been efficiently suppressed by the repressive regime and the *progresismo* of the 1880s offered a more optimistic state in accordance with the spirit of the cacao boom. This redefinition also sought a quick solution to the existing contradiction between the concentration of political power among the elites of the Sierra and the wealth of the elites on the coast, who were becoming increasingly resentful of their exclusion from power.²⁵⁴ The first president of the progressive period was the aristocrat Antonio Borrero, a descendent of the patriots of the independence who identified as a liberal Catholic. The National Academy of Ecuadorian History registers in his biography that he opposed the dictatorship and the centralism of García Moreno, but at the same time he restrained the eagerness of the liberal circle in Guayaquil from convoking a National Assembly; in effect, when Antonio Borrero refused to convoke it, the liberal circle from Guayas was the first group to proclaim its opposition to the regime and head a *coupe* that was led by the commander of the army from their province, Ignacio de Veintimilla.

²⁵⁴ María C. Cárdenas Reyes, “El progresismo ecuatoriano en el siglo XIX. La reforma del presidente Antonio Flores (1888-1892),” *ANDES* 18 (2007): 77-97

After almost twenty years of exile, José María Urvina himself directed the military march towards the Sierra with the idea of retaking the state for the Liberal Party under the dictatorship of Veintimilla. The military confrontation in the Sierra was bloody. The figures speak of 1,000 dead at the battle of Galte, near Riombamba – a figure without precedent in Ecuador. This action, however, only achieved the installation of a leader who would betray the aspirations for democratic expansion of the Liberal Party. The government of Veintimilla was quickly recognized as corrupt, as it used growing public funds to pay-off allies, including members of the army and distinct regional clientele.

In the decade of 1880-1890, the presidents of *progresismo* tried to make the competition between factions take on the form of electoral competition. *Progresismo* constituted itself as a third option – Catholic and liberal, elitist but open to negotiating with elites of the provinces. As Ayala Mora states, the political circles of distinct tendencies and factions multiplied among the urban elite of the country, as the *Partido Liberal Nacional* also formed in Quito in 1890. García's faction founded the *Unión Republicana* and the Liberal Party turned radical in the provinces of Manabí and Esmeraldas.²⁵⁵

Restauradores (conservatives) and *regeneradores* (liberals) participated in the war that overthrew Veintimilla. Predecessors of *Unión Republicana* and the *Partido*

²⁵⁵ Ayala Mora, *Lucha política*.

Liberal appeared from their distinct places of regional influence to act simultaneously, although not in a coordinated fashion, against the dictatorship of Veintimilla. The process of restoration mobilized militias of mixed composition. Among them, one was headed by Pedro Lizaraburu, of the aristocratic landholders of Chimborazo²⁵⁶, and others headed by the liberals Eloy Alfaro and Luis Vargas Torres. After the fall of the government, the conservatives put up a government headed by the *progresista* José María Sarasti in Quito, while *Regeneradores* were proclaimed the supreme chiefs in Guayas. The heads of distinct regions convoked an assembly that elected José María Plácido Caamaño, liberal from among the elite of Guayaquil and owner of the largest and most productive cacao *hacienda* of the era, Tenguel.

While the conservatives sought to consolidate their presence electorally, the generals Eloy Alfaro and Medardo Alfaro and Luis Vargas Torres and Nicolás Infante observed that the *montoneras* had remained armed in the provinces. We do not know with certainty if pressure from these *montoneras* or the force of their own radical convictions caused these leaders of these two provinces on the northern pacific coast

²⁵⁶ *Progresistas* like José María Plácido Caamaño and José María Sarasti participated. Also, followers of García Moreno like Javier Salazar, the ex Minister of War, acted in the south of Ecuador. After Veintimilla was defeated, the *progresista* line was re-established in governments between 1888 and 1895 (José María Plácido Caamaño from 1884-1888, Antonio Flores Jijón from 1888-1892, and Luis Cordero from 1892-1895).

to attempt a different way from that which president Caamaño proposed. They were not able to or they did not endorse the invitation presented by *progresismo* to pacify the *montoneras* and continue down the path of a restricted democracy. The attempt to pacify the *montoneras*, without having received their demands in exchange and after having successfully defeated Veintimilla, could have broken down the leadership of these regional elites.²⁵⁷ In effect, among the cosmopolitan *caballeros* and landowners of liberalism, by the 1880s there were already popular leaders, such as the famous *Crespin Cerezo* (known as a *montuvio* from Daule). The social differences among the coastal provinces of Esmeraldas, Manabí, Los Ríos, and Guayas led to a political difference that marked how the circle of liberal elites and popular militias inter-acted.

In Guayas and in Los Ríos there existed a clearer presence of cacao properties and, therefore, there existed a larger quantity of hacienda workers who were mobilized by the *patrons* to go to war. During the cacao boom, Guayas was dominated by large properties in the model of the hacienda Tenguel and enjoyed an important port and commercial infrastructure. “It was only between 1870 and 1920 that the value of the sale of exported cacao from Ecuador increased by 700%, when the profitability of the business made the land more desirable and the large properties

²⁵⁷ The later history of liberalism in the 1910s revealed how the *montoneras* of these two provinces had relative autonomy and counted on popular leaders such as Lastres in the case of Esmeraldas. For a history of the Liberal Revolution in those zones, see Figueroa, “Guerrilla y montoneras.”

expanded over the small producers.”²⁵⁸ The large landowners also controlled sources of credit and a commercial and banking sector arose that imposed strong conditions on producers and captured commercial ties. The high interest rates to which peasants were beholden in order to attempt to maintain their autonomy as producers, led them finally to enter into exploitative relations on the lands of large landowners.

In the case of Los Ríos, the memory of the formation of the *Chapulos*, as described by Alberto Hidalgo, indicates that some indignant “distinguished patriots” met with the *progresista* government of José María Placido Caamaño (1884-1888) and “other unknown [people] of the same persuasion” on Hidalgo’s hacienda, La Victoria. Seventy-seven *conciertos* of the hacienda came together. They had a debt of at least three hundred *suces* and negotiated that with their first appearance in combat, their debts would be canceled and the lands would be recognized for their use. In their march through the countryside, these *conciertos*, known as the *Chapulos*, imposed war contributions on rich landowners in the name of the fatherland.²⁵⁹

Manabí has been characterized by the historian Manuel Chiriboga as a province with little concentration of lands. In the first cacao boom of the coast up

²⁵⁸ Ron Pineo, *Social and Economic Reform: Life and Work in Guayaquil* (Florida: University Press of Florida, 1996)

²⁵⁹ Emilio Estrada, *La campaña de los Chapulos* (Guayaquil: Litografía e Imprenta de la Universidad de Guayaquil, 1984); Eugenio De Janon Alcivar, *El viejo luchador, su vida heroica y su magna obra, compilación de documentos histórico-gráficos-literarios* (Quito: Editora abecedario ilustrado, Quito, 1948).

until at least 1870, both large and small properties coexisted, whereas in Guayaquil large properties were predominant. This coexistence was reinforced by favorable ecological conditions, a considerable demand, and the low cost of land.²⁶⁰ The operations of liberalism in this province were much closer to radical *alfarismo*. The archbishop of Portoviejo, Pedro Schumacher, known as a hero of the *ultramontana* resistance to liberalism, announced in his letters that Alfaro would have made a pact with Lima to bring the Mexican General Francisco Ruíz Sandoval to help him with the formation of *montoneras*. In fact, Ruíz did travel to the province of Manabí from Lima, where he had been in exile for having mobilized wars in the north of Mexico against president Porfirio Díaz.²⁶¹

In contrast with Guayas and Los Ríos, the province of Esmeraldas was a territory with an ample afro-Ecuadorian population that foreign companies viewed early on as a territory rich for extractivist activities. In letters from members of the liberal *montoneras* to the National Assembly of 1896, they demanded the end of the irrational practice of logging and the extraction of rubber plants by their roots for

²⁶⁰ Chiriboga, *Jornaleros y gran propietarios*.

²⁶¹ References to these people and *montoneros* in Ecuador include Loor, *Eloy Alfaro*, 217. The book of Elliott Young, *Catarino Garza's Revolution on the Texas-Mexico Border* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004) contributes important information about the identity of Francisco Ruíz Sandoval, who organized a rebellion against Porfirio Díaz from the border with Texas in 1890. Caamaño's harassment of the *montoneras* included the offer of 20,000 pesos reward for the head of the Mexican general Sandoval, who passed into exile and later participated in other liberal wars in Venezuela and Guatemala.

European industries.²⁶² The liberal circle in Esmeraldas must have experienced a certain anxiety with regards to the colonialism of this province, full of commercial consulates of the world and peripheral in every sense to national politics.²⁶³

The persistence of the wars in this zone of the country can be explained according to the strong tension between their mobilization in 1883 in the name of the democratization of the state -- and with the firm intention of accessing land and autonomy -- and the reality of the following two decades in which they experienced harassment over lands and the marginalization of their aspirations for political integration. For the conservative historian Wilfrido Loor, the tactic of the liberal *guerrilla* against *progresismo* combined taking the sea by arms, maintaining the *montoneras* active in Manabí and Esmeraldas under the command of radicals (with financing provided by masonic circles from Peru and Central America), and initiating a march from the southern Sierra of Loja to the capital of the republic to the north to find help from among liberal circles and the “crowds of Indian peasants.”²⁶⁴

There were two attempts at advancing that chimeric march in search of indigenous peasant support. The first was directed by General Luis Vargas Torres of

²⁶² AFL, Asamblea Nacional, *Vecinos de Esmeraldas piden se establezca una escuela de artes y oficios*. box 81, folder 24 (d) Solicitudes no despachadas (77-102), file 90, 283-294

²⁶³ See Figueroa, “Guerrilla y Montoneras,” how the province had the first black governor of the country and was bombarded by the government of the liberal “of order,” Leonidas Plaza, from the sea to submit the *montoneras* still there in 1913.

²⁶⁴ Loor, *Eloy Alfaro*.

Esmeraldas. Vargas decided to enter through the south of the country with the help of Peruvian liberal circles, seeking to join forces in the furthest provinces from the capital. Three days after having arrived in Loja on the November 7, 1886, he was ambushed by Colonel Antonio Vega Muñoz, who had gathered some peasants from the haciendas of conservatives of Azuay and enlisted artisans from Cuenca as soldiers tied to Catholic associations.²⁶⁵

The refusal or the lack of capability of the radicals to access the *progresismo* proposal to construct a democratic co-existence restricted to elite circles was seen by the conservatives and progressives as a provocation and as dangerous offense against the civilized order that had given a subordinate place to the peasantry. This order was being subverted by the composition of the radical liberal army. According to the conservative Wilfrido Loor, there were various alarming signs of radicalism in the battle of Loja in the south of the country in 1886 that the conservative press described as sacrilegious and also as the violation of the sacred domestic space of patriarchal

²⁶⁵ From the composition of the army of Antonio Vega Muñoz, as can be observed in the documentation relative to the processes of grabbing that proceeded the conservative leader according to the testimony of several of the soldiers forced into the AFL. "Solicitudes despachadas," box 81, folder 24 (a), file 14, *The indigenous [man] Manuel Concha asks that what is convenient with respect to a document of concertaje be resolved that in some way Sr. Dr. Miguel Toral was made to sign in Baños Azuay in the year 1895 to free him from having been taken by the forces of the conservative revolution led by the conservative Sr. Antonio Vega for combat of Portete*. Also see Rafael Arízaga Vega, *Antonio Vega Muñoz. El insurgente* (Quito: Editorial El Conejo, 1989).

families of the Sierra by barbarians and peasant cannibals, blacks, and *montubios* from the coast. The first attempt to take the Sierra by the liberal army ended in an shocking failure since the conservative colonel, Antonio Vega, was able to take Luis Vargas Torres prisoner, along with 26 officials and 42 soldiers. The execution of Luis Vargas Torres in Cuenca took one of its most recognized and cultured leaders from liberalism, which in turn only motivated the *guerrillera* and reduced the possibilities of an exclusive democratic pact.²⁶⁶ The historian Sonia Fernández has counted fifty confrontations between radical *guerrillas* and the government of José María Placido Caamaño in the provinces of the coast.²⁶⁷ Caamaño refused to recognize them and could not conceive of a pact for demobilization and integration with regards to the *montoneras*. In fact, he invested two million *suces* in an army that occupied the province of Manabí and the frontier with Esmeraldas.²⁶⁸

The horrifying image that the *progresistas* had of the popular liberals and their *montoneras* was similar to that which the landholding elites had had who made a pact with García Moreno. They did not conceive of a political integration of the peasantry,

²⁶⁶ Rodolfo Pérez Pimentel, vol. 3 of *El Ecuador profundo: mitos, historias, leyendas, recuerdos, anécdotas y tradiciones del país* (Guayaquil: Edit. de la Universidad de Guayaquil, 1988)

²⁶⁷ Sonia Fernández, “La revolución de los Chapulos” in *Nueva Historia del Ecuador, Panorama histórico 1875-1895*, ed. Ayala Mora, 250. Also see Luis Vargas Torres, *La revolución del 15 de noviembre de 1884* (Guayaquil: Imprenta de la Universidad de Guayaquil, 1984).

²⁶⁸ *Message of Caamaño to the nation*, 1888, cited by Loor. *Eloy Alfaro*, 220.

not even of a subordinate form of inclusion. The discredit of *montoneras* among the “sensible” people made it unthinkable that the radicals would take power. Their allies could not conceivably support such a political regime.

The *montoneras* were excellent for distracting the attention of the government and obliging it to spend public money to maintain order, but it was a chimera to think about the conquest of Power as such, among other motives for the wide discredit that they caused among the sensible people [including] so many assaults and robberies politically organized in the name of the fatherland.²⁶⁹

3.3 The Battle of Gatazo: from Radicalism to the National Imaginary.

The next advance of the radical liberal army towards the Sierra occurred in the year 1895. A scandal involving Ecuador, Chile, and Japan occurred during the government of Caamaño and was the event that triggered the liberal circle of Guayas to proclaim the illegitimacy of the *progresista* party in 1895 and ask for the renunciation of the president, Luis Cordero.²⁷⁰ The conservatives, being aware of their majority, proposed an electoral transition; the radical circles, being supported by a majority of illiterate peasants, rejected the idea and proposed measuring forces militarily.

²⁶⁹ Ibid., 212.

²⁷⁰ Chile had signed a non-intervention pact with China. When China and Japan went to war, Chile was forbidden from trading with Japan, but Ecuador lent the Ecuadorian flag to Japanese ships to continue trading with Chile.

Alfaro's great wager was that the liberal army would grow during the march from the coast to the Sierra and from the south to the north before reaching the positions of the central government's army in Quito. In effect, the campaign of 1895 that culminated in the military collapse of conservatism in the central Sierra in August of that year can be recognized as an experience of political integration that lacked precedents in the Republic. The pacts between liberalism and the peasant and indigenous communities of the central Sierra during the epoch of Urvina had been regional pacts. There did not exist a national army with a popular peasant base in the coast and the Sierra as radical liberalism wished to construct in 1895. Whereas the formation of peasant *montoneras* from the coast, which involved an agreement to abolish debts and distribute lands, constituted a change in the form of enlisting troops for the conservatives, the success that Alfaro had with his wager that indigenous communities in the Sierra would unite with his cause against a common enemy marked a substantial difference.

The first armed movement of this march occurred in the villages of Milagro and Daule under the direction of Pedro Montero.²⁷¹ Between May and June of 1895,

²⁷¹ From January 1895, the liberal circles in Guayaquil and Quito (with Julio Andrade and Emilito Terán, among others) and in Cuenca, sought the renunciation of Cordero. In this year, various urban centers of the country had risen up in one of the two bands and with the purpose of substituting the government of Cordero. The conservatives also mobilized and sought the substitution of Cordero with a candidate named Camilo Ponce.

Alfaro was proclaimed the Supreme Chief in various counties of the country, beginning with Manabí and Esmeraldas. Then to the north in Tulcán the conservatives proclaimed Camilo Ponce. Ruperto Bowen, who had fought as a liberal soldier in Honduras went to Ecuador and passed from the coast to Babahoyo and later on to Guaranda in the central Sierra.²⁷² In Riobamba, the revolution was declared on behalf of factions of the army while in Ambato the liberal Julio Andrade organized the *Columna Tungurahua*.²⁷³

On June 5, 1895, Alfaro was on the pacific coast when he was proclaimed leader in Guayaquil. The proclamation included the principal military champions of liberalism and was accompanied by 15,784 signatures.²⁷⁴ On the June 14, Azogues to the south and Carchi and Imbabura to the north confirmed this mandate. In that month Alfaro and Plaza arrived from Central America with armaments purchased

²⁷² Among the international agreements of liberalism that supported the regional battles is the pact of Amapala, endorsed by Crespo, of Venezuela, Zelaya of Nicaragua, Uribe of Colombia, and Alfaro of Ecuador. Crespo and Zelaya were in power in part due to Alfaro; Uribe and Alfaro were leaders of the radical liberal party of their countries and aspired to the head of government on Loor, *Eloy Alfaro*, 256. Alfaro was a general of a division of the armies of Honduras and Nicaragua and helped the defense of the project for independence in Cuba, for which Marti admired him as a “man of creation.” Plutarco Bowen received the title of general in five countries. Alfonso Mora Bowen, *El liberalismo radical y su trayectoria histórica* (Quito. Imp. Romero, 1940).

²⁷³ Carlos De la Torre Reyes, *La espada sin mancha. Biografía del general Julio Andrade* (Quito: Casa de Cultura Ecuatoriana. 1962)

²⁷⁴ Roberto Andrade, *Vida y muerte de Eloy Alfaro* (Nueva York: York Printing, 1916)

with the help of Santos Zelaya, president of Nicaragua. They also arrived with 3,000 men on the southern railway that from 1873 to 1888 had been built between Durán in Guayas and the bridge of the Chimbo river in Chimborazo. In this village on the periphery of Riobamba, his brother, General Medardo Alfaro, was awaiting him. Medardo was known as the victor of the war that expelled *ultramontano* conservatism from Manabí, but he did not have any experience in the Sierra whatsoever.

Alfaro threw himself into the definitive battle in the central Sierra without having stepped into the region before. He could count on the political support of liberal circles of Riobamba, Guaranda, and Ambato, but the military support he received from them was minimal. The troops of Medardo Alfaro were essentially all from the coast. The march to the Sierra was one of their riskiest moments and, therefore, one of great symbolic expression of radicalism. Conservative sources described the radical army as free of hierarchies in an attempt to illegitimate them as potential successors of conservatism. However, other sources also described such a lack of hierarchy as a sign of the liberal spirit. In a communication from the owner of a hotel in Chimborazo to the National Assembly of 1896, the owner asked for an investigation into two days of rest that the troops of Flavio Alfaro and Pedro Pablo Echeverría enjoyed there in disorder after their ascent into the cordillera.

The day that the forces of Alfaro arrived to fight the final battle in the cordillera and chambo, I had a good hotel with a complete bar and rooms for staying the night for many people. Questions for the witnesses: 1. If the day

that they arrived, all accommodated themselves in their respective quarters, at the same time many bosses and officials took shelter in my house. 2. If foreseeing that I would have many guests, in addition to the two dining areas below that were always there, I would prepare another above with nice dishes for the bosses and more principal people. 3. If on the second and third day after the arrival of General Alfaro, all of my house was occupied violently and unexpectedly by the battalions of Pichincha and Bolívar at the command of Colonels Flavio Alfaro and don Pedro Pablo Echeverría, respectively. We were expelled from the house without letting us take anything with us. If the troops occupied all of the dorms, the bar, the dining rooms, and kitchens with all their belongings and in the shop Flavio Alfaro established his habitation.²⁷⁵

Beyond the party that broke all professional barriers, the liberal army used a new language of co-fraternity among themselves; the scene in the hotel in Chimborazo merely reflected the fact that the revolution was altering class order.

Alfaro remembered the experience of Urvina (also a mason), but until August of 1895 the idea that he would be able to count on the support of indigenous communities was mere faith. However, as he ascended for the first time into the Sierra, he described his advance as a national project that would support popular classes.

In this sense, one can understand his response to a letter from General José María Sarasti, against whose army he would open the battle of Gatazo in Chimborazo. He defended himself against accusations that defined him as the head of

²⁷⁵ AFL, box 81, folder 43, file 24 (b) “Solicitudes no despachadas.” *Dario Miño pide indemnización por perjuicios causados por las tropas de Gobierno en su hotel de Riobamba.*

a regional project that was attempting to take the civilizing space of the Sierra for itself. Even without knowing that he would be able to ally with the indigenous communities of the central Sierra, he evoked the imaginary of a nation whose base was constituted by the laboring classes.

It is not the coast that has set out to invade the Sierra, nor will my canons enter from the households of the pacific, rather from valiant [people from] the interior. To say so in the press is a sign of bad faith, to assure it in an official note is a baseless flippancy. The coast has the honor of initiating the transformation, but it has spread through all the provinces of the Sierra. I am not alone, Sr. Sarasti: It is the Liberal Party with its irreproachable antecedents, with its renowned men and with a great mass of independent laborers, very hard-working, who contribute to this arduous but very noble task that I have put myself.²⁷⁶

The possibility of an alliance with the indigenous peasantry of the Sierra was crucial for taking the capital of the country. The military enemies in the Sierra were powerful. The experienced General José María Sarasti, directed the armies of the government of the north to the south, while two powerful *gamonales* of the central and southern Sierra, Pedro Ignacio Lizarzaburo in Chimborazo and Antonio Vega Muñoz in Azuay, sought to surround them to impede their passage to the capital.

The radicals had the intention of entering the Sierra through two ways, as indicated by the confrontations at San Miguel de Chimbo in the province of Bolívar,

²⁷⁶ Letter directed towards Sarasti August 7, 1895, Archives of Eloy Alfaro, quoted in Loor, *Eloy Alfaro*, 299.

near Guaranda, and those at Gatazo, near Riobamba, on the August 14, 1895. Loor attempts to explain the triumph of these battles on behalf of the liberal army and a “crowd of Indians” with the argument that the conservatives were divided.

The encounter between the liberal army and the communities of Licto, Pungalá, and Punín in Chimborazo (the home of the Indian general Alejo Saez), indicated a wide repudiation of the Catholic church, large landholders, and the charging of tithes. These communities, as we have seen in the first chapter, had developed a series of strategies so that the tributary tax would not erode the community’s economy. The strategy that appeared most notable in sources from the middle of the nineteenth century had been the strategic division of the community between Indians and peasants along the river Achambo. In the repression of the 1885 insurrection against the tithe (headed by Alejo Saez), the issue of the administration of territory by the community came out once more in the sources. José Modesto Espinosa, Minister of the Interior of José María Placido Caamaño, communicated the following:

The governance in accordance with the military command, sent a small force to Licto and in the streets of that population a conflict took place in which the Indians were dispersed, leaving a few dead and others injured. As the sedition did not end with this, later the same military commander had to traverse the great extension of the parish of Licto, dispersing the diverse group that was

found united along the heights of the cordillera. A little later, the Indian Alejo Saez, principal chief of the rebels, was captured.²⁷⁷

In the reconstruction that the Costales write of the “legendary general Alejo Sáenz,” they recount that he was a prisoner between 1883 and 1885. When his bail was paid, he fled to the coast, where there was a strong presence of *montoneras*. There is no evidence that he met the *montoneras*. However, there are various reasons to believe that his support for the liberal campaign was crucial in the central Sierra. In accordance with the descriptions made by plaintiffs before the National Assembly of 1896, the greatest loss in Bolívar and Chimbo was of mules that the Indians had taken from the haciendas and from small landholders in the name of general Alfaro.²⁷⁸ These mules were ready for the liberal army when they arrived at the port of Guamate. Alejo Sáez had a conversation with Alfaro as the representative of a large group of *comuneros* who identified with liberalism and he offered military support, mules, supplies, and a guide through the *páramo*. On August 10, 1895, on the date of the first call for independence, Alfaro performed a politically and symbolically significant act as he issued a signed decree in which he named Alejo Sáez as a general

²⁷⁷ Report of the Government Ministry and Foreign Affairs to the Constitutional Congress of 1885.

²⁷⁸ This is a very valuable documentation with which we will reconstruct several aspects of the political negotiations during the war and post-war periods. AFL, Asamblea Nacional 1896-1897.

and Miguel Guamán a colonel.²⁷⁹ On the August 15, the triumph of Alfaro was directly tied to this support offered by the communities and to the leadership of Sáez and Guamán. They spied on the route chosen by Sarasti and they recommended that Alfaro not take the route that general Antonio José de Sucre preferred, but rather a route less well-known that was used by the Indians that would be more rugged and quick and, above all, surprising to the enemy. The battalions “9 de abril” and “Daule,” *montoneras* from the province of Los Ríos, were directed by Medardo Alfaro, while general Sáez commanded another group. The subsequent battle was not definitive. There were close to eighty dead between two armies of two thousand men each. Loor attributed this to General Sarasti’s “inexplicable withdraws” from the field of battle and to the fact that many troops from the state army changed to the side of what they already imagined to be their next government, thus exchanging the blue ribbon on their hats for red ribbon, signaling their acceptance of liberalism. The author suspects that the *progresistas* maintained a pact with the liberal cause since it was unfeasible that the liberals would win the battle simply due to the support of the Indians and the “paid” *cholos*.²⁸⁰

Various military members, whose memories Loor accesses through general

²⁷⁹ Alfredo Costales and Dolores Costales, *El legendario general indio Alejo Sáez* (Quito: Abya Yala, 2001).

²⁸⁰ For a reading on the military failure of the conservatives in the summer of 1895 in the central Sierra as an effect of the ambiguous position of the *progresista* general J. M. Sarasti, see Loor, *Eloy Alfaro*.

Julio Andrade, reported that Sarasti's advantage during the day was overturned at night because the Indians came out and, knowing the terrain, penetrated the ranks of the enemy, cutting the ropes of the mules, which surprised Sarasti's army come daylight. At that point "the army was no longer an army, but rather a confused human mass that struggles in desperate attempts to save their lives."²⁸¹ In the words of the conservative chronicler, Alfaro maintained the plaza of Cajabamba "by means of the Indian Alejo Sáenz and Guamán, whom he made general and colonel, respectively; he maintains an active espionage service; through the whites, he continues sowing discord among the conservatives and the *progresistas*, and through Sarasti, he makes waves of liberal triumph around the sure collapse of the Government of Quito."²⁸²

3.4 The Weight of the Region and the Search for a National State in Post-war Dialogue: Military Members, Peasants, and the Constitutional Assembly, 1896 – 1897.

Eloy Alfaro convoked a National Assembly to meet in Guayaquil between 1896 and 1897 with the charge of establishing peace negotiations and dealing with post-war reparations, electing a president, and conforming a first liberal constitution that would channel the liberal's aspirations. As Ayala has noted, the central theme of

²⁸¹ Ibid., 314, memory of Miguel A. Páez.

²⁸² Ibid.

the assembly was the relationship between Church and state. Although the constitution spoke of Catholicism as the religion of the Republic, it also proclaimed the freedom of religion, which provoked a strong reaction from the clergy and conservatism. All of the factions of liberalism participated in the assembly. The conservatives did not accept the peace at that moment and were still at arms in the south under the leadership of Antonio Vega and along the border with Colombia under the command of the Archbishop of Portoviejo, Pedro Schumacher.

Beyond this dispute that led to conflicts over the power of the Church in education and civil contracts, the assembly received a large quantity of communications from diverse actors throughout the country that identified themselves as liberals and demanded the fulfillment of promises. Among these demands, which now form part of the archive of the legislature of Ecuador, two types of requests stood out: the demand for reparations for economic losses, usually on behalf of livestock owners and *hacendados*, owners of urban businesses, or more popular sectors who had lost their horses or crops; and the demand on behalf of peasants throughout the country calling for the abolition of *concertaje*, a process of land redistribution, and state legal protection. In these correspondences, they mentioned not only the involvement of the peasantry in the revolution, but also the alliances that had been formed for the possibility of constructing a national state that would include them. These letters allow us to see the options for state configuration

that had been opened up through alliances between peasants and radicals, as well as the political opportunities that such a wide mobilization had opened and the conflicts that such promised inclusivity would entail. The letters demonstrate the grand process of institutionalization that was at play and the conflicts in local space from which the actors speak and develop tactics for organizing peace with change.

The letters to the assembly and also the personal correspondences between actors of distinct position in the processes of the time allow us to see beyond the paradigmatic case of the encounter between the Indian general Alejo Sáez and general Alfaro to expectations that involved many actors. Such documentation reveals the specific forms of articulation between the Indian peasantry and the political processes that led to the installation of a liberal republic.

In this sense, we can analyze visions with respect to the Liberal Revolution as an opportunity to *forge basic social equality and collective identity*. Within the demand that they be recognized as equals – “that they make us people” – *comuneros* presented alternatives to servile work and to racial power at the local level. They also demanded political recognition. Historical sources of the period offer rich narratives with respect to regional conditions before the war, the experience of the war itself, and how actors became linked together through that experience.

The constitutional moment was a highly expressive moment in which the act of putting down arms assumed the intervention of a discourse on the conditions of

peace. The communications of the coming and going of regional actors and the state in construction, peasant testimonies, and the reports of military leaders and new political functionaries provide views into the negotiation of alliances that led to party consolidation and of the most critical peasant disputes with regards to *concertaje*, land, and political inclusion.

The documentation ultimately allows us to observe the manner in which the assembly and distinct provinces of the country generated a culture of negotiation. It was a negotiation that empowered the liberal circles of various regions. The arrangements of the assembly before parish conflicts varied in accordance with the configurations of the provinces and the type of support that the liberal army had received from them.

In order not to idealize the field of battle it is important to recognize that the popular sectors suffered difficult experiences during the war. It was not always a political alliance that produced their integration in the army. The civil wars were experienced as a time of great fragility and risk for family economies who might have fallen into relations of *concertaje* by trying to evade being enlisted or as a result of the *gamonal* elites taking arms. In other cases, from the heterogeneity of positions that characterized the situation of indigenous peasants in the Sierra, they saw in the Liberal Revolution and the radical proclamations a moment of political commotion

that opened up the opportunity for making their own demands.²⁸³ But even when the political will for weaving alliances was present, going to war meant that there was no other way out of their conflicts.

The correspondences to the Liberal Assembly of 1896 contain vivid descriptions of how the peasants were enlisted. The fact remains that the majority of the complaints over forced enlistment and the imposition of contracts of *concertaje* in the context of the war were made with respect to the conservative army. Several of these documents, particularly rich with information, let us establish bridges between the war and the more daily conditions of domination.

The motivation of the conservative general Antonio Muñoz Vega for forcefully enlisting peasants might well have been intimately tied to his role as a *gamonal* authority, as a landowner, miner, exporter of husks, and protector of the Salesian order in the eastern forests. The testimonies of how he enlisted people in his army reveal three strategies: the enlistment of Catholic artisans tied to the Salesian order, the mobilization of hacienda peasants under conventional mechanisms of debt, and the forced enlistment of free peasants.

²⁸³ Chapters 4 will include a characterization of the heterogeneity of labor that distinguished the *hacienda* and the indigenous communities, divided into *concierto* communities inside the *hacienda* as indebted workers, *arrimados*, and landless peasants that worked seasonally in the city and free settlements in the *paramos* or on collective lands.

With regards to his power over the artisan sector of Cuenca, a series of factors came into play. Firstly, Vega maintained a close link with the Salesian order. Vega inherited mines in the zone of Sigsig and Gualaquiza towards the east of Azuay in the zone where his family helped the Salesian order establish its eastern missions and where indigenous work groups were organized by the order. His cousin Francisco Febres Cordero Muñoz entered the Salesian order and founded schools for the workers in Pichincha and Azuay under the orientation of Pope Pius IX and his doctrine of fighting liberal modernism. The attempt to form a group of artisans willing to fight against the “demon of masonry” in the confines of the western world won the cousin of the military leader, Hermano Miguel, the title of church saint.²⁸⁴

The conservative essayists insisted that Vega’s troops were composed of cultured and conscientious artisans, thus distinguishing them from the liberal troops, the *montoneras* of the coast who were seen as uncivilized peasants.

Liberal writers and followers deliberately ignore the preponderant role that the artisans played in the wars of last century... artisans fought against the liberals not only for being Catholic but also because they were profoundly defending their style of life and their economic independence, which they considered threatened by the peasants who had risen up, especially those from the Ecuadorian coast.²⁸⁵

²⁸⁴ Family testimonies of their descendents tell that the tie with Pope Pious IX was so close that he had authorized the family to have the *santísimo* in their private residence. Arizaga Vega, *Antonio Vega Muñoz*.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

On the other hand, the denunciations of forced enlistment in the rural zone on behalf of Vega's army left several testimonies. Manuel Concha, an Indian from Azuay, told of how he was captured to serve in the conservative army and later sold as a *concierto* to a family member of General Vega Muñoz in 1895.²⁸⁶ In his letter to the assembly, he described how he was obliged to go into combat as a soldier in *el Portete* and how his little talent for carrying arms (i.e. his resistance) served so that general Vega would free him. However, he was offered up as a *concierto* to his father-in-law, Dr. Miguel Toral, under the pretext that he ought to be protected from forced enlistment into the liberal enemy. Yet, after five months of working on Toral's *hacienda*, the father-in-law would not let Concha go because he had not paid off the debt owed for having been freed from the liberals and Toral even threatened him with imprisonment. Concha's denunciation of forced enlistment and his effective enslavement was not just a simple narrative. It sought an alliance with the state.

With the pretext of putting myself in liberty, he had me sign the bulletin of liberty, and then a certain document appears of peasant *concierto*, and it said that I had owed a quantity long before having been contracted by this señor; this is how the conservatives deal with the unfortunate indigenous people, abusing the servant that they have in their hands.²⁸⁷

The Indians Manuel Pillco and Jesús Rumipulla presented a similar testimony to the

²⁸⁶ AFL, *El indígena Manuel Concha*.

²⁸⁷ Ibid.

National Assembly. They told of how conservatism took advantage of the war to submit them to *concertaje* and they denounced the condition of slavery that this system engendered. In this case, they spoke of how Sr. Antonio Segura converted himself into their *patrón* and slave-driver. He had anticipated the advance of General Vega's army to offer them protection and a loan of 36 pesos, "with the pretext of avoiding public work and recruitment that was upon everyone for the assistance of the militia," and he subsequently made them honor a document of *concertaje* for a period of five years.²⁸⁸ By the time of their denunciation, almost a year had passed without having received a penny for their work. According to their denunciation and observed custom, they anticipated that they would be obliged to work without pay for a lot longer than five years, since they were going to be charged for the deterioration of the farm instruments and for the use of any natural resource of the hacienda. "In general, it is observed that the landholding señores seek opportunities to enslave the unfortunate people and have workers in their lands that do not cost them a daily wage."²⁸⁹

In both cases they offered testimony about how the *hacendado* elite reacted during the formation of the militias, but both go beyond that to question a regime of

²⁸⁸ AFL, Asamblea Nacional, box 81, folder 24 c solicitudes no despachadas 51-75 (1896-1897), *Manuel Pillco y Manuel Jesus Rumipulla, (Cuenca 1896) Solicitud a la Convención Nacional de una ley expresa sobre el concertaje*, December 8, 1896. Legislatura del siglo XIX, 1896.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

justice that made *concertaje* possible. Under these considerations, they asked for a reform of the justice system and a law that would end *concertaje* altogether and not just one that would absolve them of their personal debts.

Since if we begin some action with respect to these abuses, we do not have a judge that will make justice [and sanction] those who feed themselves at the cost of the sweat of our foreheads because the considerations are only for those who are called big [landowners] and the hostility is for those unfortunate [people].²⁹⁰

One of the virtues of the moment was the acceptance of testimony, as part of a new system of justice, which would permit people to vent conflicts publicly, a system that was unthinkable without the erection of a central state power that could interrupt the system of local power. Pillco and Rumipulla establish that the Liberal Revolution changed conditions so that “the Indians that unluckily call ourselves *conciertos* without payment and that today find ourselves slaves of our *patrones*” were no longer obliged to be quiet; “it is not possible that we should be quiet once the honorable chamber has attributions of protecting the unfortunate, dictating a law that should protect us and punish those oppressors.”²⁹¹

Due to the pressure that the war placed on daily life, this was a decisive moment that obligated even the least motivated for fighting to make contact with the

²⁹⁰ Ibid.

²⁹¹ Ibid.

state and attempt to influence the course of state change. The rise of the regime of the Liberal Revolution was considered a revolutionary opportunity and convoked many communities and people affected by the conservative regime to define themselves as political subjects and ally themselves with the state to strengthen the presence of the state throughout the territories. Since the war had placed them in extreme conditions that had made the custom of slavery even more evident, the *conciertos* of Azuay denounced their condition and proclaimed that “we are not, Sr. President, in the era of slavery.”²⁹²

The power of the conservatives in Cuenca and Azogues generated an atmosphere of generalized mobilization and high polarization among the population. The cases of Concha, Pillco, and Rumipunlla were not isolated. The *concierto* Indians found an opportunity to express themselves in the liberal war against the *gamonal* power of Vega and against the Salesian experiment.

In Azuay liberalism had a radical connotation due to social polarization there. Liberalism in Azuay produced the most stringent critic of conservative power, the intellectual José Peralta, as well as the only case of an alliance between captive indigenous populations of an Amazonian religious mission and the liberal army.

Peralta had a strong influence on radicalism in Azuay. General Vega had been able to merge the army in Azuay with that which operated in Chimborazo under the

²⁹² Ibid.

command of Melchor Costales, as they took Cuenca together and imprisoned some liberals, including José Peralta. General Manuel Antonio Franco took various conservatives prisoner in Quito and proposed that the Civil and Military Chief of Azuay save Peralta or he would execute the conservatives. Peralta was liberated on August 22, 1896, when Manuel A. Franco was designated Civil and Military Chief of Azuay and replaced the conservatives of the provincial government. The gestures of radicalism of Franco and Peralta would be important in Pichincha and in Azuay. After the army of Franco arrived triumphantly in Cuenca, he began to demonstrate his power to the conservatives there.

Rafael Arízaga Vega, grandson of the conservative leader, recalled that the conflict between liberals and conservatives turned into such a very fierce war because, as Vega's figure became surrounded by a sacred aura, his enemies became willing to ally themselves with the liberal army.

In the battle of Cuenca, a large group of indigenous people from Gualaquiza, specifically from San Juan county, presented themselves to defend Alfaro and they took the plazoleta del Carmen, close to the cathedral, and there they let loose in fierce combat with a ferocious group of women... several died, stabbed, others with the cranium split in pieces, and the victorious *cholas* proclaimed that they had shed the brains of the heretics.²⁹³

²⁹³ Arízaga Vega, *Antonio Vega Muñoz*, 94

The Indians of Gualaquiza revealed their disdain for the power of Vega precisely in his zone of local power as *gamonal* of rubber and husks. In 1893, the Salesian order had arrived in Cuenca and Vega had been the port of entry for the missionaries to the Amazon. The missionaries immediately installed schools for the re-education of indigenous families, separating men from women and children, submitting them to disciplined work in the collection of rubber and husks.²⁹⁴

The alliance of the Indians of Gualaquiza with liberalism was a clear expression of the rejection of the large landholding families that controlled the legal system, the religious institutions, and the territory in the zone peripheral to the rubber exploitation.²⁹⁵ After the massacre at the hands of Catholic artisans, the Indians of Gualaquiza sent out communications and requests to the assembly that sought to assure their alliances with liberalism. They described how the practices of forced mobilization, reinforced by the religious discourse, did not only take place in times of conflict, but also in contemporary daily life imposed by the Salesians and Vega. The complaints about forced enlistment and the captivity of the populations of the eastern

²⁹⁴ Juan Bottasso, *Los salesianos y la Amazonía: Actividades y presencias* (Quito: Abya Yala, 2003); *Recuerdo de las Bodas de Plata del Instituto Don Bosco de la Tola 1900-1925* (Quito: Tipografía y encuadernación salesianas, s/f.). Suffice it to say that the indigenous peoples who defended the liberal campaign of 1895 formed part of the Shuar ethnicity, isolated from civilization but in the process of re-education through the Salesian missions.

²⁹⁵ In a sense, described by the literature as patronage politics, see Richard Graham, ed., *The Idea of Race in Latin America, 1870-1940* (Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1999). And about gamonalism see Flores Galindo, *La agonía de Mariátegui*.

cordillera of Azuay contain very valuable information about the relationship between the power of the landholding elites over the administrative political units established by the conservative party on the one hand and their militancy in the war and in political office on the other, which guaranteed their control over justice. Thus, the denunciations revealed how the sectors subordinated to relations of *patronal* domination conceived of these relations as violent and arbitrary before the possibility of a new political regime that might allow them to strengthen their fragile local position.

In a letter to General Alfaro, the inhabitants of Sigsig and the local authorities of the communities of San Bartolomé and Sima asked the supreme chief that Gualaquiza not be restored as a county since such a status would permit Antonio Vega to continue with a personal, despotic, and “unbearable” domination over the population.

Vega maintained a *gamonal* power in various populations of Azuay and at the same time a visible presence within conservatism since he had triumphed over the radical armies commanded by Luis Vargas Torres and he was one of the most important forces in the confrontation with the troops of Alfaro and Pedro Pablo Echeverría in the central Sierra during the war of 1895. His active participation in the war against liberalism is explained in part as a defense of the privileges that the conservative regime provided him, having made Gualaquiza a county and therefore

having recognized his local clients as county authorities and his territorial power as a large landowner (he was the owner of sugar crops, rivers for finding gold, and extensive forests, where he cultivated husks). The inhabitants of Gualaquiza asked the National Assembly of 1896 to strike its status as a county in order that they might access independent justice in Cuenca, given that Vega Muñoz had installed a political structure useful for his strict control of the population.²⁹⁶

The political head of the territory was in dispute since the epoch of the *progresistas*. The triumph over the dictatorship of Veintimilla served the conservative generals to erect Gualaquiza as a county. This territory had conventionally been peripheral. It had been administered by the Salesian church to support civilizing missions for Amazonian indigenous communities and as a center from which extractivist companies that worked with gold and husks were organized. From 1883 until 1895, the Vega family had maintained monopolistic control of political offices and of the justice system, *maintaining their neighbors in the most terrible and humiliating slavery*. The letter, accompanied by more than two hundred signatures from heads of families in indigenous communities and among the neighbors of Sigsig, Gualaceo, and Gualaquiza, indicated that they wanted to form an alliance with

²⁹⁶ AFL, Asamblea Nacional 1896-1897, box 79, 23(f) “Solicitudes despachadas” (121-150) 63, *Letter directed to the Supreme Chief of the republic, Eloy Alfaro, by the inhabitants of Sigsig and the local authorities of San Bartolomé and Sima in order to belong to the county of Cuenca and abolish the county of Gualaquiza, where the justice was hijacked by Antonio Vega.*

the Liberal Party and its project of a nationally integrated state. The letter sought to demonstrate that *gamonal* power had subjected marginalized populations through the appropriation of public power by the landholding elite and the Church.

In this time, public instruction has been absolutely neglected; nothing has been done to conserve and repair the poor paths of communication; nothing has been thought of to improve the condition of this pueblo, condemned to serve as slave for the reigning family and the priests and without retribution of any type.²⁹⁷

Conservative domination was described as a personal, arbitrary domination that placed these populations on the edge of desperation and, therefore, constituted a political risk for the government. It brought them closer to the end of political accord and closer to violence. In the same way that the *comuneros* of Tocachi spoke of the end of authority's legitimacy, so too did the inhabitants of Sigsig and Gualaquiza showing the limit of a coercive authority. "We beg that you listen to the voice of a pueblo that will have to migrate to the forests in order to live among the savages of the east before being held captive by the ferocity of our tyrants."²⁹⁸

In this territory of the exploitation of resources, the elites defended conservatism with arms while the inhabitants linked to mining and the collection of husks attempted to establish ties with the Liberal Party. They would either be

²⁹⁷ Ibid.

²⁹⁸ Ibid.

recognized and protected as liberals or they would return to conditions of exploitation.

Interested in obtaining revenge from the pueblo, they have publicly beaten those who have manifested their adhesion to the liberal cause and to the leader of the regeneration; and they have threatened to torment us and exterminate us when they return to dominate us as their employees.²⁹⁹

The situation revealed in the document was common to various cases that occurred in distinct parishes of the country where there were haciendas and indigenous communities. In the model of local authority established in the times of García Moreno, the triangle of *gamonal* authority composed of landholder, parish deputy, and priest supported the exploitation of natural resources that pressured the indigenous communities to work for free in order to access these resources and lands.

Thus, the fundamental demand was to change the justice system. *Concierto* requests also asked for state backing with respect to the *gamonal* powers. Local justice was the target of all criticisms and laments. They argued that civil rights were afforded only to private landowners and not indigenous communities or peasants.

As Tilly proposes, citizenship rights belong to all of those who are recognized as members of a state given that to belong to the category of citizen ought to be

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

sufficient for a person's petition to be recognized by the state.³⁰⁰ Therefore, as these *conciertos* and *comuneros* well understood, insofar as they had not been considered citizens, they had not been guaranteed civil justice before the state. The large part of the requests enclosed a demand for a republican regime that would recognize them as subjects with rights, as well as for the reparation of abuses perpetrated by the landholding elites, who were often portrayed as having continued the Conquest. The concept of reparation could be seen as an extension of the *protectorias* of Indians from the colonial period, but it opened the door to another type of relationship between the peasantry and the state given that it represented the beginning of negotiations with respect to their class and regional agendas. At the same time, they conditioned state sovereignty to back the popular classes. In contrast to violent logic that characterized landholding modernization -- a parasitic integration of the haciendas with markets -- the indigenous communities proposed that they be recognized as the fundamental political support of the nation. Therefore, the concept of reparation was associated with the interest of the state.

The state charge to protect the indigenous communities was defined in the context of war in the critical moment of 1895 to 1897. This discourse projected the notion that the social problems of the Indians and peasants were crucial themes for state sovereignty. Thus, the state did not manage the themes of Indian political

³⁰⁰ McAdam, Tilly and Tarrow, *Dynamics of contention*.

identity, land, and work as contentious civil rights issues, but rather as political issues that in part determined the liberal regime's possibilities of overcoming conservative *gamonal* power.

In this spirit, the members of the indigenous community of Tocachi, neighbors of the Chimburlo hacienda in Cayambe, demanded that the assembly recognize them as subjects with rights through “a law that would make us people in a republican Fatherland.”³⁰¹ Their demands against the hacienda were accompanied with a demand for restitution of political rights – that is, for strengthening their legal identity -- and for reparations. This would be possible if the state would assume the landowner's power over the Indians, which was an exercise of power that ultimately violated national sovereignty. In this moment of conflict and negotiation, the discourse on reparation was less unilateral than the literature indicates, as demands invited the state to politically confront *the frontier of the internal colony and establish state sovereignty over new bases*.

The denunciation of the Indian neighbors of Chimburlo for having been stripped of their livestock – both their *honor and their family goods* – represented the contentious experience of many haciendas. It also reflected the attempts of the

³⁰¹ AFL Asamblea Nacional 1896-1897, box 81, 24 (b) “Solicitudes no despachadas,” *Indígenas vecinos de la hacienda de Chimburlo*, f. 26-50.

haciendas to suppress the autonomy of the communities. Harassments to force Indians to serve as *conciertos* in the hacienda included the confiscation of livestock, land theft, and also the questioning of their “honor,” including the use of violence and the denial of legal process.

They have stripped us of our livestock until we had General Manuel Antonio Franco return them to us... But as soon as the praiseworthy General stopped protecting us due to his absence from Ibarra, our inhumane aggressors returned to victimize us with their measured violence. They bring our animals down to their fields; they say that we damage them; they produce the information that for those damages we are their debtors and they appropriate our work with the pretext of confiscating our livestock. Excellent Señor, we beg of your integrity and enlightenment a ruling to shelter, protect, and provide us with guarantees.³⁰²

Before discussing other demands, a large part of the letter was dedicated to describing the lack of access to the justice system in the parish of Tocachi, where the authorities in charge – that is, the political deputy and the priest – were subordinate to the *Señores* Eloy and Nicanor Guerrero, who had been the tenants of the hacienda for more than eleven years before becoming its owners. The expressive complaint described how “our indigenous people, beings destitute from all rights,” were persecuted in a number of ways in order to force them into involuntary labor.

³⁰² Ibid., *Indígenas vecinos de la hacienda de Chimburló*. The letter is signed by twelve people that represented the heads of family groups that conformed the community of Tocachi. Only a third of them signed for themselves and the rest signed “by request” for other people.

“Despite the illustrious constitutional guarantees and despite slavery being prohibited, we are overwhelmed by every type of humiliation.” Facing these conditions, the community declared a rebellion. They proclaimed that they no longer recognized the authority of the priests or the parish deputies or their civilizing discourses. “Though religion is not practiced, the Republic is not proclaimed, and Freedom is not praised, we have the perfect right to be free and independent of all unnatural coercion.”³⁰³

This threat described a return of sovereignty to the *pueblo* and suggested the need for *the republic be proclaimed*. In the context of the liberal assembly, when the fundamental issue was strengthening and centralizing the state, liberal circles promoted a delimitation of the Church’s power as a sovereignty issue. In this same context, the *comuneros* described the local space as a crucial scenario in the battle for sovereignty and they described the *hacendados* as usurpers of public power. They called on the state to assert itself as a national political institution in an action to subordinate the private power of local elites.

This new sovereignty would consider the indigenous people as having rights and they would await a law that would exempt them from *concertaje*. Andrés Guerrero proposes that this type of document expresses the liberal intellectuals’ manipulation of the indigenous peoples. His argument is that the republican language was foreign to the indigenous groups. Such a discourse was only found in urban and

³⁰³ Ibid.

intellectual environments, but did not circulate in rural localities where the law of custom predominated. Arguably, indigenous communities of the Sierra had early contact with the conflicts between the conservative and liberal parties and, therefore, had an awareness of the positions that both groups represented in terms of key issues such as land, work, and identity. They had defined their alliances much earlier. We see here how political discourse on *national regeneration* was accompanied by the denunciation of the effects that the conservative regime had on indigenous communities in Ecuador between 1861 and 1895. They described a situation that entailed the hijacking of the justice system on the local level, discrimination, economic damages, and violence. The testimonies that accompanied denunciations of violence, land usurpation, and forced mobilization for work and war ultimately suggest an awareness of the political landscape.

The concept of *reparation for damages* caused by the conservative regime constituted a powerful tool for mobilizing actions. The use of such concepts had practical implications that changed the conditions of local conflicts as these discourses generated actions in which the indigenous peoples became actively involved.

The Guerrero brothers demanded general changes to the justice system and a new proclamation of the Republic, along with a concrete denunciation of *gamonal* power. The broad republican discourse of the indigenous peoples of Tocachi produced

a hegemonic process – that is, a process of uniting distinct forms of social consciousness and experience. The discourse presented a political identity with a particular collective interest in which a new political regime might be founded.³⁰⁴

Ties between indigenous communities and other social classes with other legal and linguistic capacities were not secret nor did they lead to manipulation, as Guerrero has suggested. The large part of the documents of the period were explicit with respect to these ties or alliances with political parties. In fact, in legal rulings these alliances were cited and the particular conflicts between communities and haciendas appeared as political conflicts throughout the countryside between liberals and conservatives. The Indians understood full well the opportunity of using the pressuring capacity of allies in the revolutionary army.

The conditions of conflict had begun to change with the triumph of the Liberal Revolution and one of these transformations was the association of radicals with peasants in a national imaginary that struggled through interesting conditions to convert itself into hegemony. The solicitation for a legal change that would eliminate the legal framework established by conservatism in the last decades of the nineteenth century reflects the alliance between indigenous communities and the liberal army. Such an explicit and open correspondence was not an operation of ventriloquism. The quotation of Manuel Antonio Franco before the national assembly attempts to recall

³⁰⁴ Joseph and Nugent, eds., *Everyday forms of state formation*.

the territorial presence that this radical general had and the signs of a new state power that was inserting itself in various key places of landholding power, including Cayambe (a zone characterized by large haciendas such as Chimburlo and Changelá, which belonged to the son of Gabriel García Moreno himself, and Pesillo, which was property of the Church until its confiscation by the liberal state).

Manuel A. Franco was put in charge as the commander in chief of the army in Quito when Alfaro went to Guayas, where a national assembly was set up. His presence in Pichincha and Imbabura was characterized by a series of actions that carried messages of state empowerment and political sovereignty over the conventional power holders: the Catholic Church and the landholding elites of Pichincha. General Franco marked the territory between the capital and the northern frontier, while the assembly resolved the conditions for a peace negotiation and re-ordering of the territory.

The confrontation with the Church was one of the most decisive themes and it was in this area that images of General Franco were most clearly called upon. The correspondences of distinct military bosses with Alfaro characterize the clergy as just another political actor that asked for fidelity from the pulpit: “They are fanatics from the middle ages that can eat the very heart of anyone and remain satisfied for the

great glory of God.”³⁰⁵ However, it was not easy to break up their influence. Actions taken against the Church were generally limited, but Franco’s actions proved to be the exceptions. According to Loor, he was one of the few who treated the clergy as true military enemies. Thus, Loor recorded that in 1896 Franco “aimed to discover a conspiracy whose heads are the priest of Belén and the monks of Santo Domingo; he researched the convent for arms and took prisoners and reassigned priests, taking them from the capital to serve in mountainous zones such as Nanegalito to the northwest of Pichincha as if he had had jurisdiction over ecclesiastic issues.”³⁰⁶

If these actions were part of a search to strengthen the central state before the Church, the construction of sovereignty supposed other challenges that the Chimburlo Indians identified in the actions of General Franco. He completed a series of symbolic acts that sought to reduce the landholding elites’ public power and subordinate it to state power. Along these lines, for example, he obliged all hacienda owners in Pichincha and Imbabura that had a telegraph line to subsidize the state telegraph.³⁰⁷

He had military backing, which implied not only the possession of arms and the capacity to mobilize the national army if it were necessary, but also the capacity to impose the presence of new actors in the region. Battalions of mostly illiterate

³⁰⁵ “Carta al general Alfaro, C.A. López. Quito, abril 4 de 1897,” in Leonardo Moncayo Jalil, ed., trad. and notes., *Cartas al General don Eloy Alfaro 1893 – 1900* (Quito: Academia Nacional de Historia del Ecuador, 2006), 166.

³⁰⁶ Loor, *Eloy Alfaro*, 353.

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 585.

soldiers represented a new presence in the territory that carried the national emblem.

With [the economic situation] hopefully improving a little, go pay some salaries to the battalion of Quito. Each day this group makes me more sympathetic to their moral discipline, loyalty; we must attend them the same way as Colonel Ribadeneira, an excellent chief incomparable to few others who by the force of contraction and laboriousness, has been able to place this Battalion in the degree that it finds itself despite its poverty. Today I have named a school teacher to the battalion in order to teach all soldiers to sign who do not know how to do so and tomorrow I will pass a flier to all commanders of the artillery of the republic so that they do the same; I believe this to be a good measure to have enough electors.³⁰⁸

This vision raised the expectations of free indigenous *communities* that neighbored the powerful haciendas of Pichincha. At the same time, a possible alliance between free peasants and indigenous communities produced serious concerns among the *hacendados*. In effect, Franco was known by the liberals themselves as “tiger Franco” since he had so fiercely asserted the superiority of the state over the landholding class. He became very popular in the army and among indigenous communities.

The Indian community of Chimburlo’s letter to the assembly offers a view of how these initial moves to assert sovereignty found allies. They fanned the eagerness of the communities subjected to the conservative legal regime to invite state authority into the parish level. The question that the community directed at the assembly was how to extend the control that the liberal army established during the times of

³⁰⁸ “Carta al General Eloy Alfaro de Manuel Antonio Franco, Ibarra Marzo 23 de 1896,” in Moncayo Jalil, *Cartas al General don Eloy Alfaro*, 91-92.

mobilization to times of demobilization and the construction of republican institutions? How would they establish a more inclusive justice system that would not dissolve with demobilization and the establishment of a civil government?

The letter from Manuel Antonio Franco described his vision of how to fortify the militias within the political construction of the party. Franco wanted to create a liberal electorate out of a wide social conglomerate, beginning with the army. The general advised Alfaro on how to name authorities throughout the territory in order to consolidate liberal circles and not lose them to candidates imposed from outside of the party. Thus, in a letter addressed to Alfaro from Ibarra, he recommended that Carlos Concha always be consulted in the case of Esmeraldas. Instead of placing figures in political office who merely sought fortune, he asserted that Alfaro needed to get to know the regional liberal circles in order that the regional governments should be maintained in the hands of true liberals.³⁰⁹

This alliance was crucial in the stage immediately after the liberal triumph.

³⁰⁹ When Alfaro proposed a candidate for president that would inaugurate the twentieth century in Ecuador, and facing the threat of the conservatives and the fractioning of his party between radicals and civilists, he preferred a conciliatory line over a candidate with radical alliances and he chose Leonidas Plaza G. and left Franco aside. This decision weakened the leader himself, who was murdered during the civilist regime of Plaza. In the Sierra, as we will see in the next chapter, this supposed a process of authoritarian modernization that postponed for another decade the negotiation of the peasant integration into the national state. The allies of Franco in the coastal provinces maintained their arms in defense of radicalism even after the assassination of Alfaro.

The relevance of this alliance can be observed through the initial alignments that formed during pacification in Pichincha. In this province, the landholding elite was profoundly reluctant to accept the presence of a state that would impose itself on its power, while the indigenous communities and peasants in various parishes and several artisan groups in the city declared themselves liberal militias and sought to mark out their territory with regards to their enemies by making alliances with the new regime.

Through the decree issued on October 24, 1895, the National Assembly created an investigative committee for each province with the function of discovering the damages suffered by Ecuadorians during the war. The Pichincha committee allows us to see three factors at play with respect to the character that reparations assumed in this province and places in context the case of the indigenous community in neighboring Chimburlo.

The investigation told of large landowners, including the Church, who joined the conservative cause after their haciendas were taken by the liberal army.³¹⁰ These findings merely reflected the condition of the Liberal Party as an upstart in the

³¹⁰ On the structure of property in Pichincha, see Segundo Moreno Yanez, ed., *Pichincha. Monografía histórica de la región nuclear ecuatoriana* (Quito: Consejo provincial de Pichincha, 1981). On the *hacienda* in Cayambe and the rise of indigenous political organizations in the twentieth century, see Becker and Tutillo, *Historia agraria*. Also see Carlos Marchán R., *Estructura agraria de la sierra centro-norte, 1830-1930* (Quito: Banco Central del Ecuador, 1984).

province, since, although there existed liberal circles, the economic and political power in the region was fundamentally conservative. In this moment, the conservative bands seemed irreconcilable and in the context of strict rivalry, alliances with indigenous peasants became seen as a strategy (particularly by Franco) to undermine the power of conservative elites.

Thus, Gabriel García Alcázar, the owner of Changalá hacienda, denounced the robbery of property between May and November of 1896. It was property that he had been renting for eleven thousand pesos and that contained 3,300 animals. In the same way, the land of Chisinche that belonged to Josefina Flores, widow of Barriga, had been confiscated in May of 1896 in the moment that General Franco was in charge of Pichincha. Mariana Alcázar, widow of García Moreno, protested that due to the confiscation of lands, she lacked peasants because they had disappeared under the pretext of the confiscation. The widow of General Flores asked for an exorbitant compensation of 66,193 pesos for livestock and *hacienda* products, in addition to 9 percent interest and the rent. For the properties of the *Seminario Mayor* and seven convents, they wanted to charge the state 14,810 pesos.³¹¹

Alfaro responded with a significant act of force to this series of requests for compensations. The Ministry of the Interior and Police declared these *señoras* as

³¹¹ AFL Asamblea Nacional 1896-1897, box 80, Marzo 29 1897, “Contribuciones-cupos de guerra-confiscaciones 1896-1897. Imbabura, Pichincha, Tungurahua,” file 1, Pichincha bienes confiscados.

instigators of public insecurity and confiscated their properties, freeing their *conciertos* of their obligations.

Finding the interior peace threatened and being as it is notorious for the public and evident for the government that those who attempt to disturb order receive constant help of all type from said señores, their possessions remain impounded by order of the supreme chief, who will dictate the measures of the case for that which concerns their deposit and transfer... Take possession of the referred to goods for señor Carlos Intriago Macías, who has been named the depositee and administrator.³¹²

They confiscated Church properties that led to a significant transfer of goods from the Church to the newly formed Public Assistance of the state. They also confiscated property from the largest and most powerful private estates. The assembly named an administrator and informed him that “to fulfill your office, be aware that the Chief of State has decided that the debts of Indians of these seized lands should be dismissed and they should continue lending their services with the salary of 20 cents daily.”³¹³

The specific measure taken against these *señoras* due to their threatening attitude was generalized throughout the province and marked the beginning of more forceful actions to establish state power. The surveillance measures of political enemies had already been employed in the frontier regions, where the conservative army had been assembled with the support of the Colombian conservative party and

³¹² Ibid.

³¹³ Ibid.

the archbishop Pedro Schumacher, but before the internal threat represented by the *hacendados*, these measures were extended throughout the province of Pichincha. The Ministry of the Interior and Police described the *hacendados* as enemies of the public order that did not accept peace agreements and, therefore, required a special demonstration of state authority.

1. Considering that the enemies of the public order have not stopped conspiring against the regime established by national will, 2. that the generosity and the tolerance for the fanatics has been repudiated by them as a show of weakness, 3. that the attempt at sedition by the enemies of the fatherland make necessary the conservation of a ready force that demand enormous expenses from the treasury, 4. that the continued alarms absorb the administrative attention of the government and make difficult the consolidation of order and peace, the only sources of public prosperity, 5. that the decree of the 7th of last year is deficient and only relative to the provinces of Imbabura and Carchi, it is decreed that any movement of the army and more war expenses will be met with the goods of those who disturb the public order, should they be natural or legal persons.³¹⁴

The definition of the goods of the public order's enemies as goods at the state's disposition constituted the first transformation of private property into public patrimony or into a possession of collective interest. This measure was accompanied by another significant measure, which liberated the *conciertos* from their debts with the *hacendados*, but this only applied to *hacendados* that were recognized as public enemies of liberalism, such as *hacendados* in Pichincha and Azuay. This radicalism that included the confiscation of lands for issues of public interest and abolition of

³¹⁴ Ibid.

debts was selective, which would have serious consequences at the moment of evaluating the incidence of the Liberal Revolution throughout the territory of *gamonal* elites. But before making a general evaluation, it is important to observe how the demands of popular militias of liberalism were presented and what connotations they entailed so that the state might establish its presence in local space to control private power.

In the cases of Pichincha and Azuay the radicalism of political confrontation between conservative and liberal bands constituted a propitious field for subordinated populations to negotiate their own interests and to express their condition as private subjects with rights.

In Pichincha and Azuay we observe how conflict marked the political definition of local space. In this context the diversity of indigenous communities, from the free communities of Tocachi to the *conciertos* of Changalá and populations tied to extractivist activities in Azuay, coincided in their rejection of the “regime of custom” and in their preference for a military occupation of the territory on behalf of the liberal state that had declared the *hacendados* as public enemies. These indigenous groups contributed to the expansion of the Liberal Party throughout the countryside as they incorporated a political identity tied to liberalism.

The relationship between the emancipation from personal oppression and the emergence of a sovereign subject at the base of the new regime constituted the

revolutionary element of popular liberalism. In Ecuador as in other Latin American cases, the most specific interests for the abolition of debt relations with *patrons* were accompanied by more profound considerations about the relationship between slavery and tyranny, emancipation and sovereignty. Although the negotiations were selectively radical and not universally so, there was an attempt by the indigenous communities and peasants of distinct regions to pressure for their inclusion within the post-war political negotiation. In the language of Charles Tilly, this was a process of collective action that sought to accumulate the political capacity for negotiating rights.³¹⁵

In this sense, the letter J. A. Polanco sent to the assembly was revealing. Polanco was a self-described liberal subjected to the slavery of *concertaje* in Cayambe. He reminded the Assembly that it legislated for the *pueblo* “to deal with sacred things pertaining to our nation.” Polanco recalled the military process as a moment of convocation to participating and speaking and he hoped that, therefore, the assembly would listen to his voice as well.

[In 1895] the public was given some loose sheets by the civil and military chief [Manuel Antonio Franco] in which it is said that the current government is the Government of all and for all; it also says discuss, write, speak, ask for our improvement, just as it is based in this I make the following mention.³¹⁶

³¹⁵ McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention*.

³¹⁶ AFL, Asamblea Nacional, Legislatura del siglo XIX, Cayambe 1896, box 81, folder 24c, “solicitudes no despachadas” 51-75 (1896-1897), *J.A. Polanco a la*

The liberal militia was called to practice its political rights. Though the majority of peasants did not enjoy the right to vote, the war had restored them as political subjects, restoring their “honor” and calling on them to come out of their silence and present their points of view. Polanco demanded recognition of the popular base of the revolution so that the Indian *concierto* would be recognized for having taken the liberal side militarily. “The liberal *cholada*” was to be viewed as the base of the revolutionary government. This narrative was born of the demand for state intervention to guarantee their economic autonomy.

Why not cut off a block from one side and the other of the roads so that they should be distributed to the unfortunate [people] that today lack even a few inches of land, for which three or four landowners oppress them without giving a place for the needy in which they could form even a small cabin... and those of us who take a weapon under the arm to sustain a government, why not give a look at the unfortunate, as they tend to say vulgarly, the *cholada* forms a government like the current [one].³¹⁷

Polanco identified the restitution of the Indians as members of the republic with the end of racial domination begun during the Conquest. The Liberal Revolution was to represent the end of colonialism and the beginning of a popular sovereignty that included the indigenous peasantry.

convención Nacional.

³¹⁷ Ibid.

This *concierto* proposed a historic memory about how the appropriation of collective lands initiated during the conquest continued until the fall of the cooperatives and communal pastures that were the base of the extensive private properties of Cayambe at the end of the nineteenth century. The demand for republican rights or citizenship that followed requests for land and emancipation from servitude were accompanied by an effort to reconstruct a memory of colonialism. The nation arose from the revolution as a break from the colonial and racial process that had generated the expropriation of land and the enslavement of the Indians.

In the letter from Polanco, the land appeared as a political solution to the state of violence. The land must not be seen as a property, but rather a political good – that is, a resource that must be administered for the common good and not for individual gain based on colonial violence. These armed peasants defined the *hacendados* and, by association, conservatism itself as continuations of the conquest, while they recognized themselves in the republican language as generators of the common good and the nation.

Now tell me, señores, those who unluckily by fortune came here in conquest brought some treasure to appropriate the haciendas or did they come as enemies of the indigenous race to appropriate themselves of what was foreign, as has happened? Until when will the indigenous race be subject to the power of the hacendados, until what day will this poor race serve as animals to make three or four landowners wealthy... and [until when will] the work of

these unfortunate people be paid with five cents a day, with which they cannot have any class of support?³¹⁸

In Polanco's narrative, he expressed perhaps more lucidly something that had appeared frequently in the multiple discourses and trials presented before the assembly. He emphasized that the *hacendados* strictly pursued their individual interests, while the peasants thought about the collectivity. This was one of the sources of the liberal state's image as a restoring state for the enslaved classes, a discourse which operated through the recognition that land was an issue tied to sovereignty and public good and not only to private property and civil rights. Polanco's discourse on the liberal state promoted the idea that land was ultimately the patrimony of the common good.

After analyzing the political dangers of this private appropriation of the land for a threatened republic, he suggested how these lands could "be returned to the poor."

Why does just one individual have to embrace the endless forests, the limitless hills, the immense fields, and for all and in all place impositions? How could it be that so few enjoy so much comfort and, that's to say, why should one live and one hundred die?³¹⁹

The denunciation of the strictly private interest that took precedent in the space of

³¹⁸ Ibid.

³¹⁹ Ibid.

gamonal power, the parish, was described as a system in which all the institutions attempted to nourish themselves on the Indians, from the *hacienda* to the Church and the justice system. The private interest and the corruption of justice led to a state of violence and crime.

Also among those who live exclusively from the [indigenous] sweat, the priests that suck the same blood of the inhabitants [when they pay] as when they do not pay... They are confirmed, they pay; they are married, they pay; they need a baptism, they pay; finally, they die, they pay double so that the family sacrifices and end up in the streets for burying the dead. Now many of bad faith... leave the poor vulnerable; also the infamies, tortures, thefts, every class of offense that is committed, in silence, as a consequence of a legal disposition, which accuses witnesses for nothing...³²⁰

The violence and crime could only be resolved from a process of state pacification and distribution of justice. In this sense, Polanco was described as a “liberal of order” who had put down his arms and desired a favorable institutionalization of the revolutionary (national) state that would suppress colonial practices. Manuel Polanco, *concierto* in Changalá, and other *conciertos* in Azuay, Rumipulla, Pillco, and Concha all demanded on their own the consolidation of a central power that would recognize them as subjects with rights.³²¹

³²⁰ Ibid.

³²¹ For Andrés Guerrero, "Una imagen ventrílocua." These discourses give us only the use that the Liberal Party makes of its defense of the Indian race in its confrontation with the conservative party, but it does not represent the voice of the indigenous peasantry.

Pichincha and Azuay were ultimately the provinces with the most complaints of violence with respect to the imposition of *concertaje*, but denunciations against this practice and the demand for the restitution of rights emerged from various provinces, including Loja and Guayas. In this sense, “various citizens of Guayaquil who asked for the abolition of the documentation of *concertaje*” addressed a letter to the national assembly.³²²

They directly signaled how *concertaje* was the result of the imposition of the landholding state on those who worked and they described how a tenant’s work contract comparable to the treatment that was given criminals.

Whether in the inter-Andean populations or in our coastal [population], our present [time] is the most wretched because our whole life is employed in serving the patron according to his whim and if casually we contradict him, giving us the title of fugitive peasant, they put us in a public jail, where, piled up in unhealthy cells with murderers and thieves, we obtain our freedom when our patrons sell us as slaves to others for conventional prices, a cause of horror... but it is very simply the reason for which one cannot access his will [and] therefore cannot challenge the letters that they present us, adding on top of this that we do not know how to read or write.³²³

The letter from Guayas associated the abolition of slavery more to freedom than to a reparation for racial injustice; however, both appeals led to a demand for their

³²² AFL, Asamblea nacional 1896-1897, box 81, folder 24a, “Solicitudes no despachadas,” file 15. *Varios ciudadanos de Guayaquil piden la abolición de las cartas de concertajes*. Guayaquil, November 24, 1896.

³²³ Ibid.

political recognition as citizens and as constitutional subjects. The demand was direct. The *conciertos* of the coast closed the letter “hoping to be attended to by the abolition of *concertaje* that we solicit; we do not doubt that you will understand our position founded in the reasons that we have left exposed.” These demands for reparation did not only have an impact at the local level, modifying the interaction of forces, but they also had a definite impact on the configuration of the Ecuadorian state, since the state was defined as the restorer of discriminated populations and proceeded to integrate conflicts over exclusion into processes of state democratization.

Although discourse on the reparation of victims of *gamonal* violence served to strengthen pressure on the landholding class and mark out space for new political actors, during the 1910s this discourse became tied to the practices of an ambiguous paternalism.

The configuration of the state as a source of a social reparation affected the way in which rights were constructed. It began to delineate the powerful artifact of ethnic citizenship as a mode of identification that permitted the translation of demands and affected a specific state mode for responding, a mode of democratization that depended on a sector of civil society that required justice and identified itself as a collectivity demanding state protection. Indian citizenship assumed a process of reparation that began with pressure exercised by the liberal “*cholada*.”

In a similar manner that the literature suggests with respect to the Mexican revolution, in Ecuador the aspirations for political participation among a sector of the elite led to a convocation that largely overwhelmed the restricted circle of political subjects that had configured the first demands for democratization. The liberal circles of the coast could only advance in their strategic fight against conservatism as part of a much more extensive wave of social mobilization that literally and symbolically brought the peasantry towards the capital.

A mobilization of sectors with their own expectations responded to the convocation proposed by liberal circles. In this diversity of interests that came together under the banner of radical liberalism, contributions from Esmeraldas and Manabí were fundamental.³²⁴ Following the history of the Mexican revolution, the Ecuadorian civil war of 1895 was a process in which a daily construction of hegemony began. A national hegemonic discourse appeared that generated political identifications among diverse popular sectors, achieving a political integration among subjects who, in objective terms, had been territorialized as subjects of local power and coercive identifications.

Liberal citizenship, or belonging as subjects with rights to a liberal republic, accompanied a proposal for reparation for a racially discriminated population. In other words, more than a discourse on abstract equality, this represented a demand for

³²⁴ Knight, *Revolución, democracia y populismo*.

the reparation of rights confiscated from a social sector. Racial exclusion had forced the construction of an ethnic citizenship since this was the sector that demanded an specific reparation to guarantee its citizenship. This relation between popular citizenship guarantees and the reparation of damages caused by racism against the Indians was an important equation in the negotiated the expansion of democracy in Ecuador. Even when a large part of the demands analyzed here were not satisfied by the liberal regime, the formulation of these demands by indigenous peasants constituted a legacy for later struggles.³²⁵

The “citizens of Guayaquil” in the condition of *concertaje* commented on the lack of a national policy against *concertaje* with frank disgust.

Although we have read the message of General Alfaro in fragments, we have admired that dealing with the abolition of *concertaje*, among short and apologetic words... [I]n the administrative epoch of General Urvina, various capitalists opposed the abolition of slavery, but against the torrent of spectators over the freedom of man, the decree on the alluded abolition was given without giving results that were prejudged; it is for this that we come to the Assembly of 96 so that without much meditation it should abolish the *concertaje* notes; it is sufficient that these were what they substituted for those of slavery and now it is not possible that Ecuador should be the only South American country where there still exist rezagos from the despotism of colonialism that so many disappointments, well-embittered, come costing the

³²⁵ Prieto, *Liberalismo y temor*, proposes that these discourses speak of new expectations and her book seeks to demonstrate how this opening generates a rapid reaction of racial panic that closes the political system. In the next chapters, we will observe how a new arrangement of power of limited negotiation among peasants was struck between 1909 and 1922 and once more in the 1930s during a process that recuperated the memory of the expectations generated during the Liberal Revolution.

governments that sponsor certain laws that remember the cruelty of them by the effects that they have produced.³²⁶

The radical intellectual Agustín Cueva Sáenz commented on this process during the National Convention of 1917 when he tried to introduce a day-laborers' law that would impede *concertaje* through regulation, just as José Peralta had attempted in 1897. In this later context, unlike that of the radicalism of Franco in Pichincha, Cueva succeeded in abolishing the imprisonment of indigenous debtors, and in this sense, broke one of the most exasperating alliances between local justice and landowners which characterized the conservative regime. He commented that in the assemblies of 1896 and 1906 the central objective to which all political decisions had been subordinated had been to negotiate the ceasefire and establish the predominance of the state. Thus, all the necessary decisions had been made to end the war, but not to prevent further conflict.

The legislators had taken on democracy as a theme of public power, "looking for a point between dictatorship and anarchy," while neglecting "the social problem."

The social problems in relation to the organism, to the structure, to the functioning of the masses and the diverse social classes, to their activity... have been ignored and forgotten, and having a republican existence, we find ourselves with half or two thirds parts of our population submitted to servitude and before ourselves and in plain written democracy, a medieval

³²⁶ AFL Asamblea nacional 1896-1897, box 81, folder 24a, "Solicitudes no despachadas," file 15, *Varios ciudadanos de Guayaquil piden la abolición de las cartas de concertajes*.

building of privilege and violence at these times when [servitude] has been reduced to rubble in the entire civilized world.³²⁷

The discourse on reparations impacted the relationship between the liberal state and artisans. The newspaper *Confederación Obrera* published by artisan groups and some former members of the liberal army in Guayaquil spoke of the discourse on reparations. When the second national liberal assembly of the Alfaro government met in 1906, *Confederación Obrera* referred to the need for reforms that would materialize the abstract ideal of democracy and bring workers into the protection of state laws. The society Sons of the *Pueblo* was founded by Miguel of Albuquerque, a Cuban tailor and mason linked to the work of Maceo in Cuba, who arrived in Ecuador to support Alfaro with the formation of popular urban societies.³²⁸ This organization had adopted the discourse of state protection and in 1906 its newspaper *Confederación Obrera* called the liberal state the *redeemer of the invalid race*, seeking shelter under the paternalistic liberal umbrella.

After establishing their sympathy with abolitionism, *this law of concertaje that is slavery by another name*, the *vivanderos* (small vendors of food from the Sierra

³²⁷ Agustín Cueva S. had developed all of the arguments in favor of the project of the “daylaborers' law.” In the middle of the senate, he proposed a reflection about the theme of servitude in Ecuador. (Debate over *concertaje* on October 2, 1915, act 43, pages 372). For an analysis of the arguments that justified the servitude of the Indians in the same assembly, see Prieto, *Liberalismo y temor*.

³²⁸ José Buenaventura Navas, *Evolución social del obrero en Guayaquil. Obra histórica*. 1849-1920 (Guayaquil: Imprenta Guayaquil, 1920)

associated with Sons of Labor and the Workers' Confederation of Guayas) asked for the backing of the liberal government with respect to the *hacendados*. For the workers and the small *vivandero* merchants, democracy required protection from the state for small capital.

Our generation, in love with precision, the daughter of science and admirer of method, cannot resign itself to repeating abstractions... a modification in the social machine: The state will need to defend the small and medium capitals that are the well-being of many and avoid protecting the great masses of capitals whose only utility it reports to the country is its extraction for the use and benefit of another country.³²⁹

Market suppliers, including a majority of small merchants from popular social strata and with Quichua last names, were the bridge between Indians and artisans. The Workers' Confederation of Guayas' appropriation of the discourse on reparations and state protection resulted from the demands and negotiations presented to the state by indigenous communities, *conciertos*, and free peasants.

Thus, not only did the Indians request protection from the state, but the popular classes of the coast sought it as well. That is, these popular classes did not oppose the radical agenda, as the literature would suggest. In the same framework as the suppression of work for debt, *Confederación Obrera* N. 4 (April 1906) proposed a transformation of the elections laws to provide representation for the working-class in

³²⁹ Periódico *Confederación Obrera*.

the national and sectional government.

Although the *montoneras* had gone to war to reject the *progresista* proposal that voting rights would be sufficient to overcome exclusive power structures, in this moment ten years after the revolution, the popular organizations of coastal liberalism proclaimed that it was the moment to universalize suffrage. The mobilization process of the Liberal Revolution and the existence of collective and individual popular subjects that claimed to be the foundation of national sovereignty tended to support a single conviction: it was time for equality.

3.5 Land, Communities, and Negotiations over State Jurisdiction.

Negotiations over land were closely linked to the political conquest of the country. In provinces like Pichincha, Loja, and Azuay, characterized by an aggressive process of land concentration and accompanied by a paternalistic domination of populations on the haciendas, the communications of indigenous peoples integrated the issue of “lands” into that which had taken priority in their negotiations – their emancipation from *concertaje*. In the case of *concierto* peasants, the lands issue was tied to the objective of emancipation from the personal power of the *hacendados*. In this sense, it was accompanied by arguments in favor of the presence of the liberal state that was described as a state emerging from a more inclusive social pact.

Many requests, such as that of Polanco, claimed that the only way for free

peasants to avoid falling into dependent relations once more was to recognize the Indians' citizenship and distribute lands to consolidate a peasant economy. Several requests included the idea that land could be used to construct public roads to facilitate access for captive communities to parish centers and, therefore, to the justice system. According to these requests, the relationship between land and state became central to the issue of emancipating the peasantry.

In this moment of pacification, the only land that was considered a public problem was that of the liberal army's enemies, located in strategic areas of the political map, such as the frontiers of Carchi, Azuay, and the province of Pichincha. In Pichincha the negotiation over lands took place in terms of the state's sovereignty over those subjects subjected to personal domination on the *haciendas*. The lands that were re-oriented for the collective good included that of the Church, which became patrimony of the state, and those of public enemies, which were confiscated. The *conciertos'* demand for a repartition of *hacienda* lands had to wait until the 1930s, as related in the next chapter..

In the case of the central Sierra, particularly in the provinces of Tungurahua and Bolívar, the request for the assembly's intervention into land issues came from indigenous communities that were not contained within haciendas, but rather bordered haciendas. Due to the recognition of lands for peasant communities and families in the mid-nineteenth century and their articulation with regional markets,

the scenario in these provinces was very different than that of Pichincha by the end of the nineteenth century. The “whites,” as the free indigenous communities called the *hacendados*, did not have economic and ideological power over them, but rather disputed land boundaries with them. The Indians even had several urban spaces and political networks on their side.

The diversity and the amount of the contributions from regional actors in Tungurahua and Bolívar contrasted with those from actors in Pichincha and tell us more about how alliances and conflicts came about at this time. In Pichincha, the conservative generals and the *hacendados* had to contribute through forced confiscations of livestock, houses, and weapons, while the contributions in the central Sierra were more fairly distributed. Since property was not as concentrated, there was not a commercial monopoly and almost the entirety of the demands for compensation in Tungurahua and Bolívar was for food, mules, and horses that had not obtained a fair price of between 5 and 200 pesos. Thus, although Tungurahua was the center of conflicts during the war due to its location, the negotiation of reparations for damages from the war was not done with large lenders, as in the coast, or with public enemies from whom large amounts of livestock had been confiscated. As the commission formed in Tungurahua maintained and in agreement with the decree issued on the 24th of October, 1896, it was established that only two *hacendados*, Juan Vascones and Manuel Quinteros, contributed 1,000 sucres to the war.

In this province, confiscations have not been carried out since even when orders have come, they have not had opposition. No citizen who has goods in Tungurahua can complain that his patrimony has been destroyed due to confiscation. With respect to the damages suffered in this province, from the beginning of the revolution until the last conflicts, they are innumerable. Here began the revolutionary movement and this city was the center of almost all the operations... The province of Tungurahua was nearly annihilated with respect to its property... Almost no owner of horses [or] mules has not lost them. How to make up for so many losses? We believe that a just or even an equal reparation is nearly impossible. Moreover, if we are discussing compensation, if the provinces that have lost things due to the establishment of the current order have the right to demand something... we ask the honorable Assembly for the creation of a building in which the arts are taught.³³⁰

Among the communications on issues of land and state presence that arrived at the assembly from Tungurahua, the case of the request presented by the communities of Chibuleo, Pilahuin, and Santa Rosa against the *hacendados* of Pilahuin was representative.³³¹ Chibuleo was one of twelve indigenous communities of the southeast of Ambato that belonged to the ancient *cacicazgo* of Simiantug. The Indians of these communities, as we have seen in other cases described in the first chapter, moved into parish and county centers, where they obtained temporary work and participated in commercial activities in agricultural fares.

³³⁰ AFL Asamblea Nacional 1896-1897, box 80, folder 21 “Contribuciones-cupos de guerra-confiscaciones 1896-1897, Imbabura, Pichincha, Tungurahua,” file 1, *Imbabura Informe de las comisiones encargadas de examinar sobre los perjuicios sufridos por los ciudadanos de Imbabura por culpa de la guerra*.

³³¹ AFL Asamblea Nacional 1896-1897, box 79, folder 23f, “Solicitudes despachadas” (121-150), file 62, Quito, February 18, 1897, *Indígenas de Chibuleo*.

In the letter they sent to Alfaro, they denounced the “whites” of the rural parish of Pilahuin for wanting to take away their access to urban space, markets, and the valley. The intention of the *hacendados* was to break the articulation that the settlements of the *páramo* had with family networks in the fares of Santa Rosa. This would serve to force them to work as *conciertos* on the haciendas. At the same time, their separation from the parish of Santa Rosa would subject them to the jurisdiction of the political deputy of Pilahuin, thus entering into the presence and influence of the *hacendado* circle. “In a very unjust manner and for deplorable ambitions, the whites of Pilahuín, our neighbors, want to rip us from our own and ancient jurisdiction of Santa Rosa, setting new limits without motive.”³³²

The way in which this complex network, self-identified as a community of Indians, demanded the state’s attention was interesting for discussion about peasantry pressures to configure the liberal state. The indigenous peoples of Chibuleo were presented as a social collective with a collective identity and a collective will that was legitimately represented by their delegates. They approached the state to demand concrete actions, as they asked Alfaro to influence the National Convention.

The indigenous peoples of Chibuleo who have signed below are also those who, as delegates of our party, came here and are before you in demand of victory... That the ambitious pretension of the whites of Pilahuin be rejected

³³² Ibid.

and they be left calmly in possession of the old limits.³³³

At the same time the delegates delivered the message to the state that they were willing to exercise other forms of pressure and even oppose the authorities in order to pressure for the intervention of justice, as we have seen in other cases.

But we are resolved not to cede even one point: we do not want to change homes and if they try to take us to Pilahuín, they will take us dead. Before that trampling should take place, before viewing ourselves obliged to throw ourselves desperately to the defense of our ancient jurisdiction, we have wanted to come to you to ask that you should impede this harm and that you send a message to the Convention, making them do justice and reject the ambitious pretension of those of Pilahuín.³³⁴

The representatives of the party from Chibuleo described their strengths for negotiating throughout the letter, claiming to have legitimate representatives based on consensus; to be capable of acting collectively to mobilize a resistance; and to count on the support of two levels of justice: the parish of Santa Rosa and the municipal committee of Ambato, which favored them over the *hacendados* of Pilahuín.

The committee sent commissions to us and to Pilahuín and after seeing and studying which they said, resolved in our favor. You would not be able, since you are president, to get the Convention to favor us as well and at the same time approve that which, by special agreement, has just decided our Municipality?³³⁵

³³³ Ibid.

³³⁴ Ibid.

³³⁵ Ibid.

The five representatives signed the letter with a very significant epilogue in which they argued that the revolutionary state has been created by the liberal *cholada*. They told the assembly that it depended on popular opinion and on the legitimacy it was able to cultivate. “We are sure that if you do it, and for that we already thank you, upon returning to our houses, we will tell all of us that you have heard us and you have treated us well.”³³⁶

For the ethno-historian Carlos Mamani, the force of the delegates’ voice came from their long tradition of political power as ethnic authorities. The *pueblo* of Tomavela had twelve groupings that were divided into two *cacicazgos*, one settled in Guaranda and the other in Santa Rosa. During the colonial period, the network of settlements that constituted the *jatun ayllu* was reduced and lost its access to the coast, occupying other spaces near Ambato. According to this same work, in the eighteenth century two *cacicazgos* were formed that were descendents from the Cando Pilamonga family with six groups each and where each one tried to maintain leadership at all costs.³³⁷ The memory to which Mamani's study refers ought to be brought up to date by social and political competition over space in the nineteenth

³³⁶ Ibid.

³³⁷ Carlos Mamani Condori, *La estructura de la comunidad originaria: el caso de Pilahuin*. (Master's thesis in Andean History, FLACSO, 1992). Zimiatur, Guango Liquin, Mondo Quita, Juebene, Chungato, Salinas, Ootoso, Cusumuncho, Mulasilli, Silagato, Hillahalo, and Chigui also maintained *mitma* populations in very distant places like Quito, Chillo (carpenters), Ambato, and Pelileo, and had *camayos* in charge of the salt in Salinas and Guano.

century. In this sense, historical alliances with liberalism, the capacity to sustain collective and family lands thanks to these alliances, and their presence in markets must have helped make the political power of the community viable at the same time they maintained the ancestral capital of Santa Rosa under their influence.

The free indigenous communities of Tungurahua made a proposal to the assembly that was very different from that of the indigenous peasant *conciertos* of Pichincha and Azuay. The *ayllu* Simiatug spoke with more conviction about his pressuring and negotiating capacity on a regional level. In this sense, it was understood that the municipality of Ambato could help the cause of free communities avoid conflicts with powerful actors and also that the communities should turn to all the authorities available.

This regional condition of being partially democratized already made negotiation less radical in the short term. The communities were actors with a political trajectory and a certain degree of security. The state did not need these representatives to confront a threatening elite, and so it decided not to recognize the conflict as important to state sovereignty. Although some requests wanted the state to consider the harassment of *hacendados* as a problem of public order, in reality they were not able to make the state accept this notion. The demands for restitution of lands usurped by the hacienda were discarded by the assembly under the argument that land was an issue related to property – that is, it was an object for common

judges and civil law. We must suppose that this argument discouraged the population from expressing their conflicts over land boundaries. Thus, in the central Sierra, advantageous conditions in local power continued being more important than state intervention.

The assembly's response to the Chibuleo community's proposal for negotiation probably motivated a search for other allies. Pedro Quilligana and Mariano Guaseo addressed the parish priest of Pilahuín in order to solicit his intervention in case Sra. Valdivieso should mark off land that she thought was hers.³³⁸

This belongs to the parish of his charge. Therefore, we put to your knowledge, my dear priest, that you should impede her in case she might begin working [the land]... And in case that should happen, we will complain to our president with the titles that we have from our ancestors... since we have always been absolute owners.³³⁹

The argument spoke of territory as a space in which distinct jurisdictions were superimposed and thus the leaders appealed to the parish clergy to assert its jurisdiction over those *páramo* lands and in turn recognize that they belonged to the communities. Otherwise, they would appeal to the president. The options perceived by the community spoke of how the ties between the community and the state were

³³⁸ AHA, Gobernación, pack 1897-1909, *Río Blanco y río Colorado alindan con los páramos del Sr. Diego Santa Cruz*, the heads signaled.

³³⁹ Ibid.

not defined strategically as had occurred during the military government of Manuel Antonio Franco in Pichincha in 1896.

The assembly's decision to resolve the demands for compensation according to property losses and damages caused during the war in part marked the path of post-war institutionalization. A law issued on May 14, 1897, gave credits to lenders and landowners of each province that had been affected or had helped the *regeneration* cause.³⁴⁰

Yet, this decision was subordinate to considerations with respect to the political identifications of landholding elites and indigenous and peasant communities, which in turn depended on the capacity of the liberal regime to establish its political predominance.

In effect, when the assembly tried to pacify the provinces and generated commissions in charge of investigating economic demands, it found that the commissions made requests that contrasted with one another starkly. From Guayas, Manabí, and Esmeraldas arrived requests for the payment of large sums for loans

³⁴⁰ The archive of the legislative function (AFL) notes the reports of the provincial commissions. In the margins of the documents they are counted as requests that had been attended to, for which we can assume that these requests were resolved and significant funds were dispatched to compensate financial assistance for the war. Also, there exist several requests sent individually including that of J. Ribadeneira, who asked that 8,398 sucres invested in the cause of the Liberal Revolution be returned. AFL Asamblea nacional 1896-1897, box 79, folder 23e, "Solicitudes despachadas" (101-120), file 113, February 28, 1897.

made to liberal generals for the purchase of arms, whereas Pichincha sent a bill for hundreds of thousands of *sucres*, reflecting a lack of resignation on behalf of the landholding elite. From Pichincha, very significant letters also arrived that described *gamonal* power and the weight of that power on the indigenous peasantry on the *haciendas*. Negotiation was almost impossible until the arrival of the leader of liberal civilism or of moderate liberalism, Leonidas Plaza Gutiérrez, in 1901.³⁴¹ In the case of Tungurahua, the report spoke of the diverse nature of the contributions in a society in which wealth was less polarized. We must suppose that the liberal circles of Ambato requested that the Assembly construct a school of arts to demonstrate that their closeness to liberalism had more to do with concepts of progress and civilization and less to do with the possibility of changing the political conditions of the region. In the 1910s, however, the province of Tungurahua would be an exception before the processes experienced in Pichincha and Guayas, where the initial pact between the peasants and the radicals was replaced by new negotiations that we will analyze shortly and in which the landholding elite of the Sierra defined their formula for a pact with the liberal state in the same way that the commercial and financial elite of Guayas – that is, they wished to promote a model of popular integration within their

³⁴¹ The radicalism of the alliances in the first year of the revolution under the leadership of Franco was taken into account by Alfaro in the moment of naming his successor and deciding on a pacifying move that would indicate the conciliatory will of the regime in order to advance with the institutionalization of the liberal state; this move materialized in the figure of the moderate Leonidas Plaza.

regional regimes, but without integrating the peasant agendas.

The requests for the abolition of *concertaje* in various provinces were commented upon in the margin with red ink that states “to be dealt with in the day laborers’ law that the assembly has not been dealt with yet.” The day laborers’ law was dealt with ten years later in a completely distinct context to that of the national post-war negotiation of 1896. In 1917, the last of the radical *guerrillas* in the northern basin of the Pacific had been defeated by the central state, which was consolidating itself as an institution while the governments of the provinces of Pichincha and Guayas had been converted into centers of conservative and liberal-progressive civilizing projects.

The assembly, as various authors have pointed out, did not give a universal response to the Indians’ requests for citizenship. Nor did they present a law that would abolish the social institution of *concertaje* or generate a process of massive land distribution. With respect to these three general themes up for negotiation, the assembly’s response was to deny its capacity to resolve these issues in universal terms and at the same time offer negotiated, selective, and particular forms for conflict negotiation. Again, these negotiations took place in accordance with the specific regional configuration and political interests that this negotiation could have for the consolidation of the liberal regime. We could find documents that describe how to deal with the cases presented earlier. Among these, the response given by the

Assembly to the petition from the indigenous peoples of Changamina in the parish of Gonzanamá in Loja with regards to the claim that in their parish there were lands that belonged to the nation which they had the right to use although “part of these lands had been transferred without the intervention of the treasury representative.”³⁴² Since they paid for the right to use them, they asked that a law be dictated that would prohibit the sale of the lands and that the contracts that might take away their collective possession be declared null.

The Assembly responded that these petitions were inadmissible and argued that the Assembly should not address this type of case. Thus, it did not have the intention to propose new principles about fundamental rights. For the judges of the Assembly, the complaints that the Indians presented needed to be dealt with by common judges as civil rights cases. They were not part of the discussions on the fundamental social contract – “the national interests,” as the Indians had attempted to make them seem. The Assembly determined that simply because these seemingly private issues could affect national rights, they could be considered for investigation by the executive power in charge of themes of government and public security.³⁴³

Thus, the Assembly named a commission to deal with all themes related to *concertaje*, lands, and justice presented by a diverse array of actors that included, as

³⁴² AFL Asamblea Nacional 1896-1897, *Indígenas de Changamina a la Asamblea Nacional*.

³⁴³ *Ibid.*

we have seen, *conciertos* from Pichincha and Azuay; free indigenous communities from Tungurahua, Loja, and Guayas; peasant *montubios* from Guayas; and “neighbors” in servitude. The collection of requests and arguments that were sent to the assembly were summarized in the category of *Asunto Indios* under two sub-categories: “the first asking that they stop the abuses of some *hacendados*, who, through fraud and trickery, make them work without remuneration, faking debts and contracts, which maintain them enslaved; and second, under the category of denunciations against [the naming of] lands as empty lands.”³⁴⁴

With respect to requests related to work and land, the Assembly could act through the creation of a new legal framework that would prevent slavery according to the suggestion of the plaintiffs by suppressing the practice of imprisoning debtors, creating justice tribunals that would replace the *gamonal* power, and recognizing the popular militias of liberalism as part of the sovereign contract of the nation. The basic proposal of the plaintiffs was that the state should assert itself through the justice system and through force to regulate labor relations and undergo a campaign to give lands to peasants so that they might reconstitute themselves as producers and political subjects inter-connected through urban nuclei.

With regards to the possibility for issuing a constitutional chapter that would

³⁴⁴ AFL Asamblea Nacional 1896-1897, box 69, folder 2b, Informes aprobados Asamblea Nacional Constituyente 1986-1987, file 112, *Asunto Indios*.

regulate *concertaje* explicitly, the Assembly considered it “as a project of legislative decree” that accompanied the petition documents from *conciertos* of Azuay that the radical intellectual from Cuenca, José Peralta, had presented to the Assembly.³⁴⁵ Peralta was in the National Assembly as a delegate from Azuay. He was a prominent representative of regional liberalism due to his influence on public opinion, but above all for being one of the closest allies of the radical general Manuel Antonio Franco in a province that had been dominated by the conservative general Antonio Vega between January and August, 1896. The regulations on *concertaje* proposed by Peralta came from a province in a similar condition to that which predominated in Pichincha. For that reason, the representatives of liberalism exhibited a radicalism before a landholding elite that had a clear and non-negotiable identification with conservatism.

Peralta attended the National Assembly as representative of Azuay. He gave his presentation of regulations on *concertaje* in Quito when the Assembly moved to the capital in January of 1897. There, the radical circle was composed of Julio Andrade and José Felix Valdivieso, from Imbabura and Loja, Juan Benigno Vela of Azuay, and the then radical Leónidas Plaza Gutiérrez, among others, who all favored

³⁴⁵ Ibid., Written on a sealed paper of 5th class and signed by SS. Peralta, Adolfo Páez, and Risar de Valdivieso.

dealing with the problem of *concertaje*.³⁴⁶

The Assembly recognized that the proposal of Peralta “regulates somewhat the manner for contracting Indians.” In addition, he argued that the fundamental problem was that the Indians have the constitutional right to enter into contracts and “to prohibit [that] would be to put oneself in collision with the Constitution that guarantees them that right.” According to this criterion, the problem was that the Indians should be able to enter into contracts since equality was found by forging equal relations. The response of the commission supposed that the very fact that the Indians might establish contractual relationships with subjects of another status would lead them to slavery: “[T]he cause consists precisely in contracting, since it is in this case that frauds inevitably take place.” Nonetheless, the commission recommended skeptically that regulation, such as that presented by Peralta, could serve to alleviate the slave-like conditions of *concertaje*, but not avoid them altogether.

The commission put in charge of Indian Affairs reported at the same time on

³⁴⁶ José Peralta (1855-1937) was a prolific writer, essayist, and journalist of the radical branch of the Liberal Party. Pérez Pimentel identified him as a member of the masons, along with Alfaro and Manuel Antonio Franco, among others. He fought Plaza’s government, accusing him of impeding transformation and then for the murder of Eloy Alfaro. Through the press, he supported the insurrection of Carlos Concha Torres and the *montoneras* of Esmeraldas against Plaza between 1912 and 1913. During the *revolución juliana* he contributed with an analysis of the relationship between radicalism and socialism, although he opposed the fusion of the two parties. Pérez Pimentel, *Diccionario biográfico del Ecuador*. See a list of his works in María Cristina Cárdenas, *José Peralta y el liberalismo. Análisis documental* (Quito: Banco Central del Ecuador, 1988).

its evaluation of the requests related to land issues and its position was similar to that which it held in the case of Changamina, Loja. The commission stated that the petitioners in that case accompanied their requests with copies of old titles, but that the *hacendados* also presented documents through their representatives that indicated their ownership of the lands. Among the documents were “contracts of rent celebrated by the plaintiffs” and confessions taken from the *conciertos* in the *tenencias politicas* before the revolution, in which they “confess having made false claims and were obliged to pay, not only the value of the earlier rents, but also the cost of those trials as well.”³⁴⁷

It was evident that these confessions were the result of pressure exercised at the local level by the political deputy and the *hacendados*, since it did not function for any other purpose than to oblige them to pay with work for land use and, in addition, receive a monetary punishment for having dared to question the legitimacy of these debts. The petitioners appealed to the Assembly in order to re-open cases of conflict that had been violently closed. They wagered that they would be recognized in the new context of post-war negotiation. However, the ever conservative judges validated the confessions taken by force and declared that the lands were always submitted to a dispute between two parties for which “*it turns out that the convention is not*

³⁴⁷ AFL, Asamblea Nacional 1896-1897, box 69, folder 2b, Informes aprobados Asamblea Nacional Constituyente 1986-1987, file 112, *Asunto Indios*.

competent, since this is about a contentious right that must be explained before common tribunals.” This report, which was communicated to the Governor of Guaranda with respect to the concrete case of Manuel Quill and Juan Mulán against the convent of *la Concepción*, served as a referent for the treatment of issues related to land.³⁴⁸

3.6 *Reparation: The Logic of the Integration of Indian Conflicts into Post-war Negotiations and the Liberal State.*

The Ecuadorian historiography has witnessed in the liberal regime’s discourse a profound paradox with respect to its promises for assistance for Indians and artisans, on the one hand, and several practices that reproduced conventional exploitative relations on the haciendas of the Public Assistance, on the other hand. Ecuadorian literature has already made some important observations about how the goods of the Church that passed over to the state after the *ley de manos muertas* or Law of Dead Hands accumulated in these haciendas. These properties were integrated into programs of social assistance and public sanity in urban nuclei, while they were rented by private administrators that did not only maintain relations of *concertaje*, but they also increased pressure on indigenous communities that worked in order to use

³⁴⁸ Ibid., This report was communicated to the indigenous peoples and to Fidel Andrade on May 22, oficios N° 199, *Asunto Indios*.

the land. As Kim Clark has demonstrated, the renters placed greater pressure on communities due to their eagerness to cover and surpass the cost of renting.³⁴⁹

In this sense, various authors view the protectionism with which the state purported to confront Indian issues as an illusion, disguising a false or failed revolution. For several authors, the fact that the liberal state should have even included a debate over the abolition of *concertaje* only responded to the interests of the coastal elite to loosen the control of the elite of the Sierra on the labor force.³⁵⁰

Prieto's work recognizes the indigenous presence that demanded transformations and highlights the fact that the liberal state changed the relationship with Indians as it substituted García Moreno's logic of a racial order with a constitutional pronouncement establishing the Ecuadorian state as protector of the indigenous race. According to Prieto, the protectionist discourses of the liberal state were part of a discourse on the genealogy of the liberal state: "promises of Eloy for the Indians of Gatazo-- which ultimately encapsulate a process of state centralization. Before the Indians of the new central state, there is produced a vision of the Indians as subjects of scientific objectification and discipline."³⁵¹ Prieto's work analyzes the discourses that circulated in the constitutional debate among the elites of

³⁴⁹ Kim Clark, "La formación del estado ecuatoriano en el campo y la ciudad (1895-1925)," *Procesos* 19 (2003): 117-130.

³⁵⁰ Quintero, *La cuestión regional y el poder*.

³⁵¹ Prieto, *Liberalismo y temor*, 41.

progresismo, particularly that which established that Indian inequality was due to a variety of causes, among which circulated racial notions and others about the degenerative effect of colonialism. She concluded that the Assembly unified a diversity of demands around stereotypes about the Indians that arose from fear – in effect, these threatening subjects required the state’s paternalist protection.

The arguments that we have presented here help us maintain that a process of negotiation occurred at the regional level in distinct provinces and parishes of the country in which the presence of the state was requested by peasants and Indians in the moment that the liberal regime was forging alliances at the local level. The liberal regime refused to put forth general regulations or a national pact; however, regional negotiations were inevitable. The type of response varied in accordance with the conditions in each region, particularly according to the state of competition between landowners and peasants and the political form that this competition has taken in relation to their identifications with the two other forces in competition, the political parties.

Of course, the actual results were poor in terms of land repartition or a national policy for obstructing relations of *concertaje*. However, at the regional level the relations of domination had been submitted to a political examination. Though the end of the nineteenth century was more radical than the 1910s and this decade demonstrated a turn towards “oligarchic” pacts that we will describe in depth in next

chapter, the possibilities for negotiation between peasants and the state that arose in the nineteenth century were not closed definitively. A new stage of negotiation was taken up when the oligarchic circle entered into crisis in 1922.

In this context of regional negotiations we propose that the state's discourse as an institution that provides protection might carry a distinct meaning from that which other authors attribute it. Agustín Cueva Sáenz was correct that the fundamental tension of the Liberal Revolution was that it negotiated only a partial change in oppressive relations in order to end the war, thus leaving intact the institutions that produced a general sense of injustice. At the same time it recognized requests ranging from reparations to the demand for universal voting rights from the popular classes as indispensable allies for state sovereignty. The social question, as Agustín Cueva Saenz called it, was the concern of a democracy with a permanent threat from *gamonal* power and it led to the construction of a framework for aid to the subaltern classes.

The fact that the role of the state was defined in a space of class competition obliges us to evaluate the nature of the tension between the emergence of state protective action and the continued presence of *gamonal* power at the local level. Thus, in these chapters we analyzed the negotiations in distinct regions where interactions between liberalism and regional actors who sought alliances took place. The relationship sustained between the new liberal regime, which still occupied the

Sierra militarily in 1896, and the Indians of Pichincha and Azuay constituted a social interaction in which a general model for Indian articulation with the state was generated.

The meaning of the protectionist discourse is found in this interaction, which was episodic at first and later became more organized as requests before the state sought to diminish the power of the landholding elite. Reparation was a concept that had a profound impact and capacity for mobilization as the Indians sought out recognition as *persons* – that is, as sovereign subjects of the liberal republic that wished to put an end to the colonial practices that characterized the landholding state. In this sense, the discourse on protection can be interpreted not as one of discipline, but rather an element that permitted the entrance of Indians as actors capable of negotiating with the state.

Our hypothesis is that the legacy of peasant demands for state presence to deal with inequalities and harassment suffered during the conservative regime shaped the manner in which these demands surfaced once more in a key moment for peasant mobilization in the 1930s. Though the category of Indian Issues obscured the distinct condition of the plaintiffs -- ignoring the differences between *conciertos* and free *comuneros*, for example -- it marked the beginning of a mode of negotiation of conflicts presented before the state that could be defined as *selective*. That is, the state would only enter the local scenario due to demands from organized actors and in

specific contexts. Another characteristic was that it was oriented to the *reparation* rather than the prevention of inequities through the strengthening of the legal identity of plaintiffs in conflicts presented to the state.

For the indigenous peoples, this opportunity to be heard came to represent not only a search for the recognition of their status as subjects with rights, but also as subjects who constituted the Liberal Republic's foundation. Although the concept of citizenship formed part of the language of these public discourses and introduced a notion of equality, the connotations of the concept had significant variations at the moment of negotiation.

The constitutions issued by the liberal state in 1897 and 1906 denied the right to vote to the illiterate population as the constitution of Garcia of 1867 had done. They only modified the notion of citizenship by declaring freedom of religion and excluding property as a criterion for citizenship; however, the requests that cited peasant participation in liberal militias and the discourses that cited alliances for spreading state sovereignty throughout the countryside were oriented to another type of political participation and another type of exchange that began to configure itself immediately after the war. The indigenous plaintiffs offered their capacity for mobilization in support of the liberal regime in exchange for reparations – that is, the right for compensation for having been subjected to an oppressive regime within an unjust legal framework.

With the constitution of 1896, a body of petitions began to form that began to define the land as a strategic issue for the sovereignty of the state. The notion of a collective good was inserted into particular demands and thus arose the first initiatives to construct modern, collective rights. The definition of land as a political issue and not one of private property generated some very particular expectations and forms of democratization.

Thus, the fundamental paradox of the liberal state was the ambiguity of the principle of reparation since, although it supposed a certain type of paternalism, it opened the door for association between citizenship and social rights that had a strong impact on post-oligarchy state configuration.

The framework of the Liberal Revolution and of the idea of a more inclusive nation generated an association between social rights and citizenship that emerged once more and in a more efficient manner in the 1930s, during a cycle of union organizing and ethnic policy construction that favored a more profound democratic change.

The revolution was not a sudden event, but rather the culmination of events that sought to end the old social order. In this sense, although the large property owners survived the Liberal Revolution, the discourse on reparation cannot be understood as one of manipulation. It constituted an irrevocable offer from the liberal regime. Despite the fact that in the 1910s the pressuring capacity of the radical and

peasant front over the short term was not sufficient, expectations and agreements were established that generated a more inclusive democracy -- though insufficiently inclusive, thus generating the conditions for another mobilization between the mid-1920s and the mid-1940s.

The categories of class, ethnicity, and gender were openly re-considered as categories for the demand of positive discrimination in the treatment of conflicts with the landholding class in the 1930s. In that context the demand for the configuration of a social right sought once more to give nuances to the inequities that were experienced in tribunals. The demands for political rights that certainly included the extension of the vote to illiterate peoples arrived within a framework of demands that represented the state as an institution that ought to control the power of the *patrons* and *hacendados* in representation of those without economic or political power. The memory of liberalism in those negotiations arose time and time again. The creation of the liberal state and then the state transformation of 1925 both required an alliance with popular actors that at the local level could support the state presence that in each region competed with the power of the landholding elites. The state was transformed in that double dynamic, both responding to the demands for the political integration of the peasantry through the mechanism of reparation as a social right and sustaining its sovereignty before the “public enemy” through alliances with the popular classes.

To understand the negotiation relative to the period 1895 to 1897 and its

legacies, we must take into consideration that the liberal regime only negotiated temporary and regional alliances according to a radical model. These negotiations obeyed the urgency for pacifying and consolidating state control since a prolonged war may have been unsustainable for the radicals and *montoneras*. Establishing alliances that did not involve a deepening of conflicts was the most expeditious path towards pacification. In this sense an alliance with elites from Pichincha and Azuay was impossible at this early moment. The alliances in these contexts were more radical. In the central Sierra, Manabí, Esmeraldas, and Guayas, liberal, urban circles composed of a social sector that was not directly affected by the colonial frontier offered to engage a process of gradual integration of the popular classes. Ambato and Esmeraldas asked for a social of arts; Manabí, Esmeraldas, and Guayas asked for the payment of immense sums for loans made for the purchase of arms. The liberal assembly of 1896 to 1897 had a liberal majority since conservatism was still at war, but it did not have a radical majority. Thus, in several territories, the model represented by liberal circles was not satisfactorily radical and the integration of Esmeraldas and Manabí became unmanageable. The *montoneras* took up arms once more, particularly after Eloy Alfaro was assassinated under the tolerant gaze of the moderate liberals. In the central Sierra, the *civilistas* of liberalism, coordinated by circles from Ambato, Riobamba, and Guaranda, aided in the deepening of relations between communities and rural elites as an unexpected effect of the revolution. These

communities would be the first to initiate a new cycle of mobilizations in 1923. After a tense process of constructing hegemony, Pichincha and Guayas attempted a model of equilibrium constructed in an image of regional civilizations that was dominant between 1909 and 1922. Urban modernization and incipient industrial development headed by municipal centers were seen by the liberal and conservative parties during the oligarchic regime as scenarios for a gradual democratization in which artisans would be included in civilization. Civilizing centers and programs of gradual democratization would seek to contain the heart of the conflict around the place of indigenous communities and the peasantry in the nation and they implied the renewal of subordinate, colonial relations in rural areas.

Symbol	Province	County	Parish	Place
A	Guayas		Daule	Pedro Montero on Daule
B	Guayas	Milagro		Pedro Montero on Milagro
C	Los Ríos	Babahoyo	Babahoyo	Ruperto Bowen on Babahoyo
D	Bolívar	Guaranda	Guaranda	Ruperto Bowen on Guaranda
E	Chimborazo	Riobamba	Riobamba	Victory of the Revolution
F	Tungurahua	Ambato	Ambato	Julio Andrade on Ambato
G	Guayas		Durán	Los Alfaro y Plaza on Durán
H	Bolívar	Guaranda	San Miguel	San Miguel batle
I	Chimborazo	Alausí	Guamote	Los Alfaro y Plaza on Guamote

Table 3 - Liberal Army Advance in 1895, Map 3.

**CHAPTER 4: Among the Democratic Civilizations: Conflicts of Gradual
Integration and Renovation of the Colonial Frontier in Pichincha during an
Era of Truce between Conservatives and Liberals (1906-1920).**

The current chapter demonstrates the retreat of the revolutionary process that had begun in 1895. Just a few years after the beginning of the liberal revolution, new political and social movements came to the fore that initiated a reaction to the revolution. The formation of a pact between the conservatives and liberals – principally in Pichincha – and the adaptation of concepts of “civilization” to an environment stressed by internal colonialism made the liberal state crack into regional segments. In the cities and, more specifically, in the large “civilized” centers of Quito and Guayaquil, liberal and conservative elites welcomed the gradual integration for artisans and workers, but withdrew from the idea of the political participation that they had demanded. In this chapter, we will observe the form in which new frontiers were drawn between the city and its rural surroundings beginning with pacts between regional elites and the state. These frontiers permitted to control urban popular politics and allowed for a process of land concentration that negatively affected the indigenous communities. Institutions like the Public Charity and private charities set up by conservative elites affiliated with the Catholic Social Action (*Acción Social Católica*) reduced the possibilities of negotiation among rural

actors and created conditions for the appearance of violence. The colonial frontiers that arose along with the liberal state demonstrated that the pact it had made with the conservatives and landholders was a box that offered no escape for the state.

In 1900, the task before radicalism's leader, Eloy Alfaro, was to begin a stage of pacification after consolidating the liberal state. In that year, Alfaro selected the moderate General Leonidas Plaza as his successor over the radical General Manuel Antonio Franco, who had directed the military triumph over the conservative elite of Pichincha and Azuay. In his first period of government, Plaza gave clear signs that he preferred the pacification of the internal frontiers over the advance of those who sought to further the radical agenda. In his message to the nation in 1904, president Plaza spoke of ceasing the war in order to form a system of political parties, defending them as “*organs of the public opinion in politics.*” Thus he proposed that the liberal and conservative parties be charged with representing the opinion of the *pueblo*, promoting social activity, and educating the public and preparing them for suffrage³⁵²

The consolidation of a democracy sympathetic to the causes that had mobilized a nation against conservatism required a process of education and public formation. This education, however, would be based on the premise that the *pueblo* was not yet ready for equality. In this sense, new political actors found barriers to the inclusion of

³⁵² AFL, MIM, Mensaje a la nación del Presidente Leonidas Plaza G., 1904, 14.

their demands, though some elements were included in the liberal constitutions, such as the abolition of *concertaje* and changes in certain legal processes.

The first and maybe the only stable process of social integration undertaken by the liberal regime was that which it set forth with a group of liberal militias. Almost two hundred members of the central committee of liberalism and nearly five thousand members of the militias joined the national army.³⁵³ In order to form a national army that would support the liberal state, significant financial resources were directed to the military.

In reality, the process of post-war negotiation was much longer and more complex than the military conflict between the two largest groups. The internal frontiers in various regions remained tense, particularly those in which the actors still expected that the change of regime would benefit them and that their alliance with liberalism during the war would improve their position in local power relations during the new stage of institutionalization.

Land ownership, which was historically tied to conflicts for political recognition and the economic autonomy of the communities, constituted an internal frontier in conflict. There exists abundant evidence that the communities reconquered territories even when the justice system ruled against their demands and

³⁵³ Enrique Ayala Mora speaks of the entrance of 6,000 new members into the army -- 300 officials in 1894 and almost 700 in 1896. *Historia de la revolución liberal*, 271-273, 276

thus left the door open to further trials in more favorable contexts. As we have seen in earlier chapters, the communities wagered on alliances and, in many cases, they were able to force political regimes to act to their benefit or at least to mitigate the capture of the justice system by the white *hacendado* elite at the local level.

The trials over boundaries between communities and haciendas were re-opened multiple times in accordance with the “opportunity structure” observed by the political regimes of the nineteenth century. The “opportunity structure,” that capacity perceived by the actors of the possibility of negotiating their agenda before a determined political regime, varied significantly. As the work of Charles Tilly illustrates, in democratic regimes actors can use their “repertoires” of legal processes to advance their agendas and they can achieve representation and political dialogue when there are openings for negotiation. In exclusive regimes that do not have autonomy from determined classes, interactions tend to take the form of violence.³⁵⁴

The democratic capacity to which the actors aspired as they demanded justice depended on how relevant their alliance had been in the political confrontation that brought to power the first “dominant block,” composed of liberal circles and their

³⁵⁴ The concept is useful insofar as it shows the relationship between types of contention, resistance, and protest on behalf of mobilized actors and political regimes, helping us avoid an isolated reading about actors and state. The concept is elaborated in McAdam, Tilly and Tarrow, *Dynamics of Contention*. On the relationship between social pressure and the institutionalization of conflicts, see Charles Tilly, “¿De dónde vienen los derechos?” *Sociología* 19, no. 55, (2004): 273 -296; López-Alvez, *State Formation*.

military allies.³⁵⁵ This criterion was relevant for several of the actors who expected favorable solutions were at hand with respect to both local conflicts and national policies – in particular, the restitution of lands perceived to be part of common territory and “a law” that would abolish *concertaje* and recognize them as citizens of the liberal republic.

During the liberal revolution these expectations grew, given that alliances between radicals and peasant and indigenous communities that turned out to be crucial for the military triumph and for the establishment of the liberal state in conservative territories.

However, the decade of the 1910s demonstrated an unexpectedly distinct scenario to that of 1896. In the first two decades of the twentieth century, the conservative elites of Pichincha were declared the public enemy. A sector of the liberal elite tied to commerce and agricultural exportation finances in Guayas took charge of the powerful municipal governments that left little margin for the negotiation of a popular agenda. Although the liberal constitution issued in 1906 consolidated the liberal state institutionally, the literature characterizes the decade of the 1910s as a moment in which the party fractured.³⁵⁶ A confrontation between radical *guerrilla* and *grupos civilistas* within liberalism affected spaces of regional

³⁵⁵ Gramsci, *Selection from the Prison*; Mallon, *Peasant and Nation*,

³⁵⁶ Ayala Mora, *Historia de la revolución liberal*.

influence first in Esmeraldas and Manabí and then from the control of the governance of Guayas and the control of the central state after 1912.³⁵⁷

The 1910s began with the centennial celebration of independence and with the regional appropriation of the globalized concept of civilization and a negotiable meaning of democracy. After the decade of 1910, the concept of democracy became synonymous with civilization, which needed to be achieved by all the actors who had participated in the conflict within the liberal state and the institutions of conservative power as well. Quito and Guayaquil became seen as the nuclei of civilization and would integrate the working classes into processes of moral education and establish rigid frontiers with their rural surroundings.

The literature states that in Pichincha a landholding elite that had diversified and integrated into the market began a process of institutional renewal oriented to the construction of a regional economy and that came to assume a modern political profile. The Pichincha Bank's foundation and that of the Chamber of Commerce of Quito responded to the first objective in 1906. The Jijón family and Tobar and Acosta Soberón also participated. At the same time as the foundation of the Newspaper *El Comercio*, there were reports of the miracle of the *Virgen Dolorosa*, who cried before the descendents of the *patronal* elite of the province in their high school. Jacinto Jijón

³⁵⁷ Jean Paul Deler, "Transformaciones regionales y organización del espacio nacional ecuatoriano entre 1830 y 1930," In *Historia y región*, ed. Maiguashca, 295-355.

y Caamaño, Carlos Manuel Larrea, and Julio Tobar Donoso were part of a process of the “renewal of the faith.”³⁵⁸ The witnesses of the miracle constituted the vanguard of conservatism between approximately 1906 and 1932 and they created very important institutions for their party such as the network of the Center of Catholic Workers (CCO), settled in each capital of the Sierra and they also formed associations of elites such as the Ecuadorian Society of American History Studies and the Congregation of Gentlemen *de la Inmaculada*.

These facts have been used within Ecuadorian historiography in order to speak of a “top-down modernization” that presents the landholding elite of the Sierra less backward-thinking with respect to the agricultural exporting coastal elite than had been supposed.³⁵⁹ During this renovation in the decades at the height of the Liberal Party, few advances were actually achieved in the negotiation of crucial themes of the peasant agenda. This was a moment in which the opportunity structures that linked

³⁵⁸ For Enrique Ayala, this political modernization of conservatism was the result of its defeat in the war and gave way to a more formal competition between parties. Enrique Ayala Mora, ed., *Federico Gonzalez Suarez y la polémica sobre el estado laico* (Quito: Banco Central del Ecuador and Corporación Editora Nacional, 1979). In contrast, Gioconda Herrera, “La virgen de la Dolorosa y la lucha por la socialización de las nuevas generaciones en el Ecuador de 1900,” *Bulletin de l’Institut Français d’Etudes Andines* 28, no. 3: 385-400 Explains the phenomenon as a “renewal of faith,” placing emphasis on the capacity of the conservative elite to form institutions and intervene in spaces of socialization in the region.

³⁵⁹ Carlos Arcos, “El espíritu del progreso: los hacendados en el Ecuador del 900,” *Cultura* 19 (1984); and Carlos Marchán, “El sistema hacendatario serrano, movilidad y cambio agrario,” *Cultura* 19 (1984).

the communities to the state were not particularly inclusive. The scenario was in various ways contrary to the return or the redistribution of lands and contrary to political revolution.

How did the cycle of negotiations put forth by the National Assembly of 1897 close? What new correlation of forces made possible this counter-reform? What strategy of power and alliances sustained the renewal of the elite? How did popular radicalism and liberalism retreat in the countryside? What did the offer to integrate the artisans and urban workers into working-class organizations headed by the conservative and liberal parties signify? What effect did this pact have on the working-class sectors that, through the use of their political identities, struggled with other classes in local spaces? In what situation did the indigenous communities that had negotiated a place in the liberal republic as allies find themselves in that moment? What happened to the capacity for economic and political articulation of the indigenous communities settled in distinct rural and urban niches? What does the memory of the establishment of the oligarchic state tell us about its violent fall between 1922 and 1925?

To respond to these questions, the first part of the chapter describes the peace negotiations between Alfaro and conservatives in Pichincha in the context of the centennial celebrations of independence in 1909, a process in which a discourse on civilizing arose that substituted the discourse on popular sovereignty of the civil war

period. The concept of reparations no longer equated to 'positive discrimination' or negotiation with regards to ethnic citizenship. The state constituted reparations within an authoritarian political language, which served as a pretext for the renewal of the colonial frontier. It constructed this frontier discursively between actors prepared for integration and actors subject to tutelage for their moral flaws and uncivilized nature. *Orientalist* representations of the indigenous peasantry crossed the wide spectrum of conservative cultural production from exhibitions in the national exposition of the centennial to legal discourses that addressed themes of conflict through the use of cultural representations of the Indians as constituents of societies tied to mythology and incapable of managing their economic and political interests. The modern civilization, characterized by a co-existence between instrumental rationalism and subjective autonomy was contrasted with images of *orientalized* civilizations where the social institutions integrated into a single entity religion, economy, and politics, closing the space for subjective autonomy and rationalism.³⁶⁰ This powerful ideological apparatus sought to deny the political tensions of internal colonial modernity and the participation of indigenous communities in the construction of the state.

³⁶⁰ Harry Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture and Community in Interwar Japan* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000). About the concept of orientalism, see Edward Said, *Orientalismo* (Madrid: Libertarias and Prodhufi, 1990).

The second section of the chapter is about the effect this ideology had over spaces of socialization and popular identities. The promotion of urban working-class associations in the principal cities of the country was a fundamental piece of a strategy of re-configuring the dominant power block. Incipient processes of inclusion and legitimation of artisans were offered as a way for gradual democratization that gave legitimacy to the process of state institutionalization. These forged a popular sector that formed part of the dominant block and displaced the peasantry.

The inclusion of the artisans and the displacement of the peasants from the dominant block sacrificed the democratic vitality of the urban working-class sectors themselves since a model of ideological unity was imposed in the regions of conservative and *civilista* liberal predominance. Powerful actors supported the integration of urban and rural space under the form of a *colonial tie*. The top-down model of inclusion to deal with peasant conflict depended on a control of deliberation processes among factions within the state. In this environment, a demobilization of popular liberalism took place in the Sierra and in Guayas the municipal government began to target popular liberalism with civilizing programs and gradual democratization.

In the third section of the chapter, these arguments will be integrated to show how the landholding elite accumulated power in an unprecedented expansion of its control over rural territories and the labor supply of the indigenous communities in

the region of Pichincha, precisely when a process of national mobilization had come to an end and in a capital city where significant confrontations had taken place between conservatism and radical liberalism during the war.

Finally, in the fourth section we argue that contrary to what the literature indicates about economic modernization in Ecuador, a conservative-led modernization was not free of conflict. The period of 1900 to 1922 was particularly difficult for the indigenous communities and the peasantry, who were separated from the dominant power block. The experience of the communities with regards to powerful actors of Catholic modernization, such as the *Conferencia de San Vicente Paul* and the *Sras. de la Caridad*, was one of retreat and withdrawal from the practices of negotiation, as forms of coercion and violent marginalization arose once more. This was an epoch in which known forms of resistance in Pichincha came to an end. However, in this period in which the paths of conflict and negotiation of the nineteenth century were exhausted, the communities became aware of new conservative strategies, they perceived the limits of conventional forms of resistance, and they developed more complex visions of the enemy to reveal the fallacy of Catholic charity.

4.1 The Historiographic Debate on Landholder Modernization.

The Ecuadorian historiography explains the retreat of the radical agenda as a betrayal of the liberal revolution by president Leonidas Plaza, who is seen as the author of a personal pact with the *hacienda* elite of the Sierra.³⁶¹ The assassination of the radical leader Eloy Alfaro during the second presidency of Plaza in 1912 and the displacement of radicalism into the peripheral provinces of Esmeraldas and Manabí, where anti-radical guerrilla groups formed, would confirm this thesis.

For its part, the modern economic historiography of the 1980s left out this perspective and in general an analysis of politics in explaining the power of the modernizing landholding elite. This historiography contrasted the myth of several backwards *hacendados* in the Ecuadorian Sierra with the evidence that the descendants of the landholding elite diversified their economy, orienting agriculture toward national markets and forming an industry. Through new mechanisms and technologies, they integrated into a new internal market and generated projects of urban modernization before the stimuli from the cacao boom of the first two decades of the twentieth century.³⁶² Yves Saint Geours has criticized this argument. He has proposed that the modernization of the landholding elite of the Sierra during the

³⁶¹ Oswaldo Albornoz, *Del crimen de El Ejido a la revolución del 9 de julio de 1925* (Quito: Ministerio de Educación y Cultura, 1996). See historiography in Ayala Mora, *Historia de la revolución liberal*; and also De Janon Alcivar, *El viejo luchador*.

³⁶² Marchán, “El sistema hacendatario.”

liberal state was not merely a response to the economic opportunity presented by the cacao boom, but rather this modernization demonstrated the elite's capacity to adapt to a system of labor control to promote industrial and commercial development.

The author points out that the process of diversification by the landholding elite and the birth of industry depended on the revitalization of *concertaje* and on a new cycle of hacienda expansion, both oriented towards subsidizing a parasitic modernization.³⁶³

In this sense, the French historian returned to a criticism of the paradigm of modernization in which which Ecuadorian sociologists like Fernando Velasco, Andrés Guerrero, Oswaldo Barsky, and Miguel Murmis participated in the 1970s. They examined the way in which different regions of the country had reacted to the agrarian reforms of 1964 and 1973. In their analysis of the structure of the hacienda, Guerrero maintained in 1976 that the fact that the diverse forms of “pre-capitalist” production were inserted into the sphere of capitalist circulation.

...did not mean the end of servitude. The case of the hacienda demonstrates to the contrary that these forms can be maintained [since] a process of transformation-conservation exists instead of transformation-dissolution of the social forms of heterogeneous production in capitalism. A transformation-conservation of diversity was functional for the accumulation of (internal) colonial capitalism.³⁶⁴

³⁶³ Yves Saint Geours, “La sierra centro norte (1830-1925),” in *Historia y región*, ed. Manguashca.

³⁶⁴ Guerrero, *La hacienda precapitalista*.

Along these same lines, the work of Jorge Trujillo established the manner in which the landholding class was able to position itself with agricultural products and industries in the coast, successfully rivaling the importation of those same products. This incorporation into the market carried this class through modernizing measures. However, with respect to competition for the labor supply with the coast, the landholding elite attempted to strengthen mechanisms to control the mobility of the peasantry. The hacienda expanded with productive ends, but also in large part motivated by the desire to enclose populations and subject them to *concertaje*.³⁶⁵

Thus the opposition of the landholding elite to the formal and definitive abolition of *concertaje* proposed by liberal lawyers like Agustín Cueva Sáenz in the national assemblies of 1906 and 1917 is explained as an effect of its interests within the expanding market and not as the persistence of feudal concepts of income.³⁶⁶ It could be argued that the predominance of an elite agenda that displaced the radical agenda in the period after the liberal civil war was not due to an individual pact but rather more complex processes and strategies that gave way to a new period.

In reality, the distinct stages of conflict and political negotiation that proceeded throughout the nineteenth century had obliged the landholding elite to discover new

³⁶⁵ Jorge Trujillo, *La hacienda serrana, (1900-1930)* (Quito: Abya-Yala, 1986)

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

adaptation strategies, which included economic diversification as well as efforts to construct political legitimacy at a regional level.

The landholding elite had not been able to overcome powerful social pressures and alternative policies as they integrated changes selectively while impeding others. The elite were able to impose their mark on the process of change, but they did so as an effect of successful political negotiations that permitted them to cease being public enemies of the state and to convert themselves into part of the dominant block. Though they opposed the abolition of *concertaje*, the conservatives were able to carry out a peace negotiation with the Liberal Party from 1909 on and although they ignored the peasantry as a political actor, they opened the way for a gradual and selective inclusion of urban working-class sectors. This agreement served both the Conservative Party and the Liberal Party - controlled by the financial and commercial elite – and it contained the radical liberal agenda. The gradual inclusion of working-class sectors gave the Liberal Party and the regional governments of the conservative party an aura that progress would lead to a democratic expansion. The state intervened against the potential formation of a block that would project radicalism and the peasant agenda.

In effect, no re-composition of power after the liberal war could come from the alliance of a single class or from the simple imposition of force. To the contrary, a collaboration of various segments of the population was required. The small

bourgeoisie, new commercial and industrial class, indigenous communities, peasants, and urban workers (artisans and industrial workers from 1900 on), as well as the landholding elite all held influential spaces from which to demand inclusion in the new regime. The Liberal Party had to construct consensus. Various actors were negotiating the character of the democratic revolution with great effort. The arrangements were not stable and, in the language of Lenin and Gramsci, the *type of leadership* and the *composition of the support base* were in permanent dispute.³⁶⁷

The construction of the *leadership* of the Liberal Party during this difficult period was the result of alliances. The sustainability of the regime could only come from a composition of support from diverse sectors positioned at a regional level that foreclosed the possibility of a radical hegemony.

As a result of the liberal war, the regime needed to push processes of inclusion of popular sectors. However, this inclusion was conducted through the promotion of spaces of socialization that were maintained at the margin of the political militancy,

³⁶⁷ In accordance with Lenin in his political analysis of the situation in Russia in 1905, the working-classes could find in the bourgeoisie revolution a key moment for constituting themselves as political actors and carrying out stages of radicalization that included an articulation between the workers and the peasants; the other path was through the formation of an alliance between the leading class and the traditional powers that would attempt a top-down modernization so that the working-classes would not become political. Vladimir I. Lenin, vol. 3 of *Obras escogidas en doce tomos* (Moscu: Editorial Progreso, 1975), 13. See a reading on Gramsci's interpretation of Lenin and his concept of hegemony in Luciano Gruppi, *El concepto de hegemonía en Gramsci* (México D.F.: Ediciones de Cultura Popular, 1978), chapter I and V, 7-24 y 89-111

but were identified with the moral superiority of the dominant party in each region.

The landholding elite of Pichincha recognized that it would be favorable to accept the presence of the liberal state and receive in exchange for the acceptance of its regional leadership as the head of a civilizing project in Pichincha. The same thing happened with the commercial and financial elite of Guayas that headed a civilizing project in the city and port of Guayaquil, while the radical elements of liberalism in the coast were confined to the peripheral provinces of Esmeraldas and Manabí.

At the same time, that strategy included the formation in the city of groups and associations that identified themselves in opposition to the peasants. The separation of artisans and peasants attacked the chain of political articulations that had been fundamental in the two decades prior for popular political mobilization. They wished to substitute a traditional strategy of peasant economies linked to the urban work of internal migrants with a more highly controlled form of integration between these two areas or, alternatively, they sought to expel peasants into informal work in the cities. In these contexts, the landholding elites conceived of rural areas as a periphery that subsidized modernization and was located outside of the sphere of civilization.

With few exceptions, the literature ignores that top-down modernization generated conflicts and had rivals.³⁶⁸ In reality, in that shining moment of the

³⁶⁸ Some exceptions are those of Trujillo, *La hacienda serrana*; Clark, *The Redemptive Work*; Hernán Ibarra, *La formación del movimiento popular 1925-1936*

landholding elite (between 1900 and 1920), settled in powerful and culturally sophisticated urban nuclei, the footprints of a long conflict between the indigenous communities and the haciendas were still fresh.³⁶⁹ These conflicts were not only over resources, as we have seen in earlier chapters, but also there existed conflicts over political projects. The communities sought to recuperate lands, conserve their autonomous relationship with regional markets, and maintain the demographic strategy that would permit them not to depend exclusively on *concertaje*. Ethnic authorities and community representatives defended the alternatives of the indigenous and peasant communities before the justice system and larger political movements.

This chapter presents a thesis distinct from that of the betrayed revolution or the thesis regarding the initiative of modernizing landholders stimulated by the expansion of agricultural exportation. Alternatively, it highlights the role of post-war political negotiations in the reconfiguration of regional power.

(Quito: CEDIS, 1984); Fernando Rosero, ed., "Estructuras agrarias y movimientos sociales en los andes ecuatorianos (1830-1930)," (Informe de Investigación IIE PUE CONUEP, Quito: unedited, 1990).

³⁶⁹ On the transformation of the cities and the adoption of a European aesthetic, see Eduardo Kingman, *La ciudad y los otros: Quito 1860 - 1940. Higienismo, ornato y policía* (Quito: FLACSO, 2006); Rosemary Bromley, "El papel del comercio en el crecimiento de las ciudades en la Sierra central del Ecuador, 1750-1920," in *El proceso de urbanización en el Ecuador [del siglo XVIII al siglo XX]: antología*, ed. Fernando Carrión Mena (Quito: Editorial El Conejo-Ciudad, 1986), 175-200. For a reading of the effects of the European aesthetic in the cities of the oligarchic period, see Sebastián Salazar Bondy, *Lima la horrible* (Lima: Editorial Universidad de Concepción and Clásicos Latinoamericanos, 1964).

The situation of the indigenous and peasant communities changed substantially in the processes of economic modernization in the northern central Sierra and Guayas in the first decades of the twentieth century. The regionalization of political organization was part of a pact among regional elites and the liberal state. The incorporation of mechanisms of social inclusion for select members of the urban working classes (gradual democratization) in Quito and Guayaquil and in smaller cities like Cuenca and Riobamba were a form of strengthening the position and the legitimacy of the conservative modernization without giving in to the peasant agenda.

The oligarchic state in Peru, as described by Alberto Flores Galindo and Manuel Burga, reflected a pact between the *gamonal* elites of the Sierra and the agro-export oligarchy of the coast. In Ecuador, by contrast, the liberal and conservative parties – with strong regional roots – had arrived at a political negotiation after having undertaken armed conflicts in various moments of the century in which popular republican (both liberal and conservative) identities had been forged.³⁷⁰

In contrast with Colombia, where the competition between parties benefited the conservative state control, in Ecuador the leadership was liberal. Once in the government, the party needed to respond to the expectations of democratization that

³⁷⁰ Burga and Flores Galindo, *Apogeo y crisis*. For the case of Colombia, see Sánchez and Aguilera, eds., *Memoria de un país en guerra*; and Mary Roldán, *A sangre y fuego. La violencia en Antioquia, Colombia 1946-1953* (Bogotá: Instituto Colombiano de Antropología e Historia y Colección para la Promoción de la Ciencia y la Tecnología, 2003).

were key for its organization. In this sense, it had to constitute itself as a leading regime and not just a dominant one. Historically, the Liberal Party had been formed through multi-class and even inter-ethnic alliances. Though the *civilista* regime needed to incorporate the powerful pressure of the economic elite, it also had to apply new mechanisms for social integration that would be perceived as vehicles of democratization by various regional actors, which, for example, did not happen in Peru. In Ecuador, the existence of the liberal state had pressured the landholding elite of the Sierra to develop more modern strategies for regional control.

One powerful effect was that of generating competition between liberals and conservatives over the support of the urban working classes. The Liberal Party had undertaken important initiatives to break the ideological monopoly of conservatism over the artisans and there existed a large population that oscillated between urban and rural spaces.

To block the advance of the peasantry, other scenarios of inclusion needed to be generated for the other working classes. The formation of alliances that the conservative elite developed with urban artisans through privileges and organizations represented competition in regards to the negotiations that liberalism had had with indigenous communities in certain regions of the country. The gradual democratization projected from municipal spaces in which the artisans were included as legitimate participants in “civil society” must be understood within the framework

of political competition with the peasantry and indigenous communities. Having been politically empowered on various occasions during the nineteenth century, peasants suddenly found themselves politically limited.

In this sense, the study of the political and cultural negotiation that prepared the integration of labor issues into the Ecuador political system was a central theme in the institutionalization process of the liberal revolution; it constituted a comparable process to those of other “gradualisms” in Latin America. Rebecca Scott described this concept as two complementary processes of reaction to peasant insurgence: on the one hand, legal and political measures for administering work that did not completely abolish slavery nor permit the emergence of salaried relationships; and on the other hand, the configuration of institutions of urban and rural tutelage for administering the subaltern population.³⁷¹ From 1910 on, both political parties recognized the necessity of integrating working-class sectors into institutional schemes established in their regions of influence. The liberal government of Guayas and the conservative municipal elite of Quito promoted urban working-class unions. These corporations were the place of a series of important and yet not widely-known interactions in which a negotiation of the post-revolutionary order took place at the working-class level.

Civilization was a key concept within the language of domination in the

³⁷¹ Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba*.

oligarchic state. It permitted the construction of mechanisms of gradual integration and gave way to the project of re-conquering rural spaces according to internal colonialism. The metropolitan cities of Quito, Guayaquil, and, in part, Cuenca were presented as centers of modern civilization and they offered programs of gradual inclusion for the working classes. In gradualist logic, the artisan and labor organizations were seen as spaces for learning about liberal or conservative civilizing patterns. The subaltern classes were prepared for a future integration through exercises in distancing themselves from other racialized populations. The conservative, *hacienda*, and industrial elite and the commercial elite sought to develop more controlled mechanisms for articulation between these spaces that would threaten the fluidity of movement and the existence of networks between peasants and urban working-class sectors.³⁷²

³⁷² The memories of the Confederación Obrera del Guayas (COG), of the Sociedad Artística e Industrial de Pichincha (SAIP), of the Centro Católico de Obreros CC), and of the Centro Don Bosco (DB) in Quito constitute essential sources for researching organizing processes and the interreaction between organizations and parties. These memories are contained in their organizational records and books sponsored by the municipal government. This information contrasts with newspaper articles and municipal documentation. See these three representative works of worker memories about their organizing process and their relation with political parties: *Estado actual de las instituciones obreras de Guayaquil* published in 1914 by José María Chávez Mata, belonging to the *sociedad de tipógrafos* and to the COG, and the work *Evolución social del obrero en Guayaquil. Obra histórica. 1849-1920* by José Buenaventura Navas of the same organization. And finally, Miguel Chiriboga Alvear, *Resumen histórico de la "Sociedad Artística e Industrial del Pichincha" (1892-1917)*, 1917. The Workers' Confederation of Guayas and in Pichincha the CCO and

The demobilization of liberal radicals and working-class ultra-conservatives and the implementation of experiments in gradual inclusion were accompanied by a series of measures that sought to construct a rigid frontier between the city and the rural areas. However, the process of consolidation of the Conservative Laborers' Confederations (*Centro Católico de Obreros*, CCO) and the Liberal Laborers' Confederations (*Confederación Obrera del Guayas*, COG) within regional civilizing projects could not be read as a phenomenon wholly apart from the creation of a new discourse of power, the creation of a dominant block, and tensions and conflicts in rural spaces where the expectations of change were met with processes of land concentration, expansion of *concertaje*, and political exclusion.

4.2 Centennial, Agreement, and Orientalism at the Interior of the Republic: The Political Use of the Concept of Civilization.

Facing the threat of Leonidas Plaza's faction and that of the *civilistas*, as well as of the conservative elite at the regional level, and leading a country that was exhausted after 32 months of war, Eloy Alfaro developed two projects for achieving national unity. Alfaro spent large sums on both projects. The first was the southern railway, which facilitated the integration of the landholding elite into the internal

the *SAIP* remained tied to the liberal and conservative parties until the political crisis of 1922 and the emergence of the left in the political arena from 1926 on.

market, and the second was the National Exposition of the first centennial, which projected an allegorical construction of the nation in which the liberal state offered a truce between the liberal and conservative parties.

Pichincha province, where the conservative opposition had carried out important confrontations with the liberal state, became a site of negotiation within the framework of the centennial celebrations in 1909. The framework in which this public peace negotiation was produced was already highly significant. The Universal Expositions that were carried out in the imperial capitals of Europe with the presence of booths from Latin American countries and the National Expositions that took place in Latin America after the centennial celebrations were constructed as public discourses on the conditions in which the post-colonial and colonial countries were integrated into the universal narrative of progress and the development of conditions deemed necessary for generating modern civilizations.

In the Universal Exposition of Paris in 1889, Ecuador had already brought attention to itself, as, according to the testimony of José Martí, Ecuador's booth contrasted with that of Argentina, which was represented as a colonized territory whereas Ecuador was represented as an exotic territory, identified by the footprints of an ancient civilization. The booth included an Incan temple with drawings and decorations “like those that the Indians used to place in the temples of the Sun, with

famous metals and cacao inside and weavings...”³⁷³ According to the newspaper *Diario de Avisos*, Paris expressly asked Ecuador to bring “mummies, idols, weapons, decorated clothing, and other objects of Incan origin.” Between hanging hammocks, rubber, and palm trees, these Incan artifacts were set up, together with those of Amazonian tribes so that the viewers would understand that Ecuador was once the domain of the ancient, grand civilizations of the Incan Empire.³⁷⁴ The *Diario de avisos* clearly communicated that with the objects solicited from Ecuador, Paris was interested in observing the eastern rationality of the Andean civilizations, not in the commercial worth of these objects -- “they do not have commercial worth, but will remain in harmony with the anthropological character of the Booth of the Ecuadorian section that represents a temple of aborigines.”³⁷⁵ The booth described Ecuador as one of the countries that could be classified as eastern.

The Universal Expositions at the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century, according to various authors, were showcases where the fundamental values of industrial societies and modern empires were displayed: items of progress, merchandise, and several “cultural” objects were exhibited in a hierarchical order in order to call the West's attention to colonial continents. The

³⁷³ José Martí, “La exposición de París,” in José Martí, *La edad de oro. Obras de José Martí* (La Habana: Estudios Martianos, 1990) 24.

³⁷⁴ *Diario de avisos*, Guayaquil, Jueves 11 de octubre de 1888, año I, n. 152, f. 3.

³⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, f. 3-4.

modern concept of civilization carried with it a vision of metropolitan national societies and another of the colonies or peripheral republics that encircled them.

The showcase of modern civilization stressed two values in particular – firstly, the value of civil equality that had permitted the release of the greatest capacities of human labor to the point of dominating nature; secondly, the value of subjective autonomy, a key notion for modern politics that required subjects to seek consensus. The bourgeois aesthetic transformed the objects into artifacts that configured new forms of subjectivity. In the objects, the power of pleasure was articulated.³⁷⁶ The notion of subjective autonomy was also linked to the formation of the field of modern art as a space of symbolic capitalization.³⁷⁷

The gallery entitled “Retrospective Exposition of Work and of Anthropological Sciences” and the “Habitations of Man” exhibited objects whose value was attributed to the religious awareness of ancient civilizations and the customs of despotic kingdoms subjected to English or French imperialism.³⁷⁸ These objects carried a discourse on the capacity of the empire to recognize and collect objects, taking them

³⁷⁶ Philippe Ariés and George Duby, *Sociedad burguesa: aspectos de la vida privada*, vol. 8 of *Historia de la vida Privada* (Madrid: Taurus, 1989); and Michel Foucault, “El sujeto y el poder,” *Revista mexicana de Sociología* 3 (1990)

³⁷⁷ Pierre Bourdieu, *Las reglas del arte: génesis y estructura del campo literario* (Barcelona: Anagrama, 1995).

³⁷⁸ For Trillo, parts of the exposition in Paris spoke of the modern present as a place from where one could “recapitulate the past and control the future.” Mauricio Tenorio Trillo, “Artifugio de la nación moderna,” in *Historiografía general y del Perú: autores y obras del pensamiento histórico* (Lima: Universidad Ricardo Palma, 1998), 135-144.

from what was supposed to have been their mythological environment in order to convert them in the West into curiosities, museum treasures, and merchandise.³⁷⁹

This repertoire that won a global presence between the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth cannot be understood as the transfer of an urban discursive-institutional apparatus to the peripheries.³⁸⁰ Tense processes of territorial reconfiguration were tied to the formation of new colonial orders in southeast Asia, forming spaces for the appropriation of the concept of civilization. Bernard Cohn has observed in this sense how the conformation of modalities of economic and social organization in India settled on a vision of the native civilization that he described as a community brought together by religious categories that contrasted with rationalism and practicality as well as with the rich subjective life of the British imperial subject.³⁸¹ This vision of the east was nourished by the systematic collecting that characterized the British crown.

Literature on Latin America in the period of the Expositions recognized that with the celebration of the centennial, the concept of *civilization* began to form part

³⁷⁹ Timothy Mitchell, "Orientalism and the Exhibitionary Order," in *Colonialism and Culture*, ed. Nicholas Dirks (Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 2004), 289-317.

³⁸⁰ Andrew Sartori, "The Resonance of "Culture": Framing a Problem in Global Concept-History," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 47, no. 4 (Oct, 2005): 676-699.

³⁸¹ Bernard Cohn, *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge. The British in India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996)

of the repertoires of actors that participated in the prolonged civil wars in Latin America. As Aline Helg has observed, in Rosas' Argentina the work of Domingo Faustino Sarmiento *Civilización o barbarie* expressed the regional Argentinian conflict and the aspirations of the Liberal Party in the nineteenth century. In that moment, a contrast was established between rural life and the imagined modern political forms tied to urban life. In contrast, for Helg the cycle of centennial celebrations (at the beginning of the twentieth century) in Latin America projected nationalist discourses and led to a reformulation of the racial discourse in Latin America.³⁸² After various decades of fomenting European migration, with the purpose of racial whitening, and in a moment in which the state wished to strengthen itself through education, nationalist discourses burgeoned during the celebrations of the centennial in 1910. These nationalist discourses proposed a positive image of native populations as ghosts of a glorious past that offered a cultural anchor to processes of national culture formation.³⁸³

Mercedes Prieto has also identified this change in Ecuador where, after the intense cultural production of the centennial, there occurred a slow transformation of the role of the Indians in the national discourse. The indigenous figure was integrated

³⁸² Alina Helg, "Race in Argentina and Cuba, 1880-1930: Theory, Policies, and Popular Reactions," in *The Idea of Race in Latin America*, ed. Graham, 37-69; Prieto, *Liberalismo y temor*.

³⁸³ Prieto, *Liberalismo y temor*, 45.

into allegories tied to production and there arose an artistic view of Andean civilizing traits that in turn formed part of the national cultural heritage.³⁸⁴ In effect, the centennial celebration marked a significant change in the script from that which was demanded of the country to establish its booth in the universal expositions in Europe. In Europe, the script integrated Ecuador into a canon of orientalist representations and in Ecuador the republicans tried to represent their own integration into the circle of civilized nations governed by western elites who had had their own battles in national territory over native populations considered oriental. However, in this framework interpretations of southeast Asia proposed by academics like Bernard Cohn are particularly enlightening with respect to the relationship between representations, organizations of power, and work in new colonies, especially given that the academics who have emphasized that national narratives in universal expositions and centennial celebrations have not sufficiently emphasized how these representations reinforced internal colonialism.

For Cohn, the expositions and the immense collections of oriental objects that represented empires were studied as artifacts that provided useful information for colonial administration. Thus, it was supposed that vehicles for mobilizing communities for collective work could be found in tradition. In the same way, there

³⁸⁴ Prieto proposes that in the 1930s and 1940s, this symbolic presence was appropriated by an urban indigenous sector that distanced itself from its rural surroundings and was able to intervene in a more active way in the national discourse.

was a search for a language with which to explain the existence of diverse types of property, including, of course, private property and tributes to the crown. Cohn's work has revealed the relationship between civilizing representatives of the subaltern classes of India and the administration of a colonial economy: "to be content and productive under British order, the 30 million subjected blacks of the Campaign of Eastern India, whose well directed industry would greatly help England's wealth. They did not need more than protection from themselves and hierarchies in temporary issues, leniency for their religious prejudices and those laws that they have been educated to believe are sacred."³⁸⁵

In the Andean case, there was pressure to integrate a large segment of the population that had participated in the wars and did not have a place in the nation, at the same time that forcefully emerging concepts of social Darwinism were tied to new modern institutions established by the liberal state, bringing renewed visions of hierarchy and racial difference. Beyond the allegoric narratives that made reference to a mythic past in the national imagination, the uses of the concept of civilization sought to delimit a frontier between the indigenous and the *mestizo* populations under a forced division between fluid spaces such as the city and the rural surroundings.³⁸⁶

³⁸⁵ Cohn, *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge*, 72.

³⁸⁶ In Marisol de la Cadena, *Indigenous Mestizos: The Politics of Race and Culture in Cuzco, Peru, 1919-1991* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), see, for example, the impact of the concept of decency in the demarcation of hierarchies between urban and

As we will see, though the civilizing representations in the centennial varied from the imperial scheme proposed by European centers, nonetheless they did strengthen internal colonial frontiers. They pointed out two crucial aspects for the institutionalization of the post-war liberal state: 1) The peace negotiation in terms of distributing zones of civilizing influence between the parties and 2) the division of the subaltern classes according to ranges within the civilizing project and methods of specific social control for each division.

In this context, when the cultural production around the idea of nation arrived in a highly expressive moment, an agreement was made between the archbishop González Suárez and the radical leader Eloy Alfaro, who established the premises for a division of the country into zones of liberal and conservative influence. The demarcation of the regions diminished the capacity of the parties to shape public opinion and to compete. The political parties established a strategic division opposed to the expectations of transformation among working class and peasant sectors.

Alfaro called for a compromise for national peace during the inauguration of the centennial Exposition. But he argued that peace required “confronting the causes of the revolutions,” the problems in the country that produced conflict. He mentioned three principal sources of conflict: the formation of capitals, servitude and lack of

rural *mestizos* and Indians in Cuzco.

productivity, and the political problem.³⁸⁷ With respect to the formation of capitals, the liberal state defended the investment in the National Exposition because it was a vehicle to bring renown to the country and not only to Guayaquil. With respect to work, Alfaro referred to the concentration of unproductive lands in the hands of *hacendados* and the lack of guarantees of liberty for the peasantry as obstacles to productive work. Finally, Alfaro referred to the internal divisions of the Liberal Party and the need to move from war to peace between liberals and conservatives in order to form a “democratic civilization.”

The Chilean press reported on the sophistication of the National Exposition. Two statues that represented a male and female Indian with attributes of workers were erected in the center of two gardens in front of the principal building.³⁸⁸ But beyond the allegories with respect to work within a nationalist vision of progress, the question that remained: how would the working-classes be integrated into the nation? How could they emancipate themselves from relations of personal servitude, be productive, and convert themselves into citizens?

Alfaro referred to the militias of the revolutionary army as the fundamental human resource for national production. Through the issuance of lands to peasant

³⁸⁷ Eloy Alfaro, quoted in J. Mora, *El centenario de la independencia y la paz del estado. Clausura de la exposición* (Quito: Minerva de Proaño y Cia, 1909), 35.

³⁸⁸ Eloy Alfaro quoted in R. País y R. Gormaz, *El primer centenario del Ecuador* (Quito: Casa Editorial de J. I. Gálvez. 1909), 89.

families and to soldiers, he could attack one of the causes of the revolution. Constructing an industry with the national army would also contribute to this objective: “Why not convert the barracks into workshops where three quarters of the army can work?” Alfaro pointed out that the land policies promoted by García Moreno had been contrary to the concept of civilization: “in order to sell our territory, he asked for two hundred *sucres* for a lot for a poor family... that is hurdle for their work.”³⁸⁹ He proposed that by distributing “the immense national lands” he would give priority to the peasants before the landholding elite. He would distribute them freely, ten hectares at a time to each individual that belonged to an agricultural society and 50 hectares to each family that should establish itself in the mountains. He would charge “five times the price of lands to rich people who wanted to become owners of this vast region.”³⁹⁰

In his second government, Alfaro sought to recover hegemony within liberalism and also cease conflict with the traditional party that did not permit them to govern. He sought to link the concept of nation to that of progress and ease tensions in order to *enter into the circle of democratic nations*. The turn that the concept of Democracy acquired in this context was highly influential: the notions of popular integration that in radical discourse retained the concepts of land redistribution and

³⁸⁹ Ibid.

³⁹⁰ Ibid., 7.

work emancipation as high-priority national problems. Elites accepted the vision of the country as broken up into civilizing units of diverse social structures.

In order to fill the content of the monumental and costly National Exposition, Alfaro set forth a call to all the municipal governments of the country to form commissions in charge of sending representative collections. Referring to the final composition of merchandise and displays that were part of the Exposition, Alfaro sustained that it demonstrated that the liberal and conservative elites had dedicated the first hundred years of independence to a common objective: “the freedom that our ancestors left us, we dedicate to achieving the conquest of Modern Civilization through work.”³⁹¹

Conservative and liberal intellectuals, commissioners and functionaries, and collectors and owners participated actively with evidence of the existence of civilization in various municipal governments of the country. In contrast to the pavilions of Ecuador in the Universal Exposition, the National Exposition was populated with municipal elites who carried a narrative on their own identity as regional leaders oriented toward progress and civilization. Each regional civilizing model included a place for work that was organically integrated into their respective models of regional administration.

The grand railway arrived at the doors of the National Exposition,

³⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 30.

representing a substantial step for the liberal state in the transformation of a fragmented country into an integrated economy. The innumerable objects that arrived from all over the countryside would not have been collected in Quito without the railway. The construction of a monumental building in the semi-rural setting of La Recoleta, the southeastern port of Quito, promised to represent a tremendous modernization.

The invitation to celebrate the Centennial was a fundamental bridge to forming a pact between the landholding elites who were open to change and the liberal state. Modern civilization was placed before political conflict, which constituted an undeniable proposal to the leader of the *Acción Social Católica* (ASC), the archbishop Federico González Suárez. The archbishop preached peace and nation consolidation: “we bishops, drowning in our hearts all resentments for the outrages we have suffered, as spiritual fathers of the Ecuadorians we will open our lips to bless the entire nation.”³⁹²

The meaning of civilization for González Suárez, however, came from a completely different school than that of Alfaro. The adoption of the term civilization among Catholics followed the preaching of popes Pious the 9th and Leo the 13th which could be characterized within the traditional philosophies of social authority of the Hispanic world. Under this doctrine, the archbishop Gonzales Suarez founded the

³⁹² González Suárez in País and Gormaz, *El primer centenario del Ecuador*, 49.

Instituto de Estudios Históricos Americanos, where he initiated the study of Hispanic social thought in Quito. Just as had happened in other capitals in the Hispanic world, such as the Barcelona of Balmes and Bogotá of Miguel Antonio Caro, this institute began the search for Hispanic traditions. Lacking the coercive power that had been given them during the Flores, García, and *progresista* regimes, the landholding elite appropriated documents of the colonial period and provided new readings of Catholic social action in industrial Europe in order to begin a campaign to conquer “civil society.” Under this umbrella, it promoted the formation of a network of private charities and other institutions to form the working-class.

For this branch of the *ASC*, the integration and subordination of the ethnic and class diversity that composed modern Ecuador could be achieved through “proven” institutions -- institutions that were known during the colonial epoch, particularly the corporations and languages of collective identity promoted by the Jesuit order in brotherhoods, religious art, and collective manifestations of culture and the Amazonian missions of the colonial Jesuit and Salesian orders in the republican period.³⁹³ In *Hispanism*, the *criollo hacienda* itself was seen as a cultural institution, a civilizing nucleus “of salvation” in which a moral link was created between social strata and in which the collective identity was summarized as the “Catholic

³⁹³ See a study of the counter-reform and integration of the casts and ethnicities in the context of Hispano-American commerce in Gruzinski, *La guerra de las imágenes*; Valeria Coronel, “Santuarios y mercados coloniales.”

nation.”³⁹⁴

The archbishop González Suárez, at the vanguard of the renewal of faith and teacher of new generations of landholding elite, proposed an interpretation of the independence as the maturity of a project of salvation. For the archbishop, the emancipation of the colonies could not be understood as the result of the military triumph over the empire. Such a vision could lead to the conclusion that the nations were founded by imposition, which was far from the Catholic imaginary. The independence illuminated the new terrain of the conquest: the first conquest of morality and the new conquest of the indigenous population would be led by the powerful secular missionaries.

The archbishop commented that “I would not take any part whatsoever in the celebration either as a Catholic or as a citizen.”³⁹⁵ For the archbishop, the triumph of the independence was not the foundation of the republican state, but rather the displacement of an evangelizing mission from the international to the internal, national level in which a secular elite ought to continue the religious mission of integrating the population. Independence had been a triumph of the Christian civilization and marked out a new territory for the conversion of the eastern nations that continued to live at the interior of the nation.

³⁹⁴ Julio Tobar Donoso, “Génesis y antecedentes de las ideas sociales cristianas,” (1918), in *La iglesia modeladora de la nacionalidad* (Quito: La prensa católica, 1953.)

³⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 46.

The western hemisphere brought down the barrier that separated it from the eastern hemisphere when civilization opened up a path for the American world, the invincible sword of the Spanish conquistador was stained in blood; that blood was the blood of the Indian who defended their homes and wished in vain to close the path toward Latin civilization that was arriving in the new world; when the Latin civilization grew, it felt the need to breath the air of liberty, so the Spanish sword was stained with blood once more... and that blood was of brothers... the Hispanic-American emancipation was the evolution of the son into the father, giving new luster to the coat of arms of this noble heritage as civilization knows no frontiers.³⁹⁶

Various leaders of the modernizing Catholic Church shared this perspective. They proclaimed to be in favor of celebrating the centennial insofar as it was seen as an homage to the new stage of Hispanic civilization and not as a political celebration. Thus, the bishop Carlos María de la Torre established as part of the foundation of the Catholic civilizing project, the cultivation of virtues needed for “civil society” and not the state, which was a mere instrument of force to be used as a last resort.³⁹⁷

As an effect of the agreement of no aggression between the Church and the state, the *patronal* elite was constituted into a political vanguard cloaked under a series of cultural and economic institutions that promoted internal conquest of the Indians as a moral mission. The elites represented themselves as secular missionaries. The colonial art that was significantly visible in the National Exposition of the

³⁹⁶ Ibid., 47.

³⁹⁷ Carlos María De la Torre, *La religión y la patria. Discurso pronunciado en la iglesia metropolitana con ocasión de las fiestas religiosas celebradas en el centenario del primer grito de la independencia* (Quito: Imprenta del Clero, 1909)

centennial represented their crusade.

According to Jacinto Jijón y Caamaño, the conservative elite had renewed their identity “rather negligently in the nineteenth century” when, as a symbolic inheritance passed down from the Church, the secular elite were able to buy lands and important works of colonial art that would form part of their private collections among processes of expropriation begun by the secular state.

... the great painting masters of Quito in the nineteenth century, Rafael Salas, Juan Manosalvas, and Joaquín Pinto, died within months of one another in the year 1906. Their deaths coincided with the promulgation of the charity law that took away goods from religious communities. The most affected were the monasteries that in order to provide themselves with what was necessary, were obliged to get rid of several works of art. This was the propitious occasion in which several quiteños, sensitive to the value of cultural goods, acquired images and paintings and formed copious collections of colonial and republican art.³⁹⁸

From among these emblems in the exposition, the Christs of Caspicara stood out, showcasing the collector Antonio Mena, member of the *hispanista* society of the *Instituto de estudios históricos americanos* and a businessman. These objects were indications of the aspirations of regional elites to represent their roles as spiritual heads of their regions. Religious and courtesan art that had been displaced in the

³⁹⁸ Jacinto Jijón y Caamaño, *Arte quiteño. Breves consideraciones históricas. Conferencia escrita para la inauguración de la Exposición de Arte Religioso celebrada con motivo del II Congreso Eucarístico Nacional. 15 de Junio de 1949* (Quito: PUCE, 1976), 12.

universal expositions to museums in order to leave space for modern art was recovered to reflect the origins of an alternative modernity in the post-colonial Republic. The organizers of the exposition, overlooking the universal conventions according to which awards were given to works classified within the fine arts, included a prize for the section entitled *Retrospectiva*, composed of antique colonial works: Gorivar, Samaniego, Miguel de Santiago, Salas, Manosalvas, Cadena, Salguero, and others. The judges, who could not give awards to dead artists, decided to award the collectors who had sent these works to fine arts, since, as they said, these were “among the most recognized treasures of national civilization.”³⁹⁹

Religious art evoked the contiguity of the mission inherited by the *criollo* elite while the image of the suffering virgin and the globalized vision of the *Corazón de Jesús* spoke of the moral cohesion of modern Catholic families. The conservative identity was profoundly linked to the teachings of the *compañía de Jesús* in the colonial epoch for the administration of populations and, as we have seen in earlier chapters, by the imprint of the La Salle mission among the working-classes and in the Amazonian missions. They identified these sources as pilgrims on recondite lands of

³⁹⁹ Among the collectors that the author named were Pacífico Chiriboga, Alberto Mena Caamaño, who donated his collection to form the municipal museum, and Jijón y Caamaño himself. This was also the circumstance in which José Gabriel Navarro wrote about the history of art in Ecuador.

their own republic, missionaries of orientalized populations.⁴⁰⁰ Carmen Fernández-Salvador has observed that this epoch witnessed a re-emergence of the Mary's sanctuaries in rural areas. The pilgrimage to these sanctuaries could be placed in the context of the appropriation that the intellectuals of the Catholic School made of cohesive elements of religious doctrine during the colonial centuries. Not only did they appropriate religious art, as we have seen, but they also reconstructed the *criollo* religious mission with regards to native surroundings through emblems like sanctuaries. In this sense, in the sanctuary the presence of the urban virtues to which the artisans aspired was established among the “desert” of their rural surroundings.

4.3 Centennial, Integration, and Intransigence: Strategies for Control in the Worker-Artisan Organizations of Pichincha.

The year 1906 brought with it signs that the landholding elite of the northern Central Sierra was willing to mark out its economic and social territory, even though it would lose control of the state. The foundation of the Pichincha Bank, the newspaper *El Comercio*, and a network of Catholic associations for women and Catholic worker associations headed by the CCO, each represented signs of such a

⁴⁰⁰ Carmen Fernández-Salvador, “Siguiendo el camino del peregrino: como imaginar una geografía cristiana y moderna (1880-1910),” in *Escenarios para una patria: paisajismo ecuatoriano 1850-1930*, ed. Alexandra Kennedy-Troya (Quito: Museo de la Ciudad, 2008), 54-77.

territorial demarcation.⁴⁰¹ Another sign was the report of the miracle of the virgin Mary in the Jesuit High School, an emblem of the renewal of faith that Gioconda Herrera has identified with the campaign that secular leadership and the church initiated to intervene in the ordering of spaces for socialization, family, and social groups in response to the power of the secular state.⁴⁰²

The representation of methods to integrate the *pueblo* into civilization served to develop the conservative and liberal municipalities in the years following 1909 as nuclei of social administration. The municipalities received a series of guarantees during the process of institutionalization of the liberal state. Alfaro trusted the municipalities as regional centers to promote civilization. He proposed “to make each municipality [coordinated like] a beehive,” increase their funds, and create workshops for men and women in each.⁴⁰³ The workers' space started to become a strategic space for legitimating regional power. It was not a coincidence that the worker circles sponsored by the liberal and conservative parties won the best awards in the competition of the exposition: The Typographic School of Philanthropic Society of Guayas, the *Centro Católico de Obreros* (CCO) (founded by the new generation of landholding elite in 1906), the Christian Schools, and the Don Bosco Institute of the

⁴⁰¹ Milton Luna, “Los mestizos, los artesanos y la modernización en el Quito de inicios del siglo XX,” in *Antología de historia*, ed. Jorge Núñez (Quito: FLACSO and ILDIS, 2000), 167-182.

⁴⁰² Herrera, “La Virgen de la Dolorosa.”

⁴⁰³ Eloy Alfaro quoted in Mora, *El centenario*, 43.

Salesian missions were some of the prizewinners.⁴⁰⁴

The idea of constructing institutions dedicated to private charity was enthusiastically received by businessmen of Pichincha. The creation of institutions for the protection of workers, the promotion of handicrafts and circles of mutual support, and the establishment of charities were viewed in this context as the continuity of an earlier and more efficient civilizing process than that undertaken by the protestant countries during the industrial era. The discourse of Pope Leo XIII fortified this Catholic renewal and his message was appropriated by the descendents of the *criollo* elite since it promoted the development of vehicles to smooth over contradictions of the modern world and thus avoid the formation of antagonistic class identities. The role that these institutions played in the construction of regional power in Pichincha reveals the impact of representations on political struggles.

The religious colonial art that appeared surprisingly among the *art nouveau* represented the genealogy of the elites as western Catholics, but it also carried a discourse with respect to complex mechanisms of social integration that the elites considered useful for social control in a moment in which progress and order was praised to overcome memories of war.

⁴⁰⁴ *Catálogo general de los premios conferidos por el Jurado de la Exposición a los concurrentes al certamen nacional inaugurado en la capital de la República del Ecuador el 10 de agosto de 1909, con motivo del centenario de la independencia Sud-Americana proclamada en Quito el 10 de agosto de 1809* (Quito: Imprenta y Encuadernación nacionales, 1910)

In the celebrations of the Centennial, the winning artisans of the *Sociedad Artística e Industrial de Pichincha* (SAIP) (under the leadership of Rafael E. Dávila), requested that they be allowed in the procession of August, 2, 1909, as independent corporations that were not associated with nor “forced” by the state, “as if they were troops of the liberal army.”⁴⁰⁵ In this context, the SAIP invited the CCO to organize its participation in the program of the August 10, and clarified that it was not focused on framing new political symbols proposed by liberalism, but rather on ratifying an autonomous worker presence that formed part of a moral community.

Despite the interest of the leadership of the SAIP in participating in the civic commemoration, the young landholder and honorific adviser of the CCO Jacinto Jijón expressed his suspicion that the event sought to distract the workers with new patriotic symbols that served liberalism's interest in penetrating civil society and fortifying the state. In this way, Jijón expressed his offense at not having received a formal invitation from the municipality and knowing that other respectable associations had not been invited formally either.

Sr. Viteri (artisan) answered that they would not attend a state event, but rather a community event.

Being this not an event of the government but rather of all Ecuadorians, we do not need any invitation to demonstrate our joy in the celebration of the

⁴⁰⁵ *Ibíd.*, 309.

homeland's glories. Since if this were of the Government, I would be the first to oppose that the Center attend.⁴⁰⁶

Once their participation was accepted, a planning meeting was set up under the direction of Jacinto Jijón and the assistance of Carlos Manuel Larrea, among other members of the circle of young elites who presided over the CCO. Jacinto Pankeri from the Salesian mission and 120 workers also attended.

With rhetoric similar to that of the artisans and the conservative leadership, the international press described the worker parade as an expression of unity. They praised it as a projection of dignity. The workers constituted the noble part of the nation. In the worker participation in the commemoration of the centennial we can observe new practices and a new, dynamic political and cultural language.

The most beautifully moving of the events, the nicest note in those days, the most noble and spontaneous manifestation of patriotism was the workers' parade... At 10 a.m., the capital's working class formed by the fore-mentioned group, the various trade unions, and the CCO... left the house of the Artistic Society elegantly decorated. It was headed to the commemorative tombstone that the artisans of Quito put in the house in which the illustrious workers that proclaimed our Independence, fell victims to tyranny... The banner had something truly grand, worthy of our great men and of the pueblo of year 9. Ten thousand men, forming a single heart and a single soul sang the national hymn under the direction of the maestro Reinaldo Suárez, whose notes never had more majesty than on this occasion; everyone's heart was moved. The pueblo, which is the Law, awoke to the Glory represented by our liberators.⁴⁰⁷

⁴⁰⁶ SAIP, Libro de Actas 1906-1911.

⁴⁰⁷ País and Gormaz, *El primer centenario del Ecuador*, 151-152.

Sr. Prado Orrego, master artisan and president of the SAIP, promoted August 2, 1810 as a particularly important day to remember the participation of the working class in the nation since it was the day on which the artisans of Quito gloriously sacrificed themselves by attacking the cartel in Lima in defense of the patriots.⁴⁰⁸ The worker commemoration was not just a celebration, but also a call to remember the sacrifice that the *pueblo* made for the elites. This call took the form of a collective mourning similar to that witnessed traditionally during holy week.⁴⁰⁹

It is not excessive to state, *señor* President, that as our Commission interprets the highly patriotic purposes that animate the working class of Pichincha, it has allowed participation in the project to all the institutions and social classes of the capital because thus patriotism and gratitude demand [and] with those who did not spare any blood and life so that we might enjoy liberty and homeland, the national flag will be raised to half-staff and adorned with black ribbons in front of houses and workshops.⁴¹⁰

The social groups of the epoch, the Army, and educational institutions symbolically represented by youth and childhood, accompanied the oath of the flag made by the working class, who were assured of the presence of the executive and judicial powers and diplomatic bodies. When the flag was raised in public offices, private houses, and workshops, the alumni of the military school, and the school “of the classes” made an honorific observance on behalf of the martyrs of August 2, 1810.

⁴⁰⁸ SAIP, Libros de Actas, Sesión del 23 de febrero 1910.

⁴⁰⁹ Coronel, “Santuarios y mercados.”

⁴¹⁰ SAIP, Libros de Actas, Sesión del 2 de marzo de 1910.

In a moment in which the orientation of workers in the Sierra was being debated by liberals and conservatives, the conservative leadership of the SAIP decided to include the first National Workers Congress as their principal event in their centennial celebration program. It would take place simultaneously with the Congress of Catholic Women inaugurated by the *Liga de Señasoras*.⁴¹¹ The objective of the congress was “to promote the intellectual and material improvement of the worker and spread a discourse on the unity between workers and industry.”⁴¹²

Of the 17 workers' organizations that attended the congress, only four were from the coast, and the Workers' Confederation of Guayas, composed of 12 different organizations did not attend. Thirteen organizations from the Sierra turned out in force, demonstrating the presence of Catholic workers organizations throughout the various barrios of Quito. Intellectuals from the *ASC* such as Modesto Peñaherrera, Manuel Sotomayor y Luna, Jacinto Jijón y Caamaño, and Juan León Mera accompanied them. Years later, when Guayaquil celebrated the centennial of its independence (1920), Agustín A. Freire of the COG dismissed this first National Workers' Congress, questioning the participation of *hacendados*, industry, and members of the church in the encounter in Quito.⁴¹³ However, the representatives of SAIP and CCO said that the aristocrats Jacinto Jijón y Caamaño, Manuel Elicio Flor,

⁴¹¹ Herrera, “La Virgen de la Dolorosa.”

⁴¹² Correspondencia CCO, 1909-1911.

⁴¹³ Chiriboga Alvear, *Resumen histórico*.

and Manuel Sotomayor y Luna had not been there as businessmen but rather as invited experts, “intellectuals well-versed in social issues.”⁴¹⁴

In preparation for the congress, Jacinto Jijón had given conferences to the artisans on the causes and consequences of the 10th of August. He promoted popular loyalty to the *criollo* leadership.

The Workers' Congress convened the defenders and honorific members of these groups and argued over the participation of artisans in the political disputes between liberals and conservatives. Manuel Sotomayor y Luna, one of the first promoters of workers' circles through the first Vicentine societies in Guayaquil, presented a project that would have workers exercise voting rights, supposing that they could take back from the liberals the power obtained through arms and the mobilization of illiterate populations.⁴¹⁵

The archbishop González Suárez, who warned the president of the SAIP, Rafael E. Dávila, that this issue was not a question of morality, energetically refuted this proposal. Until 1923, when the church reacted before the crisis of the liberal state and mobilized the popular classes for suffrage to recuperate the power of the state, the conservative party followed the line proposed by González Suárez not to tolerate the participation of Catholic artisans in politics.

⁴¹⁴ Archivo Historico del CCO, Libros de Actas y Copiadores de Oficios, Cartas del CCO a la COG, December 8, 1920.

⁴¹⁵ Chiriboga Alvear, *Resumen histórico*, 341.

...put yourselves on firm ground and not on weak ground: firm ground is constitutional ground and from that land your action will be taxable. Let us make the Ecuadorian republic truly a Republic; it will be if we are moral and not partisan but rather patriotic: The Homeland and not the party... unite love for the homeland with those whom the political party has divided.⁴¹⁶

The work of Milton Luna on the CCO has demonstrated the manner in which the “auxiliary circle of youth.” rejected the artisans' attempts to mobilize a defense of the conservative cause. While their public visibility was stimulated in religious and athletic scenarios, any attempt at a political identification was rejected and even a cause for expulsion. The Jesuit priest Manuel José Proaño spoke enthusiastically in July of 1909 about the impact of the exposition that had mobilized the entire country against war. He insisted that all of the monumental objects, the modern civil works, would constitute an incomplete image without a monument to the morality that united the nation.⁴¹⁷ The palace of the Exposition demonstrated the reign of the market and of civil liberty, the Sanatorium reflected the scientific technical advances of modernity, and the Sacred Heart of Jesus symbolized the moral unity of the nation:

...if our loved Homeland, freed, dedicates the Palace of the exposition to its heroes and [dedicates] as charity the gigantic Sanatorium, the same Catholic Homeland might raise one monument after another, the admirable Cathedral

⁴¹⁶ González Suárez quoted in *Ibíd.* 342.

⁴¹⁷ Milton Luna, *Historia y conciencia popular: el artesanado en Quito, economía, organización y vida cotidiana, 1890-1930* (Quito: Corporación Editora Nacional. Taller de Estudios Históricos, 1989).

having been promised by the entire pueblo to the sacred Heart.⁴¹⁸

Within the SAIP, this message ratified the position of the president of the organization, Rafael E. Dávila, and the conservative faction of the organization that had opposed the participation of artisans in public issues and that, in this sense, had rejected the debates proposed by representatives of popular liberalism.

In the first years that followed the Liberal Revolution, the SAIP oversaw an intense dispute between liberals and conservatives that fought over the presidency of the organization. In the memories of the conservative weaver Miguel Chiriboga Alvear, the liberal artisans, described as “busboys,” were politicized and sought to politicize other workers. Chiriboga recalled the Cuban weaver Miguel de Albuquerque, a veteran of the Cuban war of independence under the command of General Maceo, who left for Ecuador, charged by Alfaro to promote liberal organizing among the urban working-classes and to promote the autonomy of other social classes among the workers.⁴¹⁹ After founding the Workers' Confederation of Guayas (COG) in Guayaquil and fomenting liberalism in various groups that constituted it, he went to Quito and entered into conversation with artisans, “conquering their wills and procuring to win their trust and affect.” He was able to

⁴¹⁸ Manuel José Proaño, *El voto Nacional. Número extraordinario dedicado a los próceres de la Independencia en el primer centenario de la emancipación política del Ecuador* (Quito: Imprenta de Julio Sáenz, 1909)

⁴¹⁹ Chiriboga Alvear, *Resumen histórico*, 291.

get Sr. Villagómez of the Society of Cobblers to present him to all the trade unions to advance his political campaign.

Albuquerque continued with his work in political formation outside of such organizations until forming a group of more than five hundred individuals that demanded the election of a new directory untied to the conservative party. In reality, the liberals resisted the increasingly influential role of the new elite generation throughout its political and intellectual leadership amongst workers in Quito, particularly after the foundation of the *Centro Católico de Obreros* in 1906. Albuquerque had attempted to win this leadership through elections under the slogan that they needed to deny organizing rights to all those who were not workers or who belonged to regional elites.

This episode was exposed as a scandal by the conservative newspaper *Fray Gerundio* for which the advisory and assistance experience of the upper spheres of society for the lower spheres was highly desirable. Chiriboga claimed that the liberals had introduced themselves into the trade unions, referring to them as domestic spaces into which outsiders or political campaigns should not force themselves. He claimed that there was not a single police agent to defend the artisans and alleged that the police had not followed the law of home inviolability.

Masters who identified with conservatism such as Chiriboga Alvear appropriated the conservative discourse in support of the notion that radicals should

not enter their workshops and circles since these were domestic spaces and they did not need to be “liberated.” In fact, they were little interested in airing their conflicts in public. They spoke poorly of politics and tensions between masters and workers within the domestic space of the workshops were contrasted with the situation of *conciertos*.⁴²⁰

The liberal artisans were given arms and counted on the backing of the police and the army, particularly the veterans of the revolution in Carchi and Yaguachi. However, according to the testimony of Chiriboga himself, they also sought political legitimacy within the organizations and they sought to change the leadership of the association to adopt a liberal posture. In this way, they looked for representatives from among the artisans themselves, master Zoilo Suárez, Colonel Vascones (master weaver and owner of one of the largest workshops in Quito), master Villagomez (president of the trade union of Cobblers), among others, formed part of the liberal nuclei within the SAIP that had entered into dialogue with the Cuban revolutionary Miguel de Albuquerque. This “political monster,” according to the vision of master Chiriboga, sought to “take away support for Sr. Dávila,” the president of the SAIP who was represented as a popular inquisitor who purged the library of liberal books and attacked all vestiges of secularism.

Although Chiriboga was surprised at the existence of political positions within

⁴²⁰ Luna, *Historia y conciencia popular*.

the artisan organization, liberals had dominated the SAIP between 1893 and 1907, in particular during the leadership of José Vascones, who had been a colonel in the liberal army. The highly respected liberal artisan Francisco Rivadeneira also governed the SAIP. Chiriboga was surprised at his interest in politics, stating that “the strangest thing is that there had been members of the Society, and several as simple and characterized as Sr. Don Francisco Rivadeneira, who without any scruple whatsoever would present themselves to represent the infamous role of the group in this political pantomime.”⁴²¹

Between 1907 and 1910, recognized conservatives Rafael E. Dávila and Zoilo Suárez directed the SAIP. On November 25, 1908, the press commented on the fact that these tensions between factions were coming to a head. The Liberal Party's interest in orienting the SAIP according to its doctrine was made evident when the young liberal intellectual Homero Viteri Lafronte met with the cobbler trade union to help them write a reform of statutes for *La Artística*. For the conservative press, this was contemptible because it represented an effort to break the independence of a collectivity that had pledged political neutrality and dedication to artistic perfection. The conservative press was terrified that SAIP had chosen a liberal leadership. They characterized it as a collective directed by honorable and hardworking artisans who had passed into the hands of a “rabble of busboys” promoted by Alfaro and Colonel

⁴²¹ Chiriboga Alvear, *Resumen histórico*, 288.

Vascones and wanted to bring down the archbishop.⁴²² The liberal association campaign was important in the Sierra. The trade union of carpenters headed the foundation of United Workers, while the liberal weaver José Vascones proposed that a union of all trades would be stronger, as had happened in the case of the Workers' Confederation of Guayas, an association that the Catholic artisans called masonic.

The popular faction of radical liberalism in the city had leverage within the trade unions. Until 1909 the discourse on ideological unity in regional civilizations generated a purging of dissidents within artisan organizations. One of the outstanding points of conservative complaints was that they were in the exposition's organizing committee whereas radical workers had invaded this scenario. They complained about the presence of subjects foreign to their class.

The definitive expulsion of Miguel Albuquerque from the Sierra and the exit of various liberal artisans such as Colonel José Vascones from the COG who had disputed the leadership of the artisan organization since 1895, occurred precisely after the increased presence of the new *patronal* generation. The generation emerged with a discourse about the conditional integration of the worker sector. Manuel Chiriboga wrote about how precisely after 1910, while a process of ideological unification within the association was taking place, the association purged itself of liberal factions and the SAIP tightened its ties with the CCO. Together they had prepared

⁴²² Ibid., 296.

their participation in the centennial events.⁴²³

Several artisans to spoke about their frustrations with a political society that excluded them. In this sense, the books of acts of the SAIP refer to a significant internal debate that took place in 1911. The SAIP had been invited to demonstrate that it was integrated into the *establishment*. They were to frame the president-elect Emilio Estrada with symbols of popular approval.⁴²⁴

The invitation to the artisans to act as “live statues” that represented the *pueblo* suggested a representation that eliminated all recognition of conflict that they experienced; however, the credibility of the allegoric model of inclusion was fragile.

Every magistrate that rose to power always offered great things to the workers and never fulfilled [their word]... That of the protection of the *pueblo* was a lie, señor president; I ask that the Sociedad re-create itself, the invitation proposed unanimously.⁴²⁵

The refusal of several members of the SAIP to heed the call of the government could be interpreted as a rejection of liberalism; however, given the agreement that had been established among the parties, it more likely expressed that they were aware of how they wished to represent the sector and the *pueblo*. In fact, the president of the association, the conservative Prado Orrego, responded to this complaint with an argument that stressed the language of civilization. That which was at play, the

⁴²³ Chiriboga Alvear, *Resumen histórico*.

⁴²⁴ SAIP Libros de Actas, Sesión del 26 de abril de 1911.

⁴²⁵ *Ibíd.*, Sesión del 26 de abril de 1911, 111-113.

president reminded them, was not whether or not they supported a political movement, but rather whether they belonged to the civilized side of the nation – indicated by signs of courtesy and loyalty towards the elites – or not.

So that it not be thought that I am trying to overlook this issue, I must indicate to the associated *señores* that the acceptance of the proposed invitation, far from implying an meddling of the Society in both political [parties], I would not say anything more than that it is in fulfillment with a duty of sociability and of exquisite education that lend attentions and considerations to all who merit them for their elevated social position.⁴²⁶

The correspondence between the CCO and the *Instituto Don Bosco* was nourished during the epoch of the liberal state. The relationship that united them was not horizontal. The CCO described itself as the leading workers' institution since it was headed by the cream of the crop of the landholding and industrial elite of Quito. Gradually it converted itself into a reference point for the conservative elite of the province who the elites of Latacunga, Riobamba, Tulcán, el Ángel, and Ambato viewed as the country's salvation. In these regions it had not been easy for popular liberalism to remove the frontiers between city and rural areas.

Thus the intellectual from Latacunga José María Coba Robalino proclaimed the need to create a network of distinguished Catholics that would help the smallest cities

⁴²⁶ Ibid., Sesión del 26 de abril de 1911, 113.

overcome the political tensions between liberal workers and catholic workers.⁴²⁷ He proposed to integrate circles of Catholic workers in the province into a network under the leadership of the CCO of Quito. He also insisted on the need to establish ties with other nuclei of worker education such as the National Workers' League of San José, the Don Bosco workshops of art, the García Moreno popular center, and the missions of the Conferencia de San Vicente de Paul, CSVP.

Although the non-intervention pact between elites of both movements was sealed, the provincial elites still felt that liberalism could constitute a threat among their workers. The war between Quito and Guayaquil may have ended, but this was not the case in the central Sierra, where industries were being established without having completely dominated the communities. Worker circles were proliferating without having completely suppressed liberal radicalism among them.

... a delegate of the Workers' Confederation of Guayas, making use of the authority of which he was vested, obliged the artisans of León through threats to appear in the national police station under the pretext of the presidents of the guilds of his liking and satisfaction, elected, and obliged those dignitaries so that all of the artisans of the Workers' Confederation of Guayas be acquired. As they were violently taken to the Commission, although scared at first several signed their alliance, the rest hesitated; later, almost all united docilely with the advice and instructions of simple people; they did not fear nor were they cowards with respect to threats and spying. They protested for the press and they gave the example of people calm and prepared for anything... Without being punctual to the meetings, they would not have done what they did. The

⁴²⁷ Among these publications, see José Coba Robalino, *Monografía general del cantón Pillaro* (Quito: Prensa Católica, 1909). Here we are referring to the conference of November 21, 1909. CCO Archive.

attitude of the workers from Riobamba and León echoed through the neighboring pueblos right away. They were isolated as their isolation could be lethal for them. At the same time that the spirit of association awoke in the pueblos, the permanent desire not to remain isolated but rather to unite into some important association of the capital awoke. The provincial workers of León overheard the discussions of the CCO of this capital... and wished to unite all [of them] in this center. With the idea of viewing a general directory in Quito that should illustrate, advise, and direct the boards of the provinces, the cantones, and others.⁴²⁸

4.4 Charity and Periphery: Land Concentration and Conflicts between Indigenous Communities and Conservative Corporations in the Rural Zone of Pichincha.

The expropriation of the plantations of the Church and the expansion of the territorial patrimony of the state largely sustained the program of social integration from above, promoted by the liberal state in its spaces of influence and known as the Public Charity. The confiscated lands were dedicated to the maintenance of the army and to the financing of new state organisms dedicated to the redemption of the *pueblo* through public health, charity, and education. The Ministry of Education and the National Board of Public Charity worked with the rent from 50 percent of the nationalized goods for the management of hospitals, orphanages, maternity wards, hospice programs, and education instead of “charity” programs that had been

⁴²⁸ Coba Robalino, *Monografía*, 8.

entrusted to the Brothers of Charity and different religious institutions in the earlier regimes.

The *ley de manos muertas* (1908) and the formation of a secular public school were measures that strengthened the state, giving it goods, lands, and income that made the development of institutions possible and involved functionaries and resources in social programs in the areas of public education and health. The Board administered the foundation of industrial schools and liberal arts schools that were established in various populations as a sign of the state's will to prepare the population for progress and civilization, “liberating them from the threats to which laziness and misery expose them.”⁴²⁹

The renters of the goods confiscated according to the *Ley de cultos* were chosen essentially from among liberal circles since, as the president of the Board mentioned in 1912, the resistance of other social sectors had recently disappeared: “very many citizens opposed the *Ley de Cultos* (and) at the mercy of the satisfactory results obtained through the allocation of income from the goods that originally belonged to the *pueblo*, to invalids and to those dispossessed of their fortune (they would be able

⁴²⁹ Report that the president of the National Charity Board of Quito, Carlos Alberto Arteta, presented to the Ministry of the Interior, Culture, and Charity. Quito: Municipal press, July 21, 1912, 14.

to change their opinion and make themselves available to rent those goods at a good price).”⁴³⁰

The liberal circles strengthened and widened. Beyond the provincial elites, middle and popular professional sectors were integrated as well to serve in public institutions in addition to the renters of state goods themselves.

The educational public spaces formed an urban middle class that became professional and achieved positions within the new state functions. From this population, groups of liberal public opinion were constituted in various regions of the country, even developing an educated public sphere that sympathized with literary modernism and the liberal revolutions in Latin America.⁴³¹ This group formed a liberal public opinion and appropriated the discourse on citizenship, promoting selective processes of inclusion.⁴³²

⁴³⁰ Ibid., 14.

⁴³¹ On the formation of a group of intellectuals critical of conservatism that generated a public opinion and a literary field that identified with modernism and radicalism, see Gladys Valencia Salas, *El círculo modernista: la autonomía del arte según el modernismo ecuatoriano* (Master's thesis in Cultural Studies, UASB, 2004)

⁴³² For a study on liberal public education and the formation of political identities among women of popular and middle classes in Quito at the beginning of the twentieth century see Ana María Goetschel, *Educación de las mujeres, maestras y esferas públicas: Quito en la primera mitad del siglo XX* (Quito: FLACSO and Abya-Yala, 2007). Various texts establish that the spaces of liberal public education were the origin of the first processes of socialist organization in the Ecuatorian Sierra. In these texts, the concept of liberal circles is amplified beyond the “red” intellectuals of each province to those to whom Enrique Ayala Mora refers in *Lucha política*; Leopoldo Benites Vinuesa, *Pensamiento socialista*, Colección Pensamiento socialista 11

The Party created spaces for the reproduction of loyalties to liberalism among the urban middle classes. The artisans, traditionally excluded from political representation during the landholding state, gave themselves over to the conservatives as the ample peasant sectors saw their agendas fade from the political scenario at the same time that they were harassed by powerful actors of the landholding class. Two complementary processes took place: the renovation of a racial frontier formulated through modern social and scientific thought and the agrarian conflicts heightened as a result of the fortification of the landholding sector.⁴³³

At the same time that large state organisms in charge of health and education began to integrate demographic concepts into their policies, the discourse of the liberal redemption was displaced from the sphere of political negotiation by a civilizing discourse, according to which the working classes needed to be prepared for their future integration as citizens.⁴³⁴ Services of public health were seen between

(Quito: Ediciones La Tierra, 2008). Germán Rodas Chaves, *Partido Socialista. Casa adentro. Aproximación a sus dos primeras décadas*. Colección Historia del Socialismo en el Ecuador (Quito: Ediciones La Tierra, 2006). The quotation is from Leonardo J. Muñoz, *Testimonio de lucha. Memorias sobre la historia del socialismo en Ecuador* (Quito: Corporación Editora Nacional, 1988).

⁴³³ On the tensions within the Liberal Party among radical thought represented, for example, by Agustín Cueva Saenz and José Peralta and a liberal tendency “of order” towards a racist thought, see Alfredo Espinosa Tamayo, *Psicología y sociología del pueblo ecuatoriano* (Quito: Banco Central del Ecuador, 1979), especially the introduction by Arturo Andrés Roig. Also see María Cristina Cárdenas, *José Peralta y la trayectoria del liberalismo ecuatoriano* (Quito: Banco Central del Ecuador, 2002)

⁴³⁴ Where the state was convoked to intervene in the unequal access to the justice system

1910 and 1925 as indispensable for the preparation of society in the fight for modern progress. Its obligatory character demanded formative campaigns, propaganda, and punitive powers in the case of a lack of compliance.

These dynamics, according to the literature, substituted the ties that the landholding state had maintained with the population through privileges and racial impositions. In the same way, these policies tied the duties of the citizen to social reproduction, such as Kim Clark has observed, arguing that within the liberal discourse on public health a fundamental part of the new state oriented towards the social construction of gender, race, and nation became institutionalized. The expressed will of these institutions to fight against infant mortality among worker and peasant families was tied to the assignation of social roles to women as mediators between the nation state and the interior of the family.⁴³⁵

The new impositions that obliged working classes to acquire *civilized* patterns of intimacy tied them to the state, which was eager to save the population one way or another. The sub-director of public health of Pichincha, Imbabura, and Carchi expressed that the work of public health was not just that of investigation, but it was also a moral and a didactic activity.

in the resolution of conflicts between “*gamonales*” and peasants.

⁴³⁵ Kim Clark, “Género, raza y nación: la protección a la infancia en el Ecuador, 1910-1945,” in *Palabras del silencio: las mujeres latinoamericanas y su historia*, ed. Martha Moscoso (Quito: Abya-Yala, DGIS-Holanda, and UNICEF, 1995), 219-256.

Intensely moral and didactic, especially in its relations with the working classes not particularly erudite or willing to worry about the duties of hygiene and public health... We are instilling in the soul of the pueblo – assisted by the work of the press – a certain attachment to new sanitary practices and a certain affectionate respect for the prescriptions of industry, affection, and respect.⁴³⁶

The mechanisms for promoting practices of public health in a population seen as racially and culturally resistant to modernity were introduced through a series of requests such as “the cordial visit, the delicate notice, the opportune warning, the respectful cautioning, and lastly citation by the Public Health Commission are given and thus a punitive preventative system is achieved.”⁴³⁷

The Ministers of government, health, and education, according to what several authors have observed, presented alternatives of social integration for urban and rural working-class populations to be introduced to notions of health, hygiene, civilization, enlightenment, and technical formation in liberal arts schools.⁴³⁸ The literature has identified tensions in public policies between the will for integration and pessimistic

⁴³⁶ Carlos A. Miño, *Informe Anual que el Subdirector de Sanidad de las Provincias de Pichincha, Imbabura y Carchi eleva al Ministro y al Director del Ramo. (1919-1920)* (Quito: Imprenta Municipal, 1920)

⁴³⁷ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁴³⁸ Kingman, *La ciudad y los otros*; María José Calderón, *El criminal y los inocentes: el discurso sobre las prácticas de gobierno en las instituciones de salud y control social en el Ecuador, 1925-1938* (Undergraduate thesis in Historical Sciences, PUCE, 1995); Prieto, *Liberalismo y temor*.

visions of the racialized other.⁴³⁹ The medical and punitive observation of individuals and segments of the urban population, the census, and health and fumigation campaigns, among others, publicized the potential success of such campaigns in urban and rural populations. With respect to the integration of the urban working-class population into the nation, functionaries produced optimistic estimates, whereas with respect to the integration of the inhabitants of rural parishes – largely indigenous populations – the estimate were more pessimistic.⁴⁴⁰

In fact, this discourse coincided with the change that had taken place with respect to the agrarian problem in Ecuador. In spite of the evidence that the peasantry and the indigenous communities had forged political alliances for the conformation of the republic as a national state and despite the promise that this alliance would permit their access to justice in issues relative to work and land, the decades of the 1910s

⁴³⁹ See, for example, the combination between positivist thinking and racial concepts in Espinosa Tamayo, *Psicología y sociología del pueblo ecuatoriano*. A recount of the visions of the Indian in Ecuadorian positivist thought, see Carlos A. Paladines Escudero, ed., *Pensamiento positivista ecuatoriano* (Quito: CEN, 1982); and Prieto, *Liberalismo y temor*.

⁴⁴⁰ For a comparable vision of racism and modern demographic thought in Peru, see Pilar García Jordán, “Reflexiones sobre el darwinismo social. Inmigración y colonización, mitos de los grupos modernizadores peruanos (1821-1919),” *Bull. Inst. fr. Études andines* 21-2 (1992): 961-975; in Bolivia, see Marie Danielle Demelas, “Darwinismo a la criolla: el darwinismo social en Bolivia, 1880-1910,” in N° 1-2 of *Historia Boliviana* (La Paz: s/e., 1981), 55-82. In the work of Marcos Cueto, there is a detailed study of the transformation of the regime of charity to that of public health. *El regreso de las epidemias: salud y enfermedad en el Perú del siglo XX* (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1997)

and 1920s demonstrated a substantial turn towards the re-concentration of lands and the expansion of *concertaje* in the northern Sierra.

In this sense, the case of the haciendas expropriated by the church that, in turn, produced income for the Public Assistance is paradigmatic. They were rented out by the state to private parties, some with high standing within the Liberal Party who, as Jorge Trujillo observes, were easily able to place their products in coastal markets. The income that the state earmarked for the construction of emblematic institutions representing civilization and that set loose philanthropic campaigns was produced within the regime of *concertaje* and through increasing pressures placed on peasant families.⁴⁴¹ This was the case of Pesillo, in the north of Pichincha province, which was an hacienda of the Public Assistance that had been property of the Merced order; it was also the case of the Salamalag hacienda in Saquisilí in Cotopaxi province, which passed from the hands of the church into those of the *Universidad Central* of Ecuador.⁴⁴²

Although the history of the haciendas of the Assistance is better known, the

⁴⁴¹ Trujillo, *La hacienda serrana*; Clark, “Nuevas estrategias de resistencia;” Mercedes Prieto, *Condicionamientos de la movilización campesina: el caso de la hacienda Olmedo, Ecuador 1926-1948*. (Undergraduate thesis, PUCE, 1978)

⁴⁴² On Pesillo, see Prieto, *Condicionamientos de la movilización campesina*; Muriel Crespi, *The Patrons and Peons of Pesillo: A Traditional Hacienda System in Highland Ecuador* (Ph.D. thesis, University of Illinois, 1968); and a more recent study in Becker and Tuttilo, *Historia agraria*. Ecuador campus, 2009). On Salamalag, see Kaltmeier, “La Universidad Terrateniente;” See Rodas, *Transito Amaguaña*.

empowerment of the private haciendas worked by *conciertos* and their subordination to the processes of urban modernization was a widespread process in this period. The literature speaks of the coexistence of different types of haciendas – on the one hand, hacienda-industry complexes that articulated the circulation of goods without going through markets and administered the movement of populations between productive units, insisting on a *patronal* control of the labor market and, on the other hand, smaller haciendas that sought to place their merchandise in the regional markets or to sell them to larger business complexes.

Internal migration expanded, providing the cities a “semi-proletariate” that still depended on access to the peasant economy.⁴⁴³ Whereas the haciendas of Public Assistance maintained, as Kim Clark has proposed, the construction of modern state organisms such as that of public health, schools of arts and sciences, and the national university, the private haciendas in Imbabura, Pichincha, and Guayas subsidized the construction of urban centers in the style of European civilizations, with a modern commercial and financial infrastructure and an incipient industrialization. In this sense, the modernizing process that began with the cacao boom and with the sponsorship of the liberal state contained a profound tension between the peasant expectations forged in their political experience of the nineteenth century and the

⁴⁴³ Andrés Guerrero, *Haciendas, capital y lucha de clases andina: disolución de la hacienda serrana y lucha política en los años 1960-64* (Quito: Editorial El Conejo, 1983). Agustín Cueva called it as “subproletariat,” in *El proceso de dominación*.

subsidy that the rural areas provided to economic modernization that was even more pronounced than in previous epochs.

The conformation of political parties with urban working-class bases that integrated “worker confederations” were seen in the epoch by both elite groups as a promising sign that they could form a democratic civilization without having to give up the privileges that distanced the cities from their agrarian surroundings.

The limited negotiation of the peasant agenda that left agrarian societies with unfulfilled expectations was tied to processes of urban and artisan worker inclusion beginning in the 1910s.⁴⁴⁴ In a global sense, the proposal of a gradual integration of the “worker” into the nation in the decade of the 1910s arose as an alternative of gradual and legitimate democratization while the peasantry simultaneously fell back into the shadows.

Quito was the settlement of the landholding elites of the central provinces who migrated from the central Sierra to the capital in the 1910s and rented out their inheritances. From there, they competed against the local influence of other classes in provinces such as Chimborazo, León, and Tungurahua, and they sought to unite with

⁴⁴⁴ These demands returned in the context of the *revolución juliana* in the 1930s and 1940s. See Kim Clark, *The Redemptive Work*; Hernán Ibarra, *Indios y cholos. Orígenes de la clase trabajadora ecuatoriana* (Quito: Editorial El Conejo, 1992); Becker and Tuttillo, *Historia agraria*; Valeria Coronel, “El liberalismo y el pueblo: alianzas, postergaciones y aspiraciones en torno a la Revolución Liberal. (1895-1922),” in *El tiempo de Alfaro*, ed. Rafael Barriga (Quito: Odysea Producciones, 2009), 39-70

the most significant capitals of the Pichincha elites in order to operate in their own provinces.⁴⁴⁵

The economic correspondences of the *patronal* offices give us important information that can be complemented with memories about the situation of the indigenous and peasant communities during the epoch. These sources reconstruct histories of conflicts thanks to trials that opened in during political reforms of the 1920s.⁴⁴⁶ The trials reflect memories of contentious situations from the prior two decades in which indigenous communities experienced the pressures of conservative modernization and the frustrated expectations of the liberal revolution.

The demands presented after 1926 tell of conflicts that characterized the economic expansion of the hacienda-industry complex and the attempt at population control that accompanied it. The documents from trials between communities and haciendas described the experience of the kidnapping of entire communities which

⁴⁴⁵ Rosemary Bromley, “The Functions and Development of Colonial Towns: Urban Change in the Central Highlands of Ecuador 1698-1940,” in vol. 4 of *Transactions*, New Series 1, (1979): 33.

⁴⁴⁶ Among the documents analyzed for Pichincha province, the trials began in September of 1925 until 1961, when the military dictatorship moved the issue of lands over to the Ministry of Agriculture. The collectionamental themes that were addressed in these trials were the expropriation and awarding of lands, problems regarding the theft of communal lands, and the constitution of *Communities*. The first cases refer us to long-running conflicts. In this chapter, we will cover these conflicts and, as seen during the liberal period, leaving for the following chapters how these conflicts tended to be resolved before new opportunities and alliances with the regime of the *revolución juliana*. The theme of the regime's official recognition of *Communities* in 1937 corresponds to the thematics of the following chapters as well.

had had their lands taken after having been surrounded by hacienda property, thus denying them access to parish nuclei, roads, and markets. While the liberal state established regulations such as the abolition of *concertaje*, the fortified presence of the regional elites impeded access to the justice system.

Whereas in the nineteenth century the general tendency in the central and northern Sierra had been that of ruralization, the twentieth century was characterized by an inverse orientation towards the conformation of modern urban centers where capitals forged in agriculture were invested and new economic scenarios were formed that were tied to commerce and industry.⁴⁴⁷ These centers reconfigured the relationship that the *pueblos* had had with rural areas up to that time. They established a clearer frontier between spaces, and the rural areas were subordinated in a relationship that we could call a renewal of the *colonial ties* insofar as it represented an attempt at population control against which the indigenous communities fought.

Pichincha, the region that had most dramatically confronted the radicalism of the conservative elite and where a solution to the problem of *concertaje* was promised in 1897, was stimulated by the arrival of the railroad in Chimbacalle in Quito and by the cacao boom between 1900 and 1920. In a study of the properties of the Jijón family, Ricardo Muratorio maintains that significant amounts of money were invested in productive technology, in bringing electricity to the city, and in facilitating

⁴⁴⁷ Yves Saint-Geours, “La sierra centro;” Kim Clark, *The redemptive Work*.

urban transport, a phenomenon that articulated the modernization of Quito and the landholding-industrialists' project of production with the peripheral parishes and with the coast through the railway.

Quintero has observed the manner in which textile products imported from England were displaced at the beginning of the First World War by the products of the industries of the Sierra. Colmenares adds that the capitals of the Sierra industrialization came from agricultural industry. The Sierra was ready for an economic articulation with the coast.⁴⁴⁸ The elite of the Sierra began a cycle of production oriented to the internal market, expanded the processing of flour, and generated two textile industries, one of tissues and simple fabrics for consumption in the Sierra and Colombia and another of cotton, more useful for the coastal climate.⁴⁴⁹ The large families used their agrarian resources to create capital. They modernized their textile workshops, introduced machinery, and took advantage of the railway and the international crisis, fortifying the commercial hacienda and generating a textile industry in the Sierra.

Whereas the constitution of 1906 eliminated imprisonment for debt, the institution of *concertaje* continued and formed part of the labor heterogeneity with

⁴⁴⁸ Quintero and Silva, *Ecuador, una nación en ciernes*; Colmenares, "La hacienda en la sierra norte;" Guerrero, *Haciendas, capitalismo y lucha de clases*.

⁴⁴⁹ Carlos Arcos, "El espíritu del Progreso;" Carlos Marchan, "El sistema hacendatario serrano."

which this economic diversification was administered. When *concertaje* was formally abolished in 1917, the haciendas were articulated with industrial installations and inter-regional urban markets. The economic environment was more robust than that which existed at the beginning of the liberal regime. The landholding elites had been able to generate a commercial value for lands as they integrated them to the urban economy. They were diversified agriculture capital towards industry and towards a labor system of *concertaje* that was expanded to include industrial processes.

Saint-Goeurs describes the attraction that the coast exercised on free peasants that had not yet been forced into *concertaje* within the hacienda. He has analyzed this pull as a political and economic competition that stimulated the transformation of the traditional hacienda (which had traditionally sought the most control possible over the labor supply based on their monopolistic control of lands). The new generations of the landholding elites, unified in the National Society of Farmers, sought the integration of the hacienda with the city and the internal markets. They developed an industrial infrastructure and strengthened the role of the municipal governments within their vision of a top-down modernization.⁴⁵⁰

In accordance with Saint Geours, the structure of the *hacienda* stimulated by the cacao boom was too much competition for that combination of peasants and artisans that had opted for autonomy from the large properties and *concertaje* in the

⁴⁵⁰ Jean Paul Deler, “Transformaciones regionales.”

nineteenth century. In the same way, the salaried labor supply that existed in the valleys retreated before the expansion of the system of *concertaje* and the landholding elite of the Sierra sought to avoid peasant mobility once more.⁴⁵¹

Despite the fear expressed by the elite of the Sierra that the indigenous population would move to the coast, the statistics constructed by Saint Geours establish that the aggressive campaign of hacienda expansion and of capturing rural populations prevented such an exodus.⁴⁵² According to the statistics offered by Guillermo Bustos between 1886 and 1906, the population of Quito rose from 39,600 to 51,852 inhabitants. Based on the writings of the doctor Pablo Arturo Suarez, the work of Eduardo Kingman demonstrates that a large part of the population “maintained a fluctuating relationship between the city and the rural [areas]” -- the day laborers that reached 10.4 percent and the servants that reached 21 percent came principally from the haciendas.⁴⁵³ Another component of the urban working-class sector, the “autonomous workers,” was mostly artisans and only 4.6 percent worked in industry, according to Kingman. In Pichincha, where lands were commercialized

⁴⁵¹ Saint Geours, “La sierra centro,” 172.

⁴⁵² Guillermo Bustos, “La identidad clase obrera a revisión: una lectura sobre las representaciones del Congreso Obrero de Ambato de 1938,” *Procesos* 2 (1992): 73-104; Eduardo Kingman, *La ciudad y los otros*.

⁴⁵³ Pablo Arturo Suárez, *Contribución al estudio de las realidades entre la clase obrera y campesina* (Quito: Imprenta de la Universidad Central, 1934), quoted in Kingman, *La ciudad y los otros*.

and many of the *concierto* peasants were freed by Alfaro's legislation, peasants sought to access lands that, in turn, were quickly divided up and constituted tiny plots; an “army of reserves” was thus formed that quickly became a new group of hacienda *conciertos*.⁴⁵⁴

The abolition of *concertaje* in 1918 transformed this contract of dependence into an informal practice, but nonetheless it was still employed. The indigenous families and communities that integrated relations of dependence with the *hacienda* came to call themselves *huasipunguero* families because the parcel of land and hut that were given to the family -- in conjunction with access to certain natural resources like forests and *páramos* -- were called *huasipungos*. In exchange, the *hacienda* demanded a series of unpaid individual and collective services. The debt increased through cycles of lending known as “*socorros*.”⁴⁵⁵

The “greater *huasipungo* family,” as Andrés Guerrero calls it, put their work before that of the large land owners. This guaranteed their own existence through work in three or four areas -- services rendered to the hacienda gave them access to a parcel of land and to indispensable resources for agriculture and grazing; the work within the *huasipungo* of the *arrimados*, close family members on the *huasipunguero* plot, produced food for subsistence; and their cyclical enlistment in activities of the

⁴⁵⁴ Saint Geours, “La sierra centro,” 176.

⁴⁵⁵ Guerrero, *La semántica de la dominación*.

hacienda supported the *huasipungo*, as they gave the *hacendado* the capacity to mobilize the labor supply and provided *huasipungueros* an extra income. In addition, the work of the *arrimados* outside of the *hacienda*, in the *pueblos*, provided a monetary income for key moments and the artisan work of women and children was used for subsistence and, at times, sold for income. The *arrimados* brought in between 50 percent and 80 percent of the total salaries of the family, according to Guerrero.

Between 1910 and 1925, various models existed in this scenario. There existed a model in which the most successful businessmen of landholding origins affiliated with the conservative party promoted a system of *patronal* administration of population flows between the rural areas and the city. From their administration in Quito, where multiple businesses were managed throughout the inter-Andean region, the Jijón family mobilized populations and goods between one productive unit and another, avoiding at all times entering into the market. For example, they moved *arrimados* cyclically from the *haciendas* in Imbabura (*arrimados* of the indigenous *huasipunguero* families⁴⁵⁶ and afro-Ecuadorians) into industrial work in the textile settlements of the southeast of Quito while they provided the labor supply with products forged in *huasipungero* relations in the extensions dedicated to the

⁴⁵⁶ Libros de correspondencia económica de la familia Jijón. Archivo histórico Jacinto Jijón y Caamaño, colección Iván Cruz Cevallos.

cultivation of cereals along the border with Colombia.

The other “model” was less controlled and more extensive. According to the description proposed by Guerrero in 1975, the ties between rural areas and the city resulted from the very structure of the hacienda and the wider *huasipunguero* family of the hacienda. In this sense, for Guerrero the two-headed system (hacienda and *huasipunguero* family) generated a *distorted form of proletarianization* in which the pre-capitalist relationship did not dissolve. The salary that members of the *huasipunguero* family received did not reflect salaried work in its true sense. The basis of its reproduction always lay in the productive apparatus of the family. This allowed landholders to capture “loose” workers at the same time that they conserved the *huasipungo* structure.⁴⁵⁷

The clearest example of the modernization of the landholding elite of Pichincha was constituted by Jacinto Jijón y Caamaño himself. Having come from a long line of owners of colonial workshops and prominent *hacendados*, at the end of his life he was one of the most widely-recognized conservative intellectuals in the country, the unquestioned leader of the conservative party, and the most powerful businessman in the northern Sierra, as he maintained modern textile industries, control of the distribution of his products, and enormous haciendas in various provinces of the

⁴⁵⁷ AMC, Jijón collection, Jacinto Jijón y Caamaño, vol. 1 and 2 of *Política Conservadora* (Quito: Prensa Católica, 1929 and 1934).

country. Jijón took charge of the businesses that his father, Manuel Jijón y Larrea, had developed in 1909.

Jijón owned the San José hacienda, which was dedicated to the cultivation of sugar cane, and the industrial complex of San José of Urcuqui in Imbabura, where slaves who were freed by the government of Urquina and had not migrated to the coast had been converted into *conciertos* and later into *huasipungueros*. He also inherited the old workshop of Peguche in Imbabura that had stopped producing textiles in order to become an hacienda that produced cereals and a labor supply for a new textile industry located in the southwest of Quito, the Chillo-Jijón textile industry in Amaguaña, and the Santa Rosa de Chillo wool industry in Sangolquí. Jijón had a cereal hacienda in Imbabura with which he supplied a labor force for his other industries. Jijón had been able to subordinate the wool production of the haciendas of the Chiriboga family in Chimborazo, converting himself into the exclusive buyer of his materials for the industry established in Quito. In the same way he was supplied with cotton from various haciendas located in lowlands in order to make his textile industry function. He was a lender among national and international financial circles and his family was able to win great earnings as investors in the electrification of Quito. Jijón was the director of the conservative party during almost two decades and was considered a first class intellectual due to his publications in the fields of archeology and conservative social thought. He was a prominent figure within the

Ecuadorian Right until his death in 1947.

Other hacienda families with lesser capacities for diversification became clients of Jijón, as in the case of the Chiriboga *hacendados*. Something similar could be said of the Tobar, Landázuri, and Ortiz families of the province of Carchi, who achieved the circulation of products of Jijón businesses and constructed a strong political support for the conservative Right of the 1930s and 1940s.⁴⁵⁸ The *haciendas* of the Chiriboga family were located in a more politically contentious zone since, although they had been able to link themselves to the economy of the modernizing landholders of Pichincha as suppliers, they were close to autonomous indigenous communities that had their own regional influence. They had been able to negotiate an interesting position in the region and they found themselves surrounded by small- and medium-sized groups of peasants and small haciendas. In contrast, the close ties between the conservative elite of Pichincha and Carchi and the commercial orientation that they had been able to achieve with respect to the Colombian market, had resulted in a more consolidated power in that zone.

The administrative system of the Jijón trade conglomerate underwent a sustained modernization between 1913 and 1929. The figure of the *patrón* was gradually substituted by local managers and a general manager located in Quito, who

⁴⁵⁸ Quintero and Silva, *Ecuador, una nación en ciernes*. Also in Colección Iván Cruz Cevallos, Commercial correspondence of Jijón y Caamaño 1880-1967.

only communicated selectively with Jijón. However, Jijón had taken two significant decisions -- to maintain the practices of *socorros* and *suplicidos* among all of his indigenous workers in the rural areas and in the city, and to gradually take these practices away from the *mestizo* workers.

Thus, he proposed to deal with all correspondences with *huasipungueros* and issues relative to the issuance of parcels of land.⁴⁵⁹ Jijón y Caamaño described the salary of the *concierto* in the following manner:

In a sum of money, the least important portion, in the income from a piece of land, if it be well cultivated, should give him what is sufficient to not die of hunger, he and his family; in a periodic quantity of goods; in the right to graze their animals in determined areas; in the interest of the advances received.⁴⁶⁰

Amaguaña, which was considered “the jewel of the valley of *los Chillos*” in 1931 due to its tourism attractions, zoo, and sports, had the following industries:

[F]our powerful factories, three of ice cream and wool weaving and cotton: San Francisco, San Jacinto, and San Rafael, and one of flower, Santa Rosa de Chillo, surrounded by an immense zoo of free native animals, an artificial jungle with rivers and waterfalls.⁴⁶¹

⁴⁵⁹ Colección Iván Cruz Cevallos, Archive administered by the Jijón family, Quito. Correspondencia 1913-1945.

⁴⁶⁰ Jijón y Caamaño, vol. 2 of *Política Conservadora*, 534. An interpretation in José Antonio Figueroa, *Del Nacionalismo al exilio interior: el contraste de la experiencia modernista en Cataluña y los Andes americanos* (Bogotá: Convenio Andrés Bello, 2001).

⁴⁶¹ AMC, Jijón collection, Flier *La joya del valle de los Chillos*, Quito, 1931.

This luxurious artificial space, designed in an *art nouveau* style was inhabited according to the flier by a labor supply that was foreign to modern salary practices. Therefore, the products of the Santa Rosa factory were destined by their owner for the elaboration of bread for the breakfasts of the workers in the weaving factories, who were paid monthly with a significant quantity of corn, fine weaving, silk sweaters, kashmir, ponchos, rugs, pullovers, towels, and various types of clothing and materials that were produced by a labor force paid with a complex mix of salary and species.

The most notable characteristic of this industrial center is that all of the machines are managed exclusively by indigenous people, including children who after having finished primary school... enter to labor in the factories, arriving quickly to acquire a great facility in the fulfillment of their duties.⁴⁶²

As Saint-Geours has proposed, money was not only a form of exchange but also an instrument of political domination and the *hacendados* of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries opposed the free circulation of that “which would unify the national space, but would put at risk their regional power and their capacity to control the labor market.”⁴⁶³

In industry, work was paid in goods and only partially in salary. The practice of paying in merchandise and systems of indebtedness similar to those of the hacienda

⁴⁶² Ibid.

⁴⁶³ Saint-Geours, “La sierra centro.”

for the “Indian peasants” were maintained according to what can be observed in the lawsuits presented by the Indian *huasipungueros* of the textile industries of Amaguaña during the cycle of strikes that occurred in 1934.

The documents relative to a cycle of worker strikes in the textile industries of Quito and Ambato in 1934 reflect the working conditions in the nascent industrial economy, which was associated with the hacienda and the conservatives' broader project.⁴⁶⁴ Firstly, it can be observed that there were at least three models of labor administration. In the industry *La Internacional*, technical investment and strict labor vigilance were combined with some *patronal* abuses. The principal obstacles were informal work for weekly or contingent contracts and frequent firings that were possible due to the existence of large, available labor supply.⁴⁶⁵ In the textile industry of San Juan in Sangolquí parish in Amaguaña, the workers also complained of piecemeal work that prevented the stability of the workers. The *mestizo* workers spoke of the impossibility of fulfilling minimally civilized working conditions when there always existed the option of turning to the indigenous labor supply. Instead of insisting on the necessity of differentiating the *mestizos* from the indigenous people, they showed a certain solidarity with the indigenous workers as they described their especially tough treatment and reduced pay, in particular with respect to the

⁴⁶⁴ AIFP, MPST Collection, 181 box, Informes de Fábricas 1934.

⁴⁶⁵ “Problemas obreros en *La Internacional*,” *El Comercio*, Wednesday January 10, 1934, 8; and “Huelga La Internacional”, Thursday, March 15, 1934, 1

indigenous women and children from the rural areas.⁴⁶⁶

The case of Chillo Jijón in Amaguaña is the model of labor administration that best reflects a tie mediated by the *patronal* sector of agrarian servitude to industrial production. If one observes the list of workers and compares it with the registry books of the *haciendas* of the same family, it is easy to see that these two populations were composed of members of the same *huasipunguero* families of Peguche. The administrative books of the haciendas and industries of the Jijón family show how the administration coordinated the planned temporary migration of the labor supply from Imbabura to Quito, the arrival of cereals to supply workers who were not paid in money but rather in goods, the distribution of low quality textiles in the haciendas, among other dynamics of internalizing the market within the network of Jijón properties. Also, there was a series of last names that coincided with *huasipunguero* families that were descendents of ex slaves of the sugar grower of Urcuqui in Imbabura. In Sangolquí, Santa Rosa de Chillo Jijón was an hacienda-industry with an agricultural section and a section of *huasipungueros* that provided a labor force for the industry.⁴⁶⁷

The case of the textile industrialization of the northern central Sierra of Ecuador was comparable to that of Antioquia in Colombia, described by Mary Roldan and

⁴⁶⁶ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 182 folder 5, Fábrica de San Juan de Chillo y otros conflictos laborales 1934.

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid

Ann Farnsworth-Alvear.⁴⁶⁸ The capitals coming from coffee were invested in the textile industry that was maintained in the same way as that of Quito, based on a racial division of labor. The political geography was complemented by a more extensive periphery in tropical zones where oil was exploited. In the case of Ecuador, specifically in Pichincha, labor politics formed with racial divisions similar to the sexual and racial divisions of the population about which Roldan and Farnsworth-Alvear write in Antioquia. Quito was defined as a *hispanista* capital, including in this concept that of artisans who needed to separate themselves from their rural surroundings and defined as peripheral the rural parishes of the surrounding valleys populated by indigenous communities.⁴⁶⁹

The demands presented by indigenous communities from 1926 on tell of the conflicts that characterized this economic expansion of the hacienda-industry complex and the attempt at population control that this entailed. The documents coming from trials brought about by the communities against the hacienda described the experience of entire communities being captured, having been surrounded by hacienda property that took away access to parish centers, roads, and markets. While the liberal state established regulations such as the abolition of *concertaje*, the

⁴⁶⁸ An experiment similar to that of Medellín, Colombia. See Farnsworth Alvear, *Dulcinea in the Factory*; Roldan, *Blood and Fire*.

⁴⁶⁹ Ernesto Capello, "Identidad colectiva y cronotopos del Quito de comienzos del siglo XX," in *Historia social urbana: espacios y flujos*, ed. Eduardo Kingman (Quito: FLACSO and Ministerio de Cultura del Ecuador, 2009), 125-138.

strengthened presence of the regional elites impeded access to the justice system. This was the testimony of the communities that we will be analyzing.

The subsequent rulings show how in the first two decades of the twentieth century the expectations of justice sown in the provinces of the Sierra transformed into a generalized disappointment. The sources reveal that communities had maintained the expectation that local justice would respond to their demands due to the redemption of the liberal constitution and that they perceived that the lack of autonomy of the justice system with respect to the aspirations of the landholding elite was a condition that did not correspond to the ideals of the liberal revolution.

In this sense the *comuneros* of the community of Calshi located in Guano county of Chimborazo province, as in various cases that we have observed in other provinces of the central Sierra and in Pichincha, complained in 1930 that the haciendas had recently made them *conciertos* although during the liberal revolution they had been identified as owners of their freedom: “without being *conciertos*... nor having debts in that hacienda, that we the indigenous people are owners of our freedom since the arrival of our General Alfaro.”⁴⁷⁰

The lands of the southeastern valleys of *los Chillos* and Tumbaco near Quito and the south of Quito were connected to the central province of Cotopaxi and

⁴⁷⁰ AIFP, MPST Collection, 176 box, Comuneros de Calshi quejas sobre concertaje, March 9, 1930.

Chimborazo by railways. In these scenarios: Amaguaña and Sangolquí in the valley of *los Chillos*, Cumbaya, Tumbaco, Pifo Yaruqui, and el Quinche in the east of Quito and in the closest populations to Quito in the south, Chillogallo and even Machachi were all converted into highly contentious zones since these indigenous communities, articulated with regional markets, had been established for a long time. In these scenarios, we will find the most important conflicts as the indigenous communities confronted new forms of property-holding among the elites, including many elites with foundations and companies that took possession of lands in the name of charity.

Conservative businessmen had influential lawyers within their political group to confront the indigenous communities in local trials over land ownership, water, natural resources, and tensions surrounding the expansion of the labor regime of work for debt. Among the most notable owners of lands were the *Conferencia San Vicente de Paúl* (CSVP) and the *Asociación de las Señoras de la Caridad* (ASC), which had legal representatives such as Julio Tobar Donoso, Alberto Acosta Soberón, and Carlos Manuel Larrea, conservative intellectuals and lawyers of renown tied to the Pichincha Bank foundation.

4.5 Land Concentration and Conflict in the Rural Parishes of Pichincha

Students of agrarian conflict in the decades prior to the agrarian reform of 1964 have predominantly covered the conflicts in state haciendas and have maintained,

according to the evidence available, that such conflict was essentially limited to the state haciendas. The thesis of many authors is that the rise of *concierto* or *huasipunguero* insubordination on state haciendas was an effect of the over-exploitation to which the Indians were subjected under the administration of renters, in contrast with the haciendas managed by paternalistic *patrones* who, according to this literature, did not have to deal with significant conflict until the 1930s in response to the world financial crisis and the pressures it imposed.⁴⁷¹

One of the explanations of this thesis that now seems suspect is that while the cases of conflict on the state haciendas were available to researchers in the archives of medical history, where the heritage of the Ministry of Health can be found, the cases of conflicts between communities and private haciendas and between communities remained unknown due to the lack of availability of the MPST history that contains labor and land disputes from all the provinces and were recently incorporated into the internal archive of the Public Function.⁴⁷²

An integrated view of conflict in the nineteenth and twentieth century demonstrates that conflicts also came about in private haciendas and in the new productive units linked to them. The institutionalization of the liberal state was a

⁴⁷¹ See the studies of the state *hacienda* in Mercedes Prieto, "Haciendas estatales: un caso de ofensiva campesina: 1926-1948," in *Ecuador: cambios en el agro serrano*, et. al. Miguel Murmis (Quito: FLACSO and CEPLAES, 1980), 101-30

⁴⁷² New studies on the state *haciendas* in the 1930s have been based on sources found in the archives of the *Universidad Central*. See Kaltmeier, *Jatarishun*.

period in which violence and conflict predominated over inclusion or negotiation. Among the diversity of opportunity structures in which the indigenous communities entered into dialogue or conflict with the state, this period reflected the weakness of a state with a poor capacity to implement its policies over the countryside

Among the most contentiously discussed cases of agrarian conflict on state haciendas was the case of Pesillo in the county of Cayambe in northern Pichincha. It was one of the largest haciendas owned by the Church and, after passing into the hands of the state, it was put up for rent. In this hacienda a series of conflicts came about in the 1930s between *huasipungueros* and renters which included the burning of peasant lots and their expulsion from the hacienda. Some of those who were expelled, including the historic leaders of the indigenous movement Dolores Cacuango and Jesus Gualavisí from Juan Montalvo parish, formed the *Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios* (FEI), which was affiliated with the Communist Party in the 1940s.⁴⁷³

In the case of Pesillo we can observe how the discontent that accumulated from the liberal period was expressed after 1925. In 1903 the liberal state had declared this site a civil parish, freeing a large part of the *concierto* population on the hacienda and conceding to it various hectares of land progressively until 1918, when one hundred and twenty two lots were given over in conjunction with the formal abolition of

⁴⁷³ Becker and Tuttilo, *Historia agraria*.

concertaje. The Congress of the Republic that had abolished *concertaje* as a legal contract had considered that the parish of Olmedo, “created several years ago in the hacienda of Pesillo, despite having a thousand inhabitants, lacks plazas, streets, public offices; its inhabitants live under the pressure of renters that oblige them to lend their services by force as *conciertos* in exchange for the ground they occupy.”⁴⁷⁴

In September of 1925 (scarcely two months after the July Revolution was proclaimed) the neighbors of the parish of Olmedo denounced the fact that despite the will expressed by the liberal state for fulfilling the promise to end *concertaje*, the renter of Pesillo, José Rafael Delgado, had surrounded the parish through the expansion of the hacienda, thus obstructing the free circulation of 3,000 inhabitants with the purpose of reinserting them into indebted relations in exchange for the right to pass over hacienda lands. “The cause of this late-comer, the only obstacle and the only impediment to the realization of the blessed work that the legislature of 1918 favored for the good of our pueblo is the lack of a road for entrances and exits.”⁴⁷⁵

Three hundred people (the majority having indigenous last names) signed this denunciation with a footnote that indicated that an additional one thousand five hundred people had not signed it because they were busy working in the haciendas

⁴⁷⁴ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 176, folder 8, document attached to the *huasipungueros* of Pesillo's request. Promulgated on October 31, 1918. Signed by the Government's Ministry, José María Ayora, as part of the official registry.

⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

Moyurco, la Chimba, and Pucará. Due to a denunciation presented by an indigenous community from the neighboring parish – Juan Montalvo – we know that during the liberal regime the communities continued to occupy community lands while they negotiated their access to lands with fugitive peasants or internal migrants, though property titles set back the political negotiation of the haciendas.⁴⁷⁶

The case of the parish Juan Montalvo involved a dispute over community lands that had been auctioned during García Moreno's regime and had come to the attention of the president's family and to that of his son Gabriel García Alcázar. On November 15, 1935, the Political Deputy of the Cayambe police wrote a report addressed to the MPST about a case brought up by the inhabitants of the parish. The report affirmed that after various threats to the indigenous Quimbiamba to take him from his lands, the servants of the hacienda “Chaguarpungo” “have gone to plow [his lands] to take away the potatoes planted by the fore-mentioned indigenous man” and “they have thrown some donkeys into a contiguous ditch, resulting in one death, doing the same with two small huts that the indigenous people had used for sleeping in while taking care of their sheep.”⁴⁷⁷

On January 14, 1936, the police chief of the county sent out another report in which it indicated having “energetically reprimanded Juvenal Garzón with respect to

⁴⁷⁶ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 176, folder 3, Pichincha, Juan Montalvo 1936.

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid.

the abuses committed towards Idelfonso Quimbiamba, abusing his position as *Mayordomo* of the hacienda “Chaguarpungo” of this County,” adding that the “eviction” to vacate the land and hut inhabited by Ildefonso Quimbiamba had begun. After the inspection in the place under dispute, the Political Chief indicated that Ildefonso Quimbiamba did not have property titles since, after having been evicted from the hacienda “Santo Domingo” in the same county, he had been “picked up by the Community of Juan Montalvo, who had given him ownership of that lot, which they have manifested to have been theirs (of the community of Juan Montalvo).”⁴⁷⁸

Although these documents came after the period with which we are concerned in this chapter, they demonstrate the existence of an unresolved rivalry over lands and also show that the indigenous community used the practice of incorporating indigenous *forasteros* or *arrimados* into the occupation of territory as a way of effectively taking possession of it in spite of the pretensions of the *hacendados*. It is also clear that in this tension the *hacendados* continually turned to the use of force.

The inhabitants of Juan Montalvo denounced the intention of the owner of the hacienda “Chaguarpungo” to take the area called “Ancho Callejón” that extended to Monjas and the “Pulgaria” ravine and the lands to the north of the ravine, which had been community property since “ancient times.”⁴⁷⁹

⁴⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid., Document of September 17, 1935.

The descendents of García Alcazar presented a record signed in 1905 that mentioned how the hacienda Chaguarpungo was divided, including in it the communal lands. The *comuneros* remembered having been handed unfavorable rulings after the plundering of community lands and they recalled having affirmed their ownership in many ways thereafter, pursuing a positive reevaluation of the situation by the legal system. The narration of a technician from the ministry indicated how all of the community members went to the lot and proclaimed that it was important not only as community patrimony, but also as a guarantee of their free access to the public road.

They have conserved and continue to conserve that piece of land, known by the name of “Ancho Callejón,” during more than thirty years; they conserve property titles... and still he has resolved to mark off a great extension [of this land] with the public road – the community lands indicated extend to the “Guacho Guacho” point of “monjas” of the same Jaun Montalvo parish.⁴⁸⁰

Despite the documents fabricated in favor of the *hacendados* during trials, many collective actions in this epoch sought to associate this land with the community given that, in the community's memory, they had never ceased being community lands.⁴⁸¹

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁸¹ In 1935, their representatives, Jesús and Luis Gualavisí, in presence of all the indigenous people pronounced that they offered the Ministry the titles that they had, which were in the capital in the possession of their lawyer. The Gualavisí brothers

Equally significant tensions were forming in the valleys of Tumbaco and Los Chillos in the immediate periphery of Quito. These were densely populated zones that had been dangerously surrounded by haciendas and by institutions of the landholding elite. Almost half of the cases in which the communities demanded the attention of the state in Pichincha involved haciendas of private charity formed by members of the conservative elite.⁴⁸² The corporations of private charity administered the rent of the landholding elite and placed lands under the protection of influential lawyers and financiers.

In this sense, a letter from the technical inspection that the MPST wrote told of multiple conflicts that took place between communities and *haciendas* and that finally came to trial in the 1930s. The process of land expropriation that took place during the period of conservative modernization meant that in the 1930s “all of these *pueblos* of the eastern Checa, Yaruquí, Puembo, Quinche, should lack lands and

went along with Dolores Cacuango, as the founders of the FEI. The lawyer to which they made reference was Luis Felipe Chaves of the Communist Party of Ecuador. The papers did not seem to exist since they were presented throughout the trial with respect to the *haciendas* of Cayambe. The defense that they made of these lands, as we will see in the following chapter, took a political form rather than a legal one.

⁴⁸² The principal mechanism of pressure exercised by the different actors for obtaining the lands after 1925 was to ask the *Ministerio de Previsión Social* for the partitioning of vacant lands and then after 1929, when the land was declared state patrimony and its social use was put above private property, above all else the expropriation and partitioning of *haciendas* was demanded.

should find themselves at the limit of work.”⁴⁸³

In 1926 the peasants of *anejo de Tabavela* of the Yaruquí parish dared to demand state attention to free them from *encirclement and persecution* that the population had suffered at the hands of the neighboring haciendas of San Antonio and Guambi. The complaint of the neighbors was that the haciendas had expanded illegitimately over community lands, expropriating a valuable land called “*El Aguacate*” and *paramo* called “Yacupamba,” where the community collected its water for a complex system of irrigation for sandy lands. As an effect of the collective administration of irrigation systems, the zone had been dedicated to the production of fine produce for the Quinche market (such as *chirimoyas* and guacamole). The self-proclaimed “neighbors” characterized themselves as an indigenous community that had maintained this system, that had family and collective lands and that had developed their presence in the urban areas of Tababela, Yaruquí, and Quinche.⁴⁸⁴

Their complaint described how they had been subjected to strong pressures

⁴⁸³ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 182, folder 6, 1937-8 Pichincha expropiación *hacienda* Huambi, Yaruquí. Also see in the same collection the box 183, Juicio de Expropiación de la Hacienda Huambi.

⁴⁸⁴ Segundo Moreno Yáñez, in an ethnohistoric work on the Pichincha province, refers to the Yaruquí as a *mitmae* settlement that, during the period of Incan domination, served for the cultivation of *michiay* (corn associated with artificial irrigation) “after the Spanish invasion, these lands stopped being cultivated because the irrigation canals were destroyed and nobody was sufficiently interested in restoring them,” the ethno-historian supposes. See *Pichincha, Monografía histórica*, 74.

between 1900 and 1920, making growth almost impossible and placing at risk their traditional work as farmers and merchants. In 1912 the hacienda had closed the access from these lands to the road, leaving the community only with access to the dangerous ravines of Alpachacca and Guambi through which they could get to the markets of Quinche, “thus subjecting them to continuous dangers and difficulties in their transactions and commercial transport.”⁴⁸⁵

The technician from the MPST, Sr. Suárez Dávila, described Tabavela as a small parish with a population of 450 inhabitants around which an ample group of people were settled on distinct lands. The technical study described the land as a well irrigated plane at an altitude of 2,483 meters, with access to the train and located 35 kilometers from Quito, making it highly coveted land. The extension of the *pueblo* was of 114 hectares divided into lots of one hectare each, several having been further divided among members of a single family, and a “*Quinta de frutas*” of 30 hectares known as “*el aguacate*” on which all members of the community worked, though it belonged to a single member of the community, Estefa Chávez.

The population of Tababela believes that long ago it belonged to them, being a site for sheep grazing and that the owner of the hacienda appropriated this land. There is no legal data about this, but such tradition can be a favorable point for expropriation and thus erase any motive for a future social problem.⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁸⁵ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 183, Pichincha, Yaruquí, Juicio de expropiación de la hacienda Huambi.

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid.

The Guambi hacienda belonged to Carmen Muñoz de Vega, who was married to Felicísimo Vega. Vega had expanded the haciendas of Guambi and San Antonio over community lands at the end of the nineteenth century. The lands remained in dispute in the nineteenth century and during the life of Sra. Muñoz, who had to recognize that they were community lands and that she would return them once the renter fulfilled his contract. The community's access to water required that representatives of the community construct and maintain the irrigation systems and the administration of waters coming from the *páramo*.

Around the year 1900, Muñoz had negotiated water access with 38 heads of family of the community in exchange for monthly payments. However, Sra. Muñoz protected this hacienda by giving it as a “donation” to the *Las Senioras de la Caridad*. She was thus guaranteed rent until her death and interrupted the legal process that would have obliged her to return the lands to the Indians.

The private charity had a statute with which the landholding elite sought to dismiss the demands of the community that were often based on the proposal that the collective interests were superior to those of a few monopolizers of private lands. In the long lawsuit that the community presented against the *haciendas* of Sra. Vega, experts examined the titles of both parties. The CSVP argued that it had received the *haciendas* Guambi and Tababela (also called Oyambarillo) and the *páramo* called

“Yacupamba” from Sra. Carmen Muñoz, through a contract given them by the Supreme Governor on October 26th, 1919, when it was established that these inheritances would not require payment of taxes since part of their rent was destined to charity for the *pueblos* of the region.”⁴⁸⁷

The powerful lawyers linked to the Catholic Social Action and the concessions of the state to private charity institutions placed communal possession at grave risk of being lost definitively despite the long history of conflict and negotiations that favored the stance that these lands did in fact belong to the group of Indians of Yaruquí.

In 1932, the inhabitants of Yaruquí and Checa took the Intuna hill by force when it was registered as part of the hacienda “La Tola.” The inhabitants had farmed, prepared the mountain to extract wood, and “exercised all the acts that constituted a true ownership.” The property owner, Juan Ignacio Escobar, presented a request to the Ministry of Social Welfare and Vacant Lands, “demonstrating that [these inhabitants] had taken a great extension of lands [from his property] and he asked for administrative support to clear up the situation.”⁴⁸⁸ The property titles of Escobar dated to 1753, which seemed to settle the issue. Moreover, at some moment in the trial the inhabitants of Yaruquí recognized the titles of Escobar and acknowledged

⁴⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁸ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 180, Informe enviado al Subsecretario del Ministerio de Previsión Social por el Jefe de Previsión Social, Manuel José Aguirre, April 26, 1932

that they had occupied the top of “Intuna” because the land that was really theirs was already over-populated.

However, according to the report already mentioned, a few days later Dr. Juan Genaro Jaramillo argued that the Vega family and other owners had taken the lands of the *pueblos* and therefore it would be necessary to do a general revision of all land possession in Yaruqui before the Indians would recognize the legitimacy of such ownership.⁴⁸⁹

The occupation of the haciendas, the opening up of trials, and the intervention of the socialist lawyer Juan Genaro Jaramillo through an argument about the necessity for revising the entire distribution of lands in the area were all phenomena that corresponded to the “opportunity structure” that had opened up with the crisis of the liberal state. However, these documents carried pertinent information for understanding the situation of multiple harassment and strategies for private appropriation by the elite that brought the inhabitants of this valley, both communities and peasants, to the crisis that found political expression in the 1930s. Jaramillo

⁴⁸⁹ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 180, folder 1 Demanda por despojo de tierras, 1937-8 Yaruqui. As we will see later, Juan Genaro Jaramillo was the “Secretario Judicial del Partido Socialista Ecuatoriano” and worked as a union lawyer in defense of the causes of indigenous communities. Among his writings we find a valuable analysis of the social conflicts in Pichincha and we recognize the process of social conflicts and trials underlying the construction of popular identities of the Left in Ecuador in the 1930s.

argued that after the advance of the hacienda in the last decades, the land problem in Yaruquí had become an integral problem, the CSVP had concentrated the lands and, accompanied by various private haciendas, had led the population into an extreme situation. In this context, new documents were opened to understand the process in Yaruquí.

Fulfilling the order of president Isidro Ayora, Juan Genaro Jaramillo asked about the situation of the lands and the communities in the valley and presented “pertinent data on the lands of the *pueblo* of Yaruqui and the rights conceded by the *señora* Carmen Muñoz, widow of Vega, in her testament to the very population of Yaruqui and other neighboring populations.” In this sense, it was revealed that the Yaruqui *pueblo* had been able to show before Muñoz and in accordance with the “ancient and undeniable titles” that it had the rights to a considerable extension of lands that formed the *realengo*. The report pointed out that the owners of the neighboring haciendas, especially owners of the hacienda Alagachi “had wished to take these lands, establishing hillsides among their property with the tendency to include in their lands the *pueblo* Yaruquí.”

On repeated occasions, they have wanted to change the ownership of the lands, putting to use their personal influence, such hacendados and policemen or troops have moved themselves to this place with the objective of conquering by force the resistance of the *pueblo* Yaruquí, who have triumphed thanks to their

exceptional spirit and the honor of its members.⁴⁹⁰

According to the report, in 1919 a police squadron went to Yaruquí to prevent the *pueblo* from opposing the possession of a large part of the lands by *señora* Muñoz. Thus, the community of Indians from Yaruquí and from Checa presented their lawyers. Dr. Alberto Monge represented them and was able to get the Carmen Muñoz and Laura Vega to recognize the rights of the Yaruquí to the lands of *realengo*. They accepted that as soon as the current lease was over, the process of returning the lands to the community would begin. However, she subsequently donated the lands to the CSVP, “whose leaders wished to ignore the rights of the *pueblo*, alleging that *señora* Vega's recognition [of the community's rights to the land] had not been offered in public writing.”⁴⁹¹

The case reflects that while the ownership of the hacienda had been an unstable one and the *hacendados* had been obliged to negotiate before the pressure of the community -- some receiving justice depending on political circumstances -- the Vicentina Society was more rigid and attempted to do without negotiation with the community. Muñoz Vega had had to hear the voice of the indigenous communities of Yaruquí and Checa. At the end of the nineteenth century, the demands of the

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁹¹ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 180, Informe de Juan Genaro Jaramillo secretario del Partido Socialista al MPST, 1937.

communities seemed respectable. Thus, they had come to agreements in which they had negotiated frontiers and received offers to return what was theirs. Yet, in the 1910s and 1920s, the Vicentina Conference wished to do away with such processes of negotiation and even ignore legal documents to close the case unilaterally. The Vicentina Conference had received its legitimacy from the liberal state, justifying its control over the countryside.

The institutional scheme of the Conference of *San Vicente de Paúl* and of the Association of *Señoras de la Caridad* gave perfect cover for this double purpose of generating a catholic civil society and consolidating landholding predominance through modern legal strategies. The Vicentina Conferences had arisen in France under the sponsorship of the industrialist Federico de Ozanam in response to Jacobism and the Paris commune and constituted a bastion of new social Catholicism in Europe since the nineteenth century. In the case of Ecuador, these institutions facilitated the formation of some landholding elites, who were no longer limited to the great territorial patriarchs. Settled in Quito, these elites were able to integrate their properties in a true strategy for territorial concentration under the legal entity of this corporation.

In the context of landholding modernization, the Conference supposed that they could impose their criteria by force, without negotiation with the community. The Conference had promised to fulfill a series of conditions before returning lands to the

communities according to the testament of *Señora* Muñoz Vega. The conditions were formulas similar to those used by the state's Commission of Public Health, proposing that the *pueblo* “found itself in a period of education,” which justified the deferment of the return of lands. A monthly pension of twenty *sucres* was to be given to two people from Checa, Yaruquí, Puenbo, and Pifo, whose honor and poverty was to be proven. A professional school for women was to be established in which food and shelter would be provided to fifty poor young people, of whom twelve (preferably from Checa, Yaruquí, Puenbo, and Pifo) ought to maintain the property.⁴⁹²

The Conference was convinced that the integration of the *pueblo* and the fulfillment of promises to the community were not necessary, leading it to dismiss even the conditions established within the charity's discourse.⁴⁹³ One of the most important clauses of the testament was that the lands could not be sold since ultimately they were to be given back to the community. The dismissal of this clause caused the mobilization of the communities.

In the testimonies presented by the inhabitants of Yaruquí, we can observe just how much the community resented the fact that the CSVP cited its moral superiority to justify breaking promises and ending negotiations for its own benefit. The lawyer who represented them presented testimonies from the community with respect to the

⁴⁹² AIFP, MPST Collection, box 180, Demanda por despojo de tierras. 1937-8 Yaruqui

⁴⁹³ Miño, *Informe anual del Subdirector de Sanidad*.

trials that the CSVP wanted to ignore and in which it had made verbal and legal agreements.

The CSVP, which ought to have been a charitable institution, had been converted into a threat for the *pueblo* of Yaruquí and their communal lands as it had begun to fill the jails with inhabitants who wished to defend their lands. The CSVP wanted not only to keep the lands, but to break up the community as well.

The resistance of the pueblo has ultimately come to bribery and to the temptation of the principal elements of the Yaruquí, to whom parts of the communal lands have been offered either at low or no cost whatsoever in order that by dividing the pueblo they might overcome the resistance, making personal or legal conflicts develop among the inhabitants of this parish. Breaking with the expressed dispositions already noted, a sale's note was made for Ezequiel Jara in the part of the section called Ucucha according to the writing celebrated before the Scribner senior Cevallos on the May 12th, 1932. And this senior Jara is who has begun the new movements against the community of Yaruquí, thus starting a new stage of conflict fomented and maintained by the Conferencia San Vicente de Paul, though it hypocritically tries to seem unrelated to these new issues.⁴⁹⁴

In the group of conflicts in Pichincha, the presence of the Conference and the *Señoras de la Caridad* stood out due to the number of cases in which they were involved and for the characteristic of having been able to gather a series of *haciendas* to the point of strangling the rural parishes of the eastern valley of Quito in just a few years.

Aside from the case of Yaruquí, the Conference *San Vicente de Paul* possessed

⁴⁹⁴ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 180. folder 5, Cooperativa vs. Conferencia San Vicente De Paul, 1936

the Chicheato hacienda, which had surrounded the *Chiche Anejo* in the jurisdiction of the parish of Puembo to the point that the population lived in a particularly serious state of poverty even in comparison with the communities in conflict throughout the valley of Tumbaco, according to the technician from the MPST. The technician described the fragmentation of the community since they had lost all of their collective space.⁴⁹⁵ The leader of the community “*Chiche Anejo*” requested authorization to expand the irrigation ditch that conducted water for the parish of Puembo given that they “had no water whatsoever for domestic use or to service the school that had 40 kids.” He also asked that the road to the community be fixed and widened. The community bordered powerful haciendas, including the Toledo hacienda of Julio Tobar Donoso and the haciendas Nápoles and El Ingenio. The poverty, isolation, and privation of water and land that this community experienced surprised the technicians.

The narrowness of the cited *Anejo* is not unknown by that Ministry since it is found enclosed between three haciendas without any right to extend itself in any direction... The Community does not have “goods of any kind nor livestock” and they lack water altogether to satisfy their domestic needs.⁴⁹⁶

The village of Puembo controlled by the *hacendados*, distributed water at their

⁴⁹⁵ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 180 folder 19, Expropiación hacienda “Chicheato” y “Chiche Viteri” por parte del anejo y luego Comuna “Chiche Anejo” Provincia Pichincha, Cantón Quito, Parroquia Puembo, Anejo Chiche, 1937

⁴⁹⁶ Ibid

convenience. The old roads to the community tended to disappear “overcome by brush lands” having on one side the haciendas of the *San Vicente* Conference and on the other side the habitations of Martín Imba, Juan Collaguazo, Rosalía Rodríguez, Juan Paillacho, Casimira Cabascango, Manuel Padilla, and Franciso Padilla.

The Conference had thus surrounded the parish of Checa along its border with Cayambe to the east of Yaruqui. Its inhabitants complained about the pressures on the community and on the parish as these small farmers began to migrate to the city of Quito.

The Political Boss of the county reported that in effect the population center had been reduced to a six by three block area in which one hundred and eighty families lived. This information was collected from a lawsuit regarding the expropriation of lands that was leveled against the Vicentina Conference and other haciendas that “hermetically surround the population of Checa and have made it impossible for this [population] to expand in any sense” between La Josefina and the lands of Aglla, Chilpesito, and Chilpe-Grande “that form a single body and that belong to the Association of *Señoras de la Caridad*, whose representative is Dr. Alberto Acosta Soberón.”

The description spoke of the manner in which the *haciendas* had taken “the heart of the *pueblo*,” which was more literal than figurative. The conquest of space on behalf of the haciendas had been thorough: “*Checa finds itself completely encircled*

by the hacienda 'Chilpe-Grande' whose house is in the plaza, in front of the church of the pueblo."⁴⁹⁷ The Cuzcungo plantation of the Conference of *San Vicente de Paúl* or the *Señoras de la Caridad* was located in the "heart of this *pueblo*...while our children, brothers, and all our cohabitants are going to congest the large cities."⁴⁹⁸

The arguments of the representatives of landholding modernization against multiple lawsuits have given us a clear show of the weight of the ideological aspect of the "renewal of faith" in the strategy for concentrating lands in Pichincha.

Among their arguments they affirmed that although the plaintiffs may have occupied the land at some time, the plaintiffs no longer belonged to the indigenous communities due to their migration to Quito: "the foreign people who wanted to introduce themselves into the population would displace the natives."⁴⁹⁹ In the mid-1920s, the migration of the peasants of Checa to Quito had become compulsive, marking a clear difference from earlier migrations that we described in the nineteenth century and that the literature recognizes in earlier centuries. The conservative lawyer proposed that the immigrants should no longer be considered Indians and that the discourse on liberal regeneration should not apply to them given that they were

⁴⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁸ In April 1936 the "Comité Pro Expropiación del Cuzcungo" of the parish of Checa, Cayambe county, requested that the Supreme Chief of the Republic parcel and allocate the "Cuzcungo" lands, AIFP, fondo MPST, box 183, folder 14, Hda Cuzcungo- Parroquia Checa. Juicio entablado en 1936, documentation 1915-1936.

⁴⁹⁹ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 183, folder 14, Audiencia de conciliación entre pobladores de Checa y Sr. Garzón, 1946.

responsible for having lost their territorial and social rights, having been converted into *mestizos*. Later he commented ironically that the public employees of the post-oligarchic state had Indian origins since, as he stated, several of them had become employees of the ministries. According to Acosta, neither the Indians nor the *mestizos* were prepared to watch over their own well-being and for that reason he insisted on the value of the hacienda and rejected the proposal of the radicals that the land be handed over to the peasants: for Indians and *mestizos* this reformist or revolutionary solution was inappropriate. It was a “Europeanizing” solution. The haciendas and not the peasants were the guarantee of work and of civilization.

Ecuador lacks solidarity, lacks that mutual support, lacks that direction and that skill... Every modern, basic agrarian law takes into account the practical and special education of agrarian workers and their children. Distributing lands would mean nothing if they are not farmed with intelligence and skill. With illiterate workers, made brutish by ignorance, without the most elemental knowledge of civilized life and the norms that dictate the perfection of produce, nothing serious can be accomplished.⁵⁰⁰

The dismissal of Indians was accompanied with a list of characteristics that represented them as incapable of following regular legal procedures: They did not conform with legal formalities, such as presenting their identification, and they could

⁵⁰⁰ The *hacendados* sought to negotiate a scarce terrain for a school, the *Tenencia Política*, the mail office, and telephones and telegraphs, of which the parish lacked. Thus they also promised to support the road from Urabía to Checa and Yaruquí to Checa that was suspended for a long time. Ibid.

not provide a payment number for the respective tax. Acosta disqualified all the plaintiffs as incapable subjects. The plaintiffs' composition against the *hacienda* was as diverse as the range of subjects that the conservative businessmen and lawyers dismissed.

Married women without economic independence, poor people that work as peasants in the haciendas and those who can be classified as insolvent, and others whose names have been taken and have not signed nor have been authorized to sign at their request, the fingerprints corresponding to other people according to what they have reported to me; others are strangers to the place, largely public employees and others are natives of the parish of Checa that reside in Quito.⁵⁰¹

One of the key arguments of the conservatives was that the lands that could be handed over to the *comuneros* were not useful nor could any benefit be obtained from them since the lands were dry and lacked irrigation. However, the ruling revealed that the concentration of lands had an Achilles' heel. The irrigation systems could not be expropriated since it was constituted by complex networks that connected distinct communities from the *páramos* to the valleys and were administered by the communities themselves. In a large number of cases, the problem of water in the valley was resolved through payments and negotiations with the communities. In other cases the haciendas interrupted the circulation of water, harming the communities and their own holdings. The extension of 200 hectares of Sr. Gabriel

⁵⁰¹ Ibid.

Garzón, for example, interrupted irrigation in the parishes of Otón and Ascázubi, but had not been able to access continuous water flow for having been interrupted in turn by *comuneros* in other levels of water collection.

The testimonies on this concentration process were accompanied by other descriptions in which the violence characteristic of labor relations was denounced. The *concertaje* had not been rolled back, but rather had increased in *haciendas* and industries. The testimonies reflected the experiences of a “semi-proletariat” such as that of Checa, forced out of the farming areas, while others described the temporary and cyclical piecework of the *arrimado* population on the *haciendas*.

With respect to the *huasipungo* regime, the *huasipunguero* denunciations of the haciendas of Mrs. Rosa Pérez Pallares were representative. This Mrs. was one of the landowners of Cumbaya, the closest rural parish to Quito in the valley of Tumbaco. She was also a regent for foundations for women in the valley of *los Chillos*. Among her haciendas included *Miranda Grande*, a swath of land in Amaguaña which was at once a parish with one of the largest indigenous populations in Pichincha and the place where the greatest industrial investments had been made in the province.

With the July Revolution, the end of the liberal regime, and opportunity structures that were favorable to the emergence of demands against the landholding elite throughout the countryside, the *huasipungueros* denounced the violence and slavery that they suffered in the haciendas: “we are workers of the *Miranda grande*

hacienda...an hacienda in which we were born and we have been raised... our condition, our life in that hacienda, has been of the most miserable – such is the unhappy condition of the indigenous *concierto* of the haciendas.”⁵⁰²

The *huasipungueros* reported having been subjected to a series of coercive measures. They spoke of the unpaid labor of women and the use of force by administrators. They proclaimed that the owner had abandoned all her responsibilities with respect to mediation between the administrators and the peasants and that she “authorized the servants to mistreat them and harm them during work.” Thus they also denounced having been denied all information about their debts, which obliged them to work, “though we have the feeling that the hacienda servants consider us deeply indebted.”⁵⁰³

The work of the hacienda is done piecemeal but the work is longer than a day... Every day we have work except for Sunday from 6:30 to 9:00 and for that work they don't pay us anything. We have to give five eggs per person each month. The women are obliged to work at one moment in farming and at another moment in domestic work and at yet another moment they are sent to Quito, and all of this work by the women is unpaid. When they are not available due to some domestic issue, the number of days worked by their husbands is reduced; so the women have no time, freedom, or power to attend to their households, take care of their children, mend clothes, attend to the sick. They have to be subjected to work without earning [pay] and when they do not work, the husband loses the day of labor, loses the right to cross off that day of work that he has completed [from the accounting books]. The hacienda servants mistreat

⁵⁰² AIFP, MPST Collection, box 177, Amaguaña, June 28, 1933.

⁵⁰³ Ibid.

us under any pretext; when we do not attend the servants, they hurt us and discount the value of the hours of work in a week.⁵⁰⁴

This testimony provides an image of the state of the concentration of lands and the expansion of servitude that characterized Pichincha between 1906 and 1920. The demands that focused on threats to their lands and water resources and the strangulation of rural parishes by conservative elite groups demonstrate that, although there existed a large quantity of private haciendas, nonetheless corporations formed around the idea of a “renewal of faith.” These groups constituted the beginning of a modern Right that wished to put an end to negotiations between landholders and indigenous communities.

Before the 1910s, communities had utilized mechanism for retaking lands in dispute through symbols of occupation and ownership. For various decades they used the tactic of re-occupying the lands that the haciendas had taken. They placed boundary stones, planted things, and put other signs of occupation in order to mark their footprints in the lands being disputed and reinforce their refusal to recognize the property titles of the *hacendados*. Even with regards to cases that had been settled against the communities in unfavorable circumstances, such signs of occupation allowed them to re-open cases in more favorable circumstances. No circumstance seemed as favorable as the liberal revolution for recuperating lands. For that reason,

⁵⁰⁴ Ibid.

the groups of conservative elites were very efficient at combating the risks inherent to the legal ambiguities around land ownership and the multiple land titles that could be cited by various actors wishing to possess lands in dispute.

Conservative lawyers took responsibility for ending this custom together with any possible negotiation of the status of land ownership. They sought to end the multiple jurisdictions that could operate over a single possession. They closed off lands that had only been marked off by trenches or incidental geographic markers. The enclosure of extensive properties made it difficult to maintain a local conflict open. It seemed almost impossible to recuperate lands or fight against powerful groupings of elites.

The haciendas of the nineteenth century competed with the autonomy of the peasant communities while the frontiers of the hacienda had not been clearly defined. The frontiers had been objects of constant conflict, tension, and negotiation with a variable amounts of local and state intervention. In the first two decades of the twentieth century, the concentration of lands was protected by conservative associations that developed legal mechanisms that prevented negotiations of land ownership.

Although the presence of renters that, as various authors have pointed out, broke with the paternalistic morality of the haciendas and the violence of many administrators, the communities faced impenetrable institutions. As we have seen in

testimonies in the 1930s, the expropriation and marginalization of communities led to the exasperation and the fragmentation of those communities as can be seen reflected by the poverty of Chiche, the migration of inhabitants from Checha, or the crisis of agrarian and commercial economies among *comuneros* of Yaruquí.

There no longer existed local representatives of these lands as there did in the nineteenth century. The legal entity rented properties out, guaranteeing large incomes to associates. They set up the first enclosures around the haciendas and they used the support of a capable team of conservative lawyers, who were also intellectuals of the Catholic Social Action. The lawyers were no longer clients of local power but rather modern lawyers located in the capital and with very clear visions of political control. They had organized a system of administration and a defense of property that guaranteed the flow of income to Quito or to Europe, where many *ex-hacendados* had settled. In exchange for this legal and ideological representation, the landholding elites also entrusted these lawyers with the direction of the conservative party.⁵⁰⁵

⁵⁰⁵ Until the rise of José María Velasco Ibarra in 1932. Velasco represented conservatism, advising conservative workers as an intellectual; however, unlike Jijón or Tobar Donoso, he was able to foresee the rise of the Left after 1926 and the danger of working-class and peasant support in its fight against conservatism. He proposed a nationalist, conservative alternative.

4.6 Conclusions.

By the celebration of the first centennial of the Revolution of Quito, fundamental processes of the configuration of the modern nation state in Ecuador came to the fore. The stability of the liberal regime was being negotiated while both party relations were being resolved and internal regional frontiers were being pacified, and the language of cultural representation was being renewed in a post-colonial context. Both processes transformed the way of viewing the relationship between working-classes and the nation.

In 1897 negotiations had varied in accordance with the relationship between classes and political affiliation and with the liberal regime's capacity to create alliances to establish itself throughout the country, but after 1909 the elites were able to define themselves in terms of local power. Intervening in spaces of working-class socialization was important for the conformation of a new power block. The pact they made allowed them to set out on a campaign to subordinate the rural areas beginning in urban nuclei and under the banner of economic progress. They ignored the peasantry as a political actor and thus established a more demanding form of internal colonialism.

While their advantageous economic position in part led to their renewed power, so too did their integration into the dominant political block. The conservative elite made a pact with liberalism. Indigenous communities and the peasantry were the

natural enemies of the conservatives, who were forced to generate such alternatives as a symbolic integration and palliative measures for conflicts with working-class sectors. They allowed for the inclusion of artisans under the condition that they provide an apolitical loyalty to the conservative party, thus reducing the presence of popular liberalism in the capital and marking a frontier in rural areas that seemed to save artisans from the stigmas that were applied to Indians and had made them objects of colonial violence.

In the peace negotiations between Alfaro and conservative leaders in Pichincha in the context of the centennial celebration, political language was substituted by a civilizing discourse which proposed restricted notions of the nation together with a cultural frontier or an *orientalism* with respect to working-classes, which were excluded from the construction of the nation.⁵⁰⁶

Described as beings in processes of formation and unable to manage the conflicts of the modern world, the peasants were denied their political agency, though they had taken political stances with respect to the crucial policies of the nineteenth century.

The spaces of worker socialization were battle fields for the inclusion of new actors and for giving meaning to discourses on the nation within the political tensions of the epoch. The vitality of competition between militants of popular liberalism and

⁵⁰⁶ Edward Said, *Orientalismo* (Madrid: Libertarias and Prodhufi, 1990).

of conservative workers of the Sierra, which existed until 1909, was limited by a pact between the elites of the two parties with which the first steps were taken in the attempt to construct ideological unity.

The production of discourses on the nation and the construction of spaces for social integration took place in constant interaction with the reconfiguration of the colonial frontier. The celebrations of the centennial entailed a civilizing discourse that modified the conditions of social competition and conformed a new model of social articulation.

The reconstruction of the colonial frontier in rural areas at the beginning of the 1920s was dangerous for the liberal state from various points of view. The legitimacy of the regime found its limits before widespread discontent over the failure to fulfill promises to rollback servitude and generate processes of economic and political integration for the peasantry and indigenous communities. The new strategies of conservative elites had led to a regime that impeded the incorporation of new subjects into productive work and citizenship and instead they were converted into marginal populations, obstructed from any contact with the state. The mechanisms of conventional antagonism and negotiation between classes at the regional level fell apart.

Although the indigenous communities in Pichincha were in crisis, the use of force was clearly perceived as illegitimate, unsatisfied expectations remained, and

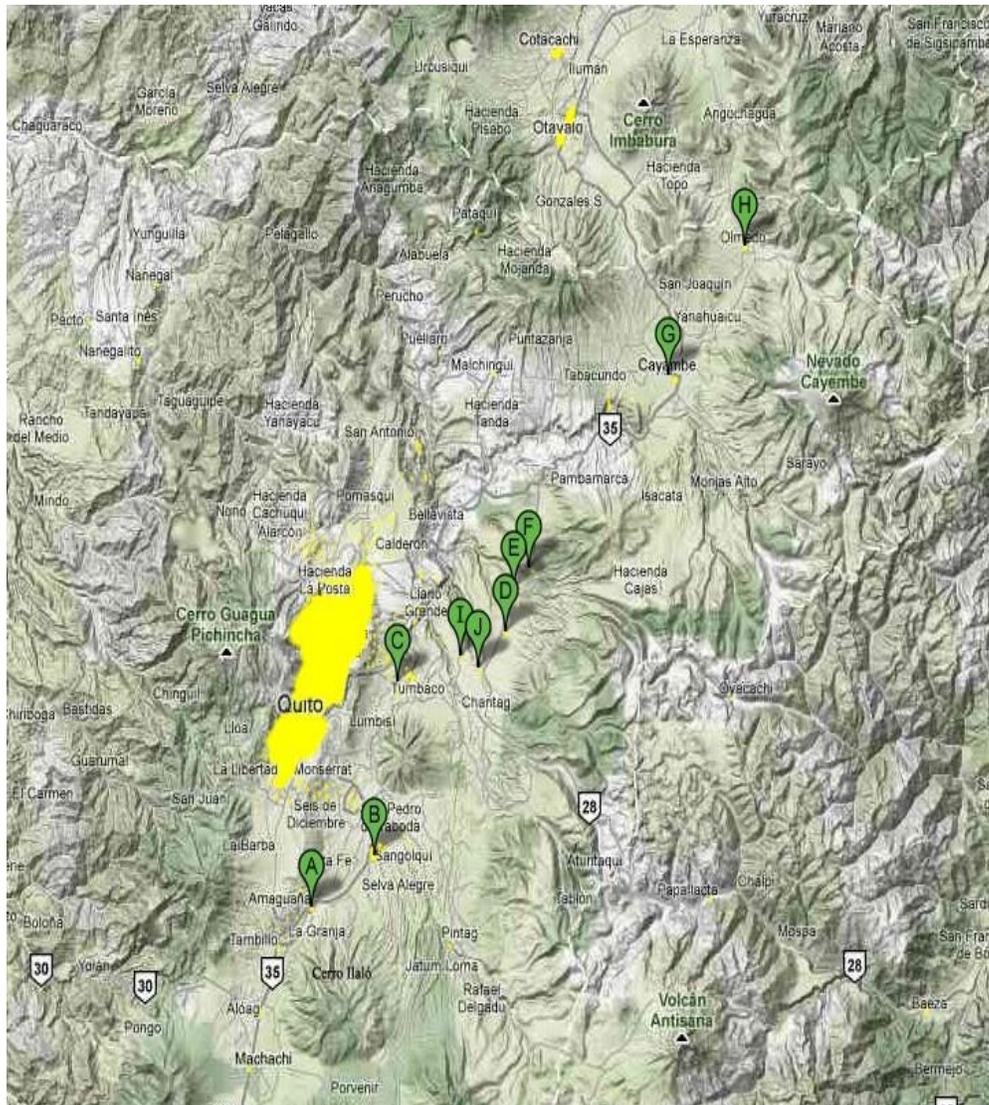
pathways for negotiation and local pacts were closed. The denunciation of the Charity as a project that hid private interests and that utilized illegal and violent measures unmasked the integration program that had substituted the radical agenda of the earlier two decades. The rejection of the catholic civilizing program before processes of concentration and marginalization that it entailed was one of the legacies of this epoch that marked the conflicts of the 1930s when peasant denunciations were articulated through the critical, though schematic, thought of the first Ecuadorian socialists, the founders of the socialist and communist parties who established alliances and incorporated testimonies in order to generate a general criticism of social and economic conditions throughout the country.

In effect, the primacy of coercion over hegemony in the catholic modernizing regime and the impossibility of reasserting conventional forms of resistance characterized a scenario in which open confrontations and violence could arise in the 1920s. In the same way, the rejection of the *hacendado* regime and forms of conservative charity was a legacy that social and political organization inherited as it sought alternatives to the liberal regime.

While inclusion and intransigence in the formation of urban middle- and working-class sectors advanced, everyday expressions of violence toward the peasantry were commonplace. The fragility of the agreement with artisans and urban working-classes and the lack of mechanisms for negotiation to respond to peasant

discontent led to the breakdown of the state model established by the liberal regime.

The integration that had been offered to the urban working-class sectors to hide the level of illegitimacy at which regional powers operated in rural zones was a fragile arrangement, as was revealed in 1922 and later with the fall of the regime in 1925. The period prepared the country for what came after 1922 – an explicit and open violence against the demands for working-class integration and particularly against the entrance of the peasantry into urban spaces with the economic crisis. This period also prepared a new and stronger democratic articulation among sectors that were weakly integrated such as the middle classes and radical circles with indigenous communities and peasants who, in turn, awaited a new and more favorable opportunity structure, a democratic rupture.



Map 4 - Conflicts in Pichincha (1906-1920).

Symbol	Province	County	Parish	Place
A	Pichincha	Quito	Amaguaña	Amaguaña
B	Pichincha	Rumiñanui	Sangolquí	Sangolquí
C	Pichincha	Quito	Cumbayá	Cumbayá
D	Pichincha	Quito	Yaruquí	Yaruquí/Cerro Intuna
E	Pichincha	Quito	Checa	Checa/ Chilpe Grande, Aglla, Chilpesito haciendas
F	Pichincha	Quito	El Quinche	El Quinche
G	Pichincha	Cayambe	Cayambe	Cayambe/Chaguarpungo hacienda
H	Pichincha	Cayambe	Cayambe	Olmedo/Pesillo hacienda
I	Pichincha	Quito	Puembo	Puembo/Anejo Chiche
J	Pichincha	Quito	Tababela	Tababela/San Antonio y Guambi haciendas/ Yacupamba highlands

Table 4, Pichincha's Land Conflicts, Map 4.

CHAPTER 5: Indigenous Communities, Modernizing Fictions, and Local Conflict: A Cycle of Resistance and Violence in the Central Sierra. 1906-1923.

In Ecuadorian historiography, studies on the period of liberal predominance have vacillated between two readings, one that highlights a continuity of landholding power and the betrayal of liberalism's promise for democracy due to its pact with the elites of the Sierra, on the one hand, and another reading that focuses on modernization processes, economic transformation, and the formation of new state institutions, on the other hand.

The work of Andrés Guerrero represents an important critique of these tendencies, which are too general and distant from local power. He has focused interpreting the parish level of social interactions within haciendas, particularly in the area of Otavalo. According to his reading, state discourses on Indians and its promises to them must be understood as part of a dynamic that sought to legitimize the state based on a fictitious conception of nation. For Guerrero, in local space highly symbolized hierarchies governed inter-ethnic relations through rituals and moral discourses that ordered and regulated relations of domination integral to *concertaje*. This system was enclosed by a triangle of power between the *hacendados*, the political deputy, and the ethnic authority. Guerrero's reading, which proposed a new, local interpretive structure, essentially argued that there existed a

political and cultural duality between the state and local power. The state was transformed and generated new discourses on political representation, while local space was governed by customs or disperse Foucauldian mechanisms for ethnic domination.

In the analysis of local power proposed in this thesis, I have observed that power is permanently in dispute. Classes and ethnic and political identities have been formed through long processes of conflict in which no consensus has existed and during long periods in which regional hegemonies were negotiated. As William Roseberry observed in his article in *Everyday Forms of State Formation* – a book that explores state formation through the everyday actions of regional classes – the greatest methodological emphasis that Gramsci proposed was that hegemony is fragile and consensus is difficult.

From this observation, we generate a number of other important methodological observations: First, the unity of elites and the unity of working-classes is not a premise, but rather a potential historic result; second, the “objective” space of formation in the economic sphere is a relational space in which social differentiation and unequal development impact regional formation; and third, subaltern classes are not passive actors nor are they foreign to power relations. Roseberry has proposed a reading of Gramsci’s concept of hegemony as a framework for studying processes of social struggle before other models that have assumed the existence of consensus. “I

propose that we use the concept not to understand consent but to understand struggle.”⁵⁰⁷ He urges academics to “explore hegemony not as a finished and monolithic ideological formation but as a problematic, contested, political process of domination and struggle.”⁵⁰⁸

In effect, the earlier chapters have traced the steps of state formation, which was shaped through tensions and negotiations among classes and organizations. In this dynamic, the political regimes that controlled the state apparatus needed to negotiate and win support rather than take such control by force. In this sense, Ecuador is an important case of study for analyzing the construction of regional power and the convergence of regional powers through time. After the Liberal Revolution, processes of consensus took place. The greatest conflicts and tensions resulted from the state’s economic and organizational re-structuring, which regional actors interpreted as new opportunity structures in which to act.

In the rural parishes of Quito and Cayambe in Pichincha province, the expansion of the hacienda and of *concertaje*, as well as renewed processes of land concentration, did not only result from an economic re-organization, but also from a political renewal of conservatism. Conservatism was able to renew itself in reaction to radical alternatives that were developing in the countryside. The conservative elites

⁵⁰⁷ Roseberry, “Hegemony and the Language of Contention,” 360.

⁵⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 358.

decided to make a pact with the new administrators of the liberal state in order to ease the level of conflict and, above all, challenge the alliances that *conciertos* had made with the armies of Alfaro and the radical Congress of 1895. In this sense, they began to adopt the language of democracy and offer gradual inclusion mechanisms. At the same time, they found certain elements in the modern civil code that favored them as landowners and led them to respond negatively to the requests and aspirations of the indigenous peasantry.

Regional re-organizing directed by the new conservative elite of Pichincha marked this space with transformations that went beyond urban modernization and the integration of rural businesses in commerce. Conservatism's political leadership invested time and energy into purging the artisans of elements tied to working-class liberalism and into restricting the emergence of democratic spaces of socialization. This authoritarian inclusion sought to establish a frontier between urban and rural spaces. They tried to build such a conceptual frontier through educational processes that promoted the idea of civilization and constructions of the peasantry that mirrored colonial *orientalism*. In the meantime, *hacendados* in rural parishes were able to undertake aggressive campaigns to concentrate lands and expand *concertaje* as part of a counter-revolutionary reaction.

In this history I do not identify the continuance of custom, but rather the negotiation of conflict. Whereas conflict had strengthened the position of the

peasantry politically, having been able to characterize the landholding elite as a common enemy with the liberals, the radical agenda was characterized as a problem in the context of governing a state that had been precariously captured. The public enemies became allies or friends of regional order for the liberal state.

If this process had only taken place in a single province, it would not have been sufficient to affect the change that liberalism suffered during the institutionalization of the oligarchic state. In Pichincha, the landholding elites with access to international networks of conservatism and the Church negotiated their regional power and, consequently, the communities suffered from renewed land expropriation and *concertaje* expansion.

In contrast, the position of the *hacendados* in Tungurahua was characterized by the fact that the elites and the urban artisan organizations were divided by their political affiliations. At the same time, ethnic constellations existed along with a politically strong peasantry that was tied to commercial networks. Moreover, both had collaborated with the revolution and the state had no particular promises to fulfill with either.

Despite the specificity of political processes in Ecuador and in its regional variants, there is ample evidence of processes common to those identified in the social historiography of Latin America of the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. The civil wars had been waged through “multi-ethnic

alliances.” They were wars that were organized under conservative and liberal parties, which in turn broke down into selective alliances between the new regime and actors that promoted modernization rather than the democratic agenda that had been proposed during wartime: “the consolidation of power took precedence over the construction of the nation.”⁵⁰⁹

Similar to processes described in other countries, in Ecuador there were concerted attempts to form a capitalist nation characterized by productive specialization, commercial infrastructure, and financial infrastructure, particularly for cacao exportation. Visions of state modernization also became influential, such as legal uniformity that would end the diversity of rights that existed in the country, not only due to the legacy of the colonial state, but also due to unresolved conflicts throughout the countryside that were subject to multiple and conflicting jurisdictions.

As in the case of Peru, even when a wide cross-section of the population “continued waiting for their participation in the national war to be recognized,” the

⁵⁰⁹Florencia Mallon, “Alianzas multiétnicas y problema nacional: los campesinos y el estado en Perú y México en el siglo XIX” in *Los Andes*, ed. Bonilla, 457-494. In this article the author sets forth important arguments that are developed in the book *Peasant and Nation*, dedicated to the comparison of regional processes that led to the configuration of the national state in Peru and Mexico. The concept of *multi-ethnic alliances* refers to the wide participation of indigenous communities in their regional complexity and their coalition in political and military processes with *mestizos* and white elites in contexts of political mobilization in the nineteenth century and in the international and national liberal wars of the nineteenth century in Peru and Mexico.

peasants did not seem to be attractive allies for the new liberal regime.⁵¹⁰ A new logic of economic reproduction and concentration tied to cacao exportation and the founding of the Andean railway company facilitated the creation of large fortunes. In effect, this new logic oriented state reform away from democratic aspirations and toward the consolidation of exportation and financial infrastructure, as well as the integration of alliances with sectors that represented the “civilized side of the nation.”

Authors such as Manuel Chiriboga and Jean Paul Deler agree that the elites involved in agricultural exports on the coast and diversified their income in the areas of international finance and commerce, constituted one of the pillars of the liberal state between the decade of the *boom* and the fall of the liberal state in 1925. After World War I, their presence in finances helped them to continue living a fictitious process of civilizing transformation, ostentatious consumption, and growth, while they awaited the recovery of the cacao trade.⁵¹¹ In effect, according to the data provided by Deler, between 1895 and 1913 Ecuador met close to 25% of international cacao demand. Afterwards, that figure diminished due to competition from Africa. However, financial speculation and credits awarded among the plutocracy and the landholding elite characterized an epoch of fictitious bonanza between 1914 and 1923. In this context, they were able to investment in spaces for working-class

⁵¹⁰Ibid.

⁵¹¹Deler, “Transformaciones regionales;” Chiriboga, *Jornaleros y gran propietarios*.

socialization and education in order to prove that democracy gradually advanced along with progress and civilization.

Quito, Guayaquil, and the intermediate cities brought together by the railway, concentrated populations and capitals to the point that four cities constituted 15% of the population of the country.⁵¹² The railway that crossed the country along the Andes and the south of Chimborazo towards Guayaquil introduced important transformations, activating production and product diversification, and it led to the emergence of dairy haciendas, an incipient textile industry, shoe factories, investments in irrigation, and livestock and seed importation, among other products. The railway improved the economy in several urban nuclei such as Ambato and displaced Guaranda, isolating it along with indigenous merchants who had maintained commerce with Guayaquil.

But beyond the new hierarchy of spaces, the railway and new visions of progress promoted aspirations among local actors to receive support from the state in order to impose their own interests without any negotiation with other classes or ethnic groups. The general tendency that we can describe in Ecuador is not that of a modernizing transformation, but rather a fragile and localized modernization.

⁵¹²Ibid.

This process was accompanied by the advance of the landholding elite and new administrative sectors, allied with the new regime. This advance was meant to reconstruct privileges based on the idea that goods and resources needed to be reorganized in modernity. At the same time, the modernizing elite could not be obstructed by the negotiations to which they had been obliged by indigenous communities and the regimes of the nineteenth century. These aspirations led to indigenous and peasant demands before the state – to which they received little response – and to mobilizations that awoke reactions from *hacendados*, administrators, political deputies, and parish and *cantonal* authorities who were all clients of the hacienda elites. Visions of a modernization from above in the the central Sierra ultimately led to a wave of violence in the formation of the Ecuadorian nation.

In this sense, Deler cites the liberal legal expert Luis Felipe Borja to speak to us of the modernizing process that was underway. Borja said proudly that livestock breeding had progressed in Quito, Latacunga, and Ambato “since improved pastures had replaced entire sections of the diminished pastures that were cultivated before and they have also climbed up to the *páramos*, where they flaunt their strength among the grasslands.”⁵¹³

⁵¹³Luis Felipe Borja in Deler, “Transformaciones regionales.”

However, the theater to which this quotation refers was one marked by conflict between indigenous communities and *hacendados*. These conflicts were prevalent in the countryside of four provinces, which became scenarios of violent disputes over attempts to renew colonial exploitation. Yet, within this modernizing process, the elites would operate rationally, the central state would control the laws, and peasant communities would be transformed into salaried labor.

Though several haciendas were dedicated to milk production and other landowners invested in industry for the internal market, such contentious experiences did not represent the majority. Judging by the most cases and legal denunciations presented by indigenous leaders of the four provinces of the central Sierra to the Ministry of Social Welfare (founded in 1925), it is clear that one of the most powerful motivations for the hacienda expansion was the elites' search for greater income from the indigenous communities. The elites wished to assure themselves of the ownership of lands in dispute by taking away a negotiating mechanism from the communities and, in turn, allow the elites to spread *concertaje*. Though there were undeniable incentives for commercial production, the origin of conflict was not located between a modernizing elite and communities tied to their customs, but rather between an elite that sought access to greater income from the communities and communities that had developed resistance strategies to these aspirations.

The majority of the haciendas sought property deeds for lands under dispute and attempted to intensify relations of servitude through strategies to weaken peasant communities and their own strategies for gaining autonomy. Agrarian contracts and holdings did not disappear due to the expansion of salaried labor and it was not the appearance of modernized haciendas, but rather the attempt to take advantage of commercial conditions through intensified servitude and coercion that was the principal cause of renewed conflicts between communities and haciendas.

Hacendados attempted to replace the conditions of conflict and negotiation with those of imposition and violence. A series of social conflicts arose that have not received much attention in comparison with the large number of studies on the cacao boom and on the consequential influence of the railway. We must distinguish between regions since there were in fact zones in which production incentives were the sources of economic decisions and even of local conflicts (this was the case of the canton Alausí in southern Chimborazo province, for example). Yet, internally diverse provinces were also characterized by conflicts between communities and haciendas due to the lack of a responsive state. In such areas we find a generalized violence at levels that can only be compared to those of the counter-revolution carried out by the armies and the *criollos* against indigenous and working-class rebellions in the eighteenth century.

In the central Sierra, we find important information about the conflicts around land ownership and the effects of these conflicts on the internal organization of indigenous communities. As Erik Langer suggests in the case of southern Bolivia, internal changes came as communities saw their internal structure affected.⁵¹⁴ In various conflicts in the Ecuadorian central Sierra we recognize the existence of an archipelago that came into tension and/or reconstituted itself before the impositions from neo-colonial modernization.

Pressures were transferred to the interior of the community. Threats from various actors (*hacendados*, renters, parish churches, colonizers) to capture indigenous lands in distinct ecological zones in effect threatened the autonomy of the community and, therefore, forced community members to seek solutions that did not necessarily contribute to cohesion. Internal rivalries grew over limited resources and when displaced families sought out their communal political leadership to re-locate them, they discovered that the leadership did not have resources available to be re-distributed. In several cases, communities broke down, generating migrations towards the coast that were more compulsive than strategic. Leaders also negotiated to send new families as *huasipungueros* to the interior of the haciendas. .

⁵¹⁴Erick D. Langer, “Persistencia y cambio en comunidades indígenas del sur boliviano en el siglo XIX,” in *Los Andes*.

The other possible solution was to active conventional social networks that recognized common leaders who could mobilize to present demands and take collective actions. This was how indigenous communities developed an understanding of the political moment, as they ultimately denounced the inconsistency of the liberal state when they saw local public functionaries act in clientelist relations with hacendados who sought to expand their lands. In the 1910s, we do not observe the emergence of a national ethnic narrative with communal bases such as in the case of Guatemala studied by Grandin, but already in this decade we do observe aspects of the evolution of organizing bases and the formation of an “awareness” of the political juncture and the failure of the liberal state as a vehicle of democratization.⁵¹⁵ Such awareness resulted from a memory of the republican struggles and of having won certain rights. Yet, their leadership now faced the challenge of strengthening and regenerating itself.

The capacity of communities to respond to the expansionist aspirations of *hacendados* and their neighbors provided more data for observing once again the strength of indigenous communities to regulate local power and affect the state. The crisis of their capacity for pressuring the state empowered regional elites. They did not seek to universalize salaries and commercialize the land, but rather to intensify

⁵¹⁵Grandin, *The Blood of Guatemala*.

forms of servitude. They appropriated state military and economic resources. These processes in turn led to rebellions, a crisis in the government, and a weakening of the state, which broke down in 1922.

Observing how distinct classes and the state re-positioned themselves with respect to imminent economic expansion and state transformation is essential for understanding several antecedents that led to the liberal state's demise. To this end, this chapter highlights changes in the practices of local power and negotiation that took place after the revolution. In the provinces of the central Sierra, the chapter documents the manner in which communities struggled and then re-accommodated themselves. They transformed themselves dramatically at the same time that they generated an alternative to an otherwise violent and racist process of change. In Cotopaxi, Tungurahua, and Bolívar, as well as in Chimborazo, indigenous communities challenged elite modernizing projects. Some were local communities and others were disperse constellations of populations, brought together by their political leaders. This analysis allows us to understand how the reconfiguration of communities and their forms of representation interacted with other classes and with the state. A look at the internal frontier between indigenous communities and the diverse range of property owners in each region allows us to observe the manner in which disputes were constructed at the local level and how the state's inability to process such disputes led to its crisis.

The creation of new, modern state organisms and investment in commercial infrastructure for communications and transport were signs that various actors interpreted as the entrance of the country into a modernizing process. For landholding elites this “modernization” involved the possibility of accessing more rent and at the same time accessing the support of the state, given that as whites they represented the “civilized” side of the nation. The privileges that many *hacendados* came to enjoy included the issuance of vacant lands, of lands confiscated from the Church, and of deeds at the same time they received armed state protection against communities. The objective was not only to access lands but also to do away with the need to negotiate with communities. As we know, throughout the nineteenth century the state sought regional alliances rather than the capacity to impose a national power over the regions. These alliances varied significantly between periods governed by the two parties. The rivalry between the traditional party (*Unión Republicana*, Conservatives) and the proto-Liberal or Democratic Party characterized the political life of the country not only in the capital but also throughout the countryside at the regional level, generating changes and modifying class positions at each political juncture.

State modernization seemed to be a sign that at last the country “would enter into reason,” following the model of the modern European metropolis. Liberalism would permit the confirmation of property and the neutralization of conflicts with Indians and peasants. The transformation of land into private property and merchandise

would be associated with a classic process of modernization like that described, for example, by Barrington Moore in the case of England;⁵¹⁶ however, there were great differences. *Hacendados* did not understand land ownership as a path towards converting it into merchandise, but rather as a form of undoing the autonomy of indigenous communities in order to subject them as labor. In turn, they would obtain the rent needed from the indigenous people in order to buy signs of status and modernity. Whereas the Senate argued for the abolition of *concertaje* and the increase of salaries in public works, these continued to be contentious points at the parish and canton levels, especially when the liberal state sent out mixed signals. In the regional cases studied in this chapter, land ownership was a vehicle to rupture strategies for maintaining community autonomy and, therefore, weaken their capacity for negotiation. In Pichincha, where this expropriation was most successful, the expansion of the services demanded of Indians without pay resulted in violence. In the case of the central Sierra, these attempts led, on the one hand, to the frustration of communities and the proliferation of demands and rebellion by the strongest and best-positioned communities, and, on the other hand, to violence on behalf of elites who were convinced that modernization would re-affirm their privileged status. Their belief was not altogether unfounded given that they had, to a certain degree,

⁵¹⁶Moore Jr., *Los orígenes sociales de la dictadura*

dismantled the liberal state and used state resources for private ends.

In contrast to Pichincha, in the central Sierra the hacienda did not expand uniformly. The relationship between haciendas and communities led to confrontations that lasted until the fall of the liberal state. In effect, in the 1910s and 1920s indigenous and peasant communities did not find allies among the urban artisans nor among leftist circles. As we saw in the last chapter, the integration of artisan circles into experiments of gradual integration by conservatives and moderate liberals was a strategy against to contain the peasantry.

Generating an alliance between urban liberals of the central Sierra and conquering the urban working-class organizations was crucial for breaking-down alliances that had served in support of the radical agenda, particularly those that had threatened to favor indigenous and peasant demands for land and emancipation. The sustainability of a modernizing agenda from above could have been successful given that there was a re-configuration of the dominant block.

In the provinces of the central Sierra, an alliance with liberal circles was at play that did not translate into a loss of lands for the new elites who had won lands. Also at play was the sketching of a distinction between urban and rural spaces. In rural spaces, haciendas had historically co-existed along with strong indigenous communities. In several cases they were *señoríos* that covered various communities and complex social networks that had collaborated during the war and had memories

of negotiation and of the state's promises. Unlike the case of Pichincha, the conflicts between haciendas and communities had not been suppressed nor had a process of community decomposition been completed. The modernizing agenda threatened established mechanisms for negotiation and led to violent encounters between classes. The liberal state needed to position itself politically with respect to this more complex field, but it came up against various obstacles. Among these obstacles was the regime's need to modernize its civil code in order to overcome legal complexities inherited from the colonial period and the nineteenth century in order to more efficiently favor the consolidation of private property. The elite vision of working-class integration through charity coupled with promises made to liberal circles that constituted a powerful landowning sector ultimately impeded political interventions to neutralize conflicts. Therefore, the central Sierra became one of the scenarios of greatest peasant mobilization and violent reaction on behalf of the landholding elites. It was there that the unresponsive justice system in effect contributed the first signs of indigenous identification with another type of radicalism: the Left.

Liberalism in the coast, which had formed a unified front against conservatism during the war, became internally divided. The literature has recognized this division. It is frequently associated with the image of several provinces of the Sierra in which personal pacts were produced between liberal elites and *hacendados*. But the

literature does not question how radicalism in Guayas retreated and, therefore, how the configuration of a gradualist model came about in that province.

The commercial and financial elite of Guayas took political control of the principal port and joined the force of conservatism in Pichincha.. In addition, the Liberal Party, the Charity Board of Guayaquil, and the Worker's Confederation of Guayas (COG) directed the selective, gradual inclusion of liberal workers. In Guayas, a language of inclusion developed that included notions of civilization and enlightenment that deferred democratic promises. At the same time, political forces marked out a frontier with respect to the peasantry linked to cacao exportation and the indigenous communities of the Sierra.

This chapter studies the tensions that accompanied the institutionalization of the liberal state. It observes conflicts and negotiations between working classes and elites, the roles that the political regime played in mediating or settling such interactions, and how alliances were configured that re-defined power relations in each region. The lack of solutions to the demands of strong indigenous communities generated much discontent that led to violent acts throughout the period, but that worsened by the end of the 1910s and beginning of the 1920s.

In accordance with Gregory Grandin's proposal in the case of Guatemala, the transition towards an export economy opened opportunities for communities -- despite internal tensions and processes of internal differentiation -- to limit elite

visions of modernity and to create an ethnic (social and political) narrative about democracy. In Grandin's study, elites mediated the modernization processes, contrasting violent and exclusive visions of modernity with ethnic and socially negotiated versions of economic and political transformation. In Ecuador as in Guatemala, Peru, and Bolivia, the transition from the oligarchic state to the nation state that emerged in the 1930s did not result from an evolution but rather from a contentious process of struggle and gradual change that included the re-configuration of indigenous communities into political actors integrated into broader alliances. Communities were internally differentiated and generated the political and symbolic capital among leaderships necessary to position themselves in the formal political landscape. They assumed the development of new discourses on the relationship between ethnicity and nation, such as those of K'iche nationalism, *indigenismo*, and popular ethnic nationalism in Ecuador and Bolivia in the mid-1920s and mid-1940s.⁵¹⁷

Between the end of the nineteenth century and the year 1922 in Ecuador, we can observe the harassment of peasant communities, their reactions, mobilization of community resources, and the tensions that affected the *caciques* and ethnic leaders. These elements contributed to the development of an indigenous narrative on the

⁵¹⁷Gotkowitz, *A Revolution for our Rights*; Hylton, "Tierra común: caciques, artesanos e intelectuales radicales;" Grandin, *The Blood of Guatemala*.

nation, especially in the 1930s and 1940s, which amounted to a political strategy that implied a relationship between democracy and indigenous integration.

5.1 Conceptions and Problems of a Top-Down Modernization in the Central Sierra.

Undemocratic processes in Pichincha were crucial for awakening aspirations among the conservatives of other provinces. Just as we read in the case of José María Coba Robalino in Latacunga, other conservatives of the central Sierra – that is, of Chimborazo and Tungurahua, as well as other extreme northern and southern parts of the country –, demanded that the elites of Pichincha lead the reconstruction of conservatism.

The personal correspondences among regional figures and fliers published by the Catholic press that circulated among organized conservative nuclei during the period projected the aspirations of various conservatives to reconstruct the party and confront liberalism. Others were guided by the preaching of the archbishop González Suárez and the doctrine of Catholic Social Action. They insisted on the need to consolidate an extensive network of social circles and private charity institutions throughout all of the Andean cities.⁵¹⁸ This proposal generated certain tensions within

⁵¹⁸The personal archives of Jacinto Jijón y Caamaño in the collection Iván Cruz Cevallos, as well as the correspondence of the aristocratic youth of the CCO and

the conservative party, especially with respect to the question as to whether or not artisans should be involved in politics. González Suárez considered this a moral theme and that only the leadership should enter into politics.⁵¹⁹

After a decade, conservatism had consolidated its political leadership in Pichincha and the workers' circles of the party widened through enlistment campaigns among the urban populace. In effect, these constituted a working-class Right which the conservative party counted on to mobilize in the 1930s.⁵²⁰

However, in the central Sierra for various reasons conservatism was not as unified. Whereas conservatives attempted to reconfigure urban space as a civilizing space and, consequently, traced a frontier with respect to rural surroundings, the

directorships of other organizations in diverse provinces, show these contents. The files of the Catholic press and also the liberal press can be found in these archives and in the Rolando archive, an important repository of magazines of the epoch.

⁵¹⁹Federico González Suárez, *El episcopado ecuatoriano ante la situación actual de la República* (Quito: Tipografía y Encuadernación Salesianos, 1914)

⁵²⁰ The formation of Jacinto Jijón y Caamaño as the supreme leader of conservatism until 1932 was the most relevant case of what we could recognize as an aristocratic modernism. However, other leaders were also being formed successfully, such as Neptalí Bonifaz (in 1932) and José María Velasco Ibarra (in 1934), who was able to unseat Jijón and mobilize the workers integrated into the circles of the ASC for a “nationalist” movement of the masses. There exists an extensive literature on Velasco Ibarra and populism on which we will comment in the following chapter. With the exception of Quintero, these studies do not integrate their understanding of Velasco into the organizing processes of conservatism, since they prefer to stress the turn towards a politics of the masses that this leader marked. However, the consideration of the alternatives at play permits us to understand better the nature of the first *Velasquismo*.

social and political history of the central Sierra placed strict limits on any unified model of modernization from above.

The principal liberal circles blended their radicalism with the image of progress administered from above and an attractive modern civilization. Among the provincial elites, important segments identified with conservatism, such as the Chiriboga family and the Lizarzaburu family in Riobamba. Yet, other sectors of the regional elite that found no space in the aristocratic circle formed liberal circles. There were more than enough reasons to believe that an alliance with the Liberal Party represented an opportunity to receive more favorable responses from the government. Thus, it is not strange that there were several members of the aristocracy, such as General Francisco Gómez de la Torre (known as “the great *patrón*” as an inheritor of haciendas in various parishes of Cotopaxi), who were also important figures of liberalism. Whereas there did not exist ideological unity in the Sierra and a series of events developed in the higher strata that led to bellicose confrontation, conservatives and liberals shared a preference for gradual *progress* rather than radical or revolutionary visions of the social order.

The arrival of the southern railway, inaugurated in 1908, had a powerful influence on this region. In this context, as in Pichincha, the vision of urban space as one governed by hygiene and forms of leisure with which modern civilization was

identified contrasted with imagery of rural space, viewed as antagonistic to progress and civilization among urban educated spheres.

According to what Ruth Lara has identified based on an intense dispute in Riobamba, liberal circles and conservatives forced a “rectification of the railway line” so that it would not cross the rural but rather the urban areas of Riobamba based on the argument that the civilized strata of the city corresponded to this modern civilizing network; the Indians did not.⁵²¹

The urban elite described the Indians as enemies of progress, identifying them as the “aboriginal race” whom it was necessary to educate, particularly with respect to “love for the fatherland.”⁵²² Just as the railway was appropriated as an object of status that marked a racial and geopolitical frontier, this discourse must be understood in the context of rivalries between regional actors. Within these rivalries, the practice of disqualifying the intellectual capacities of Indians to conceive of the nation had practical ends.

The disqualification of Indians as being insufficiently educated to manage their economic resources or integrate themselves into the nation proved to be particularly contradictory in a region populated by communities that had achieved relevant

⁵²¹Ruth Lara, *La prensa liberal en Riobamba: opinión pública, intereses locales y exclusiones* (Master’s thesis, FLACSO, 2009).

⁵²²Ibid.

political representation and had administered complex demographic systems and territories. These arguments sought to re-initiate a cycle of vacant land declarations against Indians according to the argument that such lands would form part of charity programs that would permit the redemption of the “abject *pueblo*.” Yet, of course, this discourse merely sought to benefit the whites in land conflicts.

Liberals and conservatives supported and found support within distinct artisan circles. The artisans of the parishes had greater difficulty separating themselves comfortably from their rural surroundings and identifying themselves as whites since their ties with indigenous communities were close and indispensable, as can be observed, for example, in the case of Pilahuin in the zone of Tungurahua, which we will later analyze.

According to Kim Clark's study of the Alausí canton to the southwest of Riobamba, the railway's arrival generated a modernizing process in the center of the canton. The *pueblos* through which the train passed -- Huigra and Sibambe -- were growing gradually, increasing not only their population but also their available services through the activity of artisans, merchants, and professionals. Local and regional commerce increased and certain products, such as lentils, were even exported. On the other hand, with the ideal of progress, authoritarian forms of mobilizing Indians were renewed and political deputies forced them into compulsory labor for public works in manners similar to how they were recruited in the times of

García Moreno. Clark signaled how the arrival of the bubonic plague, brought from Guayaquil by the railway, along with the sanitary campaign set out before this disaster created a scenario in which the paradox of modernization was most evident. “The inequalities within growth and prosperity” stood out. The Indians were treated with sanitary mechanisms but also with violence, as they were accused of living in inhuman conditions and of being enemies of civilization.⁵²³

It is apparent why the *huasipungueros* of Ocpote in one of the zones most integrated into the merchant circuit appeared before the state thirty years later to complain of the “pretext of carrying out a sanitary campaign,” whereas the political deputy and the *patrón* had taken their agricultural production and had not paid them for their work: “If the *patrón* does not pay salaries for our work, nor does he provide tools, he lacks any right whatsoever to share in our produce, for which he has not intervened as a partner of expenses.”⁵²⁴

According to the work of Hernán Ibarra, the railway competed with *arrierismo*, particularly important in Tungurahua and Bolívar (it was also generally associated with small *mestizo* and free Indian landowners). The growth of internal commerce until 1908 involved the activation of small property (that of the peasants) and the

⁵²³Clark, *The Redemptive Work*, 136-151

⁵²⁴AIFP, MPST Collection, box 188, *Huasipungueros de la hacienda Ocpote Faustino Ushca, Dionisio Yumbo, Roberto Cepeda, Lorenzo Yumbo y Francisca Cepeda al presidente Gral. Alberto Enríquez Gallo, 1938.*

excess production of the communities. The *comuneros* sold a percentage of their products in the marketplace through *trajín*. In that context, according to Ibarra, “marine salt was the basic merchandise that fulfilled monetary functions in credit” and the *arrierismo* manifested itself in processes of peasant capitalization. After 1908, the railway activated other circuits, including that of importers in Guayaquil and their integration with the landholding and merchant elites of the Sierra. The railway's path followed the path that García Moreno took to bring together urban capitals with the haciendas of Latacunga, Riobamba, and Alausí in order to isolate the merchant circuits that united Guaranda with Babahoyo, as well as the textile center of Guano. Ibarra highlights the subsequent depression of *pueblos* dedicated to *arrierismo*, such as Mocha, and the ascent of *pueblos* such as Cevallos and Colta. He writes of the displacement of Guaranda by other cities in the central Sierra, particularly Ambato.⁵²⁵ This structural impact was important and so too was the discriminatory treatment given on the train to those “second-class passengers” and their goods transported by the railway company, administered by the state and American investors.⁵²⁶

⁵²⁵Hernán Ibarra, “Ferrocarril, redes mercantiles y arrieros en la sierra central ecuatoriana,” in *El camino de hierro. Cien años de la llegada del ferrocarril a Quito*, N° 20 of Biblioteca básica de Quito (Quito: FONSAL, 2008), 50-82. Ibarra registers the growth of capital going to Alausí from 34,000 sucres in 1909 to 307,600 sucres in 1919.

⁵²⁶José Antonio Figueroa, “Sistemas públicos deficitarios en modernidades periféricas. Reflexiones sobre la historia del tren y el tranvía en Ecuador y Quito,” in *El camino de hierro*, 146-178.

Despite the fact that the entire rural area of Cotopaxi and Chimborazo (in contrast to Pichincha) could not be dominated by the landholding modernization project, this zone was redefined in the 1910s as a scenario of violent conflicts between haciendas and communities. In the principal cities of the central Sierra – Riobamba, Ambato, Guaranda, and Latacunga – the histories of conflict and negotiation that accumulated during the nineteenth century weighed heavily in parishes and cantons where indigenous and peasant communities were found with other actors that sought their own opportunities to gain or maintain lands. It was not only the landholding aristocracy that took part in this struggle, but also the white neighbors who had been urged to colonize Indian lands and military members who had received lands in recognition for their alliance with Liberalism during the final third of the nineteenth century. In this space, discourses on negotiation disappeared between haciendas and communities, and the liberal state did not propose a new, acceptable arrangement. The communities energetically rejected the exchange of lands for civilization. Consequently the region became characterized as a zone of great conflict, violence, and mobilization..

The capacity of the communities to reply varied significantly across distinct sub-regions. In the case of Tungurahua, long-running conflicts between communities and haciendas meant that deeds had accumulated, reflecting the fact that land had not

been a commercial good but rather a political good for various centuries. The inadequacy of a civil code that dealt with themes of patrimony without recognizing the existence of the communities and the presence of communities capable of collective action meant that land occupation often depended on the pressuring capacity of one party or another during a given regime. In the liberal period, the attempt to strengthen statutes regarding private property (tied to the commercialization of land in the central Sierra) came into conflict with diverse legal jurisdictions that had regulated land ownership since the colonial period.

In the liberal period, other elements also came into conflict that had been stewing since the period of Urvina in the middle of the nineteenth century and that came to a boil as an effect of land commercialization and demographic growth. Pressures related to limited space contributed to the conversion of internal differentiation in the communities into conflict as well. The case of the communities of Pilahuín in the canton of Ambato is very significant in that sense. The conflict over *páramos* led to the separation of *comuneros* settled in the rural zone from urban Indians settled in the parish center who had been tied together through commerce, as well as linked through kinship and reciprocal obligations. The *comuneros* accused the urban Indians of being whites, thus denying processes of strategic identification and

ties in order to restrict access to the *páramos*.⁵²⁷

In Guaranda, Bolívar province, with the end of *trajín*, a sector of the population needed to reorient itself economically and was able to do so through more permanent migrations to the coast or by returning to their regions of origin to recover rented lands or become involved in the commerce of their communities. The internal conflicts of large social networks that were integrated within the indigenous community came to a head.

Cotopaxi was characterized by conditions comparable to those of Pichincha, where there were immense properties of religious orders and a landholding aristocracy that had been able to accumulate very large haciendas. Therefore, the liberal state had the capacity to negotiate a wide range of confiscated resources to rent them out to local actors and benefit from a considerably greater income to develop its institutions. The liberal state took over various large properties that had been donated and others that had been taken from the Church and such lands were in turn used to collect rent to sustain institutions dedicated to charity, sanitation, and public instruction.⁵²⁸

⁵²⁷AIFP, MPST Collection, box 218, *Informe técnico sobre la Comunidad de Pilahuin*, September 19, 1930.

⁵²⁸Among the most extensive *haciendas* in the province were the Provincia, Llitío de Plaza, Chisulchi, Cuchitingue, Noelanda, Rumipungo, Huagraguasi, Vascones, San Isidro, and Chaupi *haciendas*.

The period in question demonstrates just how two conflicts came to together to generate strong collective reactions from the communities. On the one hand, haciendas ignored previously established practices of negotiation and, on the other hand, they enacted strategies to extract even more free work from indigenous communities. Thus, free communities aspired to negotiate their services on the haciendas as part of a dynamic of the “joint ownership” of land, which they would not accept as the private property of haciendas insofar as they rejected the logic of imposition over negotiation.

Nonetheless, large landowners set out to define land as private property, breaking with many legal precedents. In this context, *hacendados* expelled many *huasipungueros* who tried to pressure for the negotiation of terms. Abuses and mistreatment intensified within the haciendas. The communities also reacted, coming together for collective attacks on the haciendas and local police.

In Chimborazo there was a tremendous tension with respect to land and labor issues. *Concertaje* expanded along with the hacienda, but the communities did not dissolve. Even under the pressure that came with modernizing processes, communities continued to try to negotiate the terms of the transaction between resources and work, taking into account that Alfaro's government had formally abolished *concertaje* and that their services on the hacienda could only be the product of collective negotiation.

Various academics have pointed out that in Chimborazo and Cotopaxi the memory that the Indians had fought in the Liberal Revolution with Alfaro lived on, along with memories of Indian “colonels” and the notions that neither the tithe nor *concertaje* were legal practices. Therefore, the communities of these regions recognized such impositions as everyday abuses.⁵²⁹

The massacre of the *huasipungueros* of Leito, Tungurahua, in 1923, is widely-known in a de-contextualized form as an episode of violence perpetrated by the liberal state against the working classes (in addition to the massacre of workers in Guayaquil in 1922), but this event can be better understood by taking into account the experiences of other communities that suffered less dramatic outcomes and in which the relationship between counter-revolution and abuse manifested itself daily. Ultimately, violent encounters during the liberal period echoed throughout the 1920s

⁵²⁹Thus were the oral memories about indigenous participation in the Liberal Revolution and their rejection of the tithe that Olaf Kaltmeier picks up in Salamalag-Saquisilí Cotopaxi, and also the memories that the anthropologist Hugo Burgos Guevara recorded in Licto and Pungala, where a memory of having contributed to the liberal war existed until the middle of the twentieth century. Burgos noted in the 1960s that people remembered that they were enlisted through a bi-annual *mita* called Chacos and that they were paid 50 cents a day. He further notes that they remembered having contributed with mules and that it was possible to identify “a vague notion of freedom” among them. The same author told of how it was still possible to find in the 1960s descendents of Colonel Morocho of the Liberal Revolution, who was respected and had been incorporated into the hierarchy and had even achieved high political posts. Kaltmeier, *Jatarishun*; Hugo Burgos Guevara, *Relaciones Interétnicas en Riobamba* (México: Instituto Indigenista Quito: Corporación Editora nacional, 1997), 300-310.

and 1930s in the form of lawsuits.⁵³⁰

Violence, as we propose here, must be understood in the context of a decline of the mechanisms for negotiation between the communities and the haciendas in a context in which the communities were capable of collective mobilization and the elites were reluctant to negotiate. The elites were focused on notions of top-down modernization and thus were willing and permitted to use force in rural areas where counter-revolution took on violent forms. These elites included those of private haciendas and of state haciendas which were rented out in the context of commercial expansion and new demands for state finances. Renters attempted to impose (according to the logic of an internal colonial modernization) irrational conditions on indigenous communities while they denied joint ownership and negotiation.

Between 1910 and 1940, indigenous communities of the central Sierra witnessed significant transformations with respect to their opportunities to negotiate on the local and national levels. The indigenous communities of Cotopaxi remembered situations in which communities and *hacendados* had accepted the existence of joint ownership of territories and had practiced the negotiation of terms of exchange that regulated labor services. Indigenous communities of Chimborazo remembered that their collaboration had been essential for the Liberal Party's triumph

⁵³⁰Patricio Ycaza, *Historia del movimiento obrero ecuatoriano, De su génesis al Frente Popular* (Quito, CEDIME, 1984).

and cited the argument for the abolition of *concertaje* in order to resist abuses. The indigenous communities of Tungurahua and Bolívar demonstrated their capacities to bring together urban indigenous and rural indigenous populations to defend themselves before *hacendados* and conflict over land resources, as well as conflicts over changing trade routes. In all of these scenarios in the 1910s, the environment for negotiating indigenous interests had become difficult. Local elites denied the existence of multiple jurisdictions that dealt with territory as they sought to better integrate themselves into commerce through the increment of servitude.

The communities resisted the demands of the haciendas, demanded justice, and took collective actions ranging from the occupation of lands to open confrontation. The argument they most frequently used was that the channels of negotiation had been closed. In turn, the employees and renters of haciendas increased everyday forms of violence to extremes to suppress protest through exemplary punishments, including beatings, rapes, and murders.

Renters and new landholders tied to the Liberal Party, including military members, quickly oriented state decisions in favor of elites and impeded a mediation that would have been necessary to appease the communities. With such a lack of representation of their interests, the indigenous communities activated horizontal networks between communities. These networks engaged in collective acts of resistance.

5.2 Conflicts over the Transition of *Joint Ownership* to Property: Rebellion and Violence between Communities and Haciendas in Cotopaxi.

A common explanation of the conflict between indigenous communities of the central Sierra and regional powers during the 1910s is that with the emergence of the merchant economy in the region, the paternalist relations within the hacienda suffered. The idea is that renters increased forms of exploitation since they needed to pay rent and extract their own profits, thus leaving behind prior paternalistic relations for the reproduction of the hacienda. At the same time, the peasants had stopped embracing rituals that necessitated exchange relations.

Renters like Alfonso Riofrío began to call *huasipungueros* or *conciertos* “day-laborers.” Rafael Tigasi of the hacienda Tigua was incorporated into this practice. The *hacendado* did not offer Tigasi a signed contract but rather informally offered him lands with a house and farmlands in exchange for his services. Later, in response to the *hacendado's* petition, the municipal commissioner told Tigasi to vacate the lands.⁵³¹

However, in the subsequent trial, it was evident that the decision of Riofrío was not attempting to introduce salaried relations and transform relations of dependence,

⁵³¹AIFP, MPST Collection, box 203, *reclamos de peones haciendas Tigua y Zumbahua, Cotopaxi, 1929-1939, Comunicación de Alfonso Riofrío al Comisario Municipal*, 30 de enero de 1932.

but rather Tigasi, along with his *comuneros*, had expressed discontent due to increasing labor demands. The idea of expelling the Indians from their lands was a form of dissuasion and it was also intended to obtain landless peasants more willing to assume imposed terms.

Agustín Vega, leader of the Tigua community in Pujilí canton, Cotopaxi, explained that the insurrection of the *huasipungueros* in 1929 took place “for the reason that these *señores* [Riofrío and Moncayo] attempted to impose work incompatible with the personal activity and with the customs established in ancient times with respect to the form of providing agrarian services.”⁵³² In the case of Zumbahua in the same canton and in reference to one of the most intense processes of violence in any hacienda, the leaders of the community argued that something had changed since the 1910s with respect to the form of work: “In compensation for the enjoyment of the lands we occupy, we have always given our services to the hacienda [...] This just form of compensation of benefits was respected for being tradition until about fifteen years ago (1914), given that with the change of renter to the Charity of that land, the customs of the place in the order of lending our services have suffered deep alterations along with the damage of all principals of justice and to the most

⁵³²AIFP, MPST Collection, box 203, *reclamos de peones haciendas Tigua y Zumbahua, Cotopaxi, cantón Pujilí, parroquias Guangaje y Pilaló, 1929-1939*, f. 16

trivial duties of humanity.”⁵³³

To what does the leader from Zumbahua refer with “custom”? If he refers to moral custom, what could have been the cause of this break down? Several authors have proposed that the consensus with regards to domination was breaking down due to the change in the administrative figure of the hacienda which, abandoned by the *patrones*, had passed over to the management of renters and administrators who imposed new conditions on the peasants in order to pay their rent and exact profits. However, in the case of Zumbahua, the rental of lands was not a novelty in the 1910s. It had existed since 1824, when Mariano Recalde sold the hacienda to the Augustine order of Quito. In the epoch of the renter Calisto Cepeda in 1837 they had sued due to mistreatment during work and they accused Cepeda of trying to force the community to collaborate.⁵³⁴

The testimonies of the indigenous plaintiffs presented before the MPST in the 1920s seem to refer to more than the novelty of the presence of renters. They refer to a situation of political tension that emerged during the institutionalization of the liberal state and the debate over the abolition of *concertaje*. Local powers had reactivated themselves at the local level to impede abolition. The debate over the abolition of *concertaje* was certainly not foreign knowledge to the indigenous

⁵³³Ibid. *Carta de los indígenas de Zumbahua al MPST*, [marzo de 1929], f. 62

⁵³⁴Carlos Marchan, et. al., *Estructura agraria de la Sierra Centro Norte 1830-1930* Tomo II, Pichincha y Cotopaxi (Quito: Banco Central del Ecuador, 1984).

communities that had proposed abolition. Yet, in the 1910s the liberal state had taken abolition as a constitutional discourse and begun the process of constructing laws and organisms of control in various areas. Thus, the question became how such constitutional premises would apply in local scenarios and how localities would experience these changes.

In that moment, as the historian Mercedes Prieto has observed, the state believed that a nationwide monitoring system of labor conditions was not feasible or maybe even undesirable. Thus, such administration and monitoring of *concertaje* was handed over to municipal government.⁵³⁵ That is, in this respect the liberal state did not implement its declared principals for homogenizing the law and guaranteeing the abolition of *concertaje*.

Instead of developing a national network of labor inspectors, the problem of *concertaje* was given over once more to local power, represented by the municipal governments. Thus, a renewal of the *gamonal* control of local justice took place which the communities had to confront. The two camps that spoke of distinct mechanisms to make the Indians work included one that proposed imprisonment for debt – the principal mechanism that forced the communities to continue in *concertaje* relations – and another that promoted the long-term development of a protecting and educating state – liberal *indigenismo* -- which, according to Prieto, would put the

⁵³⁵Prieto, *Liberalismo y temor*, 37-79.

municipal governments in charge of generating a process of Indian “integration.” The municipal governments quickly activated notions of civilization, erecting educational centers with this objective and demanding the right to auction lands for this cause.⁵³⁶

Prieto suggests that the struggle to make abolition viable must be observed on the local level, where class struggle actually took place. In effect, in the cases that have been studied in the central Sierra, one can observe the manner in which national debates were important for the Indians, yet ultimately the state did not hear their petitions while the municipal governments were responsive to the interests of the haciendas and even provided coercive force against the Indians.

Those who sought to question the multiple deeds that were applied to lands in dispute frequently appealed to the civil code that defined private property as a unique right. *Hacendados* also employed his simplification in the labor field so that the bases for collective negotiation to which the Indians appealed as co-owners of land might be annulled. The legal complexity inherited from the colony had been complicated further in multiple processes of political negotiation in the nineteenth century. The elites attacked this complexity with respect to land issues.. They also completely ignored work regulations also established in the legal codes.

⁵³⁶Ibid.

Beyond paternalist rituals, testimonies, and other indications, it would seem that the custom to which the community referred was ultimately their capacity to exercise power and to pressure effectively for negotiations to regulate exchange. Free communities had frequently constituted a front for negotiating with the hacienda on behalf of *conciertos*. This front tended to complicate the unilateral imposition of onerous conditions. In several haciendas and parishes, the haciendas had few permanent *conciertos* and a majority of the peasants and their families belonged to communities. Thus, families and peasants from communities complemented the unpaid labor on the hacienda with negotiated labor conditions.

In the 1940s when elites near Pujili declared certain lots to be vacant, both the descendents of the Vascones family and the indigenous *communities* reacted in opposition, demonstrating a diversity of legal documents and testimonies that recognized one or the other as owner of the lots. The document entitled *Letter to the Community of Apagua to the MPST* rejected the declaration of vacant lands and asked the ministry to protect their rights over community lands. The letter established that on February 11, 1926, the principal *Cacique* of Pujilí, an expert from the MPST, and a city sheriff had all recognized their ownership and their deed: “He granted us material ownership, ordering the inscription of the act and of the respective

providence that approves of it, so that the just property title should serve us.”⁵³⁷ The *comuneros'* letter described the recognition of 61 parcels of land to 61 *comuneros* of Apagua in the areas of Apagua, Choasill, and Pilaló. However, the inheritors of the Apagua hacienda presented property deeds as well.⁵³⁸

Some military members in Pujili, including Rigoberto Torres, the commander Héctor Cedeño, Francisco Cedeño, and Julio Oña, took advantage of the legal ambiguity of land ownership in order to declare 200 hectares of land along the road that led from Macuchi to the Zumbahua hacienda and Pujili as vacant lands and in order to ask that they be given fifty hectares each.⁵³⁹ In response, the inheritors of the Apagua hacienda, who did not acknowledge having plots adjoining the community and the community of Apagua presented themselves to claim that these were not vacant lands.⁵⁴⁰

Testimonies reflect the fact that at this time there was an increment in inter-ethnic violence in Cotopaxi. The complaints describe an exaggerated imposition of free services on peasant families, women, and children in the haciendas. The domination of the administration of the hacienda and of the elites over the Indians

⁵³⁷AIFP, MPST Collection, box 200, *Cotopaxi, hacienda Apagua, 1926-1946. Carta de la Comuna de Apagua al MPST, [23 de noviembre de 1943]*, f. 9. On January 28, 1940, the acts of ownership were registered in the public writings of greatest importance of Pujili.

⁵³⁸Ibid.

⁵³⁹Ibid, *Carta de particulares al MPST*, 27 de diciembre de 1943, f. 4.

⁵⁴⁰Ibid., f. 37.

was tense and was expressed in exacerbated and exemplary forms, including sexual abuses of indigenous women by whites according to the premise that these women were property. The *comuneros* of Zumbahua expressed their dismay as they described such forms of domination. They reported the violent posturing of the administration as it attempted to force Indians to serve in various haciendas and in distinct settlements inside and outside of Zumbahua (e.g. in Machachi and even in Quito).

Manuel Hidalgo even has thirty children in Zumbahua. Juan Hidalgo also has about the same quantity. I confirm this alarming fact before the complaint that has been presented to me against us, by the administrator, the writer, and the other helper; they have exploited the morality of our homes, be it the woman who they have possessed, single or married.⁵⁴¹

The *comuneros* described incursions of the *patrones* and the administrators accompanied by foremen and sometimes military forces in order to terrorize indigenous communities. They spoke of scenes of exemplary punishment in communities. The violence in Cotopaxi included physical punishment. Administrators also attempted to free themselves from Indian pressure by expelling Indians from shared lands and burning of their houses and crops. Administrators of the haciendas and also local militia carried out such violent acts. Many of these episodes of violence were not registered. Others in which Indians were arrested are

⁵⁴¹AIFP, MPST Collection, box 203, *Zumbahua parroquia Pilaló cantón Pujilí, Cotopaxi. Declaración de Mariano Pallo Chaluisa*, f. 99v

recorded in local archives. Yet, testimonies also exist in the lawsuits that communities presented to the tribunal of labor causes and lands after the fall of the liberal state.

In the case of Apagua in Pilaló parish, located along the slopes of the Quilotoa crater, acts of violence were registered indicating that in June of 1904 there was an indigenous uprising in response to the capture of communal livestock by new landowners by the name of Vascones. The hacienda had formed part of the patrimony of the Association of the Sanctified Virgin of the Conception or the Nativity of Pilaló until on the February 24, 1902, the Archbishop Pedro González Calisto sold it to Adolfo Páez. In turn, he sold it in 1904 to Alejandro Vásconez Cepeda and Pablo Alberto Vásconez. The new owners wanted to impose unpaid labor by capturing community livestock that used pastures in shared *páramo*. The repression of the subsequent uprisings consisted in burning down homes and killing *comuneros*, for which the *comuneros* opened a criminal trial against the *hacendados*.⁵⁴²

They insistently denounced the danger to which the communities around Quilotoa – Pilaló, Apagua, Tigua, Zumbahua, and Guangaje -- were subject and they

⁵⁴²In 1925 this was one of the first trials that indigenous communities set forth before the MPST tribunal when *comuneros* were confronted by the descendents of the Vascones brothers for land issues and labor conditions in the *hacienda*. AIFP, MPST Collection, box 200, *Cotopaxi, cantón Pujilí, parroquia Pilaló, hacienda Apagua, 19-III-1946: Disputa de tierras entre comunidad y hacendados, Informe del Dpto. de Tierras Baldías al MPST* [May 16, 1944], f. 44.

called for the communities to come together into a movement to destroy the hacienda administration and put an end to this authority in the region. Panic among the elites of the central Sierra with respect to the capacity of the indigenous communities to articulate their demands had had important antecedents in the eighteenth century, but there were also more proximal antecedents.

During this period of dangerous state ambiguity, the indigenous communities that the *hacendados* pressured generated collective actions and confrontation. They demonstrated the capacity to come together into networks and mobilize among neighboring and distant communities alike. In response, the *hacendados* warned the state that a lack of protection for them and their properties would lead to violent conflict with the Indians.

Among the violent episodes in Zumbahua, the events of September 14, 1929, are well-known. Various communities acted collectively to attack the Zumbahua hacienda. On that day the batallion from Carchi and the governor of León fought the communities. On September 16, the same communities attacked Tigua and the same batallion killed nine indigenous people.⁵⁴³

This violent confrontation generated unity among the communities. The *comuneros* asked the president of the Republic for the return of their *huasipungos* and

⁵⁴³AIFP, MPST Collection, box 203, *reclamos de peones haciendas Tigua y Zumbahua, Cotopaxi, 1929-1939*, f. 16, 53, 57.

they denounced the leaders of the insurrection in order to put an end to the state retaliation: “We also participated in that silliness because we listened to the advice of those crafty people who tricked us.”⁵⁴⁴ However, they also referred to a group of communities and rural parishes that could enter into rebellion together:

The leaders told us that everyone from this hacienda, Salamalag, Guangaje, Zumbahua, and Michacalá, was notified to attack the señor Governor and the guard, and so they left the Zumbahua hacienda and afterwards they would attack in Tigua and surely we would triumph because they would meet up with us from all regions – something like five thousand souls and something more, and that everyone would be prepared with *huicunas*, machetes, axes... that we would have rifles and revolvers and that this would be the last shot to take over the haciendas as in Apagua.⁵⁴⁵

Among the populations that told this same confession were the communities of Guangaje, Pilaló, Apagua, Tigua, and Zumbahua of the Pujili canton. Distant communities also participated, such as Salamalag, where battles took place between indigenous communities and renters of the hacienda of the Central University, of which other communities of the region took notice. In the decade of the 1930s, as we will see, these networks of communities that had had the capacity to act together in the assault on haciendas and parish settlements took on various legal forms: They took the form of agrarian unions in the case of the San Bartolo and Quillucillin

⁵⁴⁴Ibid.

⁵⁴⁵Ibid, *Carta de indígenas de Tigua al Presidente de la República*, [1930], f. 17v.

haciendas, but at the same time they were defined as indigenous communities and as federated nuclei of the *Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios* (FEI) in Toacaso.

5.3 Ethnic Constellations, Response Capacities, and Internal Transformations under Hacienda Pressure.

The alliances of the communities with the state in Tungurahua did not entail memories of radical struggle nor were the ethnic leaders identified as colonels of Alfaro's army, as they were in Chimborazo province. The help of Tungurahua during the war had not polarized the Indians and whites. Both had contributed to the liberal cause. Many small and large property owners had aided in the mobilization with means of transportation, but they did not form a powerful block.

The indigenous communities, as we saw in the case of Pilahuín in earlier chapters, attempted to negotiate political support with the Assembly of 1897 through the representation that ethnic authorities provided. They had a clear notion of their rights over territory and they would do what was necessary to confront their competition, the hacienda elites; however, indigenous communities did not develop strong alliances with “red” circles in Tungurahua. For example, the liberal High School Simón Bolívar of Ambato, seen as the “planter of liberal talents,” received rent from lands declared to have been vacant and had belonged communally to the Indians of Tasinteo-Montugtusa of Píllaro parish.

In Tungurahua the situation of the indigenous communities had been more consolidated than it had been in Cotopaxi. The cases of communities like Tasinteo-Montugtusa, tied to Pillaro, as well as those of Licto and Pungala, had been impacted by the ambitions that the path to the Ecuadorian Amazon and the path between Guaranda and Babahoyo awoke between neighbors in the nineteenth century. The political alliance that these communities achieved with the governments of Urvina and Robles between 1845 and 1861 had had an important effect in the medium-range since they were able to access deeds that recognized communal patrimony and facilitated the emission of deeds for parcels and medium-sized properties in discontinuous scenarios into the hands of subaltern segments. This experience put the indigenous communities of Tungurahua in better conditions to protect their interests against actors with visions of a top-down modernization. The consequences of these alliances with Urvina included the existence of peasant lands and better territorial conditions for the communities, as well as internal tensions about property. In effect, as Hernán Ibarra points out, between 1870 and 1914 small and medium properties were multiplying at the same time that large properties were maintained.⁵⁴⁶ Greater pressure on lands at the beginning of the twentieth century generated new pressures on communities to recuperate lands divided into private properties. In Tasinteo Montugtusa in 1908 *comuneros* denounced other *comuneros* for using *páramos* for

⁵⁴⁶Ibarra, *Tierra, mercado y capital*, 32.

planting whereas their traditional use was as lands for pasture and wood collection for Montugtusa.⁵⁴⁷ In this context, the individual members brought to trial presented deeds that had been conferred to them by the governor of the province in 1888. The community authorities responded that these deeds were invalid, mentioning a series of legal dispositions that prevented the sale of communal lands in distinct moments of the nineteenth century. In 1910 the justice system ruled in favor of the collective use of these lands and demanded that the defendants restore the lands for their regular communal use; it also obliged them to hand over half of their harvest to the community.⁵⁴⁸

Conceptions of the most appropriate destinies for community lands changed along with changing regimes and their changing allies. Through a law issued on August 27, 1869, in order to provide funds for the Bolívar High School of Ambato, the sale of vacant lands and community lands was approved.⁵⁴⁹ Simultaneously, private deeds were issued for community lands as is witnessed in the lawsuit presented by the Modesto Campaña community to the municipality of Píllaro in 1887 for having sold communal lands to members of the community as private

⁵⁴⁷AIFP, MPST Collection, box 175, f. 231; box 178, f. 3. In the second chapter we see the action of the Flores regime to try to sell the lands of this community and the response of the *arcista* regime that impeded the sale, having revoked the ruling of the Supreme Court.

⁵⁴⁸Ibid., box 175, *Sentencia provista por el alcalde ordinario de Píllaro Pedro Tamayo, 2 de febrero de 1910*, f. 232-233.

⁵⁴⁹*El Nacional*, N° 383, 6-XI-1869.

properties.⁵⁵⁰ The purchasers of vacant lands were frequently charged by the community and the *comuneros* who were interested in accessing private deeds were also questioned by the community.⁵⁵¹ There were important episodes in which auctioned community lands were returned, the buyers having been either whites or Indians, which is apparent in a lawsuit presented by Pablo Tituaña. This lawyer was accused by the Indians of Tasinteo of appropriating community lands and he admitted that he had acquired “various farms which had been called Community before” in Montugtusa. Despite the existence of legal deeds, sometimes buyers had to cede.⁵⁵²

These decisions reflected the fact that the community had pressuring capacity and that this condition was known by regional authorities and even by the traditional rivals, the *hacendados*. However, this capacity had not achieved a permanent condition within the state, which reinforced itself through other allies after the war as it attempted to do without alliances with communities and, moreover, as it attempted to rule without hegemony.

In contrast, the communities to the south and west of the province felt even stronger external pressures during this period. The economic interest in the edge of

⁵⁵⁰AIFP, MPST Collection, box 175, f. 352.

⁵⁵¹Ibid., box 175, *Embargo de terrenos de colección Cuencahuco de Soledad Ortega de Gómez. Ortega presenta título de propiedad provisto por la gobernación del 30 de octubre de 1869, en el que se le confieren 3 caballerías de “terreno comunal”, Gómez da 6 pesos para los fondos del Colegio Bolívar*, f. 170-173.

⁵⁵²Ibid., *Juicio de tercería*, f. 299-300.

the mountain range that led east was replaced by interest in the region tied to transport to the coast, which awoke the ambitions of various actors. The most important change between the conflicts over goods and the autonomy of the communities in the nineteenth century from those conflicts of the twentieth century was that in the nineteenth century communities faced more fragile regimes that were less capable of imposing the interests of a class by force and more desperate for alliances, whereas the liberal state in the 1910s wove a network of regional alliances without any significant opposition. In Tungurahua no delegation of Indian political representation emerged as had happened in radical zones and in Chimborazo, where we can observe that communities were still active democratic actors, independent of any responses they obtained or did not obtain from the state.

The Indians were important in the democratic narrative of the Liberal Party and a series of laws were issued that spoke of state protection for day-laborers. However, according to Mercedes Prieto's explanation, the state could not establish institutional landmarks in the countryside (such as the commissions that came later, for example) that would be capable of assuming such promises. It once more adopted a discourse on local power and prison for debt through the police code, which was a fundamental instrument of *concertaje*.⁵⁵³ This explanation is important and, yet, to a certain point

⁵⁵³Prieto, *Liberalismo y temor*.

it falls in line with a vision centered on the state as the fundamental agent of change.

Indigenous communities in several regions of the country had expectations that the state would transform the conditions of local power given that their mobilizations had produced delegations to represent them before the state. This happened in particular in places in which radical alliances were formed against the landholding elites. However, in many other regions communities did not follow this path of forming delegations to achieve representation, either because they failed to form alliances or because in order to maintain a local position they needed to maintain a permanent local negotiation and mobilization. Therefore, the struggle against *concertaje* formed part of their political capital and of the development of community strategies.

State policies of day-laborer protection were not applied and in general the local application of state policies was not carried out, not due to a lack of institutional development but rather because regional power struggles were still ongoing and the allies of the state could not quite establish their power. The regulation of relations and exchange including with respect to work relations and especially with respect to land ownership had developed through conflicts and local negotiations that came into crisis in the liberal period.

With the fall of the liberal regime in 1925, the communities that could sustain lawsuits for several years and that had denounced the use of violence against them

and the lack of administration of justice on behalf of political deputies, presented their cases once more before new tribunals established by the July Revolution regime. In that context, they handed over large quantities of documents and testimonies about the situation of the justice system during the liberal period, about the response of the communities to new pressures tied to internal colonial modernization, and about their aspirations and resistance strategies. These documents also reported the motives and the conditions that configured one of the most violent scenarios in Ecuadorian history. Among the lawsuits that mark this political history, we find the cases of Pilahuín and Santa Rosa, Pillaro and Montugtusa, Tisaleo, Quero, and Santa Lucía. The form in which the indigenous communities of Tungurahua positioned themselves before the new pressures of the 1910s allows us to observe that despite the withdraw of the state as the protector of a national pact, the communities sustained an active social capital and continued positioning themselves in the regional power struggles until they found better opportunity structures in the 1930s.

These conditions also reveal that the attempts to impose a hierarchical logic, despite the fact that the communities had instruments of resistance, damaged the legitimacy of the liberal state. With no political alternative and in an environment in which local powers believed that they could do without negotiation with the communities, serious civil confrontations and private use of public force increased. Thus, following the end of the regime, distinct communities and parishes supported

the process of change and sought their own opportunities.

One of the representative cases in this process was that of the constellation of communities that formed the ethnic complex Pilahuín-Santa Rosa of Miñarica. This complex enclosed various communities, including those of Chibuelo, Mulanleo-Yaguelata-Zunezacha, Palla-loma, and Yatzapuzan, as well as the parish nuclei of Pilahuín and Santa Rosa. The community was close by the “Pilahuín” or “*Loma de Álvarez*” hacienda to the north, as well as to various small properties: the community of Chibuleo and the snow-capped volcanoes of Carihuarazo and Chimborazo to the south; the Chiquicahua ravine to the west; and to the east, the *páramos* of Chubuleo and the Echa-leche ravine. Santa Rosa and the haciendas of Chuquicahua and of *Loma de Álvarez* were the protagonists, along with the communities of Pilahuín, of the greatest conflicts and the longest processes of negotiation. The constellation of communities around Pilahuín, Santa Rosa of Miñarica, and Chibuleo at the foot of Carihuarazo needed to protect the fundamental elements of the articulation strategy of their populations and the discontinuous ecological levels of actors that mobilized once more before the pressures and expectations of the epoch. *Hacendados*, neighbors, *the Church*, and even other *comuneros* with whom there had existed pacts sought to re-configure or break previous arrangements. In this constellation, social articulation was being questioned between disperse community nuclei and between rural and urban *comuneros*. In turn, we can observe the negotiating capacity of these

communities and the threat of its break-down.

The communities of Pilahuín, according to what can be observed in documents relative to the 1910s and 1920s, had been able to maintain settlements in parish nuclei where the indigenous political elite and groups of specialized families were located. The ethnic authorities or leaders did not only promote an articulation between settled populations in a discontinuous space; they supported strategies to sustain access to “a maximum number of ecological levels” in adverse conditions for the communities. They also represented the possessions and the demands for rights of the communities before tribunals of local and national justice.

In the 1910s, these scenarios became very tense as neighbors sought opportunities once more during a change of government and the imminent construction of a new merchant network. From the state they demanded access to resources and community patrimonies. In this scenario the support that the state gave to municipal governments as participants in regional decision-making related to vacant lands was crucial for the modification of regional power struggles. In the debate over the abolition of *concertaje* between liberals and conservatives in the National Assembly, conservative proposals were presented that spoke of the need for moral responsibility on behalf of the *patrones* to govern the Indians and for responsibility to maintain stability in rural areas. The most liberal responses indicated the necessity of the state to protect the Indians until they were in the proper

conditions to be integrated. Thus, the conditions were such that there opened up the possibility for an intermediate institutional solution.

The communities needed to reposition themselves with regards to the legal reforms that accompanied the liberal state's civil code, particularly those reforms related to property. Various actors sought opportunities with respect to these state reforms that broke down the “custom” of negotiation over work based on the pact of joint ownership of the land that had been developed due to conflicts, confrontations, and negotiations between *hacendados* and communities. In Tungurahua, the pressure over space was felt as much in the *páramos* and boundaries between haciendas and communities as in the parish centers. The tensions with respect to space also generated internal tensions in the community social network that moved alliances and questioned the joint ownership over certain collective patrimonies. They also placed the economic wager of the urban indigenous nuclei at significant risk given that they required access to rural resources – that is, in some cases they threatened to break the ties between communities and their urban counterparts.

On April 24, 1930, José Manuel Llambo, the principal leader of the indigenous community of Pilahuín handed over four bundles of deeds corresponding to the community in the *páramos* of Carihuairazo so that, “facilitated by the principal leaders,” their legal representative could present them to the Ministry of Social Welfare and Labor. He hoped that the Ministry would study and address “their rights,

attacked by the white inhabitants of the *Pueblo* of Pilahuin.” These deeds were included in a study by the Minister Francisco J. Boloña that was presented to public functionaries Néstor Mogollón and H. Montalvo. These socialist lawyers formed part of a technical team in charge of carrying out visits to distinct regions of the country to discover the social situation of the parties involved and to interpret the legal complexity of cases in order to advise the state. The responsibility of the ministry was to exact justice and represent the government with regards to land and labor conflicts. Beyond the intentions and meaning of this report in terms of the position of the state with respect to regional conflicts – a theme that we will address in the following chapter --, the report provides a detailed reconstruction of community conflicts during the previous one hundred years, important data on the experiences of communities during the institutionalization of the liberal state, and documentation of the conflicts and strategies employed by communities to maintain the possibilities for political negotiation.⁵⁵⁴

Those who were in charge of the analysis of the situation in Pilahuín elaborated an especially rich report that included a reconstruction of processes of conflict and legalization from the colonial period up until the 1930s. In Mogollón's described various stages of a difficult dispute with the owners of the Pilahuin hacienda. The

⁵⁵⁴AIFP, MPST Collection, box 218, *Informe técnico sobre la Comunidad de Pilahuin*, September 19, 1930.

detail of the reconstruction is important for understanding the profound meaning of the judgments that the four bundles of deeds presented to the *caciques* entailed:

In the year 1815, indigenous peoples asked the *Real Audiencia de Quito* to declare the *páramos* of Pilahuín communal lands. The owner of the hacienda referred to earlier denied that right, but the *Audiencia* sided in favor of the *comuna*. However, the owner of the hacienda appealed, with which the ruling was revoked, and he declared 'that the Indians of Pilahuín do not have the right to graze their livestock and take advantage of the rest of the natural fruits of these sites by the same name.' The lots bordering the hacienda, according to the ruling, 'marked out all that which currently constitutes the Community. But, despite this legal decision, the Indians continued to occupy the lands under litigation.' In 1821, various indigenous people presented themselves before the court of Pilahuín, asking that they be given ownership of four hundred *caballerías* of community land... The transcribed dimensions include lands that largely are within those dimensions pointed out by the *Real Audiencia*. In the interlude or lapse that transpired between the two public meetings mentioned – six years – there was no transaction, sale, etc.; and yet the Community of Indians, in fact, owned the property that they had legally lost; and, moreover, he tried by any way possible to show signs of legality of the plundering of lands.⁵⁵⁵

Teresa Villacís, owner of the hacienda, began a trial to strip lands from the Indians during the epoch of Flores (1840) in order to confirm her rights that the justice tribunals of Spain and Ecuador had recognized. In this trial, her ownership was

⁵⁵⁵Ibid., f. 5. "The limits of Pilahuín are as follows: At the head, Abra Cruz, to the right, Trasquila of Pacopambay, and other boundaries, Cordillera de Lozán, and another at Tingo of Calamaca, Pallahuaico, and other boundaries Yana-zanja and Peña Blanca and the river Chiquicahua, and another by Callana-rumi, and another by Huarco-rumi of Echa-leche, Totorá *de laguna*, and another by Paloma-Paccha, and by the other parish of Santa Rosa, belonging to the parish of Pilahuín, and with another by Ahsca-chaca and the public path and other boundaries," f. 6.

acknowledged. However, once more we observe that the community did not accept the deeds conferred and insisted on taking the space and generating documentation that could serve so that members of the community and inheritors might demand rights legally.

The same *cacique* that asked the court of Pilahuin for ownership of the lands in 1821 testified in 1862, pointing out as a community all the lands contained within the transcribed boundaries. The inheritors returned the following year to ask for ownership; and the court, once more, conceded... In the struggle set up between the owners and the Indians, between the written right of some and the right to life of others, the inheritors asked that the determination of the boundaries be respected; and, against the tenacious opposition of the indigenous others, it was verified in 1863. The armed forces that had accompanied the practice of this leadership, returned once it had concluded; and the Indians returned to occupying the lands of the hacienda. The dispute did not end there, naturally; but rather in 1870 in a ruling confirmed by the Supreme Court of Riobamba, boundaries of the hacienda were confirmed to be those that the indigenous peoples did not respect...⁵⁵⁶

By 1904, the owners of the hacienda attempted to free themselves of this complex property. However, in the writings of the sale handed-in by Carlos Álvarez, the boundaries of the hacienda had been reduced considerably. The Álvarez family could not guarantee the lands that they claimed to be selling since, according to what Mogollón and Montalvo observed, the buyer complained that “the seller does not respond to the boundaries determined in the deeds.”⁵⁵⁷

⁵⁵⁶Ibid., f. 7.

⁵⁵⁷Ibid.

The evidence demonstrates that various actors shared deeds and ownership rights and occupation of the same spaces. Not only did *hacendados* and communities own deeds to the same spaces, but diverse groups within a community also often maintained verbal contracts with respect to the same space. Various forms of rights and special privileges covered the actors, including colonial agreements for communities and for regional aristocrats, declarations of vacant lands and colonizations, and collective land designations from Church donations, among many others.

Mogollón and Montalvo were occupied with generating a new framework for rights on behalf of the state reformed by the July Revolution -- social rights that more clearly established the social function of property and the obligations of *patrones* in labor contracts. In this perspective, they argued for the construction of another legal framework based on the criticism of previous rights, proposing that social conflict was due in part to the incapacity of the republic – up until then – to resolve the complexity of Spanish legislation: 'Extensive properties that the crown recognized on behalf of the Indians under their deeds of composition had a vice: the Spanish Legislation for Indians was incoherent, confusing, formal, full of paperwork' and inevitably caused that new owners would abuse the Indians."⁵⁵⁸

⁵⁵⁸ Ibid.

The evidence presented, however, leads to an alternative interpretation. In the central Sierra the indigenous communities had the capacity to pressure for the dismissal of the property deeds imposed by force in order to take back these spaces during political junctures that were favorable. Moreover, they had the capacity to pressure the hacienda to negotiate the co-ownership of spaces.

The long quotation speaks of multiple occupations of these lands, acts of resistance, mobilizations, and legal tactics. However, there were also essential factors that were not mentioned by these observers that the indigenous communities employed to sustain a control over the population: they maintained lines of autonomous economic production, they conditioned the hacienda in terms of negotiation over work, and they had the capacity to mobilize populations in moments of collective action.

In Pilahuín, as we have seen in Cotopaxi, joint ownership (in other cases it was called co-property) also existed. This relationship was not harmonious, but it was inevitable given the insistence of the indigenous communities to recuperate or at least guarantee access to their territories, the need of the haciendas to negotiate services with the communities, and the need of the state to respond to these actors in various moments in order to limit the power of the regional aristocrats.

Though joint ownership was the result of conflict, of pressure between actors,

and not of a will to share, conflict did not necessarily go against the interests of the Indians, even less so when they resisted consistently using political strategies. It was the response of the communities to the occupation of territory, their capacity to mobilize populations, and their frequent search for pressuring mechanisms that forced joint ownership and opposed unilateral domination. The joint ownership between the community and the hacienda was a relationship in which both sides had pressuring capacity. Therefore, the report presented by Mogollón to the ministry concluded that the practice that was taking place in the region was negotiation despite the deeds. “The disputes of the community with the Pilahuin hacienda from the *Real Audiencia* to 1920 (produced) diverse rulings that were not respected by the Indians nor by the hacienda, for which the disputes were continuous.”⁵⁵⁹

The conclusion of so many disputes needed to be, necessarily, a transaction in which the sides, passing over constant rights in public mechanisms, consult mutual agreements with the landowners to be able to use the *comuneros* as day-laborers; and also with these laborers to free them from onerous legal expenses.⁵⁶⁰

There were haciendas such as that of “*Loma de Alvarez*” – also called Pilahuín – that only had six full-time workers, meaning that they were always in need of negotiating

⁵⁵⁹Ibid., f. 6-8.

⁵⁶⁰Ibid., f. 8.

with the community.⁵⁶¹ In the same way, a community external to the haciendas could provide services to various haciendas, maintaining its autonomy, but suffering the pressures from many haciendas to which it was obliged to access multiple resources.

The report stressed that the conflicts and negotiations were chronicles “without news of significant uprisings” until 1920, coinciding with an epoch in which an attempt to consolidate private property took place and a legal process of delimiting lands was set forth by the hacienda to fix property dimensions definitively. In that year, when the *señora* Rosa María Albornoz vs de Rodríguez, owner of the “*Loma de Álvarez*” hacienda, and the community of Pilahuín attempted to end their conflicts permanently and the differences that existed between both sides due to the boundary disputes, the hacienda made public that it was ceding some lands to the community out of its own free will. However, we know that the community participated actively in this negotiation. The hacienda had to accept that which the communities claimed to be theirs and recognize it in writing.

As the visitors from the ministry noted, the communities operated according to the code of rights determined “by custom,” whereas a republican legal code did not exist.

⁵⁶¹Ibid., f. 6-8, 16.

Neither the Civil Code nor any other law has detailed the rights of each *comunero*; those, in taking advantage of the lands, are restricted by custom, which, in various aspects, is in contradiction with the civil law; for example, the illegitimate sons have the same rights in the community as legitimate sons.⁵⁶²

Although for the specialists that custom was specifically of the *comuneros*, it is possible to recognize in previously studied sources that customs linked actors of different status. The communities knew to appeal to various legal codes, and through multiple cases of conflict they formed a regional hegemony. Specifically, through the frequent practice of negotiation that took place as a result of pressures from both sides of active conflict they produced a language within which to negotiate terms, as well as that which was entitled “custom.”

5.4 Problems of Co-habitation within the Ethnic Constellation: Indians, Peasants, and Parishioners.

For the technicians of the MPST who had to process many conflicts in indigenous, peasant, and urban working-class populations, it was very difficult to resolve who belonged to the community and had rights to use collective lands in Pilahuín. Regarding the pressures surrounding lands that resulted from threats from haciendas, the *comuneros* of the *páramos* asked the state to support their exclusive

⁵⁶²Ibid., f. 9.

right to use the *páramos* (to the exclusion of the “whites” of the parish who wanted to use the *páramos* for their sheep and to collect firewood). This case of inter-community conflict revealed the nature of the community diversification processes of the nineteenth century and the tension to which alliances between peasants and Indians were subjected in the context of a top-down modernization.

In their technical study, the functionaries observed the complex dimensions that indigenous communities had assumed.

Taking into consideration the numerous individuals that communal property had – which exceed, with great frequency, five or six thousand people --; the great difficulty that represents determining the status of each *comunero* that considers himself of that right. And if we add to this the innumerable family relationships that are established with peoples foreign to the group (marriages in which only one person is a *comunero*, etc.), and certain situations of right (son of *comuneros* born in places far from the community, etc.), the difficulty is accentuated even more.⁵⁶³

As the technicians of the ministry observed, the difficulty resulted from the fact that the communities were not groups of “racial” homogeneity. To the contrary, they could be composed of diverse identities and they had a discontinuous settlement pattern.

The communal lands were so extensive and apt for cultivating and for life in general as they were found so far away from one another that social nuclei formed in diverse sectors of the same communal property... In each section

⁵⁶³Ibid., f. 11.

noted, families were found that, with all probability, did not have between them kinship ties. This affirmation is shown by the preponderant last names in each community; and, in effect, it is observed that while in Chubuleo the Pacchas – an ancient indigenous aristocracy – and Maliza predominated, in Pilahuín there was nobody that had this patronymic.⁵⁶⁴

The diversity of spaces that the ministry's description mentions does not tell us of specific configurations of each locality that resulted from processes of adaptation to land limitations, but rather of the collective constitution of an archipelago-type settlement:

Not all of the *comuneros* inhabit the communal area. In one community, such as in Salinas, the great majority have their habitations in the center of the pueblo and few have their houses in the *páramos* and in the mountains; in others, such as in Tisaleo, for example, they inhabit communal lands and contiguous haciendas... and in others, almost all have their houses within the boundaries of the communal property.⁵⁶⁵

The dispute over the articulation of indigenous niches settled in nuclei and parish centers and rural communities was one of the most significant sources of conflict in the period. In those cases we do not observe a consistent state policy. The ties between the indigenous communities and the parish nuclei became tense in three cases: The first came about due to the ascription of the Chibuleo community to the ancient *cacique* settlement of Saint Rosa *de* Miñarica, a parish with a large population

⁵⁶⁴Ibid., f. 12.

⁵⁶⁵Ibid., f. 10.

or, alternatively, its annexation of the Pilahuín *pueblo*, to which it was closer as a rural community, but also where the hacienda elites sought to built their power over the local authorities and justice system. The second case of conflict was the confrontation between ancient actors of a territorial joint ownership, the parish church, and the *comuneros* settled into the parish center of Pilahuín. The first, attempts at a conservative modernization, generated conditions so that some actors ignored the responsibilities of joint ownership and sought to expropriate an indigenous sector of the urban lots. The third case describes the emergence of internal tensions in the community between urban and rural segments that composed it and with regards to pressures over lands.

As we saw in the third chapter, the Indians of Chibuleo demanded that the liberal Assembly of 1896 put an end to attempts on behalf of the white elites of the Pilahuín parish to block their access to the historic parish settlement of the community in Santa Rosa *de* Miñarica. They asked the Assembly to prevent this abuse from isolating the *comuneros* from the *páramo*, thus obliging them to enter into dependencies with the hacienda.

While the ethnic authorities demanded their right to access their ancient settlement in the parish of Santa Rosa *de* Miñarica and they fought with the haciendas over their access to the *páramo* and over the integrity of the rural territory under their control in Pilahuín, the municipal government of Ambato, the ecclesiastic authority,

and the *hacendados* argued over who could annex the *comuna* of Chibuleo into their own settlements. In a request that supported the annexation of Chibuleo into Pilahuín, the landowners Cobo and Albornoz spoke of the small growth of Pilahuín, which had 3,000 Indians with access to *páramos* and lacked more annexes, extending itself over a strip of land “that comes from Carihuaírazo”—that is, mostly *páramo* lands. Santa Rosa was described as richer, with 9,000 inhabitants and six schools. With this argument, the *hacendados* requested that Chibuleo be incorporated as an annexed population:

We know of your generosity and public spirit; we beg that take interest before the council so that Pilahuín can seek protection as in our plans; it is going to be the pueblo of the new telegraph and of the new road from Tungurahua to Bolívar province (and to the coast).⁵⁶⁶

The fundamental dispute of this division centered on the annexation of Chibuleo to Pilahuín, where haciendas and communities co-existed. Chibuleo was a community of 1,000 inhabitants at the beginning of the twentieth century, for which both settlements wanted to annex it; even more so when rumors arose that there would open up a path from Tungurahua to Bolívar. For the *comuneros* of Chibuleo, the ascription of the *comuna* to Santa Rosa or to Pilahuín confronted them as a dilemma. All the communities had an important relationship with Santa Rosa as a settlement of

⁵⁶⁶AFL, Legislatura del siglo XIX 1895-1897, box. 79 solicitudes despachadas.

ethnic authorities and a marketplace, at the same time that they watched over the tense frontier with the *hacendados* around Carihuairazo. They did not want to leave any of the two spaces, but their authorities were in Santa Rosa. While the haciendas wanted the political division to locate the *comuneros* under the regime of the Pilahuín parish, where they would gain space, the ethnic authorities of the Pilahuín, Chibuleo, and Yatzaputzan communities, among others, were settled in Santa Rosa and there they attempted to maintain their ties, providing incentives with the help of religious festivals and other means of symbolic cohesion. That is what the *hacendados* called it when they referred to a “dance with band music” in which *comuneros* got drunk and the *comuneros* of Chibuleo promised their alliance to those of Santa Rosa. “Liquor, *señores*, has been the horse of those from Santa Rosa on which they plan to win the most infamous battle.”⁵⁶⁷

For some contemporary ethno-historians, the *cacique* settlement in Santa Rosa de Miñarica constituted a *rezago* of the *cacique* of Tomavela and Pilahuín, descendents of the *Jatun Ayllu Tomabela* of the *Chimbo* ethnic group. The Tomabela *pueblo* was a network of archipelagos with access to a great diversity of micro-climates and ecological levels.⁵⁶⁸ According to other authors, in the seventeenth

⁵⁶⁷Ibid.

⁵⁶⁸This *pueblo* occupied both sides of the western cordillera of the Andes at the foot of Chimborazo and Carihuayrazo along an extensive strip of territory that went from the *yungas* to the cordillera of Lozán to later descend into the valley of Huachi, closet

century, during the rise of the textile industry in the central Sierra, Santa Rosa headed a series of communities tied to wool production and coordinated the delivery of a labor supply to the workshops, which formed the principal economy of the *Audiencia de Quito*. Santa Rosa formed one of the four largest *pueblos* of the province, together with Píllaro, Pelileo, and Tisaleo, since the Ambato-Guaranda path passed through this *pueblo*.

Among the documents the representatives of Pilahuín presented to the investigators from the MPST were documents about the formation of the parish nucleus in which the community and the church existed. San Miguel *de* Pilahuín emerged as an ecclesiastic parish after the testament of General Francisco de Villagómez in 1663, which, after having profited from the *encomienda* and before dying decided to make an irrevocable donation of eight *caballerías* of land in Pilahuín to the indigenous community of Pilahuín.

o Ambato. This territory included zones such as Babahoyo, Facundo Vela, *el Corazón*, Angamarca, Salinas, Simiatug, Pallatanga, Llangahua, Pilahuín, Chibuleo, and Santa Rosa, places that today belong to the provinces of *los Ríos*, Bolívar, Chimborazo, Cotopaxi, and Tungurahua. See Aquiles Pérez, *Los Chimbos*, 2nd ed (Quito: Casa de la Cultura Ecuatoriana, 1982), 24. For a systematization of the secondary bibliography on the ethnohistory of Pilahuín, see D. Ortiz and P. Viteri, eds., *Páramos y Cultura*, Serie Páramo12 (Quito: GTP/Abya Yala, 2002). Also see Guadalupe Tobar Bonilla (Central Ecuatoriana De Servicios Agrícolas –Cesa) *Políticas Y Economías Campesinas En Ecosistemas De Altura: Caso Pilahuín, Zona Interandina, Ecuador. Proyecto Sobrevivencia Campesina en Ecosistemas de Altura Comisión Económica Para América Latina, Programa De Las Naciones Unidas Para El Medio Ambiente (Pnuma)* (Santiago de Chile: CEPAL, 1985).

After sixteen years... the Indian Gerónimo Cando Pilamunga, 'principal *Cacique* and governor of the *pueblo* Santa Rosa de Miñarica, which was of Pilaguín,' obtained, by *Real Provisión*, that 'the said *Pueblo* of Pilaguín be moved and be founded in the place and site of Miñarica,' where the Master Nicolás Arias de la Vega had formed a ranch for which he started a lawsuit against the 'common of the Indians' in order to prevent that in his lands a population should be established. But in the same year the cacique Cando Pilamunga and the Master Arias entered into transaction 'to take away the lawsuits so that the said population should be made in peace and quiet.' According to this transaction, that was authorized by the captain Domingo de la Torre, general deputy of the corregidor and major justice, the Indians established themselves in Miñarica and to the others, in compensation, four *caballerías* of the eight that the General Villagómez left were ceded, which served for the 'repartition and maintenance' of the 'naturals.' The Indians that 'had learned about legal possession' (4) proposed the agreement that was accepted by the Master indicated as he moved away from 'any pending lawsuit that had this reason and was about to recognize that these lawsuits are dubious and their expenses great in order to conserve peace and friendship.'⁵⁶⁹

The priesthood of Santa Rosa had attempted for their own interests to provoke a rupture between the communities of Chibuleo and the parish of Pilahuín in order to motivate the Indians of Chibuleo to decide to belong to Santa Rosa, despite the fact that both Chibuleo and *comuneros* from Pilahuín were tied to the ethnic authority in Santa Rosa:

To take away from [Santa Rosa] the jurisdiction of Chibuleo, a great injustice would be committed, stabbing it with cruelty a death blow given that in its territory is the only group of free Indians who can be employed in public works: for that, it is important to note that whereas we have thought that Santa Rosa should exceed Pilahuín in population, Pilahuín is of very superior condition since it is almost entirely free, which does not happen in Santa Rosa

⁵⁶⁹AIFP, MPST Collection, box 218, *Informe técnico*, f. 13.

where, due to the growing haciendas almost all the Indians are *conciertos*.⁵⁷⁰

Various people from the communities of Pilahuín and Chibuleo of the last names Llambo, Tisalema, and Malisa addressed a letter to the municipal government in which they established their disagreement to being integrated into the parish of Pilahuín:

Neither those who approve nor those who do not for not knowing, none of the inhabitants of the hamlet of Chibuleo want to belong to the parish of Pilahuín: we were born in Santa Rosa, in her we were baptized, there our ancestors rest, there we have always gone for our commerce, to present our complaints: that is, since ancient times we have belonged to her in ecclesiastical regards and in civil matters.⁵⁷¹

The church spread word that if the municipal government of Ambato decided to favor the inhabitants of Chibuleo, they would remain on the side of Pilahuín, and they would be linked to other communities and parishes of an indigenous majority. In turn, they would lose their ties to the authority and end up threatening the whites.

Those inhabitants of Chibuleo are already secretly living with those of Picaihua (Ambato), Salasaca (Pelileo), and Quisapicha in order to proceed in fact and in accordance with the threats in a given moment. We have just spoken with three of those who return from their commission to the heights of Quisapincha and with startling spite and resolution, they declare their purpose to set fire to houses, cut down fields, and seek the most unwelcoming earth for them; in the

⁵⁷⁰AFL, Legislatura del siglo XIX 1895-1897, box 79 solicitudes despachadas.

⁵⁷¹*Documentos relativos a la demarcación entre las parroquias linderas de Santa Rosa y Pilahuín* (Ambato: Imprenta de Salvador R. Porras, 1897).

band of San Bartolome, to where they would take their traditions and family memories.⁵⁷²

The image that they provided was that the Indians did not want to go to their “original” lands in order to be forced to go towards Pilahuín and become tied to the haciendas. The ecclesiastic parish also warned that the community of Pilahuín would be willing to establish ties for a rebellion together with other key communities in Tungurahua. The *hacendados* of Pilahuín who had their own interests in this dispute responded bitterly about the alliance between the Church and the ethnic authorities: “how easily they throw themselves at morality and with the eloquence of heart of a wet nurse well hired they contemplate the cribs and the tombs of the Indians...”⁵⁷³

The technical report of the MPST in 1930 reveals how the communities had constructed the conditions for joint ownership with the parish church over lands in the formation of the Pilahuín *pueblo*. In the report, Mogollón observed how this transaction took place and how a settlement of Indians in the nucleus of Pilahuín had been generated since the end of the nineteenth century until the 1930s.

The payment of the leasing law, that they gave to the priest of Santa Rosa, assured the Indians of the parcel for which they began to construct their huts, form corrals, plant trees, and ultimately make long-term projects. Slowly, in this way, the current pueblo of Pilahuín began to form on lands that had been

⁵⁷² Ibid., f. 4

⁵⁷³ Ibid.

communal earlier; but conserving the title of *comunero* for each renter; that is, with the right to use the *páramos*. On the lands of the priesthood, an old community parcel, the Indians set up their huts, each one with a very small lot for the cultivation of garlic.⁵⁷⁴

The report also revealed that the parish church pressured to concentrate benefits and break the mutual dependence that they had with co-inhabitants in the territory whom the *caciques* led. In the first instance, they attempted to expropriate lands with the argument that a public plaza would be made. Then the parish church decided to deny the job that the community had done with their lands under the protection of the Church and declare them their own property. In the trial, the Indians accused the parish leadership of attempting to strip them of community lands called “the church's backyard” by pressuring them to sign leases with the parish church that would serve as a proof of church ownership. They spoke of how the priest threatened that those who did not sign would be stripped of their lands, which would be handed-over to other peasants. The Indians of the parish center complained that this transaction represented the dispossession of the small parcels that they had cultivated since ancient times in order to hand them over to the “whites” of the parish.

In their defense, they described how their presence in the territory had long been recognized, but had changed since the archbishop had changed. Thus, they

⁵⁷⁴AIFP, MPST Collection, box 218, *Informe técnico*, f. 14.

described the manner in which relations with the parish church had always been negotiated and how their rights, despite conflicts, had always been recognized – “but when it has been attempted that we should renounce our inalienable rights to the lands in question, we have protested and we have approached the Ecclesiastic Leadership.” Even in the times of the Archbishop González Suárez, the plaintiffs say that they were respected and were able to receive favorable answers. However, they noted that this situation had changed notably in an epoch in which Manuel María Polit Lasso took charge as Archbishop of Quito in 1919. The new archbishop had entered, according to what the *comuneros* observed, into a coalition with the parish priests of Pilahuín, Dr. Pedro Pablo and later the priest Castellanos, in order to deny the validity of the “tacit ownership of many years” and introduce private property as the only right.

It is insisted that we sign private leases; and to triumph in their rash and un-Christian ends, the parish priest declares from the pulpit that the lands of those who do not accept these unjust ends will be vacant and that they can be rented or sold by him once he has ample authorization from the Archbishop; and he even threatened to take away our sacraments.⁵⁷⁵

The *comuneros'* observation was shrewd. The changing position of the archbishop was key not only insofar as it dealt with canonical rights that ought to recognize the

⁵⁷⁵AIFP, MPST Collection, box 177, Solar de Iglesia Pilahuín, 1928.

comuneros that protected collective goods under this umbrella, but also insofar as it illuminated how the Archbishop of Quito was one of the heads of the oligarchic modernization process that threatened communities in various provinces.

In effect, whereas the college of lawyers of Quito, composed in general by the new generation of liberal lawyers of Pichincha, had declared in 1909 the urgent need to make uniform and refine rights in the country, the new generation of conservative elites, led by José María Polit Lasso (Archbishop of Quito after 1919) and Jacinto Jijón y Caamaño was even more interested in adopting this program of making rights uniform. They aimed to end the practice of joint ownership in rural areas, where they were confronting indigenous communities.

Joint ownership with the Church as well as with the haciendas took on general terms in a critical phase during the oligarchic state. The extensive network of Pilahuín communities came into multiple conflicts and the threat of suffering divisions as space became limited. This was the case of another component of Pilahuín, the community Mulanleo-Yaguayata, which occupied two spaces divided by a ravine that came from Carihuairazo and formed part of the Chuquicagua river. The high part of the community was represented by the *Cacique* Espíritu Toalombo (and later his son, Alejandro Toalombo), while Pedro Tomaquiza was the president of the section called Yachacpuzan in the lower part that shared lands with the Chuquicagua hacienda of Carlos Hidalgo Álvarez. The conflict was produced because the son of

Hidalgo attempted to expropriate this section of Yachacpuzan by force, thus threatening to isolate the community in the *páramo*. After two decades of conflict and resistance against these pressures before the MPST, the communities proclaimed that the division that the hacienda wanted was unacceptable.

It is about stretching us and throwing aside an enormous strip of community lands where we already have our plants and our homes since it is the least frigid part of that inclement *páramo* and it is about limiting us to the altitude where life is impossible.⁵⁷⁶

According to the complaints of the *comuneros* before the MPST, local authorities and the hacienda administration supported the interests of the inheritor of the hacienda as they pressured the community to abandon this space. When the community did not accept this harmful arrangement, the inheritor approached the political deputy Elias Espín, son of the hacienda administrator, in order to imprison them and run them down. According to the denunciations, this practice was repeated incessantly.⁵⁷⁷

While the elites took on the plan for making the law uniform as an agenda of private interest as they used coercive mechanisms to expel the communities from shared lands, the communities asked the central state to recognize their rights and award them the property deeds in accordance with their “tacit occupation and

⁵⁷⁶AIFP, MPST Collection, box 181, Comunidad Mulanleo-Yaguelata-Zunezacha, 22-II-1935. f. 10v.

⁵⁷⁷Ibid., 27 de mayo de 1941, f. 4.

ownership for more than a century.” The aggressiveness of various actors and the lack of a response from the liberal state, which did not acknowledge their shared ownership, led to an active response on behalf of the communities through legal processes and rebellion. In this sense, despite the fact that the harassment of community lands came from the same sources, the subsequent processes had effects that contrasted with those that took place in Pichincha.

Instead of permitting the expansion of a domination whose contradictions apparent due to the community subsistence crisis, the communities of the Ambato canton in Tungurahua, as well as the communities of the parishes Pujilí and Saquisilí in Cotopaxi, seem to have actively resisted, including violent confrontations with landholding elites. In the 1920s, when the pressure that the communities exercised to negotiate joint ownership was not efficient at achieving positive results, rebellions arose. In many cases, after attempting the imposition of force, *hacendados* preferred to sell. This was the case of the Chuquicahua hacienda in Pilahuin, which was sold by its inheritors to Alfonso Cobo Villagómez.⁵⁷⁸

To break down the political integration between distinct indigenous populations was, for many reasons, the easiest tactic to prevent the communities from having the autonomy to negotiate conditions for the exchange of services. It was also a form of

⁵⁷⁸Ibid., f. 19.

appeasing a re-appearing “fear” among the whites – that is, the fear that the Indians might be able to weave alliances capable of pressuring for negotiation processes in a caste war.

The experience of Pilahuín was very important. The communities of Pilahuín denounced before the Constitutional Assembly of 1896 the *hacendados*'s attempts to ignore the right of the Indians to ownership. According to the interpretation that the Yatzapuzan *comuneros* offered, the expansion of the hacienda over the lowlands was not only an economic threat and an attack on their capacity to occupy diverse ecological zones.

Comuneros of the valley and the *páramo* and families of indigenous merchants and artisans who had long been settled in parish nuclei and who had defended this integration in the nineteenth century found themselves heavily pressured in the first decades of the twentieth century by church leaders and *hacendados*. Therefore, a tendency for rupture between these components of the community was observed in Pilahuín. The rural Indians declined access to the *páramos* to the Indians settled in the parish nucleus, despite having traditionally had such access due to their recognized membership to the community and an exchange of services between both sectors. The “Indians” alleged that they ought to be the exclusive owners of the communal lands because they received compositions, legacies, etc. -- vast extensions of territories, especially in the *cordillera* -- in order to live in community during the

colonial era and that, conversely, the whites had individualized their properties.

In order to exclude those inhabitants of the parish nucleus from the *páramos* they called them “whites.” In the description of the so-called “whites,” testimonies spoke of an indigenous population that specialized in fine agricultural products and tied to commerce, but recognized as part of the community and subordinated to ethnic authorities.

These lands, later called “the church's backyard,” were perfect for the cultivation of garlic, which requires such painstaking care that a single family cannot cultivate it in more than a very small extension. And as the article cited has very good acceptance in the market, it yields, proportionally, much more than any other product. For this reason, the entire “church's backyard,” with the exception of the lots occupied by houses, is dedicated to this class of plant. Therefore, the `repartition` of the lots of the Indians was done in relation to this circumstance; an almost incredible division (30, 40, and even more square meters) of lands was decided on. Once they were assured of the stability of these very small parcels, the Indians constructed their houses in order to take care of their plants better and thus emerged the population.⁵⁷⁹

The so-called whites argued that they also had made use of the *páramos* since remote times: “Since the most remote times, according to the public records, the so-called `whites` and the `Indians` together have exercised acts of domain in the *páramos*. Both have grazed their livestock, taken firewood for the home, wood for construction, and straw to cover their huts... without there ever having been disturbances.”⁵⁸⁰ In

⁵⁷⁹AIFP, MPST Collection, box 218, Informe técnico, f. 14.

⁵⁸⁰Ibid., f. 14.

favor of this argument, they gave testimony that they were descendents of the *comuneros* who settled in the hectares negotiated by the ethnic authorities before having changed their center to Santa Rosa de Miñarica.

The state investigators pointed out that these whites had occupied the lands that formed part of the four *caballerías* that the *Caciques* and later the priests gave out periodically to the Indians.

Taking into account the documents of the nineteenth century and the visits to the populations of Santa Rosa, the investigators spoke of the process of “custom variations among this group that they describe as ethnically white” as an effect of their integration into commerce.

Before the construction of the Southern Railway, they were also dedicated to transporting merchandise from the Coast to the Sierra and vice versa. This occupation, which made them feel new forms of association and of life, powerfully influenced them so that this change would be reinforced. This population nucleus, ethnically indigenous, varied with respect to its customs; it constructed larger habitations and it acquired more complex needs. Favored by lines of communication, several inhabitants of the *páramos* and of the pueblo intensified their cultivation in the 'the church's backyard' and dedicated themselves to commerce with the neighboring pueblos and even with the Coast. In the same center, in addition, schools were founded where children were sent... instead of sending them as herders into the *páramos*.⁵⁸¹

Beyond the optimistic view of assimilation expressed in this report by ministry

⁵⁸¹Ibid., f. 14-15.

technicians, the Indians of the parish nuclei pointed out that their tie to indigenous territory was irrevocable: “If they were not recognized property in the *páramo*, they would be reduced to misery.”⁵⁸²

The testimonies demonstrated a certain population growth in conjunction with a land shortage. The displacement of this population from the management of commercial networks as an effect of machinery caused the *comuneros* to turn to the *páramo* to cultivate. The Indians of the parish called “whites” would follow them in order to attempt to cultivate their own crops in parts of the highlands. Beyond this lack of lands, the declaration against their participation in collective goods began to reveal that the conflict was being stimulated by another interested actor. The representative of the *comuneros* argued that if the merchant Indians accessed the *páramos* and entered into contact with the *comuneros*, “they would exploit the Indians, introducing, as a consequence, a permanent problem within the community.” This argument would seem to come from the hacienda, just as Néstor Mogollón observed. For Mogollón, it was clear from the beginning that beyond the land shortage, the hacienda was exploiting these internal conflicts between groups tied to the community in order to break ties between the populations and place their autonomy at risk. Thus they sought to pressure the *comunero* Indians into providing

⁵⁸²Ibid., f. 15.

more services as they lost their ties to parish nuclei and their capacity to form alliances to defend themselves against *hacienda* expansion.

The influence exercised by the owner of the hacienda `Loma de Álvarez` on the Indians is clear. The indicated hacienda has only six workers, more or less; and it needs, naturally, a greater number of people to cultivate. The owner, with the objective of attracting Indians from the Community, has adopted the procedure of defending them against the so-called whites.⁵⁸³

In effect, if the haciendas sought to do away with the alliance between specialized groups, it was because such an alliance and the strategies for dispersed settlements articulated by figures of communal authority had made it possible that the communities could negotiate labor conditions and impose the negotiation of co-existence (joint ownership or leasing, among other formulas).

The experiences described in the communities to the west and east of Tungurahua province permit us to speak of how these communities positioned themselves with regards to the changes in the 1910s. AWe can observe how communities dealt with such changes through the accumulation of political capital that they had won in earlier struggles. The experiences are interesting given that while the liberal state did not form an institutional defense of the indigenous class, as the liberal assemblies had offered, and laws such as the day-laborers' law, the

⁵⁸³Ibid., f. 15.

communities knew to resist the development of oligopoly and servitude. Among the most important experiences that they utilized in that sense would be the spacial and demographic strategy that several authors have entitled “archipelago,” in which peasants, herders, merchants, political elites, and other actors participated. The social complexity that this strategy assumed demanded the development of mechanisms of specialized social coordination and at the same time the development of consensus in the community.

The archipelago strategy, according to ethno-historians, resulted from groups dedicated to inter-regional exchange, such as that which occurred between the “ethnic *señores* of Quito” in the pre-Hispanic epoch or based on forms of political coordination, as in the example studied by John Murra in the southern Andes.⁵⁸⁴ In the case of the communities of Tungurahua between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, we see how especially disperse communities recognized the authority of common political figures that at the same time sought to maintain ties to populations and negotiated those ties just as the *caciques* in Santa Rosa had done with respect to the indigenous community of Chibuleo. The capacity of the *cacicazgos* to negotiate territorial “joint ownership” and services from outside of the hacienda depended directly on this regime of population articulation and impeded the development of

⁵⁸⁴John Murra, *Formaciones económicas y políticas del mundo andino* (Lima: IEP Ediciones, 1975).

private property and servitude. This local aspect of the negotiation of political and economic conditions promoted by the liberal state has not been taken into account much in the Ecuadorian historiography. Yet, it is a fundamental complement to the work of several authors who have offered novel and important analysis of how state and cultural institutions of the public sphere mobilized themselves with respect to the modernization process and the place for Indians in the nation.⁵⁸⁵ The abolition of *concertaje*, which was debated in Congress between stern conservatives and moderate liberals, had put the municipal governments in charge of deciding about lands and the governance of indigenous labor. The local response given by the indigenous communities indicates just how relevant they were as actors and it clarifies theories about an order translated from urban centers to rural areas on the one hand and other theories about an unquestioned local domination. Common sense is formed through conflict between actors with pressuring capacity, which, in this case, included the indigenous communities.⁵⁸⁶

However, ethnic constellations were not always able to maintain themselves in the struggle for the survival of their population and territorial strategies. The case of the old Simiatug *cacicazgo* in Bolívar province revealed the effects of isolation that

⁵⁸⁵Capello, “Identidad colectiva y cronotopos;” Eduardo Kingman, *La ciudad y los otros*; Prieto, *Liberalismo y temor*.

⁵⁸⁶For a more complete analysis of the debates in Congress and the press, and of the science of *concertaje* in the period, see Prieto, *Liberalismo y temor*.

the region suffered after the completion of the railway. The *cacicazgo* that found itself at the apex between the Sierra and the coast had traditionally included settlements in various ecological levels. The leader of Casaiche obtained a deed from the parish judge of Simiatug that spoke of the extension of the *cacicazgo*: “from what can be verified from the hacienda Casaiche and that of Espino, Quinuacorrall, Simiátug, and Cumbillí, the colonial Indian residents were owners since the primitive times in these places.”⁵⁸⁷ The *comuneros* with rights to lands had issued several of their possessions to the Church with instructions that the Church hand them over for lease to other members of the community. With the *ley de manos muertas* that expropriated goods from the Church, the hacienda had passed into the hands of the Charity of Quito. Moreover, with the isolation that the zone suffered after the completion of the southern railway and the crisis of the *trajines* that obliged various *comuneros* to migrate to the coast and widen the margin of rented lands, the community felt pressure from new attempts of hacienda administrators to expand – namely, from the haciendas Quinuacorrall and Arsenio Valverde and the renters of the lots that demanded individual property. They declared that the community of Casaiche did not really exist in order to untie themselves from obligations.

⁵⁸⁷AIFP, MPST Collection, box 179, parish San Simón, Guaranda, Bolívar, f. 13. Property deed issued by King Carlos III on August 26, 1763, to the Indians of the common in the lands of Casaiche.

We are more than three-thousand five-hundred in number, discounting the innumerable that, in recent years, have been dislodged by the force of lands or who have had to abandon lands, migrating in search of better and more humane work conditions and lives.⁵⁸⁸

The mobilization capacity of the ethnic authorities was still current as can be deduced from the fact that they could mobilize the Indians settled in the hacienda and those of the San Simón parish in order to take the Casaiche hacienda together while the *hacendado* Arsenio Valverde asked the political deputy for “an exemplary punishment” for those who might attempt to claim hacienda land as common lands.⁵⁸⁹ In that same year, the insurgents were cleared out of the hacienda by Valverde after three leaders were imprisoned. Of this group of three, only one of them (by the last name of Chimbo) returned, asking to settle the conflict between Valverde and the community. He even accepted to convert the *comuneros* into *peones* and *huasipungueros* if they could return to their place of origin. Among the *comuneros* there were several who did not accept the treatment and preferred to work in support of other *huasipungueros* as *arrimados* instead of entering into completely dependent relations. The trials that were opened in the offices of the central state beginning in

⁵⁸⁸AIFP, MPST Collection, box 182, folder 5, Quinuacorrall y Espino contra arrendatario, f. 7.

⁵⁸⁹AIFP, MPST Collection, box 179, parroquia San Simón, cantón Guaranda Bolívar, f. 13.

1926 speak of a process of the reactivation of social mobilization from that year on – a process in which the occupations of *haciendas* were repeated.

Despite this capacity for mobilization, the internal conflicts of the community were difficult. The leader of the San Simón Lorenzo Lema hill was accused of corruption by his constituents for his desires to take land and sell it to strangers and even to convoke *mingas* twice a month in his service and under threat of fines. By 1933, the *comuneros* asked for the acknowledgment that they did not constitute a single community but rather three separate communities, attempting to unlink the members of this *cacical* constellation. The *comuneros* of Shacundo requested that three directories should be formed instead of just one because they did not want to respond to the imposed authority of *Lema de San Simón*. Moreover, they asked that the community land be parceled and that a lot be given to each *comunero*, thus eliminating the community.⁵⁹⁰

5.5 Colonels and *Caciques*: Seeking a Name for the Indigenous Leadership in a Context of Conflict.

In contrast with the earlier experience, another form of response to the pressure that we can observe in Chimborazo is that which took place in the indigenous community of Calshi, which rivaled the Chuquipogyo hacienda not only with respect

⁵⁹⁰AIFP, MPST Collection, box 181, Comuna Shacundo-San Lorenzo, f. 1, 3-4.

to land but also with respect to its political existence before the state. The community of Calshi asked for the establishment of a clear boundary line since the hacienda of the Merino-Ordóñez family had extended over their *páramo*. Also, they accused them of stealing livestock that, as we know, was a normal form for pressuring communities to accept new terms of exchange for the use of the grounds that until then had been negotiated in terms of hostile but stable mutual acknowledgment.⁵⁹¹

In 1856 the Chuquipogyo hacienda had 1,035 *caballerías* of which 892 were *páramo* and it continued to expand, as the *comuneros* denounced. The figures and the activities in the zone make it clear that the hacienda lived off of the livestock grazing that the communities did in the *páramos* and in exchange for which the hacienda demanded unpaid work. A part of the hacienda had been purchased by Ezequiel Merino in 1899. The other part had been acquired in the problematic procedure of public auction. The community perceived it as a highly threatening process. The protests and demands for *páramos* were incessant during the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century. In 1908 the community of Ichacalshi presented its demand to the Ministry of the Interior, however, this ministry denied it, arguing that a trial had already taken place and a ruling had already been issued by the Supreme Court and that they needed to respect the independence of powers.

⁵⁹¹AIFP, MPST Collection, box 180, Reclamo de Nicolás Charco y Álvaro Paca contra hacienda Chuquipogyo.

The *comuneros* Acan, Charco, and Paca of Calshi proposed the implementation of better exchange terms in addition to the recuperation of a site called Rumipamba.⁵⁹² They proposed that instead of four days without rest, the obligations should be rationalized and the work should be distributed according to the quantity of livestock of each family. The *comuneros* asked that the work take place every 15 days and not every week. They also proposed that instead of working 3 or 4 days a week, for 20 heads of livestock, one day of work would be offered; for those who had 20 to 100 heads of livestock, two days of work would be offered; and for those who had more than 100 heads of livestock, 3 days of work would be provided the hacienda, “as has been the prior custom of the hacienda.”⁵⁹³

In addition, in their argument they combined a proposal for rationalizing work with a discourse on political rights:

And for how much we know of the currents of civilization today, for the guarantees that the liberal Political Letter provide us that governs us and the expressed obligation that this imposes on the Public Powers for a special protection of the invalid race, we approach you, *señor* Minister, to demand reparations and justice.⁵⁹⁴

In response, the Merinos denied the very existence of the community of Calshi given

⁵⁹²AIFP, MPST Collection, box 180, carta de Comuneros al MPST, 23 de julio de 1930.

⁵⁹³Ibid., Informe del jefe político de Guano al MPST, 2 de julio de 1935.

⁵⁹⁴Ibid., carta de Comuneros al MPST, 23 de junio de 1930.

that they were less than 60 Indians. This attempt was answered by the political leadership of the community through an argument in which they described that they had been denouncing the attempts of the Merino family to take communal *páramo* since the time of Alfaro. They had won three rulings and their denunciation found itself in the Supreme Court, awaiting a final ruling. Moreover, the leader Luis F. Duchicela presented himself before the courts as a deputy colonel of the Liberal Revolution and denounced that the *hacienda* had attempted to ignore all of this.⁵⁹⁵

One of the results of the weakness of the liberal state was that the powerful title of Colonel of Alfaro's army was evocative of a shared but past revolution, while the resource of a noble indigenous genealogy seemed to renew the narratives that accompanied the forms of struggle among the communities. The communities constituted, although in an incipient way, two elements that became relevant in the context of the revolution of the 1930s. They generated a concept of a working-class and ethnic nation and they did so from a new space that was not from confidence in liberal leaders and pacts with the republic, but rather from confidence in the communities and their own leadership. We will see how the community assumed its legal status as the Sanancajas Agricultural Association and a few years later the status of *comuna*. It is clear that the *caciques* of the communities and hills of Calshi viewed

⁵⁹⁵Ibid., Reclamo de la comunidad de Calshi al Presidente de la República, 9 de marzo de 1930; Informe del jefe político de Guano al MPST, July 2, 1935.

themselves throughout these multiple lawsuits as negotiators with the state having legitimate political representation of communities with rights.

As Mercedes Prieto has documented, the Duchicelas began to form a genealogy as noble descendents of kings in the 1910s and they generated narratives framing these elites as fundamental sources of nationhood.⁵⁹⁶ In these trials we can observe the tense field in which this narrative of *indigenista* nationalism emerged. In effect, it emerged as a response to new levels of conflict and the insistent search by the community to be recognized as a legitimate political actor oriented to sustain the republic.

In a letter from the *caciques* of the community of Ichacalchi Torcuato Paca, Manuel Acán, and Francisco Lluay demanded that the state stop the abuses of the *hacendados* of Chuquipogyo and enforce that which the liberal state had not. They asked that the resolution of the Supreme Court favoring their ownership of the community lands be respected. They accused the owners and workers of the hacienda for having violated the laws and judicial decisions as they wanted to enslave them “without being *conciertos* or actors in or debtors to the hacienda,” and they asserted that “we the indigenous people are with our freedom from our General Alfaro.” In

⁵⁹⁶Mercedes Prieto “Los indios y la nación: historias y memorias en disputa” in *Celebraciones centenarias y negociaciones por la nación ecuatoriana*, eds. Valeria Coronel y Mercedes Prieto (Quito: FLACSO and Ministerio de Cultura del Ecuador, 2010).

addition, they presented the *hacendados* as enemies of the state under the accusation of corruption since the owners of Chuquipogyo were brothers of the governor of Chimborazo and they were favored by the political deputies.⁵⁹⁷ The *caciques* detailed the legitimacy of their functions as political representatives in the republic given their titles as colonels, their noble Indian descent, their nationalism, and the proven capacity of the communities to present their lawsuits, having received the approval of the Supreme Court. They also constructed a vision of the situation of the liberal state that had been incapable of enacting and protecting the rule of law. The search for new narratives was not easy and soon they would find themselves with other allies in the context of state reform.

5.6 Strengths and Weaknesses in the State: From Local Violence to State Violence.

The provinces of the central Sierra were internally diverse. The previously studied examples of Pilahuín and Pillaro-Montugtusa must not give us the erroneous image of a consensus that regenerated itself with flexibility in all the provinces. As we have seen, the communities were heavily pressured. The difference lay in the capacity of some and the incapacity of others to sustain resistance. This is a

⁵⁹⁷AIFP, collection MPST, box 180, *carta del 27 de marzo de 1930*.

characterization of the parishes that joined the experience of Zumbahua in Cotopaxi and that speak to us of forced initiatives taken by the landholding elite and new contenders for lands and labor. In various cantons, the general discontent of the communities that had not found the possibility to negotiate and the formation of demands for political representation in the state that were unsatisfied led to a situation of illegitimacy and violence that required an alternative political integration of conflict to that which the liberal state had offered.

The conflicts of the communities of the Tisaleo and Santa Rosa parishes against the haciendas of Juan Arias and the Jaramillo family, as well as the conflicts between the common of Indians of Quero and Mocha against the haciendas Mochapata and Chuquipogyo over the *páramos* of Sanancajas to the south of the Ambato canton, demonstrate how the communities that had been willing to negotiate joint ownership were not willing to accept definitive demarcations that were intended to mark stages of hacienda expansion. The rejection on behalf of the communities was answered by an unexpected use of force by the *hacendados* that, through the capture of sheep that passed through the lands of joint ownership, the burning of homes, and the expulsion of peasants, sought to free themselves of the communities and their claims on space. The communities reacted through collective actions that in turn attracted police repression.

The leaders Tayo and Toalombo of the communities of Tisaleo, which occupied

the *páramos* of Carihuairazo, were backed by the capacity to mobilize. With the intention of mediating in order to impede conflict, they attempted to arrive at an agreement that would recognize their limited ownership of the *páramos*.

Those that form the community are many and maybe one day or another they will decide to take justice into their own hands with a great scandal and damage to the country and its directors, but we, the principal leaders, know that reason is more powerful and that it substitutes violence and it is for this that we address you, *Sr. Minister*, to resolve [this situation] with calm and execute [the resolution] firmly, avoiding dangers, correcting wrongs, and contributing in this way to the prosperity and grandeur of the fatherland.⁵⁹⁸

This argument served to try to move the political institution to support their cause as a just cause. For the leaders this was not a problem of rivalries over goods or patrimony but one of the character of state justice. The idea that the state did not have to leave the communities to act alone, but rather had to listen to them in order for the “directors” of the country to last, is one sign of how the leaders defined themselves as a political leadership.

Unsatisfied with the agreements and processes of demarcation that the leaders had achieved, the community constituents distanced themselves a bit from Tayo and

⁵⁹⁸AIFP, MPST Collection, box 177, Comunidad de Tisaleo, Tungurahua. *Como cabecilla principal por mi propio derecho y a ruego de Nicolás Tayo, José Diego Tayo, Evaristo Peralta, Segundo Toapanta, Celidoneo Tisalme y Juan B. Tayo que no pueden firmar en este momento. José Eugenio Tayo. Carta del 26 de noviembre de 1928.*

Toalombo. Although they obliged the hacienda to withdraw its most recent aspirations, they also recognized other lands that the hacienda had taken as property of the hacienda. The community demonstrated the type of memory that had formed in a series of collective actions during almost a century and a denial of the legitimacy of the possessions of the hacienda. The notion of “time immemorial” with which they described their ownership frequently referred to multiple acts of negation of hacienda ownership that dated back to long standing struggles. The *caciques* pointed to certain transactions, but they did not receive the backing of the community, whose members shared a much more far-reaching memory and in turn took away the *caciques'* roles as representatives, accusing them of having their own interests and of not acting as delegates of the community.

We belong to the community of Tisaleo and with that right we approach to catch your attention. We conferred power to Angel Toapanta so that he might approve some arrangements with the owners of the neighboring lands. But the leadership has imagined that that power was a title to exploit and a pretext to spend as this representation has charged a lot of money to the community. The representative Toapanta, with the agent José María Labre, tells us that he is residing in Quito... to deal with the division of the community lands... We have already revoked the power conferred upon Toapanta and we reject the idea of division. Coming to you, we carry the object of making known that those who present themselves as representatives and leaders of us, have no right to represent us and that later we will name publicly before the authority of our pueblo the people we want to represent us with respect to any difficulty that should come later.⁵⁹⁹

⁵⁹⁹AIFP, MPST Collection, box 177, Comunidad de Tisaleo, 1938.

The leaders competed with the *hacendados* for the backing of the political institution. In the case of Quero, whereas *Sra. Cobo* enjoyed the support of the political deputy, the leaders of the indigenous community of the *paramo* of Sanancajas aspired to be heard by the state and the national army as they denounced the partiality of the political deputy who belonged to the same family of *hacendados* in the conflict: I call your attention to the fact that Sr. Reinaldo Sevilla was introduced into the parish of Quero as Political deputy to exercise jurisdiction without having the faculty for it, abusing his authority or better yet exercising authority for which he is not competent.⁶⁰⁰

In 1927, just two years after the fall of the liberal state, denunciations arrived at the MPST tribunals that indicated that the Tisaleo Indians had taken lands in Santa Lucia, “destroying fields, killing and injuring our livestock; they devastate a great extension of our lands, at least sixty or seventy *caballerías*, and they are constructing a ditch, a pretext that from that point to the *páramo* is of the community.”⁶⁰¹ Although the owner of the hacienda, Joaquín Arias, had signed an agreement with the *cacique* Toalombo to no longer expand the hacienda over the *páramo*, the community

⁶⁰⁰AIFP, MPST Collection, box 176, Comuneros de Quero contra Matilde Coloma, por apeo y deslinde del páramo de Sanancajas. *Hilario Cuzco, Juan Lucero, José Cando, Bartolomé Soria, Miguel Tanquina, y Estanislao Panata.*

⁶⁰¹AIFP, MPST Collection, box 177, Litigio iniciado por Modesto Ortíz, Joaquín Arias, Inocencio González y otros contra la Comunidad de Tisaleo por tierras, December 17, 1927.

had decided to recover more hectares of land than those that had entered into recent dispute. They went beyond their leader's negotiation. The same happened in the case of the Chilco hacienda of the Jaramillo family, where the community initiated for the second time since 1910 an occupation of lands that had been appropriated by this hacienda.

According to the leader José Eugenio Tayo, the dispute with the Arias of Santa Lucía originated in approximately 1840 when the *caciques* Mariano, Lorenzo, and Carmen Hallo Sumba, sold the extension of 84 blocks to Sr. Alejandro Arias. Jose E. Tayo sought a transaction with the hacienda before the state by which the hacienda would return to the extension of these lands and not expand from there:

After the purchase from the cacique Hallo Sumba, the comuneros of Tisaleo, Sr. Minister has not alienated nor dismembered a single meter of land that forms the common land; therefore, the only lands that do not belong to them are those 84 blocks sold to Alejandro Arias.⁶⁰²

The other *comuneros*, however, alleged that in 1878 the Arias had taken 70 blocks of land from the community in the *páramo* of Tisaleo that were awarded by the governor of Tungurahua for a low price, along with the obligation to pay 35 pesos to the *Colegio Bolívar*, according to the argument that this transaction would benefit the

⁶⁰²Ibid.

civilization of Ambato.⁶⁰³ The *comuneros* challenged this transaction, which benefited the *hacienda* Santa Lucía and they also challenged the transaction that benefited the *hacienda* Chilco. The Cobo family argued that the *comuneros* were challenging private property. The presence of the representative Tinimbosa in this transaction in February 1910 was ignored as a source of legitimacy on behalf of the community.

After the transaction, the *comuneros* of Tisaleo, according to the process that I have reviewed, they proposed a trial on such a transaction; a trial that they lost with costs in the first and second instance. They did not appeal the last ruling of the Supreme Court of Riobamba to the Supreme and, therefore, it remained executed and current. Thus the *comuneros* of Tisaleo, viewing themselves lost on legal grounds, took for granted and through force the possession of the lands of the *hacienda* Chilco, fixing as a division line a trench, in part old and in part constructed by them in those days. These facts were in the public domain since they marginalized the public force and they produced bloody scenes.⁶⁰⁴

The conflict over lands that began to be felt in a dramatic way in the 1910s and the attempts to privatize possessions that had been collective or subject to joint ownership between several actors brought about conflicts not only between communities and *haciendas* but also between communities that had for a long time shared the *páramos*. The *comuneros* of Tisaleo killed various *comuneros* of Apatug, a hill of the Santa Rosa parish, in 1919 in the context of their conflict with the

⁶⁰³Ibid., f. 2.

⁶⁰⁴Ibid.

hacendados.⁶⁰⁵

In February 1927, the *comuneros* of Tisaleo did not recognize an act of transaction between their leader, José Eugenio Tayo, and Leonidas Jaramillo, the owner of the Chilco hacienda, and they mobilized towards the lands that they lost in order to construct trenches and symbols of ownership. According to Cesar Núñez, the Fiscal Commission of the Ambato canton in 1927, the *comuneros* of Tisaleo would have risen up organized rioters of more than five hundred people “in gangs with the object of attacking various properties” and they would have taken possession of the haciendas of the parish. Yet, under these considerations, the governor ordered the capture of *comuneros* who were inciting rebellion and “attacked the guard with machetes, rifles, sticks, rocks, clubs, and other arms, causing various injuries that have been taken to the Hospital.”⁶⁰⁶

This image proposed by the governor justified a massacre at the hands of the Garrison of Carchi that appeared in the media due to details of its extraordinary cruelty.⁶⁰⁷ The recovered testimonies establish that, in effect, there was an uprising in Tisaleo that, beyond the agreements signed by their leadership to recover the hectares in dispute, sought to retake the lands and *páramos* appropriated by two haciendas of

⁶⁰⁵Ibid., f. 44-45.

⁶⁰⁶Ibid., 8 de febrero de 1928, f. 62.

⁶⁰⁷*El Día*, 3 de febrero de 1928, about Tisaleo uprising.

the parish many years before. The testimonies establish that in response there was a violent and indiscriminate assault by the battalion of Carchi that had its garrison in that plaza:

With the purpose of capturing the promoters of the false rebellion, it committed every class of abuse against the Comunarios of Tisaleo, getting drunk on purpose and killing everyone it found without discriminating between gender or age, stealing, raping, and devastating fields and to that end they were guided in person by the landowners and the priest of the parish.⁶⁰⁸

The *hacendados* wanted the state to recognize their property deeds and permit that ordinary justice supported by force guarantee their property. For its part, the community used words and actions that called upon public order. Community leaders attempted to demarcate community lands between the *comuneros* of Apatug-Santa Rosa and Tisaleo. Before then these lands had never been demarcated formally, but nonetheless there had been an “informal and traditional demarcation that began in Carihuairazo and continued along natural ravines.” Various attempts to demarcate them failed due to the lack of accord among the leaders of Tisaleo. However, the leaders of Apatug insisted. They made its purpose public, promoting it in the plaza of Tisaleo.

Segundo Serafín Azubadín, representative, Juan Yumbopatín, and other leaders

⁶⁰⁸Ibid., f. 63 -83v.

of the Indian community of Apatug in the jurisdiction of the parish of Santa Rosa, according to the power that I accompany in three useful sheets, I present myself to you to say that from colonial time the *páramos* located at the foot of the mountain called Cariguairazo have belonged to the community that I represent and that without any dispute nor sanction of any kind the community has enjoyed this *páramo*, grazing livestock, collecting firewood, straw, and any other service. This *páramo* has limits with the *páramos* of the community of Indians of Tisaleo to the west, who, taking advantage of the negligence of my constituents, have continued expanding and have even killed several individuals from Apatug. I come for instructions from my constituents to present this complaint. These *páramos* have never before had a line of separation; they are open. The line has not been acknowledged legally... [the line] which separates these *páramos* linked with everything so that this line might be fixed for the first time in order to avoid any disagreement between neighbors.⁶⁰⁹

However, it is evident in the documentation that the community of Tisaleo proposed to hand over the *páramos* of Apatug to the Chilco hacienda in order to free their community *páramos* and halt the violence.⁶¹⁰ The governor of Tungurahua also experienced the urgency to close this conflict as he issued an agreement to divide lands between the private landowners and the community of Tisaleo into two equal parts.

The arbitrary nature of this division led to protests on both sides. It was evident

⁶⁰⁹Ibid. The difficulty of the division can be seen in the quotation of all the geographic landmarks and obstacles beginning at the foot of Caihuairazo, Milancocha, the hill of Poca, Cocha Colorado, the Sanande ravine, the Quishuar Blanco ravine, the Llacapungo ravine, Sanja de Guagra Corral, the Colac Choca ravine, the hill of Pisco Cocha, and Piedra *embillada* (sic).

⁶¹⁰Ibid., f. 106, *Plano de división*. On May 10, 1930, the transaction act is signed, dividing the *páramo* of Tisaleo into two parts of 175 hectares each that corresponded to the Chilco *hacienda* of the Jaramillo family and to the community, respectively.

that a partial and private solution to the land problem in this province would be incomplete and always questionable. The land problem was more political than civil and it was not until the communities and their lawyers were able to pressure this vision before the state and even a legal transformation that would permit the state to see the land as a political and “social” problem once more that the violence ceased in the zone. The same thing happened among the *comuneros* of Huisla and Igualata of the Quero parish and the hacienda family Pérez. There the attempt to establish private property limits with respect to the lands taken from the communities, which had been shared via negotiation, led to serious abuses that dissolved the conditions for mutual living.⁶¹¹ The *hacendados* of the Mochapata *hacienda*, which had appropriated the *páramos* of Sanancajas, were able to put sheep in the Mocha prison and impose a cost for grazing livestock.⁶¹²

The apparently absurd nature of the measurement and the violence executed against the community can be understood only in the context of the hacienda’s attempts to take advantage of the modernizing atmosphere of the civil codes in order to privatize lands and principally to avoid that the communities become able to

⁶¹¹AIFP, MPST Collection, box 173 parroquia Quero, Igualata, cantón Ambato Tungurahua. *Carta Salvador Ashqui, Jerónimo Urco, Rumaldo Siza y Pío Analuiza, a nombre de los comuneros de la parcialidad Igualata de la comunidad de Quero.*

⁶¹²Ibid., Comuneros de Quero contra Matilde Coloma, por apeo y deslinde del páramo de Sanancajas.

negotiate work from outside of the haciendas. In this sense, it was desired that the community would feel obligated to offer more work to access the *páramos* who used to share it. With the help of the political deputy of Mocha, the *hacendados* of the Sevilla family attempted to break down the *comuneros'* autonomous negotiating strategies. The response to this harassment led *comuneros* to rebellion and confrontation with local powers with mattocks and farm tools.

...and said animals you find imprisoned in Mocha and they say that they are going to have documents for working two days a week and if not the poor are going to lose their daily bread as they are in their hands and the herds of Juan Lucero, José Cando, Ángel María Cando, Bartolomé Soria, María Aurora Chimborazo, Manuel Cuzco, and Víctor Manuel Lucero have been taken.⁶¹³

These cases serve to explain how violence arose in the central Sierra during the liberal regime. They permit us to go beyond the image that Ecuadorian historiography tends to repeat of an unfulfilled liberal redemption coupled with a continued paternalistic domination in the haciendas. As Hernán Ibarra proposes, the countryside was characterized by an authority crisis. The evidence is abundant. Various cases of unresolved conflict were on the cusp of rebellion, repression, and internal struggle. Thus, as we have seen, there emerged attempts on behalf of the haciendas to impose privatizations and to expand servitude. This reconstruction permits us to understand

⁶¹³Ibid., f. 66.

better that the crisis of legitimacy that the liberal state confronted at the beginning of the 1920s and the open violence reflected by the massacre of workers in Guayaquil in 1922 and in 1923 in Leito. Tungurahua constituted an depletion of the mechanisms for containing conflict to which the public of the parishes and municipalities had turned on prior occasions. In the case of Leito, on September 13, 1923, 70 soldiers and the political boss of Pelileo, Carlos Loza, attacked the peasants renting land on the hacienda, resulting in 37 peasant deaths, in addition to the death of the political boss himself. Ibarra explains this event as the result of the expansion of an hacienda with aspirations of modernizing itself, occupying lands beyond its recognized limits in order to control extensive forests and deny access to the communities and to the peasants of Poatug and Patate –Urco.⁶¹⁴

The Ecuadorian literature has seen this type of repression in episodes of extraordinary violence directed by the liberal José Luis Tamayo. Yet, more than being demonstrations of state power against communities subjected to “famine” due to the effect of the cacao crisis or *gamonal* abuses, such repression was part of a practice that ignited conflicts in the central Sierra during an entire decade.⁶¹⁵

Experiences in Cotopaxi and Tungurahua were replicated in Chimborazo, one

⁶¹⁴ Ibarra, *Tierra, mercado y capital*.

⁶¹⁵ Ycaza, *Historia del movimiento obrero*, 237. The protest of the peasants of Leito was brutally repressed on September 13, 1923, with troops from the army that carried out the orders of president Tamayo to crush “communist uprisings.”

of the most violent provinces of the central Sierra during that period. In Alausí canton free *comuneros* were violent persecuted on various occasions by employees of the Atapo hacienda of Carlos Donoso Cobo. According to denunciations, they were mobilized along with *conciertos* and employees backed by the police and attacked the peasants, stealing livestock and tools from the Indians that lived outside of the hacienda.⁶¹⁶ Kim Clark proposes that this persecution was a response to the loss of control over the labor supply that the abolition of *concertaje* produced. She argues that before this loss of coercion, a certain privatization of the means to access a labor supply took place that included stripping that supply of its means for an autonomous subsistence and exercising violence against the communities.⁶¹⁷ Clark's explanation indicates that the *haciendas* that demonstrated these attitudes were in processes of expansion. They were livestock haciendas (in the highlands, close to the communities) and with the railway and the cacao crisis, they began processes to augment the production of meat, leather, and wool, thus entering into a modernizing process that implied new types of livestock, new classes of pasture, and new machinery. In this way the access to hacienda lands was limited to community livestock. In addition, it explains that the growth towards livestock production was a

⁶¹⁶AIFP, MPST Collection, box 188, Chimborazo, Alausí, parroquia Guasuntos, pueblos de Guasuntos, Tixan y Palmira, anejo Cherlo.

⁶¹⁷Clark, *The Redemptive Work*, 159-167.

result forced by the break-down of hacienda-community relations that at first protected them from forced enlistment, but that with the elimination of *concertaje* produced a collapse of the appropriation of indigenous labor in the hacienda. Readings of diverse cases of conflict in the provinces of the central Sierra cause us to propose that this economic factor of expansion was crucial in several cantons, including in Alausí. However, violence was also part of the haciendas' response to political mobilization against plans to increase servitude. Although the difference might seem insignificant, it is in fact significant insofar as violence was an instrument directed against political antagonism and not only an instrumental action motivated by economic interests.

In the Colta canton the *comuneros* brought up a demand through the president of the *comuna* Alejandro Cazagallo against the renter of the Colta hacienda and the annexations of the Public Assistance “for having occupied arbitrarily and violently the plain of the western side of the laguna of Colta, taking communal lands belonging to Colta Majipamba and Yanacocha in the name of the Board of the Public Assistance.” The position of the renter would not benefit the hacienda of the state.⁶¹⁸ In this sense, the complaint of the communities came together with the damage being done to the state as the trials that filled the public offices described during the fall of

⁶¹⁸AIFP, MPST Collection, box 198, Colta, 31-V-1940, Chimborazo, cantón Colta, parroquia Sicalpa, haciendas Colta y anexas y comuna Majipamba, f. 13

the liberal state:

The *señor* Luis Benigno Gallegos, ex-renter of the Colta haciendas and annexations... has caused and continues causing damages to the Central Board of Public Assistance of Quito, the administrator of said haciendas, already resisting the restitution of them, though the renting period has come to an end... the deed of the owner retains a considerable amount of land of the “Colta,” “Guailaló,” and “Pichi-corrall” haciendas, calculated to be four thousand hectares and evaluated at two million sucres, according to the report of the expert designated by the Ministry of Social Welfare and Public Assistance.... A large part of the lands have been unduly retained by señor Luis Benigno Gallegos [and] have served for the livestock of neighboring indigenous communities, which are found stripped of this service due to the dispossession perpetrated by this *señor*.⁶¹⁹

On October 14, 1922, just one month before the liberal state undertook a violent repression that caused at least five hundred deaths in Guayaquil, the Congress was alarmed by news arriving from various regions of the country, including news that the renters of the Board of Charity were making private use of and appropriating state resources. Not only were indigenous communities in conflicts with renters of state haciendas but renters themselves had become direct threats to the integrity of state patrimony. However, it was not until the fall of the liberal state that the state gave the Boards of Charity the capacity to take security measures and make use of the police against renters such as Luis Benigno Gallegos.⁶²⁰

⁶¹⁹Ibid., Ejecutivo decree of José María Velasco Ibarra, no. 13, June 6, 1945, f. 8-10.

⁶²⁰Ibid.

It was clear that the authoritarian solution to unresolved conflicts from the nineteenth century would only generate rebellions, repression, and illegitimacy. The issue of land constituted not only a civil transaction but also a political problem. In this sense, the representatives such as socialist lawyers Estuardo Almeida and Gregorio Cordero y León proposed in 1927 (based on the experience of the Colta hacienda) the need to incorporate a principal according to which the land as state patrimony was not an issue of common judges nor of civil right, but rather it was a social right that the state could support in order to generate a resolution to conflicts tied to the idea of an internal government and social well-being.

The elites of the central Sierra were composed of landholding aristocrats and new classes that had benefited from the liberal state, including renters of lands of the Public Charity. This elite, as in the case of the elite of Pichincha, shared a vision of modernization as a paradoxical combination between land privatization, which had been in dispute, and joint ownership with indigenous communities during the previous century. At the same time communities and indigenous families and peasants were feeling greater pressure to provide more unpaid work (i.e. not proletarianization).

5.7 Conclusions.

A comparison with those classic cases of analysis from historic sociology about “paths towards modernization and democracy” gives us the image of an Ecuador between 1910 and 1925 as a case in which many landowners who were anxious to modernize took disputed lands at the same time that they imposed labor terms that expanded *concertaje*. The situation gave rise to conflicts, especially given that the indigenous communities of the central Sierra had already fought for various decades to maintain their autonomy through negotiated land possession and the integration of discontinuous populations.⁶²¹

The liberal regime, despite having ascended to power as a result of an alliance composed of subaltern classes, turned out to be beholden to regional elites that combined expectations to benefit from colonial servitude with expectations to benefit from “modernization,” including the privatization of land and subsidies from urban importers.⁶²² These sectors, as we have seen throughout the central Sierra, were not good allies for the state. To the contrary, they used state instruments to exercise forms of violence and benefit from state resources. This did not help the internal government and produced high levels of illegitimacy for the liberal state. The case of

⁶²¹Moore Jr., *Los orígenes sociales de la dictadura*.

⁶²²See Salazar Bondy, *Lima la Horrible*, for an image of oligarchic society and urbanity in Lima. Also see Burga and Flores Galindo, *Apogeo y crisis*.

Colta in Chimborazo is an indicative example of the appropriation of state resources. The discourse on charity with which the liberal state attempted to construct a consensus and respond to the demand for reparations for colonized populations turned out to be fragile when, particularly in the Sierra, the institutions formed around charity were tied to the expropriation of peasant lands. Violence took over those regions lacking political mediation between the classes in conflict. The state owed the regional elites and to a certain degree was kidnapped by them, despite the important confrontations that secularization implied. These elites did not act as decisively as elites had, for example, in England or in Japan, where they decided to sustain the state. To the contrary, their parasitic nature hurt the state. The elites were not able to divide the peasants to achieve a “peaceful path.” The peasants, for their part, were not able to confront the elites with total success. In provinces in which they were not able to respond, as in Pichincha, the elites did not engage in a real economic modernization, but rather took advantage of their advantages to guarantee rent.

In the central Sierra, disputes accumulated until the fall of the liberal regime. Elites attempted to break down ties and alliances between peasants and urban indigenous settlements, decomposing the communities’ power bases and territorial control. However, the communities also protested the internal colonialism of liberalism's new allies.

The experiences of the 1910s were fundamental to understand how the counter-

revolution that took place in various regions during the liberal regime was answered by indigenous communities that had prior experiences in political alliances with movements and parties that had access to the state and favored them. In these new conditions, these communities renewed their political strategies. Notions of a “top-down modernization” and agreements with respect to a democratization conceived as a gradual civilizing process accompanied the denial negotiation and outbreaks of violence in rural areas of the central Sierra. As in the case of Pichincha, that experience left an important legacy. There arose a rejection of private Catholic charity organizations that had become associated with the expropriation of communities. In the central Sierra, violence was answered by communities that maintained important levels of cohesion and regional articulation. They reached the limits of conventional negotiations over territorial joint ownership and the limits of the liberal state as well, and they sought alternative methods to defend their political agenda.

A break down of negotiations took place around the issues of indigenous autonomy and the custom of joint ownership. The context of an authoritarian modernization reinforced the introduction of private property and the expansion of work for debt. Yet, indigenous communities responded to the attempt to modernize the city while subordinating rural areas with an internal colonial frontier. This contentious reality that produced Indian insurrections and frequent violence on behalf

of the local authorities also caused violent state reactions, such as the repression experienced in Leito, Zumbahua, and other parishes of the central Sierra.

The liberal strategy to strengthen the state institution began to fall apart with its attempts to idealize modernization and elitist civilization. In several cases, the municipal authorities who were in charge of dealing with land and labor issues recognized the demands of the communities. Yet, in almost all parishes a new temptation for a quick and elitist modernization spread through the government as private interests took priority. The elites broke with all processes of negotiation and responded to the consequent rebellions with violence, even using public force under private leadership. The lack of collective interest and of a procedure that could be accepted or converted into common sense was evident in the period.

In fact, orchestrated by regional elites and the Church and only secondarily by the liberal state, parish and municipal police frequently employed violent procedures against rebellions. The liberal state ultimately did not assert itself in regional space and even less so in rural space. The communities, in turn, reacted against attempts to take away their capacity for political negotiation.

The use of force against the old negotiators of the Liberal Party, the Indians, only confirmed the party's fragility. Such force was viewed as even more inconsistent in a context like the central Sierra, where historic expectations had been generated that the liberal state would support the efforts of the communities to detain the

particular ambitions of the white elite and where important community networks existed with an important political memory. The discontent that this condition generated and the activities of local elites who forced their own interests – often times in the name of the state – contributed to the fall of the liberal state. Beyond the cacao crisis, which affected the autonomy of elite exporters as it tied them to onerous debts, the crisis of the liberal state was also a political crisis in various regions and in the heart of the Liberal Party itself.

In the same way, the repression that took place in Guayaquil in 1922 that resulted in six hundred deaths in the capital of gradual democracy is best understood through similar antecedents that refer us to attempts to form a modern city based on a capitalist regime that fed off of an internal colonization of *montuvias* populations, as rural communities in that province were defined.

The violence that confronted powerful local groups in the 1910s transformed into state violence when discontent reached its apex in the 1920s and the liberal state, seized by international finance capital after the fall of cacao between 1914 and 1920, incorporated generalized methods for the repression of working-class mobilization.⁶²³ The end of processes of negotiation and the open and everyday violence that characterized the central Sierra pushed indigenous communities to processes of

⁶²³On the high rate of assassinations of Indians by *hacendados* in Chimborazo, see Marc Becker, “Indigenous Struggles for Land Rights in Twentieth-Century Ecuador,” *Agricultural History* 81, no. 2 (2007): 159-181.

renewal. They entered into dialogue and sought consensus with leftist political organizations to reform the state and the justice system.

In contrast to the process described during the ascent of the Liberal Revolution in which the communities supported the leadership of the Liberal Party and trusted that the state would act according to its promises by representing their interests, the experiences of violence documented in the following pages generated a political turn among the communities that bore fruit in the 1930s and 1940s. The communities exchanged the strategy of delegating representation to the state for a process of constructing political organizations. They generated their own leadership that entered into dialogue with urban political organizations. From their historical and regional relationships, they communities sought to incorporate new legal and organizational forms in order to achieve acknowledgment as legal and political entities before the state, thus initiating a process of corporative representation and establishing alliances with the Left, supporting them and deepening the terms of the tense dispute between the conservative parties and the “democratic” front.⁶²⁴

Remembering the liberal war, several community representatives of Chimborazo and Cotopaxi intervened actively with trials and collective actions in defense of communities during the configuration of the oligarchic state. Later, they

⁶²⁴The democratic front was constituted in the 1930s along the lines of an anti-fascist and anti-feudal school of thought on behalf of socialist, communist, and social liberal (radical) parties.

supported the search of alternative struggles to combat the state of “slavery” developed in the nineteenth century and that entered into crisis in the twentieth century. Young leaders accompanied conflicts during the epoch of the oligarchic state. They were the founders of the first agrarian unions in the 1930s and in the following decade they formed the *Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios* or Ecuadorian Federation of Indians (FEI) in the central Sierra, which was affiliated with the communist party.⁶²⁵ They were significant figures of transition in the formation of new political identities within nascent leftist parties beginning in 1926.

The rejection of private charity on behalf of the communities of Pichincha, as well as the trajectory of conflict and resistance that the communities of the central Sierra experienced after having recognized their failed alliance with the state, contributed to configure new radical alliances in the 1930s. The fall of the oligarchic regime and state reform promoted by the Committee of the July Revolution would have been, according to our proposal, as fragile as the constitutional measures against *concertaje* without the explosion of demands and the help that they gained from the democratic alliance woven between indigenous communities and the Left. These conditions contributed to the formation of an alternative Left.

While in the northern coast of the country – Esmeraldas and Manabí – the

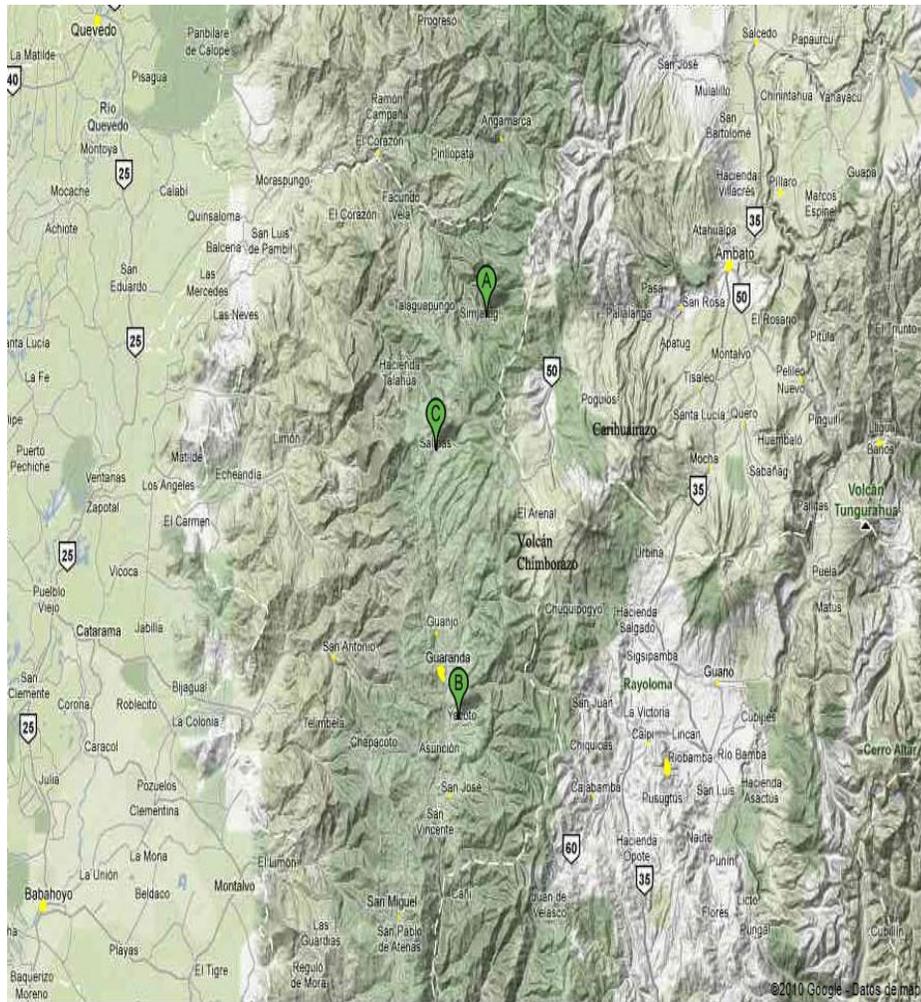
⁶²⁵Kaltmeier, *Jatarishun*. Also see Tiban, et. al., *Movimiento indígena y campesino de Cotopaxi*.

radical armies came together under the leadership of Carlos Concha, indigenous communities began to strengthen political alliances. From these experiences of resistance that transcended local confrontation to weave distinct groups together politically and from these experiences of leadership formation, we can locate the origins of the indigenous movement of the central Sierra.⁶²⁶

The indigenous communities of the central Sierra developed a *corporativist* proposal for political participation. They attempted distinct forms of integration into the political field, as agrarian unions before the state in the 1930s, as confederated Indians within leftist parties in the 1940s, and within the program of functional representation of Indians during two political constitutions in 1929, 1938, and 1944, respectively.⁶²⁷ From the environment of conflict during the liberal state and through multiple attempts at organizing and political dialogue in the 1930s and 1940s, we can observe a historical trajectory of the indigenous and peasant movement in Cotopaxi and Chimborazo.

⁶²⁶Ibid.

⁶²⁷The First Constitution that awarded a functional representation to the Indians was that of 1929. In this constitution, socialists and social liberalism of the July Revolution asserted themselves and in 1935 it was replaced by that of 1906, which reverted various social rights emphasizing once more a liberal legal sense; the functional representations were maintained.



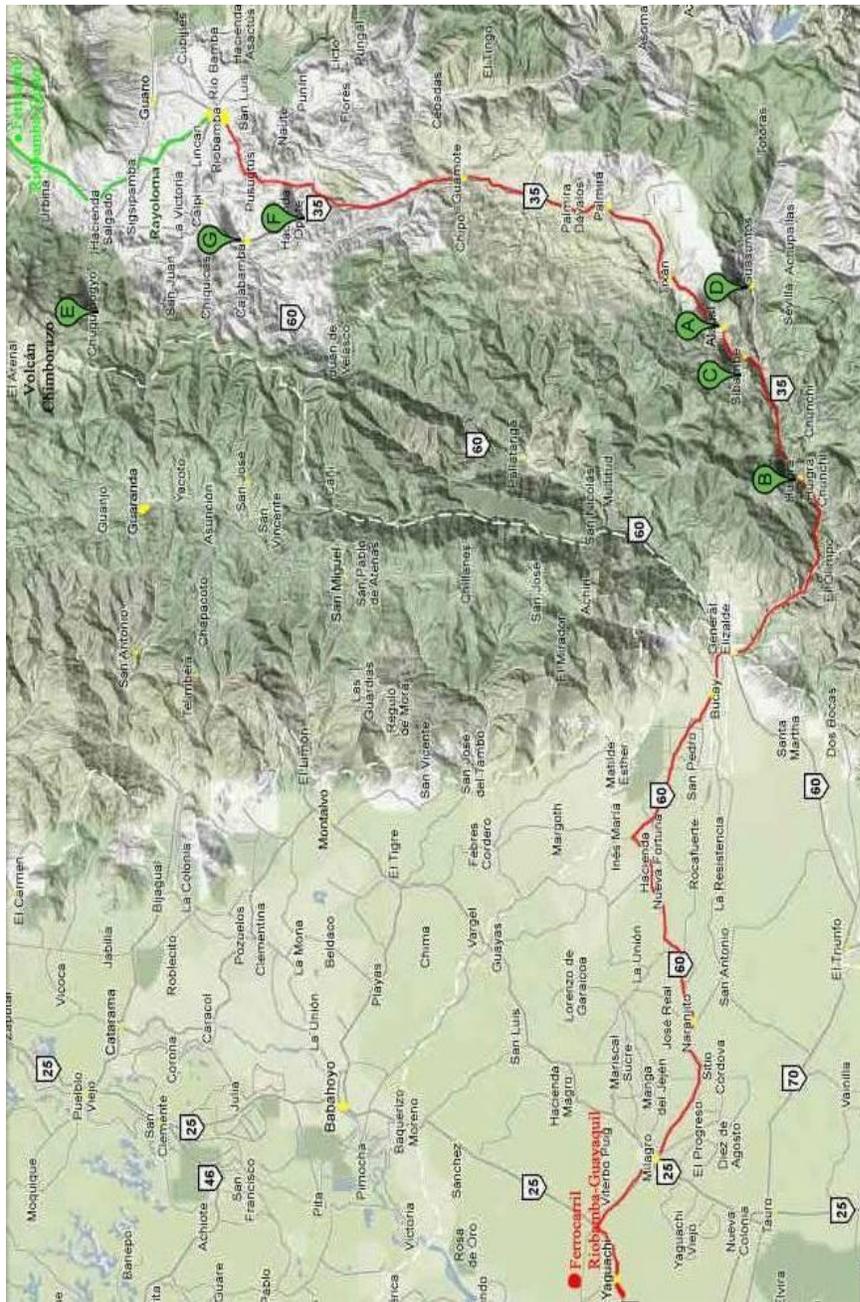
Map 5 – Conflicts in Bolívar.

Symbol	Province	County	Parish	Place
A	Bolívar	San Miguel	Simiatug	Simiatug/ Espino, Quinuacorrall, Simiatug <i>haciendas</i>
B	Bolívar	Guaranda	San Simón/San Lorenzo	San Simón/San Lorenzo/ Casaiche/Shacundo
C	Bolívar	Guaranda	Salinas	Salinas/Matiaví

Table 5 – Conflicts in Bolívar, Map 5.

Symbol	Province	County	Parish	Place
A	Cotopaxi	Pujilí	Zumbahua	Tigua
B	Cotopaxi	Pujilí	Zumbahua	Zumbahua
C	Cotopaxi	Pujilí	Pilaló	Apagua
D	Cotopaxi	Pujilí	Guangaje	Guangaje
E	Cotopaxi	Pujilí	Pilaló	Pilaló
F	Cotopaxi	Saquisilí	Saquisilí	Saquisilí/Toacaso
G	Cotopaxi	Pujilí	Pujilí	Salamalag <i>hacienda/Comuna</i> Maca Grande.

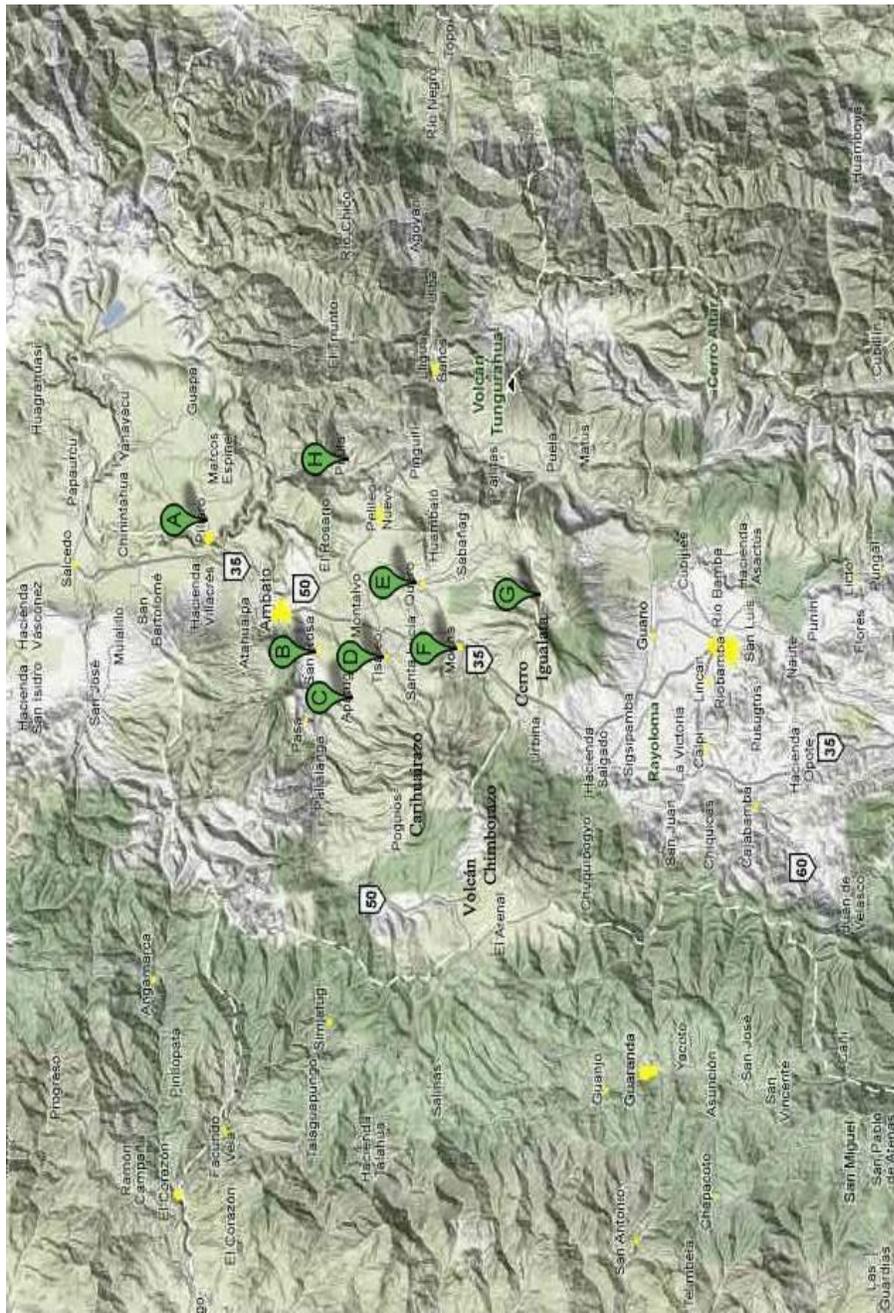
Table 6 – Cotopaxi, Map 6.



Map 7 - Conflicts in Chimborazo

Symbol	Province	County	Parish	Place
A	Chimborazo	Alausí	Alausí	Alausí
B	Chimborazo	Alausí	Huigra	Huigra
C	Chimborazo	Alausí	Sibambe	Sibambe
D	Chimborazo	Alausí	Guasuntos, Tixan, Palmira	Guasuntos/Cherlo/ Atapo <i>hacienda</i>
E	Chimborazo	Guano	San Andrés	Hacienda Chuquipogyo/ <i>Calshi community</i>
F	Chimborazo	Colta	Cajabamba	Ocpote <i>hacienda</i>
G	Chimborazo	Colta	Cajabamba	Colta lagoon/ <i>Colta hacienda</i>

Table 7 - Conflicts in Chimborazo, Map 7.



Map 8 – Conflicts in Tungurahua.

Symbol	Province	County	Parish	Place
A	Tungurahua	Píllaro	Píllaro	Montugtusa-Tasinteo <i>community</i>
B	Tungurahua	Ambato	Santa Rosa/ Pilahuín	Santa Rosa/Pilahuín/ Chibuleo/Santa Lucía <i>communities</i>
C	Tungurahua	Ambato	Santa Rosa	Apatug
D	Tungurahua	Ambato	Tisaleo	Tisaleo
E	Tungurahua	Ambato	Quero	Quero/Sanancajas highlands
F	Tungurahua	Ambato	Mocha	Mocha/Mochapata and Chuquipogyo <i>haciendas</i>
G	Tungurahua	Ambato	Mocha	Igualata
H	Tungurahua	Pelileo	Patate	Leyto <i>hacienda</i>

Table 8 - Tungurahua, Map 8.

CHAPTER 6: Gradual Democracy, Concentration, and Violence in the “Cradle of Liberalism:” Guayas, 1900-1922.

Ecuadorian historiography has often portrayed the liberal state in Ecuador as an expression of the interests and needs of the agrarian export bourgeois of the port of Guayaquil. However, this regime had to respond to a complex and contradictory series of pressures, including pressures from the working class and from tensions produced at the heart of the party itself. Peasants had expected that after the Liberal Party's military triumph, land concentration would be reversed and a liberation from *concertaje* would follow. In turn, peasant economies would materialize throughout the coastal provinces. In the same way, the artisans and other workers of urban trades that had multiplied in number along with the growth of Guayaquil maintained expectations that with labor regulations the party of the “national regeneration” would overcome the exclusive practices of the political “*argolla*.”

The National Assembly of 1896 received a series of communications from Guayas in which popular sectors expressed demands for political recognition and even for the right to vote (this demand was taken up once more during the process of regional institutionalization between 1906 and 1922). The governors and municipal governments of the coast that were associated with the Liberal Party promoted a program of inclusion that was to be gradual. They promised to support the evolution

of the working class through the instruction of virtues and knowledge, which were to be exercised as a prerequisite for citizenship. This created a tension between demands for immediate recognition and promises of gradual inclusion. Between 1919 and 1922, the relations between radicals and gradualists declined dramatically, culminating in one of the most dramatic acts of state violence that the country had experienced. The massacre of 1922 left more than four hundred workers dead in the central streets of Guayaquil. Academics have had difficulties explaining this fact and to link it to processes “normal to state formation.” Yet, it has remained in the memory of working-class political organizations as a landmark in the transformation toward new forms of radicalism.

Peasants recognized the advance of land concentration and *concertaje*. They had been denied access to the justice system in the countryside, where coercion was more common than negotiation and the promise of a gradual inclusion did not seem plausible. They sought alternative paths to autonomy. These paths changed dramatically over the course of two decades from land colonization to the legal defense of parish settlements and populations, agrarian unionism, and the development of leftist political organizations.

The powerful “moderate” faction of the Liberal Party in post-revolutionary Guayas (1905-1924) had to confront the armed uprising of a radical war in the northern coast, where large extensions of land were given over to international

companies and where president Leonidas Plaza was accused of having double-crossed the party. At the same time, the Liberal Party had to maintain a relationship with the “Clerical Party” (conservatism), which had renewed its power in the Sierra.

When the second government of Eloy Alfaro came to an end in 1911, Alfaro insisted on the need to develop the democratic system. He promoted the candidacy of Emilio Estrada against Gen. Flavio Alfaro and rejected the candidacy of Alfredo Baquerizo Moreno, for having been very close to Leonidas Plaza. Little time passed, however, before he withdrew his support from Estrada and expressed his desire to put power back into military hands.

The surprising death of Estrada meant that the then president of the Senate, conservative Carlos Freile Zaldumbide, took the presidency. Subsequently, he declared various radicals throughout the country as traitors, including Flavio Alfaro, who was the Supreme Boss (Jefe Supremo) of Esmeraldas and Pedro Montero, who was Supreme Boss in Guayaquil. In this context, Gen. Leonidas Plaza and Gen. Julio Andrade, who were the “moderate” faction of liberalism, fought radicals in the name of the government.⁶²⁸

Eloy Alfaro decided to return from Panama to attempt to mediate between factions of the Liberal Party, but his offer was not accepted. He was arrested together

⁶²⁸ The concept of *Liberalismo del Orden* comes from Arturo Andrés Roig; see Espinosa Tamayo, *Psicología y sociología del pueblo ecuatoriano*.

with other radical generals in Guayaquil. There exists a debate about the circumstances in which Alfaro was transferred to prison in Quito, and murdered together with six other generals. On January 28, 1912, a “mob” that emerged in Quito seemingly without opposition perpetrated the murder of Gen. Eloy Alfaro.⁶²⁹ In a performance that had been called the *hoguera barbara*, their bodies were mutilated and burned in Quito’s central *Ejido*.⁶³⁰

According to the liberal intellectual José Peralta, the murder were organized by a combination of forces represented by Plaza, Zaldumbide, and representatives of popular conservatism. He posited that the Catholic press had motivated them before the indifference of the Archbishop González Suarez. In his work, Peralta argued that the Catholic press instigated worker circles of the SAIP and the Catholic Center for Workers of 1912 by preaching “relentlessly the extermination and annihilation of liberalism” in newspapers such as *El Ecuatoriano*, *Fray Gerundio*, *The Voice of the South*, *The Crown of María*, *The Dialogue*, and *The Echo of Azuay*, among others, and that included a group of artisans linked to private charity works in the Sierra.

⁶²⁹ José Peralta, *Eloy Alfaro y sus victimarios. Apuntes para la historia ecuatoriana* (Cuenca: Offset Monsalve, 1977)

⁶³⁰ General Eloy Alfaro, General Flavio Alfaro, General Medardo Alfaro, General Pedro Montero, General Ulpiano Páez, General Manuel Serrano, and Colonel Belisario Torres were arrested in Guayaquil. Social realism and the reconstruction of Alfaro’s assassination is presented in Alfredo Pareja Diezcanseco’s novel: *La Hoguera Barbara* (Quito: Libresa, 1997 [1 ed., 1944]).

⁶³¹Colonel Carlos Concha, a younger member of the radical military and member of the provincial elite from Esmeraldas, formed a guerrilla in response that fought Leonidas Plaza's regime with *montoneras* composed of *montuvio* peasants and afro-Ecuadorians. They wished to recover the party, struggle against the large property model in Guayaquil and the advance of *concertaje*, and overturn the issuance of 200,000 hectares of land in Esmeraldas to the English government in exchange for bonds. Concha united with other radical leaders such as Carlos Alfaro in the province of Manabi. Internal wars of liberalism continued from 1913 to 1916, when the government of Alfredo Baquerizo Moreno was able to capture Carlos Concha and demobilize the guerrilla.

In a telegram from Ambato in December, 1913, Plaza's ex-Minister of the Interior, Juan Benigno Vela, warned Plaza that the conservatives would take advantage of the war against radicalism: "do not trust the highland aristocrat Freile Zaldumbide...do not become like the Colombian president Rafael Nuñez, a destroyer of liberalism."

You have a good army, public opinion in your favor, the justice system on your side, the entire Liberal Party that in the hour of danger comes together to

⁶³¹ Peralta refers to Catholic workers represented by the CCO and the SAIP. The minutes of both organizations during those years have disappeared from the archives of both institutions. Peralta, *Eloy Alfaro*.

protect the government. This party is not a small circle as those *señores* think; it is a large collection of direct and enlightened men that, since the year 95, has been working in the struggle, challenging impotent conservatism. It is clear that those of the Historic Party want to trick you and enter into the cabinet, the governorships, the leadership of the army. But you are not Rafael Núñez, that character who has stained his name and his spotless history by betraying his party.⁶³²

However, after various defeats of Concha and the coincidence that led to his capture, Plaza sought out quick alliances, abandoning the program of his first government in which he had spoken of the need to consolidate the regime, improve public opinion, and strengthen the party system. In his second government, Plaza put negotiated with various regional elites to avoid the emergence of radicalism outside of Esmeraldas. Internal conflict in addition to the fall of cacao exportation at the beginning of World War I caused Plaza to sign the Moratorium Law (August 7, 1914). With this law, Plaza tried to avoid gold exports and suspended the convertibility of Ecuador's currency. The law also gave the state the tools to access credit from private banks in order to finance the state of exception. Plaza put the Commercial and Agriculture Bank (BAG) in charge of guarding the gold reserves and emitting bills for public expenditure. When the cacao markets fell, the elite accessed loans from BAG, which

⁶³² Pio Jaramillo Alvarado, *La asamblea liberal y sus aspectos políticos* (Quito: Imprenta Editorial Quito, 1924).

was allowed to issue money without gold reserves. In this way, elite expenditures on symbols of progressive civilization in the cities were able to last until 1919. These decisions impacted the destiny of the Liberal Party since, between 1914 and 1920. A program of party consolidation employed many propaganda mechanisms to promote the idea that the party was leading the country toward democracy. Yet, this discourse came into conflict with a process that left the party, the state, and the economy of Guayaquil in the hands of bank creditors who had little interest in the survival of political negotiation.

This chapter evaluates the strategies of working-class actors to resist the personal power of the elite in Guayas who were able to control a large territory and access the private use of public force. It further evaluates the capacity of the regime to respond to regional conflicts.

The chapter begins with an analysis of the historiography that tends to characterize the liberal state as an expression of elite interests and that understands the failure of the liberal state as an effect of a decline in agricultural exports. I then propose an alternative interpretation by focusing on failed processes of political mediation that led to the definitive collapse of the Liberal Party between 1922 and 1925.

Along the same lines as Manuel Chiriboga's analysis, this chapter observes that the Liberal Party's promises were not fulfilled. It allowed land concentration and

coercion, leading to increased class conflict. Guayaquil became an urban scenario for commercial integration with rural areas and it also became the scenario of democratic civilization programs, as urban institutions promoted social inclusion and social rights among a select group of the working class. In the meantime, rural areas continued to suffer land concentration and over-exploitation, ultimately generating more radical working-class identities.

Routine violence surrounded the promise for gradual citizenship made to the Workers' Confederation of Guayas (COG) while indigenous communities, peasants, *conciertos*, day-laborers, and salaried workers re-positioned themselves with respect to new threats from capital expansion. Such conflict led to the emergence of important arguments that sparked processes of political identity formation – arguments with respect to land, rights, the autonomy of populations enclosed by haciendas, land distribution, *concertaje*, and the problem of sovereignty in regards to transnational companies. In this context, this chapter argues that the character of the state became increasingly clear, as did its limited capacity of transformation. This limit was ultimately reflected by the limited capacity of the governorship and municipality of Guayaquil to make its democratic rhetoric credible. As a consequence, more radical working-class identities formed which distanced themselves from “political liberalism.”

This reading allows us to understand how the conditions of political dispute in distinct regions of the country led to the fall of the liberal regime; more so than the crisis of cacao exportation or other economic difficulties. This chapter recovers the voices of actors involved in regional conflicts and offers a description of the events that generated a slow process of polarization between actors. *Montoneras* and cacao *hacendados* were not “natural” antagonists. A political process that we wish to reconstruct in this chapter culminated with the state's criminalization of the “exemplary” civil society of Guayas. Workers' organizations, in turn, developed an identity more closely related to rural struggle, unionism, and the Left.

Thus, in effect, I propose a dialogue with the historiography concerning the workers' massacre of November 15, 1922. The massacre is best understood within a broad process in which the interaction between classes lost credibility and efficiency due to a political culture that was constructed around the idea of gradual democratization. This loss of credibility and efficiency was due to a number of processes, including the deterioration of mediation mechanisms; the emergence in rural areas of discontent actors, including workers in transnational companies; the migration of the peasantry to the city, carrying their own memories of rural conflict; and the regeneration of the COG's political leadership, which began to create new forms of radical identification, organization, and political agitation independent of the party.

Guayas was the province in which the Liberal Party had its greatest presence and leadership, and it was the origin of resources necessary to construct exemplary political institutions. Thus, it is important to analyze the visions of democracy and characteristics of colonialism present in the region, as well as the conflict over political reform that the liberal state failed to deal with in the region, but which obligated future states to undertake.

6.1 Historiographic Visions of the Liberal State and its Crisis

In dialogue with authors such as Tulio Halperin Donghi and Marcos Kaplan, the work of Agustín Cueva influenced Ecuadorian historical sociology in the 1970s with two analytical approaches to understanding the liberal state. The first characterized the liberal state as an oligarchic bourgeois state whose structure was repeated in various Latin American countries insofar as their dominant classes were subordinated to international capital -- “the super-structural expression of the process of implanting capitalism as a dominant mode of production.”⁶³³ The second characterized Ecuador as a country in which unequal exchanges took place along with a “wider structural heterogeneity explicable in terms of the articulation of diverse modes of production without whose analysis it is impossible to understand the

⁶³³ Agustín Cueva, *El desarrollo del capitalismo en América Latina* (México: Siglo XXI Editores, 1977), 127-131.

concrete development of the elements.”⁶³⁴

Various authors have agreed with these ideas. The work of Manuel Chiriboga and Andrés Guerrero has demonstrated how a commercial and financial bourgeois of Guayaquil based on cacao income was able to specialize itself, distancing itself from rural spaces in order to form a differentiated economic sphere, principally in trade and finances.⁶³⁵ They have proposed that this sphere was able to subordinate the cacao producers and the state itself. According to the work of John Uggén, between 1885 and 1916, the spectacular growth of exportation assured this bourgeois of powerful political and economic influence. “The increase in exportation in that period was of 420 percent -- from 11,832 metric tons in 1885 to 49,646 metric tons in 1916 - -; in that moment the exporters of the *Pepa de oro* (cacao) exported half of the global production from Ecuador.”⁶³⁶

The central argument is that the liberal state behaved in accordance with the direction that this bourgeois gave it, settled the conditions for the emergence of monopolistic capitals, and integrated production into the largest commercial houses in world markets. The Liberal Party in effect aided North American international

⁶³⁴ Ibid., 97-100. Also see Gonzalo Ortiz Crespo, “Las condiciones internacionales 1875-1914” in Vol 9 of *Nueva historia del Ecuador, época republicana. cacao, capitalismo y revolución liberal*, ed. Ayala Mora, 11-55.

⁶³⁵ Chiriboga, *Jornaleros y gran propietarios*; Andrés Guerrero, *Los oligarcas del cacao* (Quito: Editorial El Conejo, 1981).

⁶³⁶ Boletín del Banco Central 1963, vol. 36, in John F. Uggén, *Tenencia de la tierra y movilizaciones campesinas zona de Milagro* (Quito: ACLAS, 1993), 26.

predominance.⁶³⁷ The evidence authors tend to present include large investments in the construction of a railway and a modern port and the introduction of gold. The agricultural export landholding elite, as well as the modernizing liberal state, depended on commerce and its taxes during the cacao boom, and internal debt was a type of guarantee for growth for the financial sector of the coast. Between 1900 and 1924, the liberal presidents Gen. Leonidas Plaza (1912-1916), Alfredo Baquerizo Moreno (1916-1920), and José Luis Tamayo (1920-1924) wagered on sustaining high levels of spending even after the fall of exports due to the First World War.

In her studies on the Board of Charity of Guayaquil (JBG), Patricia de la Torre provided new elements to understand the cacao elite's undeniable power. She proposed that large cacao families, merchants, and bankers used the state “as formidable leverage to accumulate during various periods in which they remained in the government through becoming indebted to financial capitals.” As part of their investments, they fomented at the municipal level the establishment of modern health institutions, media with newspapers such as the *Telégrafo*, philanthropic societies, and cultural institutions, etc.⁶³⁸ For de la Torre, the Board of Charity of Guayaquil constituted a private corporate power that strongly resisted a national regime that

⁶³⁷ Gonzalo Ortiz Crespo, “Las condiciones internacionales 1875-1914.” Along these lines in Latin America, see the work of Tulio Halperin Dongui, *Historia contemporánea de América Latina* (Buenos Aires: Alianza Editorial, 1977).

⁶³⁸ Patricia de la Torre, *Lo privado y lo local en el estado ecuatoriano. Junta de beneficencia de Guayaquil* (Quito: Abya Yala, 1999).

would distribute income and positions. It benefited from the powers awarded by the state to administer the health regime at a regional level beginning in 1906.

At the beginning of the 1990s, two highly influential works in contemporary Ecuadorian historiography were published to renew the interpretation of the role of the political process during the liberal regime. They went beyond the influence of the commercial bourgeois of the ports and approached analyses of the national conditions of the liberal state, the influence of distinct regions on the national state, and the role of distinct classes in the creation of consensus from above.⁶³⁹ Rafael Quintero and Erika Silva asked themselves why the bourgeois did not generate a profound change that would have involved processes of political integration and land distribution to peasants and would have taken personal power away from the landholding elite.

Their studies have provided new and rich evidence about the diversity of class factions involved in state configuration between the revolution of 1895 and the crisis of the liberal state (1922-1925). In the analysis proposed by Enrique Ayala, the *montonero* and indigenous peasantry were actors who were overthrown after the war. The relevant tensions that followed were generated at the heart of the Liberal Party.⁶⁴⁰ Similarly, Quintero and Silva focused almost exclusively on the elites under the

⁶³⁹ Quintero, ed., *La cuestión regional y el poder*; and Quintero and Silva, *Ecuador, una nación en ciernes*.

⁶⁴⁰ Ayala Mora, *Historia de la revolución liberal*.

assumption that they represented regional leadership, where stable systems of domination existed that were derived from the productive structure that governed the peasantry and worker-artisan sectors.

The response to questions about the lack of bourgeois radicalism for Quintero and Silva was that the bourgeois had no interest in transforming productive relations and opposed the development of industry since it defined itself as an exporter of primary resources and an importer. It therefore promoted the unequal development that characterized regional spaces in the country through commercial capital. In this sense, they characterized the national political process as a correlation of forces between regions, each defined by the landholding bourgeois power and its factions: the hacienda, cacao producers, and commercial capital. This correlation of factions of elites negotiated and disputed the orientation of the state. Quintero and Silva have proposed phrases such as “the bourgeois-landholding state sustained by an oligarchic pact,” which described Ecuador as an incomplete Junker model of modernization⁶⁴¹.

Although Quintero and Silva were correct in positing that distinct regions of the country fragmented the political capacity of the state, these regions cannot be characterized according to a diversity of modes of production that also determined their “superstructures.” Academics have thoroughly questioned the reduction of the political field to structures based on “modes of production.” The principal criticism

⁶⁴¹ Quintero and Silva, *Ecuador, una nación en ciernes*.

has been that the class category is not comprehensible from a view centered on the division of labor but rather requires an understanding of how actors themselves generate identities and strategies with political content.⁶⁴² In Ecuador, political parties have not been sustained by a single class in any region but rather have depended on varying regional political arrangements.

The possibility to “get down to the level where class conflict and the contradictory reproduction of power relations determine the form that the transition will take”⁶⁴³ permits us to evaluate the political capacity of the liberal state to incorporate and translate conflicts on the regional level. Class conflicts on the regional level conditioned the situation of the elites and their mode of relating to the state, as in the case of Pichincha, Tungurahua, and Cotopaxi, three provinces with distinct social configurations and with distinct conflicts.

In this sense, it is enlightening to consider the Latin American historiography that has observed that beyond the logic of capital, a great political effort – always contentious – has led to the establishment of distinct production regimes and forms of social control in Latin American economies.⁶⁴⁴ Moreover, this historiography has

⁶⁴² Jorge Luis Acanda, *Traducir a Gramsci* (La Habana, Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 2007).

⁶⁴³ Florencia Mallon, *The Defense of Community in Perú's Central Highlands: Peasant Struggle and Capitalist Transition, 1860-1940* (Princeton: Princeton University, 1983).

⁶⁴⁴ Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba*.

contributed to an analysis of how working classes and their dialogues with other classes in conflicts over regional spaces led to state reforms in the twentieth century. “Processes of social and political organization that gradually supplied many workers with the cultural tools, the organizational capacities, and the confidence to dedicate themselves to collective action” are essential for understanding the challenges of the evolution of oligarchies and the paths of distinct countries toward the formation of nation-states that would include labor reforms, the expansion of the political system, and agrarian reforms in the twentieth century.⁶⁴⁵

In addition, this historiography has questioned the vision of immutable territorial domains, has identified processes of peasant resistance, and has even identified how the peasantry (in its regional and ethnic variants) has been an influential actor in the formation of multi-class alliances and certain democratic political organizations. Throughout this thesis, I have observed how in the nineteenth century, neither the hacienda nor the landholding power represented stable forces. With respect to the first decades of the twentieth century, waves of progress and state modernization generated expectations that brought about violent confrontation between actors that sought their own opportunities during processes of change. Indigenous communities constituted a sector of powerful pressure in the region, though they saw their alliances with other classes weaken during the liberal regime.

⁶⁴⁵ Bergquist, *Los trabajadores en la historia latinoamericana*.

Furthermore, the landholding elite were a class in formation, perhaps particularly during the liberal regime, when lands were issued to a new sector tied to the Liberal Party.

In order to understand the internal tensions of the Liberal Party between radical and moderate factions that ended up generating armed conflicts among themselves, one must understand the political position of its components as classes in regional power struggles.⁶⁴⁶ Regions were theaters of conflict and tension in which the regional existence of the liberal and conservative parties was negotiated. The regions were not solely characterized by regional productive systems

Studies have not taken into account as relevant factors in the configuration of the state and of the liberal regime specifically the cycles of peasant protest and the processes of incorporating an urban subaltern class into political parties in development. Without considering these processes, we cannot understand the strength of the regime and its mechanisms for sustaining itself, nor can we recognize how war and post-war pressures shaped its character, nor what its mechanisms for resolving

⁶⁴⁶ Examples include the case of the quick displacement of radicalism in Pichincha and the establishment of an internal colonial re-arrangement headed by the *Catholic Social Action*, as well as the transition of the central Sierra from a scenario with a history of loyalties to historic liberalism and even from processes of redistribution to peasant communities sponsored by *the Liberal Party* to convert itself into a scenario of very high levels of violence and conflict in the 1910s and 1920s, thus offering us elements with which to observe the manner in which the loyalties to liberalism were at play at the regional level and indices of the regional influence in the configuration of the central state.

conflicts were. The significance of conflicts between elites escape us if we know little about the formation of elites as political actors in contexts of regional disputes.

Having analyzed conflicts in the provinces of the Sierra before addressing processes in the coast, I have established that the political field in Ecuador was not determined by a modernization promoted by the financial or the landholding bourgeois but rather through competition between regional forces over the very meaning of transformation.⁶⁴⁷

As Allan Knight has observed, in countries that were not able to universalize citizenship in the nineteenth century, social rights that were won by the force of organization and by strategies of revolutionary alliances, preceded civil and political rights.⁶⁴⁸ In this sense, it is crucial to observe that the processes of democratization in Ecuador did not come from economic evolution or modernization but rather from

⁶⁴⁷ As we have seen in other provinces, several regional actors sought through commercial expansion and the framework of legal modernization of the liberal state an opportunity to convert themselves into landholders, while others sought to expand internal colonialism. Various actors positioned themselves before this possibility, including urban working classes, but also indigenous communities that responded to the weakness of their previous alliances with liberalism through various mechanisms that included mobilization, resistance, boycott, and the beginnings of a new radicalism. Their position would be incomprehensible without reference to their agenda in previous processes as negotiators of the early republic and as crucial negotiators during the military triumph of liberalism in the Sierra. It would also be incomprehensible without reference to how modernizing mechanisms formed part of counter-revolutionary strategies.

⁶⁴⁸ Knight, *Revolución, democracia y populismo*.

political processes of dispute through which one can observe the organization of pressuring forces with important popular presence, agendas, and alternative political mediations. As we have seen, the Liberal Revolution demonstrated the immense capacity for organization that the struggle against the aristocratic regimes and *progresismo* had; however, we know less about the political character of the regime once it entered into processes of institutionalization and needed to attend to social pressures while demobilizing these actors militarily.

In context, once more the question about the composition of power stands out – that is, the question about the *proportion between coercion and consensus* that would distinguish the interaction between regional actors and between regional actors and the state in this specific period of political formation. As Gramscian scholars like Guha and Mallon have observed, the proportion between coercion and consensus in forms of social mobilization implemented in certain territorial spaces and in relation to a social hierarchy between actors permits us to understand relations between everyday forms of power and political processes of democratic or authoritarian construction.⁶⁴⁹ In this thesis I have established a bridge between these categories and those of the expansion of internal colonialism.⁶⁵⁰ In this sense, the motor that

⁶⁴⁹ Joseph y Nugent, eds., *Everyday Forms of State Formation*.

⁶⁵⁰ On the colonial articulation of the social totality in Latin American social formations, see Sempat Assadourian, *Modos de producción*. As we have argued before, the work of Viotti Da Costa, *Crowns of Glory, Tears of Blood: the Demerava*

activated distinct stages of the revolutionary process of constructing a national state in Ecuador was the politization of working classes and their capacity to form strategic alliances, to organize themselves to pressure, and to modify the political field and its rules, rather than the ambiguous economic modernization that formed part of the oligarchies' political program.⁶⁵¹ The interrelation between the peasantry and other social classes has been fundamental in the history of Ecuador at the moment of re-evaluating conditions for the configuration of democratic political forms.

Slave Rebellion of 1823 (Oxford: Oxford University press, 1997); Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba*; and Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba*, can be read as an interpretation of the original proposal of the theorists of modes of production developed for the comprehension of problems of labor emancipation and citizenship in contexts in which political sovereignty must be constructed in opposition to the colonial social articulation. The concept of internal colonialism has been the object of a rich debate in distinct sources of social thought. As we have seen in the introduction, it is a concept linked and historically opposed to the hegemonic process in the national construction in Gramsci, *The Southern Question*; Mariátegui, *Siete Ensayos*, Zavaleta Mercado, *Lo nacional-popular en Bolivia*; Guha, *Dominance Without Hegemony*; González Casanova, "Colonialismo interno;" Stavenhagen, *Conflictos étnicos*. The historical dilemma between internal colonialism and the hegemonic process passes either explicitly or implicitly through a large part of the literature on the formation of the nation-state in Latin America. In Latin American literature, the attention on the analysis of schemes through which internal colonialism operated has been less pronounced than the attention it has been given in Southeast Asia, for example, where the continuities between colonialism and nationalism have been studied Guha, and Manu Goswami, *Producing Indi. From Colonial Economy to National Space* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004). Also less attention is given the conformation of collective actors in processes of decolonization and the formation of democratic regimes in part due to recent history in Latin America. However, there also exist recent studies with sophisticated analysis of the relation between internal colonialism, classifications and racial racial hierarchies, and processes of territorialization.

⁶⁵¹ As Knight suggests for the Mexican Revolution, "The Mexican Revolution."

In contrast to the observations of Miguel Ángel Centeno, for whom (in the framework of Charles Tilly's thesis) the military experience in Latin America was less significant and, therefore, there were not the same effects of political expansion and state transformation that took place in Europe, the civil war in Ecuador did in fact generate an opening for rival notions of political identification. These identifications included the working class and represented the organizational and ideological origins of notions of nation that competed with one another.⁶⁵² Though the central state did not have homogeneous control over the production of nationalism throughout the country, the conservative and liberal parties evolved after the war to become more complex institutional regimes and developed distinct visions of the nation that circulated and were appropriated by diverse social classes. Certainly liberal patriotism in the context of the institutionalization of the liberal regime diminished, but it offered mechanisms of integration and began to move beyond allegory in a sector of subaltern classes.

6.2 Political Mediation, Promises, and Threats Regarding the Gradual Inclusion of the Pueblo in Guayaquil: The Worker's Confederation of Guayas.

In Guayaquil as in other Latin American cities that grew and were transformed during the oligarchic state, an urban renewal arose that emulated patterns of the

⁶⁵² Centeno, *Blood and Debt*.

European metropolis in terms of style, services, and even entertainment. Urban development was not linked to a rationalization of space for productive and industrial re-organization, but it did connect the city to world markets through modern technologies and services.⁶⁵³ The elites of Guayaquil invested economic, intellectual, and institutional resources in its vision of modernization to generate an identity for the Liberal Party as a political organization that was spreading a democratic culture in contrast with elitism and Catholic fundamentalism as the Conservative Party in the Sierra.

The symbolic rivalry between conservative and liberal elites, as well as the political promises made by the Liberal Party, generated more complex political mediation than those that authors have recognized in Lima, for example. In Guayaquil there was a very strong discourse in promotion of local workers. In this sense, in addition to public policies on sanitation and eugenic discourses that had spread through various cities integrated into the world markets in the epoch, the Philanthropic Society of Guayas and the Charity Committee of Guayaquil (JBG) promoted the image of a harmonious integration of classes while they spoke out

⁶⁵³ On the constitution of Lima in the context of an oligarchic modernization see Heraclio Bonilla, *Guano y burguesía en el Perú: El contraste de la experiencia peruana con las economías de exportación del Ecuador y Bolivia* (Quito: FLACSO, 1994). Also Burga and Flores Galindo, *Apogeo y crisis*.

against the aristocratic character of the elites of the Sierra.⁶⁵⁴ The construction of Guayaquil as an example of democratic civilization contrasted with an image of the Sierra as being dominated by *gamonalismo* and *concertaje*. The member organizations of the Workers' Confederation of Guayas (COG) had in their statutes a rejection of *concertaje* in the Sierra (without mentioning, as we will see, the growth of similar practices in the agrarian zones of the coast).⁶⁵⁵ Thus, the statutes of the workers' associations linked to the COG called for – together with the objectives of mutual assistance – the end of Indian *concertaje* in the Sierra and stressed the value of liberal philanthropy. The references to workers in Guayaquil frequently contrasted with the *obrerismo* developed by the Catholic Social Action and disputed the best way to integrate workers into civil society. In this sense, the biographer of the COG, José Buenaventura Navas, defended the liberal value of philanthropy and the spread of science as a vehicle of integration as opposed to the preaching of faith and moral virtues among Catholic associations:

The vast philanthropic society is not a meeting in which sermons and Ave Marias are fabricated, but instead in its workshops the stroke of the hammer echos, electric apparati vibrate, typographic presses move; listen to the echo of thousands of young voices that whisper the first rudiments of science and for which the pueblo should find its path to nation.⁶⁵⁶

⁶⁵⁴ Marcos Cueto, ed., *El rastro de la salud en el Perú* (Lima: Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia, IEP, 2009).

⁶⁵⁵ Semanario no. 1 (Guayaquil: Imprenta de la Confederación Obrera, 1906).

⁶⁵⁶ Navas, *Evolución social del obrero en Guayaquil*.

This province, headed by Guayaquil, constituted a scenario of particularly rich exploration for the study of the advances and limits of political mediation during the liberal regime. Guayas was in effect the region in which the Liberal Party placed the greatest emphasis on generating a vision of interdependence between progress and democracy. In Guayaquil, resources were invested and institutional diagrams were developed that included a sectional government and private institutions with “philanthropic” ends, such as the Charity Committee of Guayaquil and the Philanthropic Society of Guayas, which sponsored this extensive network of corporations that represented the *obrerismo* of the port under the name of the COG. The elites promoted the image of the Liberal Party as a political organization with a working-class social base and saw as part of its mission the promotion of associations and the stimulation of public expression through media, which were viewed as signs of an active civil society that in turn corresponded to the democratic project of the liberal homeland.

As Jaime Durán Barba observes in one of the first systematic works on *obrerismo* in Guayas, one of the most interesting experiments that the Liberal Party implemented was its promotion of working-class organizations that did not reproduce a strictly urban union order. Various trades and strata were organized which were integrated into larger confederations, as were the Association of Instruction and Entertainment, Sons of Labor, and the COG. Both Sons of Labor and the COG were

founded during the first government of Alfaro with the support of Miguel Albuquerque Vives, veteran of the Cuban independence.⁶⁵⁷ Between 1898 and 1920 the associations multiplied. The Union of Bakers was founded and joined in 1898 and circles such as the Society of the Fifth of June, ex soldiers of the liberal war that had passed into civil life in Guayaquil, the Tomas Briones Society of Cacao Workers that identified themselves as radicals, and the Sons of Labor Society *Society Sons of Labor* all integrated together with nuclei of small, intermediary merchants of peasant production from the central Sierra such as the Market Suppliers' Society with its origins in Ambato. Liberal associations with origins in coastal indigenous communities such as the Agricultural Society of Chanduy also came together.⁶⁵⁸ The administrative movement of the COG's report (Provincial Board, 1920-1923) spoke of society members including barbers and plumbers, the cooperative society of commerce, the society of hat-makers and of typographers, cobblers, carpenters, cacao workers, bakers, the bar society of Guayas, the Sons Society of Guano, the society of weavers, of suppliers of charcoal, the Workers' Alliance of Salitre Society, artisans of Adule, workers of Balao, the 30th of July Association, the 24th of May Association, the 5th of May Association, , the Febres Association, the Cordero Association, the

⁶⁵⁷ Jaime Duran Barba, "Orígenes del movimiento obrero artesanal," in vol. 9 of *Nueva Historia del Ecuador*, ed. Ayala Mora.

⁶⁵⁸ *Informe del movimiento administrativo de la COG, Junta Provincial en el periodo 1920-1923* (Guayaquil: Imprenta de la Confederación Obrera, 1923).

Pharmacy Workers' Association, the Guayas Club, the *La Aurora* Center, the Workers' League, the Workers' Center of Chanduy, the Workers' Center of Yaguachi, the Cacao Workers' Society, and the Jewelers and Silver-workers' Society.

According to this report, the COG operated with financial resources from diverse activities and contacts. The COG had positions in a consumers cooperative and a cooperative of meat sales as businesses of the association. It also enjoyed a tax subsidy and a municipal subsidy every month of 100 and 50 sucres, respectively.⁶⁵⁹ It also received money from the Charity Committee of Guayaquil under categories such as “victims,” health, and funerals.

After Alfaro's assassination, Leonidas Plaza stimulated *obrerismo* instead of destroying it. Thus, in a meeting that took place in the salon of the Sons of Labor Society on the May 1, 1913, the government of Leonidas Plaza recognized the COG as the liberal state's social base and proposed that its stimulus ought to constitute one of the regional government's principal objectives through educational and financial programs and the creation of press media.⁶⁶⁰ Thus, the Liberal Party along with the COG developed a discourse that proposed that civil society could make demands of the authorities with respect to their needs. Although the “civil society” mentioned was a select circle before a non-integrated majority, the language of negotiation had

⁶⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁰ In a meeting that took place in the salon of the *Society Sons of Labor* on the first of May, 1913.

relevant effects. For example, in the memory of the COG articulated by Chávez Mata, the workers' society had been able to have the Governance of Guayas proclaim Saturday a day of rest (“*el sábado inglés*”) and the restriction of the work day to eight hours, as well as the coverage of work accidents in 1917 (regulations that only covered those workers with contracts and who were affiliated to the COG).⁶⁶¹

In addition to the mutual help that was one of the workers' associations' objectives, they also promoted the formation of this class in regards to values. The concept of the social regeneration of workers and the sovereign emancipation of national work that had been associated with the demand for a right to compensation for those who denounced devastating effects of colonialism on the indigenous peasantry during the war was transformed into something else once it was appropriated as a discourse for constructing the liberal state's identity and was converted into a premise for the development of government institutions. These categories that had previously corresponded to the demand for state intervention through a right to compensation in justice tribunals in which conflicts over lands and work were resolved passed on to being viewed as the ideal future that could be achieved through a civilizing effort. The discourse of the liberal regime in the 1910s coincided with the discourse of modern conservatism in this aspect – both sought to

⁶⁶¹ José María Chávez Mata, *Estado actual de las instituciones obreras de Guayaquil* (Guayaquil: Sociedad de tipógrafos, 1914).

demobilize the *pueblo* and offered it integration through a civilizing program. The consensus with respect to an inter-state system and the organization of national capitalism had universalized the concept of civilization.⁶⁶²

The COG's president said that the true regeneration of the worker would be achieved through a gradual evolution of the civilization of workers "without having to turn to absurd theories and misunderstood doctrines." His rejection of theories and doctrines in 1920 was not a first reaction against the radicalism of experiences such as the Russian revolution; it was a position taken from within the Ecuadorian liberal political movement.

The evolution develops itself in its diverse phases in the Confederation and more than anything by promoting it through its organ of publicity entitled Workers' Confederation; because to educate the worker through lectures is to show him directly the path of goodness and virtue, to teach him to love [other workers], to make the worker see the beneficial paths and moral cleanliness... To teach the working-class masses is, better yet, the angular rock of social stability since knowledge teaches the worker to become very familiar with the destinies of humanity, placing him in line with what is due to him in Society (sic)... The worker is a conscious citizen that has duties to fulfill in Society and in the Homeland and for that reason it is very necessary that through lessons he be educated in the democratic school of republican duty and he be prepared to become dignified in the banquet of civilization for the elevated mission that he must represent in society and for public opinion, since those duties are the most supreme base of happiness for workers and for the future of the Republic.⁶⁶³

⁶⁶² See Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation the Political and Economic Origins of our Time* (Boston: Bacon Press, 2001); Duby and Aries, *Historia de la vida privada*.

⁶⁶³ *Informe del movimiento administrativo de la Confederación Obrera del Guayas, Junta Provincial en el periodo 1920-1923* (Guayaquil: Imprenta de la COG, 1923), 6.

Each organization had its own library and the COG had its own printing-press from which it published a monthly document. One of the most economically and politically profitable businesses for the COG was the purchase of a printing-press for the confederation. With the printing-press, not only did they provide services for a profit, but they also generated a workers' media with themes related to social issues.

In the COG the Society of Typographers and the women's associations that managed magazines, such as *Aurora* and the newspaper Workers' Confederation, were highly distinguished.⁶⁶⁴ The COG entertained certain members such as intellectuals, journalists, and writers from an important range of publications, including working-class intellectuals from among the typographers and journalists such as Julio T. Foyain and Nicolás Carrión, who were highly regarded for managing the workers' printing-press in the provinces. Together with typographers such as Agustín A Freire, they had been trained in the Philanthropic Society of Guayas' workshops on typography.⁶⁶⁵

⁶⁶⁴ The COG also included amongst its elements the feminist center *la Aurora*, the *sociedad de betuneros*, the *sociedad de carpinteros*, the *sociedad de tipógrafos*, the *sociedad cooperativa de comercio*, the *sociedad alianza obrera del salitre*, and the *sociedad hijos de Guano*, among others that by 1922 constituted 32 organizations of distinct regional and national, *gremial* and mixed, and urban and rural types.

⁶⁶⁵ Freire had a notable trajectory. He was the president of the social club of "Guayas," the treasurer of the society of typographers, member of the directory of the newspaper "*El tipógrafo*" of the *sociedad de tipógrafos del Guayas*, secretary of the *sociedad de albañiles*, pro-secretary of the *sociedad cosmopolita de cacahueros Tomas Briones*, editor of the magazine *la Aurora*, secretary of the *sociedad de*

The publications of the COG included the newspaper “Workers' Confederation,” as well as fliers and statistics and more significant works such as the Treatise of Practical Sociology of Juan Elías Naula (lost in the national libraries and frequently cited in the Confederation as an important reference).⁶⁶⁶ The second edition of the newspaper, for example, spoke of overcoming the logic of charity with a more modern notion of solidarity, inspired by the sociologist Gustavo Le Bon.⁶⁶⁷ At the same time, they cited Ransay of the English Labor Party for having promoted concrete changes and practices between the working class and the state and for having done so without socialist pretensions.

The newspaper also presented projects to the municipal government that reflected the international influence of hygiene and the legitimacy that that discourse had in the transactions between the municipal government and the artisan working class. In their publication, the associations asked for support for hygiene and urbanism in working-class sectors that were located in the middle of lakes and marshes of the city and they presented demands (sometimes contradictory) with

plomeros y gasfiteros, vice-president of the *Asociación 5 de mayo*, writer for the “*Workers' Confederation*,” organ of the *Workers' Confederation of Guayas*, and president of that conglomerate. Freire's biography was proof that racial stigma could be overcome if enlightenment could be achieved on the individual level. José María Chávez Mata, *Estado actual de las instituciones obreras* and Navas, *Evolución social del obrero en Guayaquil*.

⁶⁶⁶ Juan Elías Naula, *Tratado de sociología práctica* (Guayaquil, Tipografía y Litografía de Julio E. Foyaim, 1921).

⁶⁶⁷ *Confederación Obrera*, 18 de marzo de 1906.

respect to goods for popular consumption – those who had salaries asked the municipal government to prevent price increases while those sellers of the same confederation asked the representatives of the *canton* for the right to sell in the streets without being organized in the port market.

From the COG, at least two Illustrated Memoirs of the organizing process were published that offered an evaluation of the state of the workers' associations based on the statistics that each association maintained, on oral memory, and on the study of the historical sources of each one. Among those, we have that which José María Chávez Mata of the society of typographers published two years after the death of Alfaro entitled *Estado actual de las instituciones obreras de Guayaquil* [The Current State of the Workers' Institutions of Guayaquil] (1914). The object of Chávez Mata's study was to show that beyond the radical agenda that had included the *pueblo* as *montoneras* in the military movements, Plaza's regime had been able to cover institutionality for *obrerismo* and include it in a pact for gradual democratization.⁶⁶⁸

The Confederation newspaper also spread values and civilizing patterns, among which peace and courtesy were emphasized, as well as the virtue of work and savings and the disciplined search for knowledge. The Confederation describes picnic trips to cantonal centers of the cacao zone, where institutions received them with shows of courtesy and celebrated liberal civility. Although they were not to constitute true

⁶⁶⁸ Chávez Mata, *Estado actual de las instituciones obreras*.

consumers of these signs of distinction, merely recognizing them formed part of their training as future citizens. Their formation also included acquired tastes -- the substitution of simple immediacy attributed to the races dedicated to manual labor for the refined tastes of those of the oligarchic society, including an administration for consumption goods that were offered as imported merchandise by the commercial bourgeois that contrasted with the crude image of the manual laborers and the racialized peasantry.

The promotion of workers' associations by the Charity Committee, the municipal government, and the governor sought to maintain "disciplined" bases of party support as the party counted on the loyalties of the army while conservatives cultivated loyalties in Catholic associations, churches, and women's and artisans' groups. As we know from earlier chapters, the support for the Liberal Revolution had also come from indigenous peasants; however, they did not count as voters (in addition to the fact that *the Liberal Party* did not maintain contacts and the liberal state did not promote the political ascent of the indigenous peasantry at the regional level in the Sierra as, for example, Urvina had done in the nineteenth century). Yet, for the intellectuals at the heart of liberalism, the previous period of disciplining had not ended and they did not wish to trust the worker bases of liberalism with

suffrage.⁶⁶⁹

Though the workers did not have the vote, they were encouraged to make public appearances as the popular segment of society in Guayas. One of the forms that leaders encourage was public demonstrations accompanied with a rhetoric comparable to the artisans' parades, although the march of the COG was considered a demand of the *pueblo* directed at the liberal institutions, which were generally answered through equally theatrical and public manifestations by governors and municipal representatives in the balconies from which they ratified the willingness of the liberal regime to listen to its *pueblo*.

Jose Buenaventura Navas, in his book on the formation of the COG (published in 1920), recalled moments in which public demonstrations or marches to the governorship of Guayas were particularly useful to show solidarity among associations, to demonstrate the commitment of some of the affiliates, and to ratify the efficiency of a leadership that, respected by the Liberal Party, would be able to compel authorities to listen to their demands. The fame of some of the representatives of professional associations in the COG was based on their roles as organizers and publicists during demonstrations that occurred during the 1910s. In Navas' book, narratives about the virtue of master artisans appeared in combination with his actions during popular demonstrations. Among these masters, Navas describes how carpenter

⁶⁶⁹ Jaramillo Alvarado, *La asamblea liberal*.

J. Campoverde pressured for the carpenters association to help the typography workers in their protest of 1916. Navas also congratulated Mariano Gonzalez, the president of the bakers' association, for having organized several protests and for having managed to attain concrete benefits through each of them:

To appreciate the work of the society of the Bakers' Union on behalf of the associates and to prove its usefulness for all workers united in societies to defend themselves against the oppression of capital, it is sufficient to remember that before the foundation of the bakers' society, they only earned twenty pesos monthly and today a baker earns four sucres daily.⁶⁷⁰

Buenaventura Navas includes in his book a long list of cases in which protests showed a great capacity for building cohesion among artisans. Protests were, in addition, considered a way of making public the presence of the labor sector in Guayaquil society. Leadership viewed them as useful instruments for negotiating the modernization of labor relations in the city. By October 13, 1913, the carpenters' society had been able to impose an eight-hour work day, first among themselves as a standard for their profession, and then with the support of the Sons of the Volcano (the blacksmiths) they held a public demonstration in which the "*Asamblea Obrera*" or Workers' Assembly approved the passage of this code to the Congress for its legislative approval in 1916:

⁶⁷⁰ Navas, *Evolución social del obrero en Guayaquil*, 52.

They established the practice of the eight-hour work day, a project that had been presented to the Workers' Assembly by the society of typographers and that only three years later—that is to say, in 1916—was sanctioned by the Congress and passed to constitute a law of the Republic.⁶⁷¹

These memories indicate that workers viewed striking as a valid mechanism for making public appearances and negotiating demands. It was not considered an instrument for confrontation. protests became part of the rhetoric and the practice of negotiation stimulated by a liberal state which in turn interpreted the demonstrations as proof of a healthy and progressive civil society protests were conventionally settled when the *Asamblea Obrera* assumed the role of representing particular demands and presenting them to the authorities.

The public appearance of organized workers was considered part of the “Liberal workers party.” Agustin A. Freire, who had traditionally promoted the *Fiesta Obrera* or Workers' Party as the director of publications and organizer of the recreational Guayas Club, showed in his publications in working-class newspapers the varying perception of popular organizations in Guayaquil society between 1916 and 1921. In 1916 he told of the sixth workers' party promoted by the Liberal Party and described how in the booming river port of Nobol the workers were honored with palms and flags. The firefighters, a sort of civil police force in the town, marched to salute them together with girls of the public schools. At that time the local section of

⁶⁷¹ *Ibíd.*, 75

the COG had founded a local branch of the *Piedrahita* Workers' Association, as well as a local library that enjoyed a large selection of publications. The local “propertied enthusiast” of the cacao plantations saluted the group with a discourse about social collaboration. In an atmosphere of festivities devoted to the workers, Sr. Rendón decided to promote his candidacy to the Senate, promising that he would work ‘for the good of the *pueblo*.’ He gave tribute to the workers and to their image as an honored segment of the liberal nation.

His allegoric representation of *pueblo* included a powerful representation of the integration of classes. The presence of civil organizations promoting public philanthropy attempted to legitimize the rule of the liberal state as representatives of the *pueblo*.⁶⁷² The testimony of Floresmilo Romero Paredes, a society leader who participated in the later and more dramatic protest of 1922, ratified the image of protests as civic festivities. Following sixty years of militancy, Paredes remembered with nostalgia that in 1918 there was a great protest of coffee producers, cacao pickers, and public railroad workers *–ferrocarrileros–* that led once again to better conditions while avoiding any real confrontation: “The increases were achieved

⁶⁷² Agustin A. Freire, “Fiesta obrera, recuerdo de un pic-nic,” [1916], in Elias Muñoz Vicuña, *Añorando el pasado* (Guayaquil: Litografía e Imprenta de la Universidad de Guayaquil, 1983[1 ed. 1943])

without any class of friction or agitation; either the demands or paralyzing culminated when the bosses accepted our demands.”⁶⁷³

As Buenaventura Navas recorded it, during the great war, Virgilio Drouet, a member of Guayaquil's elite, an intellectual and representative of the Ecuadorian Liberal Party in the international congresses of hygiene, published articles at the liberal newspapers *El Telégrafo* and *el Guante*, as well as in working-class newspapers such as *The Shout of the Pueblo*, *Time*, and *The Illustrated Daily*, advising the municipality to take measures to better the workers' lives.⁶⁷⁴ He promoted price controls and the Congress listened to him as he tried to convince them to introduce restrictions on the prices of basic goods, as had already happened in Peru, Chile, Argentina, and even in Hoover's United States.

Guayaquil's labor movement was able to negotiate the passage of the eight-hour work day into law before the Versailles Treaty in 1917. In effect, since it was able to guarantee these petitions, the COG became a great attraction for the workers of the city; even the employees of the commercial port that wanted to become

⁶⁷³ Manuel Donoso, et al., *El quince de noviembre de 1922 y la collectionación del socialismo relatados por sus protagonistas* (Quito: CEN, INFOC, 1982), 41.

⁶⁷⁴ Member of geographic societies and academic societies of international history in Paris; ex representative of the hygiene congresses of Madrid and Paris, of the *Haya*' Congress of Employees, of the social sciences of Brussels, and of the Latin American Workers' Congress of 1919 in Buenos Aires. Drouet began laws with respect to rest, eight-hour work days, and accident liability. He founded an association of employees that had as its base a center for commercial and agrarian studies.

professionals integrated themselves into *obrerismo* in Guayaquil. The presence of intellectuals versed in social issues increased the prestige of the organization. New workers of the commercial port joined *obrerismo* in Guayas beginning in the 1910s as they sought “professionalization” and a dignified salary and they also founded social clubs as they explored new notions of free time.

The associations were represented as if they were several small parliaments in which the members of the *pueblo* divided functions among themselves and exercised civic virtues, training themselves to convert themselves into future citizens. Some members at the heart of the party and “experts in social issues” participated in the working-class sphere as mediators between working-class organization and national politics. Thus, Virgilio Drouet proposed the formation of Provincial Boards composed of a representative of the liberal state, another from the municipal government, and a third from presidents of the legally constituted guilds to enrich the dialogue.

The figure of Virgilio Drouet reflected the fact that mediation between workers' corporations and the political society was indispensable. Therefore, the Liberal Party included in its organizational chart such complex institutional development. He proposed the formation of a type of bank of information for employment for artisans and day-laborers which would be defined as an office or “informational center of merchant, industrial, and worker movement where an artisan who has recently arrived

from the interior of the country or from abroad can find certain and useful information upon asking for work in order to obtain an occupation.” He was an honorary member of the COG, president of the Association of Day-Laborers, and inspector of workshops.⁶⁷⁵ As president of the Association of Day-Laborers and not being a day-laborer himself, his function was to promote the formation and management of a large savings account in the Philanthropist Bank that would be “open all of Saturday so that the workers can deposit their savings.” He designed the savings account for the civic education of the workers while he also resolved issues related to working hours, work accidents, minimum salaries (of two sucres and fifty cents), fulfillment of labor functions, and limitation of personal services (these last two were introduced by the suggestion of the society of carpenters of Guayaquil) before factory owners and artisan guilds. As inspector of the workshops, Drouet made sure that this ambiguous organization functioned correctly, “despite being composed and managed by women.”⁶⁷⁶

The learning of citizenship within urban workers was also selective and responded to various types of divisions. The gender division was important in this education program for citizenship. The male associations dignified the castes in Guayas, inviting them to show a new identity as subjects supportive of values such as

⁶⁷⁵ *Confederación Obrera*, no. 8, marzo de 1915.

⁶⁷⁶ Navas, *Evolución social del obrero en Guayaquil*.

progress, hygiene, and enlightenment. In the meantime, the young women who went to the workshop for women were represented as a collective being, assimilated into the family or natural space. Men could read and were being trained in civic values while women cooked and cleaned for others, thus affirming their community being. The Drouet's inspection in the women's organizations was represented as a supervision of a directory that was assumed to be fragile. The women's organization within the COG had an important name since out of the entire collective it was the only group that was not called an association but rather a workshop. Thus the representation of the COG as a center of the spread of liberal political culture was diminished in order to delimit the sphere of action of women to the space of mechanical work and domestic life. The schools for women were for "washing and ironing," "sowing and weaving," helping the sick, cultivating vegetables, and only one productive course was given: the weaving of straw hats, an activity that in practice was developing in domestic spaces throughout Manabí and Guayas. The insistence on giving this association a community character instead of an artificial and modern one can be seen through the insistence on making women practice domestic work that would substitute the pact among members of an association for gestures that symbolized kinship.

As a necessary measure so that the female alumnae can begin their learning in a practical manner from the moment that they enter this section, each one of them

will take turns cooking so that their peers might have lunch in the workshop; the same for others who will wash and arrange the clothes of the collectivity.⁶⁷⁷

As in other cases in Latin America, this construction of work in terms of gender would contribute to ratifying the politically subaltern character of the working class within the structures of national political representation.⁶⁷⁸ As one of approximately forty organizations of the COG, this women's organization reflected the role that Drouet fulfilled as a figure of mediation, not only in the women's associations but also in the male workers' associations, which were characterized by the presence of racially stigmatized sectors.

However, from the contrast between the two organizations – of workers and women – there existed various fundamental similarities. The workers were located outside due to age limits that citizenship assumed as well as due to racial reasons that delayed the full integration of men or for gender reasons, making the presence of Drouet necessary as inspector and intermediary. In fact, the inspector of the women's workshops was the same gentleman seated at the table of the male workers' associations as an intellectual versed in social issues. The difference was in the symbolism surrounding citizenship as a middle-term objective of men and the

⁶⁷⁷ Drouet in Chávez Mata, *Estado actual de las instituciones obreras*, 42.

⁶⁷⁸ Teresa A. Meade, review of “The Gendered Worlds of Latin American Women Workers. From Household and Factory to the Union Hall and Ballot Box,” *Journal of Social History* 33, no. 1, (Fall 1999): 240-242.

domestic nature of the formation of the women.

The insistence on education as the principal objective of the associations established after the reform and promoted by the Plaza government in 1913 returned over to the old colonial theme: They wished to correct the hurried mentality of the population, “stuck on the material things like idolatry” to let them participate in the transcendental ends that the modern economy and politics assumed.⁶⁷⁹ The values of citizenship required overcoming a “natural” limit to abstract thought as a middle-range goal that would have to be met after a disciplining exercise of the body and mind. There always existed the external threat to the civilizing armies of being seen as racially determined subjects in a context in which positivist sociology cultivated by the National University was oriented towards racial theories. Intellectuals of “liberalism of order,” such as Alfredo Espinosa Tamayo, spoke of the degenerative tendency of the “colored” races and their “infantile” psychology.⁶⁸⁰

Judging by the discourses published in the workers' newspapers *La Aurora* and the Voice of the Worker, the COG was attempting to exorcize the fear that existed of the racial subaltern groups in a moment in which the international proletariat was trying to promote socialism, communism, and anarchism through unions. In contrast

⁶⁷⁹ Valeria Coronel, “Santuarios y mercados coloniales.”

⁶⁸⁰ Espinosa Tamayo, *Psicología y sociología del pueblo ecuatoriano*. Also see Álvaro Campuzano, *Sociología y misión pública de la universidad en el Ecuador: una crónica sobre educación y modernidad en América Latina* (Argentina: CLACSO, 2005).

to the case of the workers' organizations of Salitre in Chile, the bourgeois of Guayaquil believed for a long time that radicalism had been domesticated among the workers.⁶⁸¹ Figures such as Drouet guaranteed that *obrerismo* was a method of gradual inclusion, unrelated to any type of radicalism.

Preparing his trip to Mexico for the third Pan-American Labor Congress in 1920, Virgilio Drouet asked the Washington Labor Confederation if it would be acceptable to discuss in the Mexican congress the article dedicated to labor in the League of Nations Treaty. The worker delegates would thus be able to demand that their respective countries adjust to new international regulations. Drouet was able to impress in international forums in 1920 as he exhibited the municipality of Guayaquil's policies regarding labor rights, policies that preceded the Versailles Treaty, and the foundation of the ILO. This initiative on behalf of the Ecuadorian was accepted with great enthusiasm and Drouet received several letters congratulating him on the initiative. Rafael Alonso Torres, a Puerto Rican labor leader, wrote him on May 13, 1920, and argued that the labor movement in the U.S. and in England made many efforts to include the chapter on unionizing rights because in these countries' industrial struggles, injunction had been implemented to impede the declaration of

⁶⁸¹ Bergquist relates the details of how the societies of Salitre in Chile and their petitions for regulation and charity were perceived by the bourgeois of Chile and the state as an affront to the autonomy of capital and a demonstration of anarchy and communism. *Los trabajadores latinoamericanos*.

protests and workers' attempts to achieve labor stability. "There is no doubt that the entire international proletariat goes along with these clauses and that they will be ratified once more by the workers' confederation that will be celebrated in Mexico in July 1920," Alonso Torres proposed.⁶⁸²

During the Pan-American Labor Congress in Mexico, Drouet told of his long experience to the other participants, detailing the incorporation of social issues into Guayas' state policies. For several years he had been the promoter of labor regulations in Ecuador and had created the Association of Workers of the commercial sector to integrate this segment of white-collar, salaried workers among the labor sector into the COG. He also showed what was considered to have been an advanced consciousness about the meaning of the labor sector in South America when he argued for the introduction of a chapter dedicated to the redemption of the Indians from feudal relations in the campaign for labor rights in the continent. Those who attended the international event did not know about the specifics of this program of the Liberal Party. The discourse against *concertaje* that seemed very advanced and even preceded theoretical formulations of the first Marxists in Peru and Ecuador in the 1930s, was already included in the Liberal Party's struggle and its working-class bases in their arguments against the landholding elites, but it had been incorporated as a regional rhetoric.

⁶⁸² Alonso in Navas, *Evolución social del obrero en Guayaquil*, 66.

In a memoir of a worker published by José Buenaventura Navas in the same year as the Pan-American Labor Congress in Mexico, *Evolución Social del Obrero en Guayaquil. Obra Histórica. 1849-1920* [The Social Evolution of the Workers in Guayaquil: An Historic Work, 1849-1920], the working-class journalist gave signs that the epoch of bonanza was coming to an end and a crisis was beginning that would lead to the economic bankruptcy of liberalism and the deterioration of its symbols of civilization. While Chaves Mata trusted the relationship between progress and democratization in 1914, Buenaventura Navas argued for the return of Eloy Alfaro's original project to create a network of working-class associations in the country that would recognize the political role of the workers in the country as it entered into crisis.

This historic recognition coincided with the expression that radicalism had after 1919 in Guayaquil. Radicalism and the image of Alfaro once more had an important power of convocation in this city as the COG came to identify with the rural experience, the plague, and the economic crisis. In addition, when the news of the Mexican and Russian revolutions arrived to nuclei of working-class journalists and beyond the somewhat moderate commentary of the Confederation, several circles began to read anarchist and communist literature with curiosity. Yet, above all, the figure of Alfaro returned in works such as that of Buenaventura Navas and in the discourse of new organizations such as the Federation of Regional Workers of

Ecuador (FTRE) when the conditions for negotiations and representation within liberalism fell apart in the 1910s and a new leadership – an elite tied to the banks – displaced the Drouets from the heart of liberalism at the same time as the bridges of dialogue with the COG closed. The image of Philanthropic Guayaquil corroded.

The success that *obrerismo* had in Guayaquil and its capacity to mobilize resources were, for the sociologist Jaime Duran, signs of pragmatism that characterized the liberal worker organization and contrasted with the “metaphysical” character of the artisans organization of the Sierra.⁶⁸³ Under these conditions, according to the author, unionism in Guayaquil was just steps away from forming modern class organizations. Their transition to forming socialist and anarchist nuclei was almost natural in contrast with the trade association formation in the Sierra that, closely tied to the Church and the conservative secular elite, could only move towards the conformation of working-class bases for the Conservative Party. The study of Quintero and Silva proposed that the worker and artisan societies articulated to other developments in civil society such as the Charity Committee, masonic lodges, and liberal dailies resulted from the autonomy achieved by the bourgeois of the port with respect to the ideological power of the Church and slowly drew the pueblo closer to the political structures and electoral clubs. The bourgeois that had conquered the

⁶⁸³ Duran Barba, “Orígenes del movimiento obrero artesanal,” 179.

leadership of civil society pushed the artisan working classes towards the political scene.⁶⁸⁴

In contrast to those authors, I observe that liberal *obrerismo* in Guayaquil did not make a natural transition from secularism to socialism. The emergence of a representation for working-class strata in Guayaquil as the base of liberal patriotism constituted signs of working-class pressure that can only be understood according to its historic persistence and its capacity to condition state power at a regional level. On the other hand, the rivalry between political parties that took place due to the mobilization of working-class bases was also an important factor that determined transformation throughout those parties and the state. These pressures had forced conservatism to evolve just as we have seen in Pichincha. Transformation was also forced upon the Liberal Party in Guayas. Both political organizations began to worry about the need to institutionalize working-class politics, controlling veins of political activity while they opened channels for communication and regulations. However, *obrerismo* in the port had responded within the liberal discourse that was a form of intercept radicalism and not the first step towards radicalism.

⁶⁸⁴ In the view of those authors before the *revolución Juliana*, the commercial bourgeoisie controlled the hegemonic institutions of the city while the local state machinery (army, police, governorship, etc.) was controlled by the landholding *cacaoteros*, isolated from the landholding class of the Sierra in charge of the central state. This situation would have changed after the Liberal Revolution when the commercial bourgeoisie extended its domination over the national education apparatus. Quintero and Silva, *Ecuador, una nación en ciernes*, 307.

These authors lose sight of the mediation developed for the symbolic integration of the workers and their distinction from rural workers. The COG was more than the origin of the Ecuadorian Left; it was a comparable and complementary organization to the *obrerismo* of the Sierra as it integrated working-class sectors, though it did so gradually and selectively. It was also a tool within the organization of an internal colonial space as it heightened the barrier between the urban and rural worlds. The promises of gradualism, however, were converted into a key reference for rural workers and unleashed radicalism which developed in contexts of conflict rather than evolution.

The preparation of urban working classes in the coast was not just in simple rhetoric. They had in perspective the consolidation of the party at a regional level to guarantee the backing of suffrage and responded to the quick articulation of forces and to the development of frameworks of conservative socialization in the Sierra. However, it lacked confidence and thus postponed in the same way as in the Sierra the integration of working classes into citizenship. Therefore, *obrerismo* in Guayaquil did not show the first steps toward the democratization of the country motivated by the commercial bourgeoisie but rather was a scenario in which we can clearly analyze routine sources of violence and the non-evolutionary character of democracy. As the gradualism described by Rebecca Scott in the case of institutions that mediated the

transition from slavery to salaried work in the labor field in Cuba,⁶⁸⁵ the COG constituted a case of political gradualism that permitted a complex transition of subaltern classes from mobilized actors armed for the revolution to a *pueblo* in processes of enlightenment for its future redemption as citizens. Yet, the transition was that which took place with respect to an armed *pueblo* to the conformation of racialized rural workers, pressuring for “transitory” forms of work in a territory in which the *patronal* pressures and those of the rural police were apparent. In fact, the *obrerismo* of Guayaquil intercepted the most radical demands through a similar resource to that which the Catholic elites of Quito had established – namely, by establishing a division line between urban and rural areas and a strata division before rural workers. This offered integration to the organized urban working classes at the same time that they differentiated the treatment and the representation of the coastal peasantry in a policy that assigned attributes to the *montuvio* peasant that made him seem incapable of participating in civil rights otherwise guaranteed to the workers of the COG. The measure of coercion and consensus varied notably between the urban zone of Guayaquil and the agrarian surroundings; however, in both scenarios forms of coercion operated and were even routine.

Neither the artisan workers' organization of the Sierra nor that of the coast developed radical positions until the conditions of identification with the party fell

⁶⁸⁵ Rebeca Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba*.

apart and the artisans-workers of Guayaquil began to identify themselves with the organizations and conflicts of other workers, those of transnational companies and of public services and transport, as well as those of the peasants of the cacao zones that had subsidized the modernization of the port and its privileges for various decades. For their part, the workers of the rural zone in Guayas felt their exclusion from rights issued to urban workers and artisans by the governorship and included in their processes of organization the desire to access labor regulations, in addition to demands for land and justice.

Although Drouet expressed the Liberal Party experience with the formulation of policies that showed a previous epoch of consensual rhetoric, its relation to workers' organizations and its ability to promote among its co-partisan authorities a positive response to popular demands virtually disappeared in the 1920s. Paradoxically, during wartime it had been easier in Guayaquil to project the image of a consensual government and of a modernity that included different classes in the project of a progressive civilization. However, precisely when the League of Nations assumed some of the demands proposed by the industrial labor sector, the situation in Ecuador changed.

In Guayas, mechanisms for the incorporation of working-class bases within a program of gradual democracy crossed, in addition to the configuration of a contentious spacial hierarchy between the city and rural areas. The relationship

between *obrerismo* of the metropolis and the experience of rural workers is key to understanding the process that led to the radicalization of both segments of the working class of Guayas and consequently to the violent reaction that led to the crisis of the liberal regime.

6.3 The Construction of the Periphery in the “Cradle of Liberalism”: Cacao, Oil, and Tensions Among Rural Populations in Guayas.

The paradox of modernization in Guayaquil led to a rich literature on the province that emphasizes its profound contrasts between 1880 and 1930. The poet and critic from Guayaquil Medardo Ángel Silva (1898-1919) spoke of the existence of a new urban taste and a new form of subjectivity of “us nervous and restless organisms of the age of artifice.” In his writings, Silva identified “landscape in the cinema” – the cultivation of a taste for artificiality in such a way that it began to be appreciated beyond the circles of modern writers and by the very inhabitants of the city who, in accordance with modernism, were distancing themselves from the romantics and their evocation of nature and rural customs.

It is true that a man of the heroic and crude age, reader of primitive writings who made from the very color of Nature with the tone of realistic paintings, would not love these landscapes of vignettes of cut trees made with a gardener's awareness... and with geometric figures of grass. But us nervous and restless organisms of an age of artifice, the neurotic lovers of oriental ballets, sumptuous dazzling exhibitions of voluptuousness, are sons of a century that kills laughing; we enjoy seeing it pass quickly like our tormented lives, the

landscapes made of Cinematography.⁶⁸⁶

The distance between the cultivation of the modern aesthetic in the city and the image of rurality was, however, more than a stance of modern theories of language. In a context of limited industrialization such as Guayas, the distinction also supported the construction of a social frontier between the city and rural areas. While the city was designed as a cosmopolitan scenario, including programs of gradual and selective democratization, the image of the *montuvio* peasant had deteriorated dramatically. As José de la Cuadra observed in the nineteenth century, the *montuvio* peasant had been part of the romantic narrative characterized as a peasant who lived in freedom and autonomy with abundant lands and who wrote ballad songs known as *amores finos*. In contrast, in the 1910s and 1920s, the literature and magazines mocked the *montuvio* peasant, painting him as a person who had difficulty understanding the customs of urban civilization.⁶⁸⁷

⁶⁸⁶ Medardo Ángel Silva, “Paisaje en el Cine,” *Ilustración: revista literaria* 15, April 20, 1918. Essay reproduced by Carlos Calderón in *Medardo Angel Silva. Crónicas y otros escritos* (Guayaquil: Archivo Histórico del Guayas, 1999). On modernism in Ecuador and its interpretation of the Liberal Revolution, see Gladys Valencia Salas, *El círculo modernista*.

⁶⁸⁷ José de la Cuadra, who in the 1930s was an active militant in the communist party and an intellectual dedicated to the vanguard of literature, used this image to speak of the emergence of a protest literature in the 1930s that re-humanized the *montuvio* and invited him to form part of the construction of the national working-class political party in *El montuvio ecuatoriano* (Quito: UASB, 1996). For other analysis of the meaning of cultural visions of autonomy among the peasants, see Charles Bergquist,

Between 1895 and 1925, Guayaquil was also converted into the heart of the articulation and hierarchization of a wide group of populations that integrated canton centers such as Milagro, Babahoyo, Quevedo, Yaguachi, and Daule – populations in which a vast agrarian zone was dedicated to the cultivation of *Pepa De Oro*.⁶⁸⁸ The construction of territory for the expansion of the cultivation of cacao included an aggressive process of land concentration and the construction of a labor system with a high level of exploitation. Academics have called this a process of transition since much of the peasantry was taken from conditions of subsistence without having been turned into a proletariat, while forms of work based on debt still expanded.⁶⁸⁹

In contrast to the criteria of gradual inclusion with which the theme of liberal workers was addressed, we know that the life expectancy in rural areas was thirty-five years. The land concentration had led day-laborers and growers to enter into debts and dependencies that resembled a new *concertaje*. A rigid frontier was erected between the urban civilization that spoke of democracy and the construction of the rural areas as a territorial periphery in which, according to the logic of territorial geographic construction that defines internal colonialism, “social relations are marked

Los trabajadores en la historia Latinoamericana. In the chapter dedicated to Colombia he describes the relevance of these aspirations for autonomy of the Colombian peasantry which lead to the expansion of colonization. The aspiration is comparable to the case described by Holt, *The Problem of Freedom*.

⁶⁸⁸ Jean-Paul Deler, *Ecuador. Del espacio al estado nacional* (Quito: UASB, IFEA and CEN, 2007), 250.

⁶⁸⁹ Chiriboga, *Jornaleros y gran propietarios*.

by significant ethnic and class divisions and ideologies of racial discrimination.”⁶⁹⁰

Beyond the rural circuit of cacao production, headed by parish and *cantonal* centers, there existed an even more isolated periphery. These were zones such as the peninsula of Santa Elena and the provinces of Manabí and Esmeraldas, which were open to exploitation from transnational companies interested in oil and other natural resources such as wood and rubber.

In the periphery of the commercial and financial urban center, we must include indigenous populations within Guayaquil and nearby parishes like Eloy Alfaro (Durán) and Naranjito; to the east of the province was Milagro, a zone in which day-laborers and cacao growers were asphyxiated by large-landowners; to the south of the province the cacao zones were located along the frontier with the province of El Oro (Naranjal, Balao y Tenguel); to the north of the province, towards Manabí, the zone of Daule, and to the west, the peninsula of Santa Elena, where conflicts between indigenous communities and new large-landowners were proliferating, along with immigrants, investors, and transnational corporations that had investments in oil mines.

As Manuel Chiriboga and John Uggén have observed, the process of re-

⁶⁹⁰ Seemin Qayum, “Nationalism, Internal Colonialism and the Spatial Imagination: the Geographic Society of La Paz in Turn-of the Century Bolivia,” in James Dunkerley *Studies in the Formation of the Nation State in Latin America* (London: Institute of Latin American Studies, 2002).

configuring space for agro-exportation was violent. A reduced nucleus of foreigners from Europe and old landowners hoarded lands. The minority of these landowners had been able to re-orient themselves for agricultural exportation. The process of hoarding lands had begun forcefully in 1880, during the “progressive” period and from there forward it had begun to displace settled indigenous peoples and peasants who did not possess land deeds. For many, the Liberal Revolution represented a fight against the devastating effects of this territorial re-construction under the progressive regime of the final quarter of the nineteenth century, and the demand for lands from various types of peasants in Guayas signaled precisely that.

In this sense, the indigenous residents of Guayaquil represented by community bosses (of last names Borbor, Yagual, Quimí, and Tigreiro) complained before the National Assembly of Indigenous Peoples through communications in which they compelled it to honor the representation that the liberal state projected as representative of the indigenous race and thus give them definitive deeds to lands that had entered into dispute with the Municipality of Guayaquil. The appeal of these indigenous people spoke as much of the state promises to repair the position of the indigenous peoples as it did of the active link of the community with the internal urban market: Our race, at once humble and ignored, give the great Centers not unimportant services [that are] advantageous for many articles of utmost need such as

firewood, soap, charcoal, wool, cotton, among others.⁶⁹¹

The indigenous peoples noticed that since 1885 many neighbors in the city wished to ignore them and diminish their forms of living after having co-inhabited for such a long time:

We, the indigenous peoples, or *cholos* of the grasslands, as they tend to call us, have lived since our ancestors, since the foundation of this city of Guayaquil without us having ever been impeded, since we have always been considered, and not without reason, as owners who were stripped [of our possessions] by the conquistadors and their successors; such a view has been had to this respect that we have never been bothered or impeded from inhabiting said grasslands, making our huts that our resources and city provide us. But today we are told that we will be removed from the places that our huts occupy and that we are going to be taxed for lands.⁶⁹²

A report presented in September of 1885 established that the roads were not delineated in these lands and that they were not vacant lands but rather commons guaranteed by the Spanish crown. It also established that the petitioners and their ancestors had indeed occupied them since ancient times. The *Cabildo* was asked to protect the collection of firewood and soap production for philanthropy; however, the lands were located precisely in an area that the municipal government and investors considered for the development of modern urban infrastructure. This bordered with

⁶⁹¹ AFL, Asamblea Nacional 1896, box 7923(f) “Solicitudes despachadas” (121-150), file 61, *Varios indígenas piden en propiedad un terreno en las afueras de Guayaquil*.

⁶⁹² Ibid.

the “street, *9 de Octubre* in the south, by the mangroves of the salty marsh to the west, by the swamps... to the north, and the swamps that went from the city to the swamp in the east.” The ancestral lands were precisely the most important zones of growth and urbanization in the city between the end of the nineteenth century and the 1920s. The answer in November 1886 was that plans were being made for the complete re-structuring of the city and that they might remain there without being bothered until this project could be carried out. In 1897, the petition for deeds was completely denied by the National Assembly in response to the intervention of the governor of Guayas and the Municipality of Guayaquil.

Despite the passing reference that is made in Guayas to indigenous communities and agrarian conflicts in which they participated during the period of agricultural export expansion, the case mentioned was not an exception. The case of the Casas Viejas community of the Chongón parish in the Guayaquil canton and the Bajadas de Chanduy community along the road towards the peninsula of Santa Elena are also representative. The same thing happened in Julio Moreno and in the Limoncito community in the contemporary province of Santa Elena.⁶⁹³ In the parish *El Progreso*, the political deputy and the *hacendados* of the area prohibited the *comuneros* from extracting wood from communal forests while the inhabitants of the forests alleged that the forests had belonged to them for a long time and they resented

⁶⁹³ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 178, Sociedad obrera Chanduy.

the rapid change in the attitudes among the authorities. The indigenous communities were not only found in this zone, but also in other zones of classic expansion of cacao, such as Milagro, where the community of Molleturo was expropriated and then developed multiple methods to attempt to recuperate lands.

Until 1870, large landowners and small landowners dedicated to cultivating cacao had lived together, according to these authors, with a greater presence of small and medium landowners in Manabí and large landowners in Guayas. Good ecological conditions, ample demand, and the low cost of lands guaranteed the co-existence of peasants and *hacendados* that characterized Guayas before 1870..⁶⁹⁴ As Manuel Chiriboga has shown, the agrarian frontier expanded and lands, became more concentrated between 1880 and 1920. It was in this period that the aspirations of peasant autonomy and processes of consolidation of large cacao *haciendas* entered into fierce conflict.

According to Ron Pineo, when the value of cacao exported from Ecuador increased by 700 percent -- a period that coincided with the ascent of liberalism and with the state regime configured after the Liberal Revolution (1870-1920) – large

⁶⁹⁴ Carlos Contreras, “Guayaquil y su región en el primer boom cacaotero (1750-1820), in *Historia y región*, ed. Maiguashca; Ron Pineo, “Guayaquil y su región en el segundo boom cacaotero” (1870-1925) in *Historia y región*, ed. Maiguashca; Manuel Chiriboga, ed., *El problema agrario en el Ecuador* (Quito: Ildis, 1988).

properties expanded over small producers.⁶⁹⁵ The vacant lands had ceased being attainable; the large landowners also controlled the sources of credit and a commercial and banking sector emerged that imposed strict conditions on the producers.⁶⁹⁶ High interest rates to which peasants committed themselves to attempt to maintain their autonomy as producers and the expansion of large landholdings around peasant settlements, such as Daule, Naranjito, and Milagro, led them into obligatory, unpaid labor. The letters from *conciertos* of the province of Guayas to the National Assembly of 1896 spoke of the existence of the practice of *concertaje* in Guayas and demanded justice as even the smallest credits were leaving them enslaved.⁶⁹⁷

Although the ‘regime of cacao exploitation,’ as Manuel Chiriboga has identified it, was not based on the expansion of *concertaje* but rather on *sembraduría*, nonetheless land concentration in the province regenerated work for debt in the 1920s.⁶⁹⁸ The labor regime that Manuel Chiriboga has described presented two types

⁶⁹⁵ Pineo, “Guayaquil.”

⁶⁹⁶ John Uggén establishes in this study a framework for an approximation to the cycle of peasant mobilizations in Guayas that permits us to observe the relationship between access to land, land concentration, and peasant mobilizations. John Uggén, *Tenencia de la tierra*; and his earlier work, *Peasant Mobilization in Ecuador: A Case of Study in Guayas Province*, (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Miami, 1975).

⁶⁹⁷ AFL, Asamblea Nacional 1896, box 81, folder 24 (a) “Solicitudes no despachadas,” file 15, *Varios ciudadanos de Guayaquil piden la abolición de las cartas de concertaje*

⁶⁹⁸ Chiriboga, ed., *El problema agrario en el Ecuador*.

of relations of production. Production depended on a relationship between the worker and the owner of the land through which a direct producer – generally a family – was obliged to plant a pre-established quantity of trees in a territory that was not already under cultivation on the property of a select group of powerful families. “In retribution, the (peasant) family unit can lend certain complementary plants (of subsistence) to cacao production to receive loans and wages and receive a monetary payment for each of the trees in good state at the moment of the redemption.”⁶⁹⁹ In effect, the worker could enter into the “sphere of merchandise and pay in money certain levels of consumption, wages, and the money of the redemption were important as the cultivation for subsistence; however, all of the original risk, from the clearing of lands until the plant became productive, was his responsibility and required his absolute attention. In this labor regime, the level of exploited value for the large landowner was 500 percent according to Chiriboga's calculation.

The other possible form of work as day-laborers on the plantations included a salary, which was superior to the salary of the Sierra (between 1 and 1.2 sures while in the Sierra salaries were around 20 cents); however, given the prices of subsistence in Guayas and the fact that the salary was insufficient to sustain the “social factors” of the worker meant that the laborer relied on debt to the *patrón* that “made him

⁶⁹⁹ Ibid., 160.

subject to the dominant pre-capitalist legal structure.”⁷⁰⁰ For the same author, these relations of production were not due to the pre-capitalist character of the landowners but rather the transitional character of the “beginning phase of capitalist accumulation.”⁷⁰¹ As we know in comparable cases from Jamaica, Cuba, and Bolivia, the passage from these “transitional” forms of labor to the complete proletarianization of workers is not an evolutionary step, nor even a necessary one. Although the resistance to transitional regimes (to which led the peasant expropriation of subsistence conditions) may have seemed more viable in contexts in which the Andean community prevailed as a result of community defense strategies, there also existed among the day-laborers and the growers of the coast a search for alternatives to develop peasant economies. Forms of peasant resistance always included the “capacity of peasant families to mix commercial activities and subsistence activities.”⁷⁰² Some were expelled from indigenous territories as an effect of land concentration; other migrants and colonizers attracted by cacao attempted to demand, negotiate, and *pressure* for land through the rental of lands and the formation of social organizations in order to generate “vital” alternatives.

This is the case of the parish of Jesús María, precinct of Los Huaques, and the

⁷⁰⁰ Ibid., 164.

⁷⁰¹ Ibid., 158-185.

⁷⁰² Brooke Larson, *Colonialismo y transformación agraria en Bolivia. Cochabamba, 1500-1900* (La Paz: CERES and HISBOL, 1992).

Venecia and Naranjal haciendas of the Milagro canton, a selected space serviced by waters from the *páramo* of the frontier with the province of Azuay, having navigable rivers and, therefore, being one of the most desirable cantons during the cacao boom and one of the most important scenarios of peasant conflict during the height of liberalism.⁷⁰³ We know the process of conflict in the zone because of the documents forged during the long trial that involved the inhabitants of these parishes with the large landowners of the zone, particularly the Sáenz and the Díaz Granados families.

To speak of the existence of expropriated indigenous communities – an image that the bourgeois of Guayas generally excludes from its memory – creates an imaginary space in which to construct territory and land for peasant communities and distance them from the identity of day-laborers, *peones*, and people dependent on the hacienda in order to explore a truly peasant economy. In the sixty years after having been elevated to the category of parish, this population had not progressed in any way. The owners of the land in which the population was located – “*ayunos de patriotismo*” – had conserved it in a state of prostration, not permitting the workers either to support commercial life or to live in an urban way.⁷⁰⁴ They presented a communication to the Ministry of Social Welfare and Labor:

⁷⁰³ Milagro was also one of the most important bastions of the Communist Party from the middle of the 1920s on.

⁷⁰⁴ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 178, Guayas, cantón Milagro, parroquia Jesús María, comunidad Jesús María, December 28, 1928, f. 2.

We ask you, *Señor* Minister, that you should take interest in the well-being of the Homeland and of the working class, that you should make the benefits of the Dictatorship arrive to us, making the Decree of the expropriation of lands inclusive of this parish. It is not just that in the province of Guayas, cradle of Ecuadorian liberalism, there should be a population that suffers this oppression.⁷⁰⁵

Milagro had been part of the territory of the Molleturo-Mollepungo communities whose leadership was in the *cordillera* of Azuay province. The condition of tense co-habitation between indigenous communities and *hacendados* during the nineteenth century in various regions of the country suffered a substantial change after the expansion of the agrarian frontier in the coast. After the long cycle of accumulation and expropriation due to the consolidation of the cacao business, the *hacendado* Díaz Granados held “uncontroversial” property deeds. The deeds which J.M. Sáenz and Bernarda Salazar accessed on September 7, 1857, showed that their grandfather had purchased lands in dispute (with the community) with the approval of the governor of the Guayas province.⁷⁰⁶

Although by that year there existed deeds for the *hacendados*, the community had not accepted those deeds as valid and, according to the narratives of the *hacendados* themselves, in 1885 José María Sáenz decided to buy back those lands and current deeds as he sought to close the dispute over these desirable lands

⁷⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁶ Ibid., *Carta del sindicato de agricultores de Milagro al MPST 29 diciembre 1928.*

definitively. According to the descendents of the family Díaz Granados, José M. Sáenz bought the lands through a lawyer from Azuay, Carlos Ordóñez Lazo, who made contact directly in Azuay with the *comuneros* settled in the *cordillera* and also with the totality of small landholders, co-owners of lands bordering Azuay and Guayas. On October 25, 1911, clear borders were demarcated around the *hacienda* and rulings with respect to this demarcation were approved on December 9, 1911, which took the right to occupy these lands away from the indigenous peasantry and colonizers settled in the lowlands.⁷⁰⁷

Almost all of the lands with their pastures and annexes to indigenous peoples of Molleturo with the expressed circumstance noted in these purchases through which Sr. Sáenz bought those lands, not because he considered them necessary for the security of his deeds of which he held property with anticipation and found himself in possession of them, but rather to evade that in the future some indigenous people should believe that they have the right to these mountains and with the clear foresight to evade lawsuits...⁷⁰⁸

The measure also anticipated the closeness of other potential competitors who could have forced the *comuneros* to sell them the disputed lands. As Uggen has viewed it, it was precisely after 1880 that the Seminarios, the Aspiazus, the Morlas, the Caamaños, the Durán-Ballén, the Ycaza, and the Avilés appropriated Milagro in order to complement the old properties of the Sáenz who were able to convert estates

⁷⁰⁷ Ibid., f. 18-20.

⁷⁰⁸ Ibid.

into cacao *haciendas*. In turn, they were able to participate in the foundation of the National Society of Farmers as part of the clan with access to credit and support to concentrate these lands.⁷⁰⁹ As a complementary measure, the Díaz Granados took out a mortgage on the Rosario hacienda in the Mortgage Bank and with the help of their lawyer, Alfredo Baquerizo Moreno, they became the legal owners and put to rest various institutional mediations and avoid possible conflicts with peasant communities in the future.⁷¹⁰ Thus, the bank served to confirm the elites as owners in land disputes just as it tended to do in Pichincha.

The labor regime within the hacienda, as Chiriboga has described it, left little space for the consolidation of rural parishes as settlements. According to the denunciations that accompanied the land petition, the parish lacked schools, commerce was monopolized, and the inhabitants did not enjoy autonomy to build their own houses without having to go into debt and sign contracts with the *hacendados*. José María Díaz Granados had promoted a land concentration accompanied by a “capture of the justice system” as the parish authorities were also the administrators of the Rosario hacienda.

The hacienda had been converted into an independent country, denying citizenship rights, including access to the justice system and to commerce. They had

⁷⁰⁹ Uggen, *Tenencia de la tierra*, 30; AIFP, MPST Collection, box 178, Guayas, cantón Milagro, parroquia Jesús María, comunidad Jesús María.

⁷¹⁰ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 178, *Jesús María*, December 28, 1928, f. 15-16.

privatized the public domain of laws and prisons for their workers. The *hacendados* and the political deputy applied a curfew on Sundays and holidays, imprisoning in *hacienda* cells those who broke curfew after 9 p.m. The hacienda exercised a monopolistic control over commerce, “there only being two merchants who by paying rent were permitted to negotiate.”⁷¹¹ The cacao that the peasants were able to plant was also monopolized:

Despite not stating in the cacao planting contract, the obligation to sell the fruits of the plants is to sell to the same *hacienda* which takes on the responsibility of weighing, drying, sending it to Guayaquil and to pay ten sucres less than the normal price... charging the drying separately...⁷¹²

The argument of the *hacendados* was that there only existed private property in this population. The community had existed before the hacienda. The agrarian unions of Milagro in the second half of the 1920s and into the 1930s pressured the state to support them in the expropriation of hacienda lands to guarantee the civil life, the economy, and the politics of this population. In this sense, they recovered a series of historic documents from earlier centuries and testimonies in order to speak of the

⁷¹¹ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 218, Guayas-Milagro arrendatarios 1929, f. 2.

⁷¹² AIFP, MPST Collection, box 178, Guayas, cantón Milagro, parroquia Jesús María, *Solicitud del sindicato de agricultores de Milagro a la asamblea nacional, 16 de enero de 1929*, f. 4. Signed by the Union’s director Rudecindo Sánchez, the general secretary Gen. Gabriel Medina, and the secretary of Jesús María Manuel Verdugo. Also, see news of this theme in AIFP, MPST Collection, box 177, *Informe del inspector del trabajo de Guayaquil Luis Maldonado E. al departamento de Trabajo*, October 23, 1926.

prior existence of peasant populations. Discovering moments in which the hacienda was in conflict with indigenous communities of the region permitted them to legitimate their own existence and their ownership of lands against the argument of the large landowners according to which the hacienda had marked the social life of the territories. They also told of the process of hacienda expansion and the experience of the peasantry in the region. With these arguments, they did not aim to recover lands for indigenous communities as they did in the central Sierra. In the case of Milagro – a space that received internal migrations – they wished to argue for the recognition of the population as an entity independent from the hacienda and thus delimit a territory for the parish amongst the haciendas. From the parish, they wished to trace bridges towards the confirmation of peasant ownership of the land. The ownership of the land that had not been colonized by peasants during the boom or even after the cacao crisis was desperately disputed in order to construct an alternative economy and save themselves from famine. Re-thinking the community in effect legitimated the idea of a peasant economy in a zone populated by powerful landowners.

With the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, the exportation of cacao fell precipitously. The recuperation had barely begun when plagues appeared in the plantations in 1919. The cacao plants were infested, causing many lands to be abandoned. Peasants migrated to areas that had not been under cultivation by the

hacienda and many attempted to take possession of lands for the community economies. The combination of visions of peasant autonomy and the existence of vast areas left behind due to the cacao crisis generated a second attempt to take possession of lands on behalf of the peasants. Thus, the *comuneros* of Molleturo and the colonizer peasants would have purchased “shares of the Molleturo and Naranjal communities to dismount and cultivate.”⁷¹³ As Uggen has observed, the cycles of cacao boom and bust and the time before the emergence of the sugar and rice boom generated expectations of cycles in addition to land access that were linked to cycles of peasant protest and mobilization in the coast. According to Uggen, when capital returned in order to re-accommodate resources for export economies, new cycles of protest began.

In effect, these abandoned lands were reclaimed by large landowners that considered their oligarchic control over lands and the labor supply to be in danger due to the formation of a peasant economy and, worse yet, the emergence of trials that might question the predominance of capital. With the disappearance of the Commercial and Agriculture Bank *Commercial and Agriculture Bank*, the epoch of the *pepa de oro* had come to an end and the “oligarchies of cacao” would be replaced

⁷¹³ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 178, Guayas, cantón Milagro, parroquia Jesús María, comunidad Jesús María.

in the coming years by new sugar and banana magnates.⁷¹⁴ In the sugar and rice zones – large centers like Eloy Alfaro Milagro, General Elizalde, and Naranjito – they did not enjoy administrative autonomy and they rubbed up against the interests of land owners.⁷¹⁵

While the Díaz Granados family had deeds signed by the authorities and in various versions from various transactions, the *comuneros*, members of the parish, and colonizers produced deeds that were quickly shown to be fraudulent. Their arguments in defense of their ownership referred to social reasons as well as the work that they had undertaken on the lands; however, they lacked deeds. Their principal argument focused on the right to work to survive and the secondary reason was a social one – that their ownership would benefit the state and the market in contrast to the private interests that had “suffocated” the population. One of the peasants who bought shares of the Molleturo community in order to integrate himself in it, Leocadio C. Andrade, wrote in a letter to President Ayora, to warn him that he should respect the communities and not put up with violence of the *hacendados* and their authorities.⁷¹⁶

Before this new pressure from the peasant collectivity, the landowners considered constituting a legal document that would impede peasant ownership once

⁷¹⁴ Uggen, *Tenencia de la tierra*, 32.

⁷¹⁵ Deler, *Ecuador. Del espacio al estado nacional*, 279.

⁷¹⁶ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 178, Guayas, Naranjal, February 19, 1930.

more. In the 1930s, we will see the Díaz Granados family trying once more to legitimate their ownership with deeds negotiated with individual *comuneros*, though by that time (after the constitutional assembly of 1929), that was not the only form of land ownership and it had to compete with deeds signed due to the social function of the land, approved under the Law of Territorial Patrimony of the State (1929) and through which the state responded to peasant pressuring to conserve peasant support, though doing so affected the large landowners of Guayas who sustained *the Liberal Party*. In a letter to the MPST on April 22, 1930, the Farmers' Union of Milagro denounced the Díaz Granados family for trying once more to make *comuneros* of Molleturo sign documents recognizing the family as the sole owners of otherwise disputed lands.⁷¹⁷

In that moment, the peasants used the argument over communal ownership to justify re-colonizing the eastern side of the river Norcay that they claimed to be communal while the *hacienda* only had ownership of the western side. In defense of their right to autonomy, the inhabitants of Jesús María argued that all the demarcations of communal lands had to be made by the entire community and not by individual members as had been done frequently between 1857 and 1913 when the transaction before the Mortgage Bank was closed. For that reason, they argued, the deeds of the Díaz Granados family were null.

⁷¹⁷ Ibid., 28 de diciembre de 1928, f. 29.

Generally, all of the large extensions of lands coming from communal lands are usurped from their legitimate and permitted owners either for a lack of opportune demanding on their behalf or due to the great influence of the usurpers.⁷¹⁸

The denunciation of the lack of an autonomous justice system led the inhabitants of Jesús María and the *comuneros* of Molleturo to turn to the central state in search of support. The peasants of Milagro pressured the state to take a position. The alternatives were either to support the peasant initiative or the commercial and banking elite that were attempting new incursions with rice and sugar capital and sought to impede the development of subsistence economies in the interest of accessing a more flexible labor supply.

As we saw, the *hacendados* Díaz Granados belonged to organizations of exporters and networks of financial control of the port and had the capacity to mobilize the armed forces against the population; however, the pressure exercised over the regime of Isidro Ayora seemed to have been more efficient. During the liberal regime, the appeal to the central state seemed useless, but the inhabitants were willing to enact collective action.

Here the political deputy does not defend at all that it would be just that they attack us; the Governor, on the other hand, there is no one else from whom to demand justice other than you, as a father of the Fatherland as Father of

⁷¹⁸ Ibid., f. 25v.

everyone... You say that if the president does not make them be respected, they will be respected by another manner and they will no longer accept being trampled by the *hacienda* and the authorities.⁷¹⁹

Between 1925 and 1934, the population of Milagro had formed a network of local agrarian unions in the *pueblos* of Naranjito, General Elizalde, Jesús María, and Matilde Esther, with a central union located in Milagro that was able to unite 300 affiliates. The demands for the intervention of the reformed state were accompanied by newspaper publications in the workers' press and backed by other agrarian unions throughout the country. The force of the demand was based on evidence that they might have success and the demand might spread to other groups and political organizations, a possibility that seemed much more likely during the liberal regime. The force of the collective action was the last option, but it had this possibility and thus they framed it before the authorities of the Governor of Guayas and the police.

In this sense, the report of the superintendent of the police to the governor of Guayas on October 2, 1930, reported the resources and the security with which the union operated. The deputy Cesar Ayala, chief of the rural police, indicated that the unions had occupied the lands in dispute with the Rosario hacienda, that they were working those lands, and that they were paying *peones* between 2 and 3 sueres for clearing the land (a greater amount than the maximum of 2 sueres that large

⁷¹⁹ AIFP MPST Collection, box 178, *Solicitud del sindicato de agricultores de Milagro al MPST*, February 25, 1930, f. 22-23.

landowners paid). He also indicated that all of the unionized litigators were armed and ready to resist the abuses of the *hacienda*. He proposed that measures be taken immediately to remedy a situation that was growing more complex each day and he added that the force used so frequently seemed to be an unsustainable response.⁷²⁰ The union Farmers of Milagro suggested that the common justice system was being defrauded by the use of force. On October 6, 1931, they asked the Ministry that it not permit that the *hacendados* confuse them for communists to justify the use of force. They asked that an order be extended to the civil authorities of Guayas so that they might not intervene in issues for which the legal system was responsible.⁷²¹

The conflicts between the haciendas and the communities of the parishes of Milagro multiplied. In each community surrounded by haciendas we can observe the defense of parish settlements from attempts of the haciendas to take away peasant access to autonomous lands, which were, in turn, led to the beginnings of processes of union organizing. These groups advanced their immediate demands towards other, more ambitious objectives such as the expropriation of hacienda lands in order to establish conditions to be able to access markets. This was the process in the parish of Naranjal, which had unleashed a long battle against the Barraganetal hacienda, as well as in the Milagro and San Miguel haciendas.

⁷²⁰ Ibid., f. 46.

⁷²¹ Ibid., f. 54.

The Barraganetal hacienda was the property of Francisco Díaz Muñoz, who had been a contractor of the Commercial and Agriculture Bank *Commercial and Agriculture Bank* until he bought the hacienda to produce rubber, coffee, sugar, cacao, livestock, and alcohol – all products affected by plagues that destroyed the plantations and the industry. The hacienda had 195 *peones* and 31 renters, of which he confronted nine renters that occupied lands after 1925 for having affiliated themselves to the Union of Workers of Guayaquil. Díaz proposed that the renters had taken three times the land that corresponded to them, that they had not paid him, and that they did not respect the contract that they had signed as they sold products to whomever without his consent. Also, he explained that he had a lot of debts with a merchant company “Toledo Rey & Co” due to loans they had taken out. He said that large thefts were taking place on the plantations and in the mountains as they had not maintained the required distance between each plant, thus risking that plagues might infect the entire plantation. The demand proposed that all of the steps taken by the peasants were due to the fact that they belonged to the union and that it was socialist or bolshevist.⁷²²

In the Progreso canton, land thefts and abuses on behalf of *hacendados* and civil authorities were registered that were formally presented by unions formed

⁷²² AIFP, MPST Collection, box 218, Milagro, *carta de Francisco Díaz Muñoz al MPST*, July 23, 1929.

beginning in 1926 after the process of land concentration that took place between the end of the nineteenth century and the crisis of the liberal state. Populations such as Eloy Alfaro (contemporary Durán) and Naranjito had been surrounded by the large landowners to the extent that, according to denunciations, the only alternatives they had was either to abandon their houses or pay rent to the large landowners for crossing their properties to access public roads, thus falling into debt and the *concertaje* that had been so strongly rejected in the Sierra.⁷²³

The most complete demands for state control of work contracts were presented beginning in 1925 in the province of Guayas and more precisely in the rural periphery of Guayaquil through arguments that expounded the contradiction between rules for the COG signed by *the Liberal Party* and overseen by the FTRE and the labor practices in rural areas that were implemented by force. The peasants who had developed organizations such as unions around 1925 to constitute themselves into legal collective entities and to enter into dialogue with the state highlighted the great paradox that in the cradle of liberalism the rules set forth by the governor of Guayas with respect to work hours were not being respected. This complaint reflected the manner in which pacts of charity that the liberal regime attempted to identify with the philanthropic attitude of liberalism towards the workers and artisans of the city had entered into popular consciousness and formed part of the repertoire of peasant

⁷²³ “Que nos oigan,” in *La Vanguardia*, Año 1, no. 3, 15 de diciembre de 1927, 5.

demands. These pacts were used as arguments to attempt to regulate work in rural areas.

6.4 The Commercialization of Communal Lands, Imperialism, and Transnational Companies in the Formation of Guayas.

The peninsula of Santa Elena constituted a type of periphery in the province of Guayas. It was a region populated by indigenous communities that attempted to integrate themselves into the liberal political process through the creation of democratic civil societies similar to the COG. This was the case of the old *cacicazgo* of Chanduy in the parish of Chanduy, Santa Elena canton (contemporary province of Santa Elena), where the Democratic Workers' Society of Chanduy was formed on September 26, 1912, with the objective of “helping the artisans and industrial workers of the zone” in which the *comuneros* were known for their fishing and agriculture, as well as their work as carpenters since colonial times, which Guayaquil was a major shipyard of the Spanish navy. The Workers' Society had prohibited discussions over religion and politics and had established the goal of forming guilds, obtaining the abolition of *concertaje*, lowering taxes on necessary goods, and recovering and regulating the property deeds of parish inhabitants.⁷²⁴ Also, in this small parish

⁷²⁴ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 178, their statutes would have been approved by the president of the Republic on February 25, 1913.

another association formed in the spirit of the COG, the Society of Sons of Labor of the Lowlands of Chanduy.

In the parishes of Chongón, Chanduy, Casas Viejas, Ancón, and Libertad there are various examples of indigenous communities that sought diverse forms to integrate themselves into mechanisms of political representation exhibited by the city of Guayaquil. Despite their efforts to subscribe themselves in the civilized order, they suffered processes of land expropriation and land concentration at the hands of foreigners and international investors. This process of generating peripheral areas was consolidated in the exploitation of forests for wood in the foothills of the *cordillera* in Chongón and in the oil mine regions that were exploited by various businesses, thus changing the face of the peninsula. The process of land concentration in the peripheries of Guayaquil soon struck the credibility of the region as an extension of the democratic civilization of Guayaquil. The process of land concentration and commercialization could not be stopped by the organization and soon a conflict among workers' organizations was unleashed.

In the notes of the Democratic Workers' Society of Chanduy to the president of the republic, the community summarized the expropriation of communal lands and revealed ways to compare their experiences with those of the central Sierra. The first memory that the community presented was that the communal lands of Agua Verde in Chanduy were declared vacant lands in 1835 by the governor of Guayas. In this

context, as had happened in Licto in the province of Chimborazo, the *cacique* Villón took the initiative of giving communal lands as private property to *comuneros* as a way of defending lands declared as vacant lands. A sector of the community linked to leaders Villón and Quinde in 1905 would have formed the *Society Sons of Labor* Society of Sons of Labor of the Lowlands of Chanduy as a form of political and social organization superimposed over the private property of lands. This process was viewed as a direct path to the recognition of the *pueblo* within the liberal regime. The conformation of the community into a liberal association reinforced its collectivity and gave them access to arguments in relation to the ownership of lands by entire communities.

According to the accusations of the Democratic Society, the Society “Sons of Labor” carried out an act of transition by which the lands of the *comuneros* passed to the directive's wives and they were allocated as private lots among the *comuneros*, thus breaking with the logic of the community. Large extensions of community lands of Chanduy passed into private hands.⁷²⁵ The Society Sons of Labor *Society Sons of Labor* negatively evaluated the effects of the community's defense tactic as the *caciques* Villon and Quinde presented it. The initial issuance of deeds in name of the

⁷²⁵ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 178, *Documentos de la sociedad obrera democrática de Chanduy* (Quito: Imprenta y Litografía El Comercio, 1913). Anexada a *Solicitud de la Sociedad Obrera Democrática de Chanduy al MPST, sobre despojos de tierras comunales*, April 27, 1927.

comuneros that sought to defend them from the declaration of vacant lands later facilitated the sale of private lands to strangers.

The memorandum of the Democratic Society with respect to the transfer of lands spoke of a long process of land expropriation that took place in 1910 when the political deputy and the judge of the second civil court of the parish, “without naming the distinguished advisor nor the functionaries,” authorized the transfer of communal lands to Indians along with personal deeds; “for their simple-ness they accessed and signed *ipso facto* all the initial stipulations that were presented to them by some interested parties, obtaining thus those nine writings...” For those who opposed this issuance of deeds – constituted by the Democratic Society – these nine writings were based on “farse and fear” since they became owners of large lots of land that contained thousands of hectares that had belonged to the community.⁷²⁶

The existence of two organizations in the community of Chanduy in the framework of liberal *obrerismo* led to the complex composition of the community and also to conflicts within the community generated due to limited land resources and the secondary effects of private land deeds: “and believing them to constitute inviolable rights over pertinent lands, they awarded titles of purchase-sale of land lots to establish property deeds.” While the Democratic Society proposed to reconstruct collective lands, the *Society Sons of Labor*, directed by Pedro Quinde in the 1920s,

⁷²⁶ Ibid.

declared the extinction of the community: “Thus, the ideals of this Society are resolved to establish private property, giving each *comunero* a parcel of land in which are located honorable and dignified means to be able to sustain himself.”⁷²⁷

The memorandum included a summary of how the appetite for lands generated a series of communal land expropriations by several individuals and the beginning of various trials over land demarcation in the second court of the *canton*. The trials opened in 1925 by the *comuneros* of Chanduy and of Casas Viejas in the *cordillera* of Chongón reflected, as the inspector from the MPST observed clearly in 1926, a conflict that led to the loss of the community to the hands of investors. The exchange of lands already converted into merchandise was very quick and “the *pueblo*, already dismayed, discovered that the *señores* Antonio D. Palacios Maldonado and José Benito Mazzini had forged in 1920 two titles through distinct, but fraudulent procedures, becoming owners of two other extensions of this community.”⁷²⁸

In zones not exploited by agriculture, the activities referred to the exploitation of forests and primary resources in a species of economy of collection that throughout will exterminate primary forests to give way to agrarian exploitation. Those peasants, even the most poor, those with whom landlords will have to deal along with the large haciendas, and immigrants would be able to extract natural resources from tropical forests.⁷²⁹

⁷²⁷ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 178, Sociedades obreras Chanduy, 1913-1937.

⁷²⁸ Ibid., *Memorial presentado el 30 de octubre de 1928*.

⁷²⁹ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 186, Chongón, comunidad Casas Viejas, 1934-1946.

The hoarding of lands by Ecuadorian and foreign (e.g. Maldonado, Mazzini, Cleveland) *hacendados* even included the appropriation of the old precincts of Zapotal. This aggressive process of land transfer impacted strategic commercialization, a reconstruction of political organization with a discourse on the collective character of land, and the questioning of the quality of land as merchandise.

In effect, the *comuneros* organized themselves as democratic societies in the form of *obrerismo* to enter into dialogue with the Liberal Party since this organization gave them a collective character and recognition by the state; however, the state reaction was not entirely obliging. It did not even access the demand made by the *comuneros* that land deeds be issued as collective possession. This petition was considered an affront to private property and, therefore, during the administration of José Luis Tamayo (1920-1924), the leaders of the Democratic Society of Chanduy were imprisoned and only recovered their freedom in response to letters sent to the Supreme Court after the July Revolution of 1925 in addition to various trials set forth by other comuneros beginning in the same year.⁷³⁰

The communities of Ancón, *el Encanto*, and San Lorenzo in the peninsula of Santa Elena, where community lands and salt wells were also expropriated, a very

⁷³⁰AIFP, MPST Collection, box 178, Sociedades obreras Chanduy, 1913-1937.

similar process was observed. However, the orientation of the peninsula did not lead to its conversion to agro-exportation, in part due to the desert-like nature of the soil, but, about all, due to the British and North American businesses that found large oil deposits there. In his study of the South American Development Company, a mining company that located itself in the south of the country, the communist leader Ricardo Paredes took into account at least nine large transnational companies that had settled in the country within an imperialist framework. Among these companies he included the SADCO mining company, which established itself in Portovelo in the province of El Oro; the Royal Dutch Shell oil company that established itself in what is now the province of Santa Elena; the Standard Oil Company in Guayas and Esmeraldas; the UFCO, which “astutely” named itself the Banana Company of Ecuador; the Ecuador Land Company in Esmeraldas; and the electricity company and generally all those service companies that had at least half of its capital from transnational companies.⁷³¹

Among the oil companies that were located on the peninsula was the Ecuador Oilfields Ltd., with its base in London; the Ecuador Tropical Oil Company; two private extractors with refineries for gasoline of Juan de Dios Lecaro Rubira; and after 1917 the Anglo Ecuadorian Oilfields, located in Ancón. The communities observed the transformation of their geography. Aside from zones of extraction,

⁷³¹ Ricardo A. Paredes, *El imperialismo en el Ecuador: oro y sangre en Portovelo* (Quito: Ediciones La Tierra, 2006 [1 ed., 1939]).

company encampments were erected along with their administrative services. They were organized according to a strict racial order in the format of British encampments in the colonies. Thus, the British engineers had houses and clubs in which all of the goods they consumed was imported. They ultimately resembled settlements in India and Africa. The white Ecuadorian employees had their own housing and clubs. Ecuadorian workers lived in large barracks, without the proper conditions for family or social life. They were denied the right to leave the encampments to travel to local markets due to the prohibition on the circulation of merchandise outside of the encampments' company stores. Jamaican workers had their own separate settlements. Work in the oil companies involved a high number of inhabitants from the province – close to 1,500 workers.⁷³²

Although the expectations of various actors before the National Assembly of the Liberal Party was that it would generate a national posture against imperialism and would promote protectionist policies for the internal peasant market, but this did not happen during the liberal period. As socialist leaders proposed in the 1930s, the “semi-colonial” situation (e.g. Luis Maldonado Estrada, socialist) or the imperialist situation (Ricardo Paredes, communist) would have only begun to lose ground when “there began together with a political movement of vast magnitude in Ecuador, of

⁷³²AIFP, MPST Collection, box 183, Litoral Minas Petrolíferas, *Informe del subdirector del trabajo del Litoral Guayas y el Oro*.

deep democratic roots, of profound nationalist sentiment (and clearly opposed to fascism and imperialism.”⁷³³ The liberal authorities in Guayaquil, along with the commercial and financial agricultural export elite associated themselves with philanthropy. They integrated artisans, small merchants, and select workers from the port while they turned their backs on the effects that international concessions were generating with respect to the exploitation of primary resources. Thus, one of the least explored reasons for which the radical war began the liberal regime was the lack of a state response to the demands for the incorporation of Esmeraldas province (one of the strongest during the revolution) into the nation and into progress. The “neighbors” of Esmeraldas asked the National Assembly in 1896 to regulate the exploitation of rubber for global markets through national protectionist policies. In this sense, they addressed the president of the National Assembly as a “president citizen” to ask that he regulate the exploitation of rubber and impede the methods that had operated in the zone since 1860:

Because it is destroying our forests due to the destructive work of a foreign colony that, without legal regulation or supervision, is benefiting while in other Nations of the world it is planted... in Manabí and Esmeraldas its cut off at its roots with premeditated intentions, destroying in such a way as to extract a hundred pounds of rubber, leaving three hundred trees dead.⁷³⁴

⁷³³ Paredes, *El imperialismo en el Ecuador*.

⁷³⁴ AFL, Asamblea Nacional 1896, box 81, folder 24 (d) “Solicitudes no despachadas (77-102),” file 90, *Vecinos de Esmeraldas piden se establezca una escuela de artes y oficios*.

In order to avoid that the rubber plant should become extinct, as had happened with quinine in the eastern forests, they asked for a twenty-year prohibition on the extract of rubber, and the incorporation of the population of Esmeraldas into an education in the field of arts and trades. In fact, the largest lands of this province were issued to foreign companies, such as the lands of the Pailón in San Lorenzo Esmeraldas, which were administered by the “Ecuador Land Company” of the British crown that had received vast extensions in 1856 in exchange for the debt of Ecuadorian independence. Although the National Assembly had responded in 1896 to reduce the lands and rights of the crown, and Alfaro had ratified such a reduction in 1906, Leonidas Plaza decided to maintain the trust of the British crown as a form of seeking support against the radical wars of this province that threatened his government.⁷³⁵

The request from the citizens of Esmeraldas highlighted their interest in the integration of the province into the logic of gradual democracy. They asked for a School of Arts and Trades, which, given the characteristics of the exploitation in that province, seemed to be a desperate search for alternatives before an irrational exploitation of natural resources and a disdain for its inhabitants, viewed as racial inferiors by international companies and also by the Liberal Party.

⁷³⁵ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 178, Reclamos de la familia Flemming, Tierras del Pailon, San Lorenzo provincia de Esmeraldas.

On Santa Elena's peninsula in Guayas, the working-class political process experienced an important transition. The attempt of the indigenous communities to defend their lands by assuming a political identity through the format offered in Guayaquil as workers was not successful due to the hierarchies that were established between the city and the rural periphery and the territories of colonization and ventures of foreigners and transnational investors. Although the struggle of the "cholo" *comuneros* over land resisted impositions and re-asserted itself after the fall of the Liberal Party, the populations of the peninsula also gained experience as workers in the transnational oil companies. In this manner, they formed some of the first proletariat unions of the country, together with those of public services (also belonging to that transnational companies).

Among the demands presented to the Ministry of Social Welfare beginning in 1925, several arose that questioned the extreme proletarianization of workers in transnational companies in terms of the fear that workers did not enjoy the conditions necessary for living, for having a family, for belonging to a population, or for accessing local markets. Therefore, they asked the state to intervene by guaranteeing the autonomy of the worker with respect to business through the defense of their access to parish nuclei, which was a repeated theme in the struggle against the mode of organizing capital and that was perceived as a threat to the populations and their autonomy in various provinces. Another fundamental demand was that, despite the

unprecedented number of work accidents that the new oil technologies brought with them, the workers did not access medical attention nor compensation for accidents. The liberal state was very emphatic in its defense of international alliances that opened up a way for oil concessions. Yet the workers talked about national sovereignty at the same time they reflected in their right to social security.⁷³⁶ Through the questioning of the practices of British companies, one of the focuses of political debate in the 1920s, the themes of security, class identity, and national sovereignty were also brought up. These themes oriented state reform and its character at the moment of constituting a national state with a specific manner of processing conflicts and incorporating the working class.⁷³⁷

In *The Shadows of State and Capital*, Steve Striffler offered one of the most

⁷³⁶ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 183, Litoral Minas Petrolíferas, *Informe del subdirector del trabajo del Litoral Guayas y el Oro*.

⁷³⁷ We could make various comparisons with cases of configuring modes of processing conflicts as central elements of the language of the state. To mention several that influenced our work, on the field of Latin American historiography and that focus on the negotiation of conflicts with the working classes, see Bergquist, *Los trabajadores en la historia latinoamericana*; Mallon, *Peasant and Nation*; Joseph and Nugent, *Everyday forms of State formation*. See a contrasting example of peasant state integration in Turits, *Foundations of Despotism*; Daniel James, *Resistencia e integración: el peronismo y la clase trabajadora argentina 1946 – 1976* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1990); Roldán, *A sangre y fuego*; Gotkowitz, *A revolution for our Rights*, among others. In the field of historic sociology, we consider very important the work of Moore, *Los orígenes sociales de la dictadura*; and the debate between Charles Tilly, “¿De dónde vienen los derechos?” *Sociología* 19, no. 55: 273-296 and Theda Skocpol, *Los estados y las revoluciones sociales* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1984).

profound insights into the regional experience of global capital in Ecuador and dedicated part of his study to the transformation of the cacao hacienda of Tenguel into a branch of the United Fruit Company. In this context, he showed the paradoxical situation of some workers who sought to maintain their positions as salaried workers while they also developed a peasant economy at the margins of the banana enclave. In this work, Striffler observed how “local struggles play a central role in determining the constitution of global outcomes and actors and histories -- to the point where the dichotomy between local/global and above/below becomes increasingly blurred.”⁷³⁸ Striffler examines how the UFCO mixes each petition for state intervention to evict peasants from their lands, the state would send an inspector to study the social conditions and, without being explicit, the regime would refuse to use force. However, his analysis tends to be unbalanced in one fundamental aspect – namely, his evaluation of the state’s response to the agency of the workers. Striffler described the state as incoherent and precarious, lacking political will, and the peasants as actors who could recognize their opportunities to advance their own agenda. As Ron Pineo has observed, Striffler carried his notion of workers’ agency too far.⁷³⁹ By characterizing the state as “a series of fragmented relationships,” Striffler could only

⁷³⁸ Steve Striffler, *The Shadows Of State And Capital. The United Fruit Company, Popular Struggle and Agrarian Restructuring in Ecuador, 1900-1995* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2002).

⁷³⁹ Review of Striffler's book in *The American Historical Review* 108, no. 1 (Feb, 2003): 227-228.

observe how the peasants take advantage of this precarious situation to resist a transnational company, but he could not recognize how the political field in which the peasants progressively grew stronger beginning in 1925 depended not only on the local struggle in Tenguel but also on a series of negotiations with organized workers that took place throughout the country and helped to configure the political regime.

In fact, the liberal and the July Revolution regimes responded very differently as a result of the nature of the social alliances that sustained them. The liberal regime favored the penetration of imperialist capital while the regime of the July Revolution favoured internal alliances. Labor regulations, land redistribution, and the emergence of a discourse on sovereignty resulted from this alliances.

The ethnographic approximation that Striffler proposed ought to have been combined with a view that recognized the role of alliances and conflicts in distinct regions of the country that conditioned and informed the decisions of the state. As we have observed in earlier chapters, during the liberal regime various actors were formed in distinct provinces due to discontent regarding local power and the form in which capital sought to organize itself in conjunction with forms of internal colonial domination. Liberalism also left the expectation among these actors that a change in the central political apparatus was the key to revert the perceived privatization of the justice system. Though the Liberal Party's rise to power had disappointing effects, the years of the liberal regime served to renew organizing and to conform a new

leadership whose alliances were established not with the Liberal Party but rather with younger political organizations like the Left and the regime of the July Revolution. With the fall of the liberal regime and in the process of reconstituting power, we can observe how distinct actors intervened, positioning themselves before the new regime and conditioning the government at the regional level.

Tenguel was a perfect example of working-class struggle in the context of the conformation of global capital up to 1925. It was not the only case; yet, from 1925 on, the region could only be understood through the comprehension of a new dynamic of working-class political organizing at the national level, the reorganization of political parties, and the transformation of a state that had shed its previous logic of defending capital for a new rationality formed from new political agreements. From the readings we have made in various provinces and of various processes of working-class political organizing, we know that several conflicts were pending resolution throughout the country. The liberal state did not fall due to the simple effect of an economic crisis. The political crisis was the sum of conflicts that didn't find any political solution, and the use of force.

In the three regions under study – the central Sierra, Pichincha, and Guayas – during the liberal period, highly contentious scenarios took form. Although elites and the state explored paths to pacification and programs of selective inclusion to orient a conservative institutionalization, these strategies proved insufficient given that the

forces that led to the revolution were not resolved but rather grew in strength during the liberal regime. International capital awoke the ambition to reinforce internal colonialism and had a powerful presence in three regions. In the same way, the political expectations that the civil war planted only grew among the indigenous peasants of the Sierra and peasants and workers from the coast as they perceived the “injustice” of the regime that had set aside the radicals' promises. In this context, more radical processes of organization emerged that demanded justice and state transformation.

In Pichincha, the imposition of a model of internal colonialism administered by the modern conservative elite generated one of the most important post-liberal radical movements in the country. In this province there developed an alliance between socialist and communist circles and an important peasant movement that experienced one of the greatest organizing processes between 1925 and 1945. During those twenty years, socialism developed a powerful influence over state reform. Socialism's capacity to compete with conservatism in the capital was evidenced by its ascent and the working class' backing of its demands. The Left identified itself with the demand of indigenous communities to return expropriated lands allowed the indigenous and peasant organizing process to develop a dialogue with industrial workers in the textile factories. The liberal crisis in Pichincha even allowed a transition of conservative artisan *obrerismo* towards socialism between 1909 and 1923.

In the central Sierra, the scenarios of violence that powerful indigenous communities had to confront transformed the fall of the liberal state before the opening of opportunities due to a regime change. These were the origins of the most consistent indigenous and peasant movement in the country -- a class movement -- and with a powerful and extensive network of communities that were also able to develop negotiations with leftist political parties to lead to regional consensus and control over sectional power. The Ecuadorian Federation of Indians (FEI), which had two of its principal origins in Pichincha and Cotopaxi, constituted an important force in the process of state reform during those two decades.

In this chapter we have traced conflicts in Guayas – specifically in Milagro, Daule, Eloy Alfaro, Tenguel, and La Libertad -- in which political actors formed that intervened in state reform. They represented one of the nuclei of the Left in the peasant struggle and also one of the sources of struggle against transnational capital. Beyond the conflicts and emergence of working-class political actors, the political process of integrating all of these forces led to a profound transformation of the state and the national political culture between the fall of the liberal regime and the end of the Second World War.

6.5 The Workers' Massacre of November 15, 1922.

Five minutes of officially approved discharging guns against the peaceful protesters of Iquique in 1907 had done more to destroy their patriotism and respect for government authority than half a century of systematic propaganda from a thousand anarchists.⁷⁴⁰

The violence that formed an everyday part of rural life in Guayas and in the provinces of the Sierra was never as scandalous as the police violence exercised against the workers of Guayaquil who were marching through the city's boulevards to ask the governor for the renewal of liberal promises. On November 15, 1922, the workers were surprised by the officially approved discharging of guns and hundreds were killed.

The break-down of the liberal state at the beginning of the 1920s was resounding not only because the plague had invaded cacao plantations but also because the state had perpetrated a massive crime against at least 300 workers (according to official numbers, but 600 according to those of the workers' leaders). Among the fliers that the workers dared to publish after the massacre, there was one in which Alejo Capelo stated that "they waited for a humane, encouraging, or even just a paternalistic response; in the meantime, we said, a halo of death was opening up over us, threateningly."⁷⁴¹ In contrast, a pamphlet justifying the violence said that

⁷⁴⁰ *Informe de la comisión parlamentaria de Chile en 1913*, in Bergquist, *Los trabajadores en la historia latinoamericana*, 87.

⁷⁴¹ Alejo Capelo, *El crimen del quince de noviembre de 1922* (Guayaquil: Imprenta El Ideal, 1923), 27.

everything would have been negotiable if it had to do with increasing salaries, but when the workers began to offer their opinions with respect to political themes such as the economic management of money exchange, it was unacceptable: “an economic demand such as the exchange rate gave the protest a dangerous spin of incalculable consequences.”⁷⁴² In his report to the nation, Tamayo claimed to have saved the civilized part of the nation from its enemies.⁷⁴³

For the communist party historian Patricio Icaza, this protest was the “bloody birth of the Ecuadorian proletarian consciousness” and the moment in which the liberal state showed its true face by defending capitalism. For Alexei Paez, student of anarchism, this protest was an example of the important influence of anarchist doctrines in the port. The occupation of the electric company by the port workers seemed to the authorities to have been proof of the anarchist agenda of the unions that would lead to a total paralyzation of the social system.⁷⁴⁴

Jaime Duran agreed that the initial leadership of the protest was held by workers who became progressively interested in anarchism. Nevertheless, in contrast to Argentina, with its Spanish and Italian immigration and their ideological influences

⁷⁴² Un cronista imparcial [pseud.], *Para la historia. El 15 de noviembre de 1922* (Guayaquil: Imprenta el Ideal, 1922), 11.

⁷⁴³ President Jose Luis Tamayo’s report to the nation, 1923.

⁷⁴⁴ Alexei Paez, *El anarquismo en el Ecuador* (Quito: Corporación Editora Nacional, 1986); Ycaza, *Historia del movimiento obrero*.

that persisted for many years before the formation of *peronismo*, in Guayaquil the influence of anarchism over the popular movement was less notable and the radical leaders soon lost control over the popular movement. Duran suggested that it was a more spontaneous and diverse movement than what academics of communism and anarchism have proposed. As a result of the nature of cacao production and exportation and the little investment of capitals in industries made by the commercial and financial oligarchy, Duran argued that the very concept of a proletariat is problematic.⁷⁴⁵

Recent revisionist work has argued that the popular upheaval in Guayaquil in 1922 can be listed among the riots caused by a class polarization exacerbated after the world crisis of WWI, yet its characteristics -- spontaneous and incoherent, lacking a real leadership -- shouldn't be seen as similar to the southern cone experiences. For Ron Pineo, where authors have forced comparisons with Argentina and Chile with no sufficient proof of the extension of radical ideologies, the 1922 riot should shed light on other popular upheavals of the time in Colombia. Ron Pineo argues that Guayaquil

⁷⁴⁵ Duran Barba, "Orígenes del Movimiento Obrero Artesanal," 19. Building on Ernesto Laclau's critique of the definition of class in purely economic terms, Duran argues that this popular movement, "far from deriving pre-defined class interests, constituted the non-discursive articulation of spontaneous and fragmented interests; mostly demands, some quasi-political, driven by the sharply deteriorating economic and social conditions, which manifested themselves by conforming the '*pueblo*' politically.

lacked significant industrial forms of labor and tries to prove in this way that the Ecuadorian workers' movement was weak, yet these popular classes were experienced in the use of political language. Workers were using language of the Liberal Party in defense of their own complaints.⁷⁴⁶

In effect, the strategy of “*liberalismo del orden*” or “liberalism through order” had been the stimulus of *obrerismo* and even the impulse to public demonstrations of a healthy civil society capable of asking for benefits for the working class. This was the rhetoric of the liberal state at the regional level, for which it is indispensable for us to complete a detailed analysis of the factors that led to the development of a criminalization of worker demonstrations. The massacre cannot be reduced to the schematic image of class positions determined by the structure but rather we have to describe it within a much longer and more complex political process that tells us of the formation of a regional political culture, as well as part of a process of radicalizing contentious positions. The protest can be interpreted as part of a larger process of organizational change and political identity formation.

In this vein, what appears to have been a chaotic and pre-political amalgam of spontaneous initiatives can be understood as a process of political identity transformation and that which has been imagined as a confrontation between classes

⁷⁴⁶ Ron Pineo, “Reinterpreting Labor Militancy: The Collapse of the Cacao Economy and the General Protest of 1922 in Guayaquil, Ecuador,” *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 68, no. 4 (Nov, 1988): 707-736.

is better understood through the recognition of political mediations that circulated between the elites and the working classes. It is crucial to observe how specific mediations worked for both sides instead of studying separately the formation of each group's identity and thus observe the slow process of transformations that led to the deterioration of conflict resolution mechanisms in the 1920s that was answered through labor unrest and state violence.⁷⁴⁷

Following the hypothesis that we propose for interpreting the workers massacre, this chapter will go on to describe various changes that led to more permanent tensions and to the crisis of the political strategy of the Liberal Party, during which the most profound tensions between center and periphery – the agrarian conflict and the latent discrimination directed at the COG – were most dramatically revealed. Among the changes we will address, two were intimately tied together: 1. The deterioration of the forms of mediation and legitimization that the party had developed through its “experts in social issues,” tied to the COG insofar as they were displaced by the ascent of the elite that was closer to international banking than it was to the political development of the party and its “moderate” faction; and 2. The transformation of the working classes, along with the rapid deterioration of their

⁷⁴⁷ For a comparable case, see Anton Rosenthal, “General Protest in Montevideo,” in *Work, Protest, and Identity in Twentieth-Century Latin America*, ed. Vincent C. Peloso (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources Books, 2003), 63-85.

privileges, the diversification of workers, and the entrance of two new elements – workers of transnational companies and peasants in the urban scene.

6.6 Changes and Crisis in the Liberal Party.

In *Los Ultimos Siete Años*, the liberal historian Oscar E. Reyes argued that the fragmentation of the Liberal Party, the bloody massacre of three hundred workers in Guayaquil in 1922, and the final collapse of their thirty-year-long hegemony (1895-1925) could have been avoided if Gonzalo F. Córdova had been presented as candidate of *the Liberal Party* as the liberal assembly had recommended in 1920. But for Reyes, a good military government would have functioned as a legitimate referent for the electoral machine, which could not be the case for civilian candidates quickly identified by the banking elite of Guayas. The electoral machinery would have made Cordova the winner; Reyes argued that “parish judges, election judges, and soldiers” were prepared to obstruct the ascent of conservatives to the central state.” Cordova counted on the support of the political elite of the Liberal Party, “intellectuals, professors, and people of fortune who distinguished themselves for their quality and their number.”⁷⁴⁸

⁷⁴⁸ Oscar Efrén Reyes, *Los últimos siete años* (Quito: Talleres gráficos, 1933), 6.

Nevertheless, it was the candidate Jose Luis Tamayo, a lawyer of the Commercial and Agriculture Bank, who ultimately received the support of the new financial elite and of “moderate liberal” Leonidas Plaza. Thus, they imposed the candidate favored by banking interests for the presidency of the republic. Tamayo’s selection led to conflict within prior mechanisms of consultation as it excluded actors from participating in decision-making. His government then neglected to include members of the party as advisors or as functionaries. Tamayo was denounced for his use of conservative mechanisms of political mobilization instead of generating liberal public opinion. Pío Jaramillo Alvarado questioned what he considered to be Tamayo’s attempt to destroy the liberal state, excluding their best professionals from the government and even ignoring the electoral machine to the point that it was possible for the Conservative Party to return to office at any moment.

Tamayo was accused of “*plebeyismo*” or clientelist practices of hiring personal followers rather than appointing liberal professionals from the party. He was also accused of having filled all government to positions in the highlands with conservatives, while the “*amplios*” and “*anfibijs*” (those who collaborated with conservatism) multiplied in municipal offices. In his home province of Loja (southern Andes), Jaramillo’s brother, the mayor of the city appointed by the Liberal Party, was insulted by the aristocratic Burneo family who said they were going to elevate the mayorship back to where it used to be. For Jaramillo, Ecuadorian liberalism had to

fight against clericalism and the personal power of *gamonales* in order to consolidate political institutions.

In 1921, an important group of members at the heart of the party -- functionaries, veterans of the liberal war, intellectuals, journalists, and lawyers -- under the leadership of Jaramillo Alvarado, Julio E. Moreno, and Luis Napoleon Dillon, proclaimed the need to reconstruct the assembly of the Liberal Party. On June 5, 1921, the anniversary of the triumph of liberalism in 1895, Dillon called the first meeting in Quito. The liberal bureaucracy, intellectuals, and newspapers were alarmed to observe that Tamayo had excluded liberal members from public offices, while conservatives were occupying provincial governments, municipalities, and even the ministry of foreign relations. The Pichincha bureau felt not only excluded from Guayaquil's decisions, but also felt threatened by what it saw as a conservative strategy.

It is rather improbable that Cordova could have created the conditions to reunify this organization, exhausted as it was by internal divisions that changed from military confrontation between radicals and moderates to a confrontation between moderates and the so-called "plutocratic circle." This was a new generation of lawyers and functionaries of the financial capital of the port that took control of the party and the central state after seizing the properties of the agro-exportation and commercial elite.

In accordance with Plaza's economic legislation, banks were allowed to increase the money supply in proportion to bank-held government debt, as well as metal reserves, which created currency depreciation; yet such depreciation did not become apparent until 1919.⁷⁴⁹ In fact, between 1914 and 1919, production increased, and the political elite financed their image as leaders of a modern port and renovated the city of Guayaquil using Commercial and Agriculture Bank credit. Liberal state institutional expansion and the construction of a bureaucracy were also based on the creation of a huge debt with the Commercial and Agriculture Bank.⁷⁵⁰ Only when the *monilla* plague destroyed the cacao crop and a concurrent process of currency devaluation made the sucre fall from 2.25 to 4.20 per dollar between 1917 and 1922 did these patterns of expenditure, exhibition, and consumption change. A huge devaluation affected salaries and prices, creating speculation and widespread misery throughout the entire province. Bubonic plague struck the coast and highland towns all the way down the southern railroad. The institutional expansion of the liberal state and the municipalities was definitively interrupted. After 1919, the political elite of the party was dismissed by a new circle of influences linked to international finances, particularly to the creditors that seized the commercial infrastructure of the port.

⁷⁴⁹ Linda Alexander Rodríguez, *The Search for Public Policy: Regional Politics and Government Finances in Ecuador, 1830-1940* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1985).

⁷⁵⁰ Freire, "Por el pueblo;" Reyes, *Los últimos siete años*.

Rafael Quintero and Linda A. Rodriguez have argued that the claim that the Agriculture Bank was at fault for the entire crisis has to be understood as an expression of the highland economic elite's attempt to construct a regional financial system. In this vein, the political activity of Luis N. Dillon, the most active critic of the Agriculture Bank and the developer of a financial system evaluation process that led to the creation of a Central Bank during the new regime in 1925, has to be understood as an expression of the struggle of highland elite to monopolize the financial system. According to Linda Alexander Rodriguez, it was not only the decision of the bank oligarchy that caused this economic crisis. "The press and the public failed to realize that these changes were caused by declining productivity, budget deficits, and changing world market conditions. They demanded government action to stabilize the sucre while overlooking the real solutions to the nation's economic problems: stimulating productivity and balancing the budget."⁷⁵¹ Though it is true that the economic crisis was felt, the political crisis required something more than a rise in prices. The inflationary process was accompanied by the seizure of a series of mortgaged properties. The governments of Alfredo Baquerizo Moreno (1916-1920) and Jose Luis Tamayo (1920-1924), led to a substantial change within the party: the moderate faction of liberalism disappeared as such and instead formed a

⁷⁵¹ Alexander Rodríguez, *The Search for Public Policy*, 122

closer and more exclusive circle of power, which the opposition called the “oligarchic circle” or the “plutocracy.”

This change affected the political operators of the party among the workers of the COG, intent on the development of European social democracy as they collaborated with private charity (including Virgilio Drouet, José Rafael Bustamante, and even the future founder of *indigenismo*, Pío Jaramillo Alvarado, who at that time belonged to the Liberal Party and was dedicated to journalism in *El Día* under the pseudonym *Petronio*, recalling the Roman libertine during the fall of the republic. The part of the party that promoted gradual democracy entered into crisis, and the banks seized lands of its debtors while it pressured the regime through its representative Dr. Tamayo to favor it and to preserve its interests. The visible threats did not come from *obrerismo*, but rather from the rural surroundings and centers of workers associated with international companies.

Jaramillo Alvarado analyzed the political crisis in the Liberal Party during Tamayo's regime (1920-1924) and opposed what he saw as the “oligarchic circle” of Guayaquil’s financial elite.⁷⁵² In the newspaper “*La Nación*” and “*El Día*,” Pío Jaramillo Alvarado, Julio E. Moreno, and Luis Napoleon Dillon argued that the liberal assembly had lost its autonomy for making decisions for the reproduction of the political organization. The Liberal Party had been absorbed by what they named

⁷⁵² Ibid.

the “*argolla*,” a new oligarchy formed since Leonidas Plaza’s second regime during World War I, which imposed the particular interests of the port’s financial system over the whole political structure. The role of intellectuals and political experts mediating between the party decision makers or “*plana mayor*” and popular organizations was also disrupted. Small circles replaced consensual mechanisms, while the disproportionate weight of the banking group over the liberal assembly members had underdeveloped the ability of the Party to create efficient programs.

While Luis Napoleon Dillon based his opposition to the Plaza circle on his study of the public finances of the plutocratic regime, Pío Jaramillo and Julio E. Moreno were worried about the weakness of the Party as a political organization: The Party was excluding their best members from decision-making and public office and, worse yet, it was neglecting the construction of a liberal civil society. An opportunity for the Conservative Party was presenting itself. Julio E. Moreno and Jaramillo Alvarado's main concern was for the renovation of the Liberal Party as a political organization. Jaramillo Alvarado criticized Tamayo’s regime for having fragmented the political party into small circles of personal influence.

In 1921, Dillon also started a campaign to denounce the financial oligarchy for having benefited from the production crisis: “when commerce is paralyzed and industry goes on with a fallen cape, only they float in abundance, according to what

they testify, with the dividends divided and the sumptuous palaces that they build.”⁷⁵³ Dillon and Jaramillo described the “oligarchy” as a very specific group. In his economic writings, Dillon differentiated producers, merchants, and the banking elites. His fundamental ideas about the need to stop the financial oligarchy were associated with the project to promote a “doctrinal renovation.” When he considered the renewal of the party, he did not have in mind the inclusion of the *pueblo*, which seemed to him a dangerous strategy, since he did not trust the political formation of the *pueblo*. In his view, the oligarchy had to be stopped and the power of the Liberal Party had to be returned to the “political experts.”

The members of the Liberal Party were clearly aware of the fragile situation of their power in the highland provinces in which there was harsh competition between the conservative landowners' structures of authority and the liberal bureaucracy, recruited from among a secondary segment of the regional elite and middle class. The assembly recommended appointing lawyers trained in the public university as sectional authorities in order to avoid personalized elections carried out by the landowning aristocracy in their regions of influence. The renovation of liberalism, as it was seen by Jaramillo, had to include the substitution of the military *caudillos* with professional military leaders, especially those who studied in the military school

⁷⁵³ Luis Napoleón Dillon, *La crisis económica financiera del Ecuador* (Guayaquil: Universidad de Guayaquil, 1985).

under the supervision of the Italian Military Mission and who had participated in various academic exchange programs convened between the liberal state and the Chilean military force.

During the 1921 ceremony celebrated in memory of Alfaro's June 5 revolution, the “*plana mayor* of liberalism and its representative bureaucratic elements” went to the *Sucre* Theater in Quito. Luis Napoleon Dillon gave a speech in which he talked about the dangers of “nationalist ideologies” that made two dangerous turns through gestures of gradual democracy. First, they erased the dividing line between the two great political movements – Liberal and Conservative – and secondly they offered the *pueblo* a symbolic inclusion though it was not yet disciplined enough for political life.

Despite the resistance from experts of gradual democracy, the Conservative Party and the new leadership of the Liberal Party drew closer to nationalism for one reason. The critics of nationalism noticed that the conservative newspapers, *El Porvenir*, and soon also *El Comercio*, supported Tamayo’s campaign for the *Third Party*. The working classes were escaping the strict institutional frameworks tied to the program of gradual democracy. Mediation had deteriorated and the working-class field was in a process of transformation that not even state violence would be able to stop.

6.7 “We Were Hoping for an Encouraging Answer”: Changes in the Working-Class Field, Identity, Organization, and Meaning in the Protest of 1922, According to the Testimonies of Survivors of the Workers' Massacre.

Jaime Duran and Vicente Polit, two young sociologists in 1980, interviewed eight workers who were the founders of a socialist cell in the old COG and had survived the massacre of November 1922. These interviews were transcribed into two volumes which are valuable sources for approaching in detail aspects of organizational and political identity related to the events of the Guayaquil protest of 1922. Luis Maldonado Estrada, Miguel Angel Guzman, Manuel Donoso Armas, Isabel Herreria, Andres Avelino Mora, Leonardo Muñoz, Jorge Reynolds, and Floresmilo Romero Paredes told their interviewers about the slow transformation of the COG and their participation in the formation of the FTRE inside the COG. They also described the changing aspects of popular organization-Liberal Party elites in dialogue during three crucial years of political crisis. Their testimonies complement the image provided by Jaramillo Alvarado, Dillon, and Moreno and are, together with

testimonies of the massacre, the principal sources for the reconstruction of the political processes and the crisis of 1922.⁷⁵⁴

The lives of Floresmilo Romero, Manuel Donoso, and Luis Maldonado Estrada are good examples of the way in which members of the COG took on ever more radical identities and how labor organizations processed ever more radical ideologies. Between 1920 and 1926, these young leaders made several important political decisions and participated actively in the transformation of popular organizations. In this process they attempted to push popular demands with all the resources available to them at the time.

As Manuel Donoso sees it, Agustin Freire and Julio T. Foyain began with Alfaro as promoters of the port's *obrerismo* and in Plaza's government they became collaborative workers' representatives: "Alfaro helped these gentlemen to be inclusive not only of the municipal adviser, but also of the Chamber, as if they were senators." These working-class senators, as Donoso describes them, struggled for the workers -- "*la dignidad humana*" -- and trusted inter-class collaboration.⁷⁵⁵

Yet the traditional friendship between working-class leaders of the COG and elite promoters of the port's public sphere was affected by the rise of the plutocratic circle. Agustin A. Freire, Bolivar P. Garcia, and Alejo Capelo, members of the

⁷⁵⁴ Donoso, *El quince de noviembre de 1922*.

⁷⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 130.

prestigious Typographers' Society of Guayas participated in a pacific and conventional march on November 7, 1919, for better living conditions and against the rise of price.⁷⁵⁶ This association constituted a crucial piece in the Liberal Party network, since the typographers were indispensable during the expansion of the public sphere through the use of modern printmaking in magazines, newspapers, and other pamphlets, propaganda for “*obrerismo*.” Yet *El Guante* censured the typographer protest, making fun of what was seen as the inversion of roles assumed by the union, which forced the *Telégrafo* owners to discuss the destiny of these industries, as if it were a worker's right to give his opinion about capital. “Even the kids selling newspapers initiated a protest,” the newspaper claimed jested.⁷⁵⁷ Liberals’ skepticism of working-class attempts to participate in the evaluation of the crisis certainly did not contribute to the endurance of the COG-Liberal Party friendship.

While Freire felt bitter about the disrespectful treatment of the workers, young members of the same Confederation, such as Luis Maldonado Estrada, a bookkeeper, Floresmilo Romero Paredes, a barber and member of the cosmopolitan Tomas

⁷⁵⁶ Ex president of the society of typographers, current regent of the municipal press and illustrious daily and senator for the representation of the society of typographers to the workers' congress of 1920; he has filled the roles of police superintendent of the province of *El Oro* and as assistant to the police in the province of Guayas in the administration of Sr. Gen. Eloy Alfaro; Navas, *Evolución social del obrero en Guayaquil*, 48.

⁷⁵⁷ *El Guante*, 7 de noviembre de 1919, 3.

Briones Society of Cacao Workers, and Manuel Donoso Armas, a teacher and member of the Society Sons of Labor, began to explore new forms of organizing and began to question the identity of the Liberal Party's bases. Together with Alejo Capelo, they visited Andres Avelino Mora Calderón and Narcizo Velis, both members of the Tomas Briones Cacao Workers, to discuss in the workers' library and they became familiar with Red Dawn, The Proletariat, and Solidarity, the official newspaper of the IWW that US sailors brought to the port and circulated in Guayaquil.

Yet, more than anarchist theories, argues Floresmilo Romero, they were seeking political autonomy from the weakened Liberal Party oligarchy. The testimonies reveal that there were interpretations of anarchism and socialism from within the liberal organization. Capelo and Maldonado insist that their initiative was a vital part of the vast popular movement that identified with the Liberal Revolution, yet they resented the oligarchic's destruction of liberalism.

As an example of the profound link between emerging radicalism and working-class liberalism, Floresmilo Romero Paredes and Manuel Donoso Armas told their interviewer in 1983 that both had been members of the Society of Cacao Workers, founded within *alfarismo* and assisted by accompanying elders. In that association, with a friend who received pamphlets from the October Revolution, Romero contacted a small circle of readers of anarchism who also worked inside of the

Society of Cacao Workers, including Daniel Gonzalez, Narciso Veliz, and Tomas Regato.⁷⁵⁸ Romero refers to Juan Elías Naula, a respected and popular intellectual, Indian, and member of the masonry, who assisted Eloy Alfaro and Miguel Albuquerque in the creation of the Society of Cacao Workers and was author of the previously mentioned Treatise of Practical Sociology. These organizers also founded the Society of Carpenters and the Society Sons of Labor, organizations that belonged to the COG. By the 1920s, they contained the first radical cells in the port interested in anarchism and socialism.

Floresmilo Romero, barber and a founder of Socialist Party in 1926, told of the emergence of radical circles inside of the *cacahuero* workers' association during the 1920s crisis, while Manuel Donoso narrated his membership in the society Artisan Lovers of Progress, founded by artisans supporting liberalism. In addition, he told of his work to found socialist cells in the 1920s. For Alejo Capelo, their sympathy for anarchist literature represented a way to transcend the dominance of the political party elite. Anarchist and socialist readings were intermingled from early on with an expressed will to intervene in the leadership of an incomplete revolution that the oligarchy had impeded.⁷⁵⁹ Their readings of the October Revolution and their interest in anarchist pamphlets proclaiming the need of workers to abandon the framework of

⁷⁵⁸ Donoso, *El quince de noviembre de 1922*, 42

⁷⁵⁹ Capelo, *El crimen del quince de noviembre*.

state politics were crucial for gaining distance from the liberal political machine and paternalist ideology. Luis Maldonado E. was also very critical of client-*patron* political practices of the COG and saw their work as pressure for the creation of an autonomous mass movement:

In our nucleus, we repeatedly invited the COG to a unitary action and fraternal fight for common vindications and to change the pattern of class conciliation, yet we repeatedly failed. In view of the relative volume of effective forces where upon these organisms counted, we reached the conclusion that the organization of the masses was about to come into being. It was preferable to make it with the immense majority of industrial workers, services, craftsmen, employees, etc. that were at the margin of the old *mutualismo*.⁷⁶⁰

These popular intellectuals became critical of traditional politics not politics in general. By reading anarchism, they challenged the idea of the worker's need for education prior to their citizenship. In contrast to collaborative politics and clientelist practices, they sought to form a different identity constructed on a questioning of the role of the elite in the party and the threat of plutocracy to the program of the Liberal Revolution, thus linking the radical identity to the working class.

⁷⁶⁰ My interpretation of Luis Maldonado Estrada's conception of the popular organization between 1922 and 1935 is based on the interviews made by Duran and Polit in Donoso, *El quince de noviembre de 1922*; and on his thesis presented July 31, 1935 at the school of law and sociology in the Universidad Central del Ecuador. *Socialismo ecuatoriano. Ensayo sobre la realidad nacional* (Guayaquil: Editorial Páginas Selectas, 1935).

They were interested in strengthening their organization and they did so with limited resources. The need to renovate the popular movement was pressing, and young workers had to assume this responsibility. Maldonado described the foundation of radical cells in the following manner:

When I entered the center of unionism, I remember a companion, Justo Cárdenas, the treasurer, who became very unhappy as he told me that we were six months working and yet still there had not been any case of a *compañero* coming to ask if he could enter... The center belonged to a newspaper called 'El Proletario.' It was directed by a Chilean *compañero*, Segundo Llanos, who soon quit and left the country. And he put me in charge. That was the situation. And not because I was a journalist, not because I had some university preparation, but rather due to the circumstances that I had put up with. I talked to them so that they would understand what we were about: we didn't have any organization whatsoever outside of the mutualist organization, and this was our fundamental obstacle. When we went to speak in the sessions of the Workers' Confederation, sometimes they kicked us out because they told us that we were disobedient... so, the guys found themselves with an immense responsibility to direct the movement...⁷⁶¹

By 1919, the cell did not have its own name, yet received the support of two old organizations – the Society Tomas Briones and the Society Sons of Labor. At the Tomas Briones new associations formed rapidly. The young workers receive daily various groups asking for help in constituting their new organizations. They formed for each a General Secretary, a program, and commissions. Instead of organizing a

⁷⁶¹ Maldonado en Donoso, *El quince de noviembre de 1922*, 54.

bazaar or a mutual aid, they would write a document of petitions for bettering salary and labor conditions.

They also embarked on a project without precedents among the industrial workers. To do so they created an organization called the Chamber Association of the Shipyard, which rapidly developed a structure oriented to help others to form unions. A department dedicated to organization went from one neighborhood to the next. They worked in the industries day and night, taking advantage of labor shifts. Seeking results, activists entered into daily life in industrial neighborhoods and slums recently formed in the city, such as the neighborhood of the Shipyard and *Quinta Pareja*, a marginal neighborhood recently formed by unemployed immigrants from the cacao provinces and the highlands – “precincts in which not even the police entered.”

A range of student workers were coming to the society of cacao workers. We had central quarters. We made ourselves into organizers. Then the *compañeros* came with the question as to what name we should give the union? This name. Then came the necessity of drawing up a statement, and organizing the general secretary. Everything was secretarial. As the president was a typical aspect of mutualism, we named the general secretary of cultural acts. In those days, the organization was taking on the objective of making petitions for higher salaries, better working conditions, etc... Great assemblies were created in the salon of the society of *cacahueros*, which was insufficient to contain the people... so,

they didn't fit in the parquet, such a great quantity of tables, their secretaries, and the masses...⁷⁶²

Maldonado spoke about a successful multiplication of unions at industries such as *La Universal*, *Roma* -- dedicated to food industrialization --, *piladoras*, and metal mechanics, among others. They went further, organizing workers in public service and encouraging the organization of railroad workers became considering it strategic. Also, the workers of gas, light, cars, trolleys, and charter services received help organizing. With the support of university students, they created popular universities and prepared union leaders through short courses. The renewal of cultural references was part of the urgent organizational work that these young leaders sought. They had a press agency that intensively turned out pamphlets and weekly newspapers like *La Acción* and *El Hambriento*. They also had an external press agency dedicated to exchanging their own publications with the anarchist publications in Buenos Aires *La Protesta* and *Claridad* and the *Organo de la Federación de Estudiantes* from Chile, Uruguay, and Perú.

Some of the societies belonging to the COG decided to collaborate with the Chamber Association of the Shipyard (AGA). Among these collaborators were the cacao workers, carpenters, and even the middle-class employees of the commercial sector belonged to the COG and affiliated to the AGA, which challenged the loyalty

⁷⁶² Ibid., 118.

of some of the COG's members, forming a network that for the first time competed with the COG's leadership. "In organisms, in the spirit of class, in the force of the entire order, we will conquer the old COG," stated Maldonado.

In the Quito's interview on 1983, Maldonado Estrada says that these new associations were developing a more direct form for obtaining higher salaries and making concrete demands for bettering workers' labor conditions. The COG had been the first to speak of labor rights, thus generating expectations with respect to legislation, but while the mechanisms of the COG deteriorated, the organizers of the AGA wrote new petitions and argued over more efficient ways to present demands. The number of associations formed by *El Astillero* grew remarkably. The demands within transnational transport and oil companies and in factories in general multiplied. The presentation of demands was often followed by public manifestations that sought to make apparent the existence of the organizations behind such demands. Between the rhetoric of negotiation coming from the Liberal Party, the emergence of force, and the manifestations that began to proliferate by the end of the 1910s, we begin to observe important distinctions. Firstly, these manifestations did not seek out philanthropy from the authorities, but rather spoke of rights. Secondly, they pressured principally the *patronal* elite and only sought state intervention to recognize their demands secondarily (the call to the state sought to gain the public force in their favor against the *patronal* elite).

Between August and October of 1919, the newspapers registered eleven protests. *El Día*, *El Comercio*, and *El Guante* reported workers belonging to the COG, among them shoemakers and tailors and employees of hotels, bars, and restaurants, striking due to the deterioration of living conditions.⁷⁶³ Yet, in addition, two new, powerful segments of workers -- public service and rural workers -- intervened in a practice that until then had been reserved for urban artisans and employees. Public service companies also appeared, including railroads and urban cars; each had a considerable number of workers and represented companies constituted by foreign and state capital.

Among the rural workers that started appearing in the newspapers, there were workers of the ports, of sugar mills, and of rice, and coffee haciendas who were still actively producing (in contrast to cacao workers), but who were affected by the increase in prices and the lack of regulations of rural labor. The workers at the sugar mills Matilde and Luz María (pertaining to Luz Maria Morla's hacienda) protested and were able to negotiate a 20 percent increase in their salaries after a direct negotiation with the landowner. Laborers from livestock and rice haciendas at the Santay island protested and assaulted the administrator in October of 1919. The shippers of cacao – *cacahueros* -- in Manta had also protested and were able to gain

⁷⁶³ We thank Hernán Ibarra for having guided our selection of stories on political mobilizations in this period. News from *El Día*, 3 de octubre, 1919.

up to a 30 percent increase in their salaries after a six day-long protest in 1919. Outside of the conventional framework of the “*desfile obrero*” it was evident that the authorities did not have a general policy to resolve the emergence. There were attempts by the government to appease and reinforce the COG leadership. Representing the COG, Agustin A Freire was able to compel José Luis Tamayo to sign a law on work injuries — *la ley de accidentes de trabajo* - in 1919, yet this was the final negotiation that the COG managed to complete. The COG lost its capacity to represent the urban working population with respect to the city and national authorities.

The protest of railroad workers of October 1922 was recalled by most of those interviewed as the turning point of their work as organizers. New strategies and actors in the protest had impressive effects. The protest began as a protest for better salaries: “[T]hat protest, like all protests, began with an eagerness to demand higher salaries and better working conditions.” All of the railroad workers of the Quito-Guayaquil route had presented a petition; particularly active were those at Duran. The denial of the Quito and Guayaquil railroad company (American and Ecuadorian capital) to negotiate made the workers attempt direct conversation with the state because the company also belonged to the state in part. Direct conversation with the

state also failed. “The state always delays in its decisions, which in many cases sees an imminent threat, but nonetheless does not make an opportune decision.”⁷⁶⁴

6.8 Pessimism and Violence in the Program of Gradual Democracy.

The lack of a decision from the government was due in part to the lack of support that the workers' organization received from the intellectual experts on social issues, who discredited the workers' associations. This was the case during the most difficult moments of the early 1920s. The idea that the nation was not yet disciplined was crucial to the Liberal Party as it reacted against working class attempts to comment on the party's crisis. For these intellectuals, the Liberal Party could only count on the state bureaucracy and military troops. The fear of popular citizenship became a strong factor in the withdrawal of the party's support of working-class organizations' demands. Even when the popular masses of Guayaquil were becoming progressively interested in supporting a party reform that radical intellectuals also sought, liberal intellectuals preferred to maintain a monopoly on representation and to ignore the formation of working-class political subjects during the process of state institutionalization (1895-1925).

Julio E. Moreno, who, in Jaramillo's words, was the “illustrious journalist to whom so much is owed for the ideological renovation of Ecuadorian liberalism,”

⁷⁶⁴ Donoso, *El quince de noviembre de 1922*.

argued that public agitations surrounding the crisis of the oligarchic regime “did not express the peoples’ sovereignty, the base of democratic systems, but rather the enemies of liberalism.” Moreno argued that the popular classes lacked political consciousness “There had not operated any changes in consciousness, he said although the sociological situation had been complicated.” Thus, he justified both the restriction of political participation and the prevalence of the secular state as the exclusive representative of the *pueblo*.

Liberalism as doctrine and as government finds that, in practice, in the mode of our collective life it does not make sense in a genuine democracy the concurrence to voting booths of the faithful Christian masses. And, as it is not the case to lose with paper what has been won with arms and with trails of blood, the blessed dogma is complied within theory, but the governing technique is practiced so that it includes the concept of elections to be understood as selections (selecciones).⁷⁶⁵

Even though intellectuals such as Moreno and Jaramillo Alvarado expressed in the liberal newspapers their rejection of the use of force against workers, they feared the empowerment of working-class organizations. They supported the consolidation of a “disciplined and scientifically organized” political party system, yet they were skeptical of the idea of popular citizenship as they held the idea that suffrage ought to be restricted as a sort of warranty for the maintenance of “progressive party” power.

⁷⁶⁵ Julio E Moreno, *El sentido histórico y la cultura (para una sociología ecuatoriana)* (Quito: Litografía e Imprenta Romero, 1940), 148.

For Moreno and Jaramillo, a literate vanguard at the head of the progressive party should continue with the pedagogical mission of the subaltern's redemption until the military troop could organize the mass of liberal voters.⁷⁶⁶ Thus, even when they themselves, as party elites, had profound criticisms of limitations on the political space, they did not support the cycle of protests that began in 1919 and that might as well have led to reforms in the Liberal Party.

Gradual citizenship was a form of postponing citizenship rather than a vehicle for attaining it. Julio E. Moreno had taught among the liberal elites that the "theocratic system" implemented by the historical party (conservatives) had enchained the popular consciousness and their moral education to develop emotional rather than reflective ties to ideological movements:

The crowds of small propaganda organisms... frequently include an *ad-hoc* press that, of all circumspection and modernity, helps fulfill the mission of signaling people and identities worthy of Christian condemnation... the

⁷⁶⁶ Espinosa Tamayo, *Psicología y sociología del pueblo ecuatoriano*. As we will see in the following chapters, this division between a sociology interested in the process of education of the subaltern classes and a sociology influenced by eugenics marked further contradictions between organisms in charge of public policies among the Ecuadorian workers, particularly relevant for our study on the conflict between the policies of land redistribution and labor organization of the ministry of social prevision and labor, and the *Asistencia Pública* section of the same ministry.

conservatives do not foment contact between the pueblo and those elements most capable of free thinking.⁷⁶⁷

In this vein, Jaramillo did not share the belief in a biologically determined hierarchy among races, nor was he interested in what was considered the foreign influence of eugenics, but he was convinced that the project of education for popular classes was incomplete. Under these conditions it was not yet advisable to call the *pueblo* to directly participate in politics during times of crisis.⁷⁶⁸

To urban workers the slow deterioration of the mediation of intellectuals interested in social issues was very clear. The withdrawal of the intellectuals' support during their protests for better salaries and labor rights during those days of crisis was evaluated among members of the COG as a failure to fulfill the promise to accept them as citizens. In contrast to this idyllic vision of progress of the 1910s, in 1919 Freire protested the breaking of the pact by liberal elites: "The apostles of the worker and the so-called loyal friends of the proletariat (secretly those of their own class), shout that the worker ought to be such as a social factor and such as a political entity,

⁷⁶⁷ Moreno, *El sentido histórico y la cultura*, 148.

⁷⁶⁸ There was a segment of the liberal intelligentsia interested in theories of biological determinism. Among them, sociologist Alfredo Espinosa Tamayo who Arturo Andres Roig identified as ideologists of the "liberalism del orden" representing the moderate faction world view. Yet the liberal radical intelligentsia used different arguments to justify their skepticism towards popular citizenship.

but in reality, being far from the worker, they argue against him.”⁷⁶⁹ Freire became progressively aware that this rhetoric was less and less efficient. The end of a decade in which the COG had appeared as a cherished part of the Guayaquil liberal nation had impacted the leaders of this organization. As a member of the port's labor movement, Floresmilo Romero argued that between 1918 and 1922 the changing posture of the authorities with respect to the working sector and protests was dramatic.⁷⁷⁰

The negative representation of the working classes as actors that were “still” not ready for citizenship and the internal differentiation and political change of working-class organizations led to a dramatic change in the meaning of the protests. When the timid social issue experts of the 1910s were marginalized from political parties and some became pessimistic about their popular allies, the *desfile obrero* was no longer a symbol of the Liberal Party's will to incorporate popular demands, but rather became viewed as a threat to international capital. In this context, popular organizations expanded and attempted to engage new mechanisms of negotiation which were seen as remarkably dangerous in the eyes of the new elite in power.

⁷⁶⁹ Agustín A. Freire, “Por el Pueblo” (1920) in Elías Muñoz Vicuña, *El 15 de noviembre de 1922. Una jornada sangrienta* (Guayaquil: Litografía e Imprenta de la Universidad de Guayaquil, 1983), 45.

⁷⁷⁰ Interview in Donoso, *El quince de noviembre de 1922*.

Jaramillo Alvarado visualized two possible outcomes of the lack of direction from the Liberal Party – either the formation of a bottom-up insurrection, which he imagined as anarchic and influenced by foreign Bolshevik ideologies, or the renovation of the clerical party over claims of resolving the “economic problem” under the name of “nationalism” or “Catholic socialism.”⁷⁷¹ Nevertheless, he warned against the indiscriminate expansion of suffrage or direct political participation among the working classes and did not believe in expanding the popular base of liberalism or acknowledging popular demands for a new economic arrangement. Moreno agreed:

Those who, with a sense of progressive democracy, wanted the implementation of an order that would substitute the traditional order, warn with discomfort and fallen spirits that they have not achieved their influence over the social masses; that that political force that is the pueblo continues to be largely tied to the dominion of religious consciousness.⁷⁷²

This image used by Moreno shows the proximity between conservative and liberal elites’ resistance to integrating the popular classes into the nation. Moreno’s pessimistic reflection in this context, far from describing working-class resistance to cultural indoctrination, represents their segregation from the political community. This pessimistic evaluation of the working classes’ preparation for citizenship

⁷⁷¹ Jaramillo Alvarado, *La asamblea liberal*.

⁷⁷² Moreno, *El sentido histórico y la cultura*, 167.

supposed that elite guidance of working-class associations was indispensable, while their initiatives were seen as worthy of repression.

The liberals' resistance to recognize popular citizenship coincided with a wave of popular empowerment which started in the 1920s. The crisis of formal political mediation of popular discontent and the belief that a growing mass movement would initiate a revival of barbarism and criminality -- words the elites used during the cycle of protests in the 1920s -- ultimately led to frantic violence in 1922.

6.9 The Popular Movement, Autonomy, and Alternatives to Political Mediation.

Various forces attempted to change the Liberal Party after it stopped legitimating and mediating demands from the pueblo. Manuel Donoso described how the enemies of Tamayo in the Liberal Party, including Enrique Baquerizo Moreno, tried to gain the support of the new working-class leaders and their emerging associates. "*El faquir*," as they called this member of the liberal elite who had managed to control a local mafia, used violent means and political influence to dominate political leaders in the counties. His brother was one of three people who shared power over the Liberal Party and whom Donoso sees as having been a member of the corrupt oligarchic circle. He reported that in the circle itself there were

marked resentments and divisions.⁷⁷³ Enrique Baquerizo had contacted Donoso and asked for support from the AGA and FTRE against Tamayo and Intriago, yet the workers' leader denied this support as he attempted to protect their autonomy:

At two o'clock in the morning, a *compañero* from the confederation and member of the firefights comes to me and he tells me that *don* Enrique wants to speak to me. He wanted something in this protest, which was only a fatuous game because it was merely agitation; he wanted to connect our interests. Look, I tell *Don* Enrique, in this moment, we are firing the same shot, but as soon as the bullet falls, we will have to shoot at each other; and so, decide among yourselves and as soon as you decide, call me... I did not have anything, what I had was a commotion, and that was it. Baquerizo then made a tremendous declaration in *El Telegrafo* and that was the pinch that would deflate the protest... *Don* Enrique was one of those types who managed everything. He did not have the scruples to send people to kill. He sent off to kill the *intriaguistas*. Some members of the popular organizations were killed for supporting the *intriaguistas*, including Leon Valle Franco of the cosmopolitan society of cacao workers. With those kinds of antecedents, could we really have a political agreement?⁷⁷⁴

They preferred other means for influencing state decisions. They thought that two young lawyers belonging to the Liberal Party could be useful for opening a court case over the enforcement of labor laws that the Liberal Party had promulgated by 1917:

⁷⁷³ Leonidas Plaza, Alfredo Baquerizo Moreno, Enrique Baquerizo Moreno and José Luis Tamayo, he adds Carlos Alberto Arroyo del Río. Arroyo is just the second lawyer of international capital, the Anglo Oil Company in the Guayas province, and also collaborator of the *Banco Agrícola*. He was president from 1940 to 1944 until a massive and radical social movement led to the “*gloriosa*” revolution. See chapter 7.

⁷⁷⁴ Donoso, *El quince de noviembre de 1922*, 81.

We advised them to view the legal aspect of the question for which we suggested the names of doctors Jose Vicente Trujillo and Carlos Puig Vilazar, two lawyers from Esmeraldas and Guayaquil, with the purpose of assessing them. These lawyers distinguished themselves in their approach to the workers' case due to their desire to contribute to the movement; let's not say in a disinterested way, but rather as the politicians that they were, in such a way as to earn vouchers for future endeavors.⁷⁷⁵

Instead of counting on municipal support and having the intervention of intellectuals such as Virgilio Drouet talking on their behalf, the railroad workers went to trial. The state's hesitation made them seek advice among the cells organized by Maldonado and Capelo at the Society of Cacao Workers that had won the fame of being an alternative before state resistance. With the legal advice of two lawyers belonging to an emergent political group of the Liberal Party, Carlos Puig and Jose Vicente Trujillo, they opened a court case a few days later. While Drouet and the Liberal Party *plana mayor* had conventionally intervened on workers' behalf with a discourse of philanthropy and the need to contribute to worker's redemption, these lawyers demanded a new contract. Not only the procedures used by Trujillo and Vilazar contrasted with the traditional mechanisms to reach consensus used by the Liberal Party brokers, but also the social origin and personal careers of these lawyers contrasted with the elites' role as mediators.

⁷⁷⁵ Ibid.

Jose Vicente Trujillo and Carlos Puig Vilazar were young lawyers and belonged to the middle class of Esmeraldas and Guayaquil rather than to the elite. In the case of Trujillo, he was considered a brilliant orator, and he had gained some honors being named by the Party as one of the COG's advisers, yet he had difficulties ascending in his political career because of his social origin. As Donoso remembered, the elegant "duchess" Victoria Aspiazu Carbo, who had smiled for some time at Trujillo's attempts to flirt with her, one day violently put a stop to it and asked him who he thought she was, suggesting that he was a *mulato* among the black population of Esmeraldas. Like Carlos Puig Vilazar, he was close to Enrique Baquerizo Moreno's circle of influence in the so-called "*mafia de la palomilla*," yet every time Baquerizo had to open way for Trujillo's ascension as professor, candidate to the municipal council, or lawyer of international firms, other candidates were preferred, including Carlos Alberto Arroyo del Rio, once more due to his social origin. Carlos Puig V was the illegitimate son of a merchant and his mother was of Chinese origin.

The unions did not look for godfathers but for legal advisers and strategists. The lawyers occupied a role traditionally reserved for the most recognized intellectuals and ethical heads of the Liberal Party and they were doing so in order to advance in their own political careers. The evolution of their careers in politics depended on the development of the workers' progress. The agreement was tactical

and combined new expectations and contents with respect to working-class organization and old mechanisms of political representation.

The way in which popular demands were able to compel new and old associations to form a massive movement was unique and reflected the popularity of these organizations among the working classes of the port. During the protest of the railroad workers, the organizational wave increased and became more complex. While the Chamber Association of the Shipyard and all its affiliates participated in the protest, they developed a new coordinating organism, the FTRE. Popular enthusiasm pressed the young leaders to contribute to the organization of many groups.

This confederation that is born on October 15 is born of twelve embryonic organizations; it began as a mechanical organization of all people who arrived and said 'Organize us' and they had to be organized. We can't say 'wait in order that we can make a course to study this and after the course we organize them.' There were occasions in which we spent the night in the Society of Cacao Workers; until the following day we continued, and we had to go to work without having slept.⁷⁷⁶

The workers seem to have thought that the protest was an event in which they should participate and not a private demand of a particular branch. Once the protest began, there were showings of solidarity.

⁷⁷⁶ Ibid., 55.

In Guayaquil, great contingents of worker delegates went to Duran to support the protest with the presence of workers... The protest covered a considerable impetus because all the worker organizations—and here we must recognize even organizations like the COG—lent support to the workers and carried out the protest because the state was not resolving the problem.⁷⁷⁷

The protest became a massive act of solidarity and forced bosses to negotiate. By October 26, 1922 the protest came to an end and Mr. Dobie, the boss of the company accepted the workers' conditions. This experience was received with great enthusiasm by working-class associations and, with this example, by November 7 other public workers of the transportation system had organized their own demands. A workers' assembly directed by the FTRE met to write petitions for the light, gas, and motor workers, as well as conductors of electric and urban cars. Although there were attempts to negotiate with the company for an 80 cents increment in the salaries, they could not arrive at an agreement and the workers continued striking.

Beginning on November 10, the protest included the support of several new organizations and resources. A new group of industrial workers joined those of the public services as a younger organization but a massive one and with a national presence along the railway line between Quito and Guayaquil. All of these workers were under the guidance of the FTRE. Workers in the cacao, rice, and coffee processing, who had traditionally been excluded from the COG network, joined this

⁷⁷⁷ Ibid., 19-20.

movement as well. Given that not even in the modern merchant houses of the port was the eight hour work day enforced, employees in commerce who represented a fragile and humble middle-class that was organized at the Society of Workers identified with demands for better labor conditions and they too joined the protest. They took advantage of the popular wave and a mechanism of striking in order to ask for labor regulations. The Society of Caco Workers offered the assembly its newspaper “*El Cacahuero*,” which was printed at the typography of the Workers' Confederation. The FTRE also took to the street and massively distributed fliers calling the transients of the city squares to join the assembly. The railroad workers' union used their numbers to gather 500 sucres destined to ensure the assembly's survival.

In fact, the FTRE had replaced the COG as a pole of attraction for workers attempting to organize, yet the COG also re-emerged from its silence to show its presence among the striking workers and reveal both innovation and traditional associationism.

Using the concept of the “popular assembly,” which the COG conventionally used to name the periodic meeting of all the confederated chambers in the organization, they called for an assembly in November 1922. In this assembly there gathered more than just the 38 workers' associations under the leadership of the COG. New organizations including workers traditionally excluded from *obrerismo*,

including unemployed cacao and industrial workers, together with public service and workers in transnational companies joined the meeting. While new organizations continued to form and become affiliated with the FRTE, including cargo handlers, members of the beer industry, and public hygiene workers, old associations including *La Aurora*, The Workshop of the Workers' League, The Society of *Vivanderas*, and the Society of Plumbers all felt that they had the right to participate in the decisions taken by the port's workers' organizations.⁷⁷⁸ Even though the group was diverse, the FTRE held the leadership of the popular assembly until November 21, 1922.⁷⁷⁹

After the denial of the companies to negotiate with the assembly and the government of Jose Luis Tamayo, Luis Maldonado Estrada, the general secretariat of the FTRE, took a step further. Over three days, the Popular Assembly became central coordinator of activities in the city, taking total control of energy sources and the means of transportation. The governor had to write a letter asking for the assembly's permission to move from one neighborhood to another while the editors of *El Telégrafo* had to publish the protesters' communications and reports on its front page (in order to be allowed to continue with the daily news).

⁷⁷⁸ Segundo Ramos, "Razgos salientes de la tragedia histórica de noviembre de 1922," in Muñoz Vicuña, *El 15 de noviembre*. Segundo A. Ramos was a barber and union leader in Milagro and Guayaquil, member of the FTRE.

⁷⁷⁹ Interview of Floresmilo Romero in Donoso, *El quince de noviembre de 1922*.

Maldonado has been insistently asked what he had in mind when he declared the general protest in Guayaquil, which some have described as The Community of Guayaquil. He has answered by saying that he did not declare any general protest but rather it formed spontaneously. This spontaneity should not be confused with a lack of social organization; in fact, the popular assembly was not a mass of individuals. It was a combination of associations from different origins. Guayaquil's working-class was expanding and transforming the pattern of organization from the scheme of liberal circles to a new type of union.

As Maldonado recalled, during the days of the general protest, the police retired to their military quarters and the engines providing electricity to the city also stopped. The FTRE, in charge of the popular movement, saw the danger that this situation could bring; fearing the increase of criminality, they organized squads (brigades) and the population maintained in such a high degree of order that, reportedly, no crimes occurred in this city. The spontaneity with which the popular neighborhoods and workers from different organisms responded to their commitment to the popular assembly was in fact an expression of the extension of the organization. As Maldonado argues, the organization was wide and diverse, including the old network of chambers and the new unions formed over the previous four-year period. They constituted a complex but very well organized network of different types of associations.

We had the Center, the “major state” of the federation that was incorporated delegations from each of the unions; because we had the organizations, the unions, the mutualists, the chambers, within this block. This was coming to constitute the major state that was making decisions and that was organizing the movement insofar as that was possible. In the night, without lights, the organization had to establish control over diverse sectors and then they ended up passing a report to the *compañeros* from the Federation. The people no longer paid attention to the police, rather they obeyed the workers from the brigades.⁷⁸⁰

While the number of people who showed solidarity with the protest went clearly further than what the COG had ever experienced, the traditional liberal leaders disputed the leadership of the FTRE. The electric light workers had failed in their negotiations and the assembly insisted on pressuring for universal labor laws along with the FTRE leadership.

In the meantime, the COG argued that the assembly should ask for lowering the exchange rates and ending the Commercial Bank's issuance of currency because “an increment of salaries would not help enough.” Without the agreement of the FTRE leaders, they sent a petition to president Tamayo along these lines. The directive of the COG signed this petition, but also some members of the commercial elite and bank’s directories that were affected by the Commercial Bank monopoly, including the investors of the credit cooperative *La Previsora* signed it.

⁷⁸⁰ Maldonado in Donoso, *El quince de noviembre de 1922*, 65.

Attorney Jose Vicente Trujillo and Julio E. Sempertegui, COG's president, proposed to change the assembly's central demand and "to suspend the discussion of its private interests, like the raising of salaries, to dedicate itself to resolving the fundamental problem of the lowering the exchange as its primary labor; the entire *pueblo* of Guayaquil should demand this change before the authorities."⁷⁸¹ The attorney Carlos Puig and FTRE's general secretary Maldonado strongly criticized what the latter described as using the popular assembly for elite interests. Several leaders quit their positions of leadership and the FTRE lost its leading role within the popular movement: "we let the workers' movement fall out of our hands," declared Maldonado during the interview.⁷⁸²

The presence of the COG among the workers cannot be seen as an episode of manipulation. The powerful attraction toward organization among the working classes was in large part a result of a decade of propaganda and the public presence of the COG. While the failure of conventional mechanisms of negotiation during the most severe years of crisis and the formation of an oligarchy circle seemed to have deteriorated the COG's ability to mediate between *Pueblo* and Party, the innovative and more radical work of the FTRE made the popular movement grow and inadvertently infused the COG with a new vitality.

⁷⁸¹ Capelo, *El crimen del quince de noviembre*.

⁷⁸² Maldonado in Donoso, *El quince de noviembre de 1922*, 65.

The vision of the *Pueblo* before the Liberal Party had been substantially transformed. The *pueblo* was no longer seen as a pupil of civilization but rather as the standard-bearer of policies that confronted it. The new visions included the idea of a working-class integrated into a network of unions that challenged the oligarchy, which they blamed for betraying the revolution. Not only were the peasantry from Guayas, the population of Esmeraldas, and the indigenous communities of the Sierra witnesses to liberalism's setbacks and seeking to take back the banner of the Revolution, but the most privileged workers also joined this protests. The workers from Guayaquil, although they had become a more complex group than what they had been at the beginning of the century, still identified themselves with *The Pueblo* of the Liberal Revolution and they still embraced responsibility to guide the party's destiny.

The Popular Assembly started direct communications with Liberal Party officials in the municipal and provincial governments, demanding recognition of an executive committee. This committee provided representation to elements of the traditional organization in search of a new pact. In this project, the committee would contribute to the solution of conflicts between capital and workers and promote new state economic policy. This executive committee would be headed by the Ministry of the Hacienda, a bank representative of the *Previsora* and the Bank of Ecuador (excluding, of course, the Commerical Bank), the president of the Chamber of

Commerce, two delegates of the COG, and two delegates of the popular assembly. The committee would count on two advisers, two experts in social regulations, and two attorneys.⁷⁸³

With this convocation, traditional elements of liberalism reappeared in a wave of popular mobilization. The Ministry of Hacienda and president of the chamber represented the Jose Luis Tamayo regime, while president of the Chamber of Commerce was none other than Enrique Baquerizo Moreno, his enemy. The bank representatives were elite importers and investors in the Agriculture Bank; both were affected by the monetary policies and the preferences given to Urbina Jado.⁷⁸⁴ Among the advisers, the committee included Victor Emilio Estrada, son of a prestigious member of the Liberal Party and founder of a credit cooperative called *La Previsora* with small savings, including the savings of artisan members of the COG.⁷⁸⁵ Real links between different classes around the *La Previsora* Cooperative converted the demand for monetary policies into a practical interest for some of the members of the popular assembly.

⁷⁸³ Adolfo Villacreces and the secretary Juan J. Huayapa signed the petition. Segundo Ramos, "Rasgos salientes," in Muñoz Vicuña, *El 15 de noviembre*.

⁷⁸⁴ Quintero and Silva, *Ecuador, una nación en ciernes*.

⁷⁸⁵ About the divisions of the port's elite between different financial institutions see Quintero, *La cuestión regional*. See about *La Previsora* in Duran and in Muñoz Vicuña, *El 15 de noviembre*.

The ideal of a regional and political identity linking the *pueblo* and the Liberal Party had awoken many and generated a provisional amnesia about the crisis. It was probably very attractive to the working classes to retake the streets of Guayaquil as in other times; in fact, some thought of the public presence in the streets as a parade and they brought musicians and flags to accompany what seemed to represent the return of the liberal *Pueblo*.

Carlos Puig Vilazar and Jose Vicente Trujillo aspired to become influential in the Liberal Party. Trujillo was simultaneously a figure in the COG and became the FTRE attorney. During this period of popular empowerment, he took on leadership roles which he never had before. He was even able to represent *el pueblo vis-a-vis* the provincial governor. The demand for new economic policies coincided with arguments offered by widely-recognized intellectuals of the Liberal Party like Dillon, who developed this idea among the *plana mayor* during provincial meetings to which Trujillo was not invited. The “*chino*,” Puig Vilazar, was himself involved in the internal divisions of the Liberal Party in the Enriquista mafia (Baquerizo Moreno). He worked in one of the first clientelist networks formed in the popular neighborhoods of Guayaquil and was the lawyer of “*la palomilla*,” operating in personal goods distribution and mobilization in the neighborhood of Quinta Pareja. He contributed to the development of *clientelismo* in this faction of the Liberal Party. Yet, his experience during these days of popular organization made him transition to

socialist ideologies. Donoso argued that not even his social origins would allow him to aspire to a better position in the Liberal Party.

Quintero and Silva as well as Alexander Rodriguez have proposed that the demand for currency change expressed the interest of a segment of the elite struggling for their own economic interests in a context of high polarization of capitals and political influences, while the workers were manipulated. Maldonado Estrada argued that there was infiltration and that the massacre was planned. In fact, the liberal elite's own vision of the oligarchic crisis penetrated the popular assembly, changing the route to autonomy sought by the FTRE leaders; yet a careful look at the evidence shows that the liberal elite was very divided and the faction of liberalism that penetrated the popular assembly constituted an excluded faction of the Liberal Party and not an element of the dominant classes.

By approaching the popular movement, they sought legitimacy. Their presence activated traditional mechanisms of party integration. These lawyers did not think they could change their own marginality *vis-a-vis* the oligarchy without a reconstruction of popular representation. The testimony of Floresmilo Romero on his non-collaboration with the Enrique Baquerizo Moreno mafia in 1919 stated that there was a popular awareness that not only had the traditional mechanisms of integration of the COG to the Liberal Party failed, but also that the newly emerging clientelist networks did not represent popular demands nor did they constitute real allies.

Estrada, Trujillo, Puig, and Baquerizo had to seek out the assembly when popular organizations rejected direct collaboration with their circles of influence. The penetration of *enriquismo* in the committee that attempted to represent the popular assembly by November 21, 1922, shows that the popular organization challenged the mafia - clientelist mechanism of linking political figures to the masses.

Together with FTRE activism, the working classes had gained more relevant autonomy and marginal factions and new aspirants to political power saw an opportunity in the popular movement for their own attempt to gain power in the Liberal Party. The FTRE had expanded in such a way that these heads of clientelist networks could not mobilize working-class associations very easily. What was necessary, as Jose Vicente Trujillo's intuition told him, was the renewal of popular representation. More than a manipulation of the masses, what this new liberal element was doing was trying to enter into a wave of newly empowered actors. With this purpose, they used the mechanisms with which the liberal elite traditionally weaved hegemony among the workers.

During the last days of the protest, new forms of political organization used by the workers were suspended, while traditional means of political demonstration were reenacted. The liberal newspapers that by 1919 were skeptical about popular demonstrations were again celebrating that the popular movement was defending a cause that was so relevant to the *Pueblo* of Guayaquil. *El Telegrafo* and *El Guante*

cheered the workers' protest against speculation, considering it an expression of popular support to the more reasonable liberal elite. The lawyers Trujillo and Puig were assuming a criticism of the "*dictadura bancaria*" that Luis Napoleon Dillon had also developed among members of the leadership of the Liberal Party. In fact, the demand for control of the currency exchange was critical for bourgeoisie importers. Employees living on salaries, a huge segment of the cacao entrepreneurs who were seriously indebted to the Commercial Bank, and, as Quintero and Duran have noticed, groups of investors in other banks -- the Bank of Ecuador and financial cooperative *la Previsora* -- were very interested in stopping the plutocratic dictatorship as they called it in the *plana mayor* party meetings.

Puig and Trujillo thought that they could reconstruct their own role as mediators between the *pueblo* and the authorities. In this context, the legitimacy of the popular movement symbolized their own legitimacy. Members of the Liberal Party and liberal newspapers assumed that the mediation of a faction of the port's bourgeoisie would cause the party to deliver on the benefits being demanded. They assumed roles traditionally held by the party elite. Speaking from balconies, they performed the role of broker between the popular organizations and the Liberal Party. Sharing the balcony of the Society of Cacao Workers, Trujillo called for a public demonstration of "the *pueblo* of Guayaquil before the authorities" as a pacific performance; he called for women and children to attend what he and the COG's

leadership thought of as a gathering of the *pueblo*. As Segundo Ramos confirmed, in the popular demonstration of November 15, the *pueblo* marched, including a variety of classes, ages, and genders, participating in the “*desfile obrero*.” Women “not distant from the bourgeoisie” (probably referring to the *Aurora* Association directed by Agustin A. Freire’s wife); state and municipality workers; and employees of the army’s public offices, all women from the working classes -- “even housewives who happily left their work to accompany their brothers in the manifestation” – attended the protest.

The numerous feminist groups, not strangers to the bourgeois or to capitalism, just as the workers of the government and the municipality; employees of public offices of the marina, etc., came together with washers, cooks, and housewives from humble towns who contently abandoned their work to accompany their brothers and sisters in pain and misfortune in the hope of ending the desperation that they had put up with.⁷⁸⁶

As Floresmilo Romero recalled, Manuel Echeverria participated in the balcony speeches, sharing with Trujillo and Puig the “*tribuna popular*” at the hospital belonging to Dr. Abel Gilbert in front of the school Vicente Rocafuerte. The ascending factions of the liberal elite had been able to inspire enthusiasm among the masses in reconstructing the place that their organizations had maintained in the rhetoric of the old SFG. Some new leaders participated, but most of the FTRE leaders

⁷⁸⁶ Ramos, “Rasgos salientes,” in Muñoz Vicuña, *El 15 de noviembre*.

were elsewhere, discussing how they had lost control of the protest. This non-conformity with the old rhetoric may have ultimately saved their lives.

6.10 From Routine Violence to Inconceivable Violence.

On the morning of November 15, 1922, Floresmilo Romero convinced his two sisters to leave work at their small workshop where they repaired old dresses and go with him to the protest. The idea was to deliver to the authorities the popular manifesto and a female on the front line of a giant manifestation was to signal allegorically the presence of the *pueblo* of Guayaquil. They happily marched to receive some of their companions who were to be liberated from jail as evidence of the authorities' recognition of the *pueblo*, Trujillo said.

Dr. Puig Vilazar had read in the agreement and manifesto that the manager of the Bank of Ecuador had a strong will to contribute to the normalization of currency exchange. The governor of the province, Sr. Pareja, tried to send the message that the central government would also agree with the people, and the intendant Sr. Mateus, asked the *pueblo* to go back to their homes to await a favorable solution. The march also included a performance of two women workers representing the *pueblo* -- Maria

Montaño (cooker servant) and Sebastiana Peña (Lavandera) appeared next to the governor and intendant.⁷⁸⁷

That day there were elections for the *Concejalias* and it seemed that the marching group did not interfere with these sectional elections. As they approached the public jail, wanting to welcome the companions that the governor had supposedly liberated, probably loud and expressive, the militia Marañon and Cazadores de los Rios began shooting frantically and indiscriminately. Following the orders of the Luis Tamayo government, they surrounded the masses and shot at men and women of all ages. They then began throwing hundreds of bodies into the Guayas River.

Both of Romero's sisters were killed, among hundreds of other people. Floresmilo was in the hospital for months and union leaders from both the COG and the FTRE were persecuted, confined to jail cells, and exiled to other provinces or to Chile. Two journalists from *El Guante* and *El Telegrafo* who dared to criticize the massacre were fired.

Tamayo promulgated the expected law against devaluation only after symbolically eliminating popular pressure. Also, the mediation of the governor and the intendant and the aspirations of Trujillo and Puig seemed to have been dismissed by Tamayo's reaction. Among the pamphlets that the popular movement produced right after the mass murder, was Alejo Capelo's denunciation of the events as a

⁷⁸⁷ Ibid.

crime. In that pamphlet, published two months after the massacre, he argued that the popular assembly did not expect such a reaction. “They expected a humane response, up-lifting or at least paternalistic; while, we said, a death halo was extending threateningly.”⁷⁸⁸ By contrast, in a pamphlet justifying Tamayo, “an impartial chronicle,” it was argued that the authorities decided to sign salary increments, but when the workers went beyond the salary issue, so as to engage the politics of economic management, the situation became too dangerous.

Tamayo represented the formation of an oligarchy that excluded other members of the party elite. In addition, the conception of an oligarchic state was defined as an elite-managed mediator between international capital and the workers of a dependent or neo-colonial economy who were not considered part of the political community. It is evident that the regional authority and the central state on that day had different visions of how to manage popular demands for representation. During the day of the massacre, the governor played the role to which the workers and the liberal mediators were accustomed. On the other hand, the central state and the financial elite denied their participation and thus, in effect, weakened the party. President Tamayo felt threatened not only by the evidence that Enrique Baquerizo Moreno was using complex strategies to diminish his monopoly of power, but he was also aware that the

⁷⁸⁸ Capelo, *El crimen del quince de noviembre*.

popular movement was more independent of the traditional praxis than the new aspirants to political leadership Trujillo and Puig realized.

Tamayo was not only the lawyer of the Commercial Bank. He also worked very closely with transnational companies and knew that the workers of the public services were thinking like the oil company workers and the rural workers in relation to their dramas and the problem of state sovereignty. Tamayo's decision to kill around five hundred workers was probably informed by his frequent communications with international companies, whose fear of popular insurgency had already led to violent events among the workers of Salitre in Chile.

Trujillos' attempt to resurrect the role of mediator of the popular assembly was too weak, among the other reasons, because of his marginal position in the Liberal Party. Jaramillo Alvarado and Julio E. Moreno's concept of members of the working classes as religious subjects, unable to reason politically, did not protect the masses from the violence of the oligarchy, nor did it help integrate them into a reformist vision of the state. Tamayo did not act alone. He had received letters from the small circle of plutocratic families asking for protection from the enemy.

Different factions of the Liberal Party had expectations for reconstructing what they had previously perceived to have been a period of inter-class collaboration in the development of a political language of consensus. Nevertheless, the pact of the 1910s proved fragile. The division between a virtuous worker and criminalized one was

thin. Inside of the COG, the workers were thought of as possessing access to civilization whereas workers in the periphery were seen as potential criminals. The two faces of the project of gradual citizenship were paternalism and violence.⁷⁸⁹

The massacre of workers on November 15 has been seen as the end of an inexperienced and weak popular movement that was used by opportunistic elites; yet, while the Liberal Party entered into a crisis and the activation of traditional mechanisms of negotiation failed, the innovation of organizations and of political identification among the workers benefited during the following years. In fact, neither the Catholic Social Action nor the Liberal Party could continue functioning in the model of gradual citizenship after 1922. Peasants organized in strong and very well connected unions were networking with urban organizations and negotiating the integration of labor regulations and land redistribution, thus conditioning the stability of the state after the fall of the Liberal Party.

In the open violence that the state exercised against the workers that had been clients of the Liberal Party, the liberals lost their most important base. In effect, they lost the very political identification with the *pueblo* that had given them their legitimacy. In Guayas as in other provinces that we have studied we can establish a significant bridge between the everyday tensions of the scheme of integration and the

⁷⁸⁹ “La mujer ecuatoriana,” *Revista del centro feminista la Aurora* 16-17, año 2 (march and april, 1920).

established hierarchization of the working class within the liberal experiment of Guayas on the one hand and the explosion of state violence in 1922 on the other hand. The working-class sectors tied to cultural and institutional mediations with the Liberal Party took on this language to identify themselves as the base of the Liberal *Pueblo*, however the most routine tensions between integration and segregation and integration and the construction of the periphery ultimately were revealed with the progressive deterioration of the myths of well-being that the liberal discourse proposed.

This language on conditioned integration and the mechanisms of negotiation of benefits that had accompanied the development of the COG during the height of the liberal state came into profound crisis. Until the last moment, the COG tested its capacity to lead the urban working class. The cause of the fall of the liberal regime in Guayas went deeper than the cacao export crisis, nor did the fall represent the usurpation of leadership roles by the bank. The fundamental cause of the fall was that very deterioration of negotiation mechanisms and the questioning of promises with respect to gradual integration between 1895 and 1922 as the *pueblo* began to take seriously its political character and workers from the transnational companies and the peasantry of Guayas and then the other provinces began to integrate. The massacre in Guayaquil must have been unthinkable at that moment; however, the signs were there.

The factors that supported the liberal regime in Guayas were characterized by contradictions and conflicts that led to the destruction of the regime and the beginning of more complex and efficient forms of popular political pressuring along with new waves of conflict that led to important state reform after 1925. Also, common problems shared between the urban working classes and the peasantry were discovered that weakened the frontiers established by internal colonialism between center and periphery so that socialism could emerge in coastal unionism. In fact, as we observe in the following pages, socialism in Guayas found acceptance after the tie was made between agrarian unionism and the public sphere of the Left as this tie was developed in the cities by those who recognized that certain conflicts were hidden by the discourse of liberal philanthropy. This process had just begun at the moment of the protest and began to develop substantially after 1925.

Beginning in 1923, Jaramillo compared nationalism with the first manifestations of fascism in Europe. Primo de Rivera and Mussolini had suppressed political democratization and initiated direct intervention in the “economic and social problem” in order to avoid the expansion of the Left. Yet in Ecuador, Jaramillo argued, without a strong presence of socialism, *nationalism* only represented the fusion of the liberal oligarchy with the Conservative Party. The progressive party's defeat would in the end represent a step backwards for social equality. The polarization of social differences caused by World War I and the expansion of

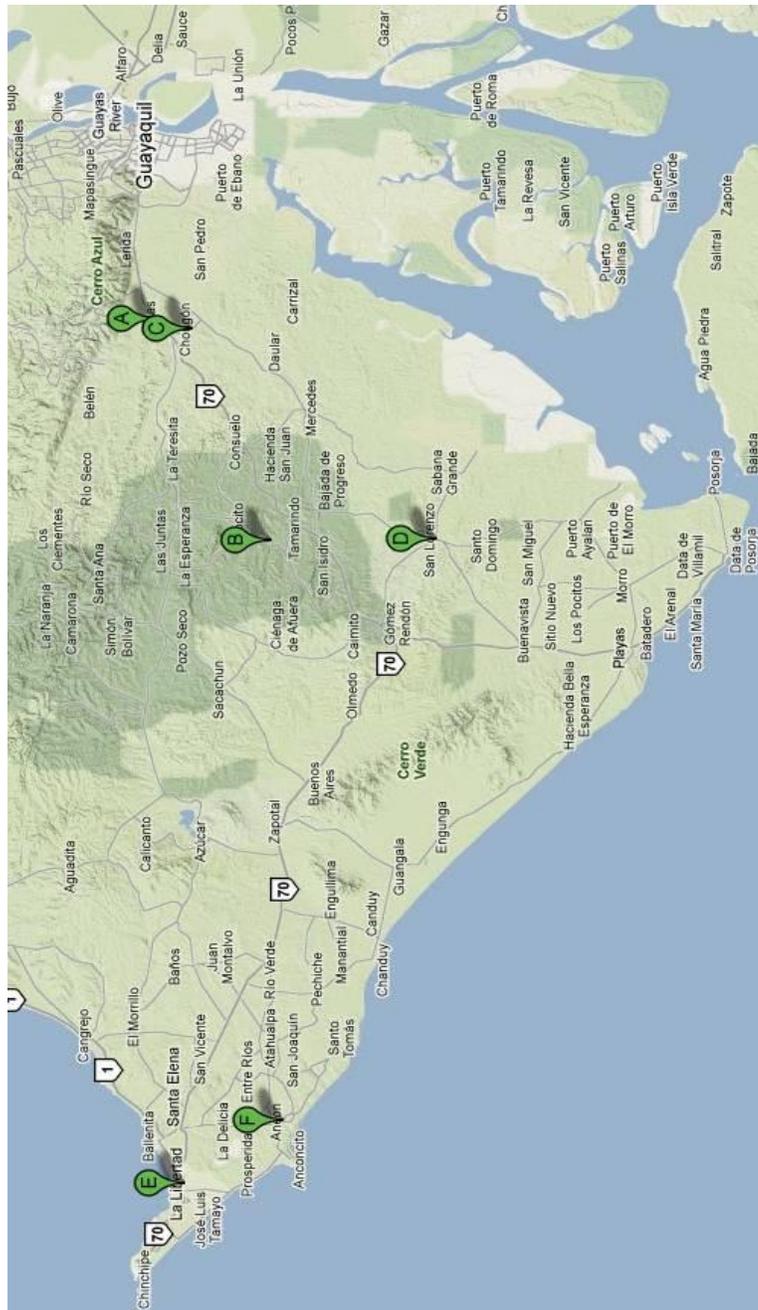
capitalism had to be confronted as an economic and social problem, introducing new elements to the program of a liberal party; yet, the liberals insisted that, unlike the Conservative Party, they had to continue with their doctrinal commitment to expand political representation.

However, before the “hybrid” nationalist programs and the emergence of new forms of radicalism, the destruction of the Liberal Party's legitimacy in Guayaquil was dramatic and soon the leaders of obrerismo that were close to the organizations of the COG explored forms of political response tied to the development of the Left. Moreover, Guayas, the political capital of the Liberal Party, was one of the places in which the agrarian unions in communication with the Communist Party and willing to confront the entrance of transnational companies and new agrarian businesses in the 1920s and 1930s formed most successfully.

The pressure from the unions together with the formation of an indigenous and peasant Left in the Sierra, as well as the emergence of national politics achieved through their efforts and their ability to construct new political mediations through the communist and socialist parties, forced important state reform that was expressed in political decision-making that gave clear evidence of the weight of the radicalized political configuration forged after the crisis of the Liberal Party.

Together with the resurgence of pressures from the peasant communities of Pichincha, Cotopaxi, Tungurahua, Bolívar, Chimborazo, and Guayas, demands before

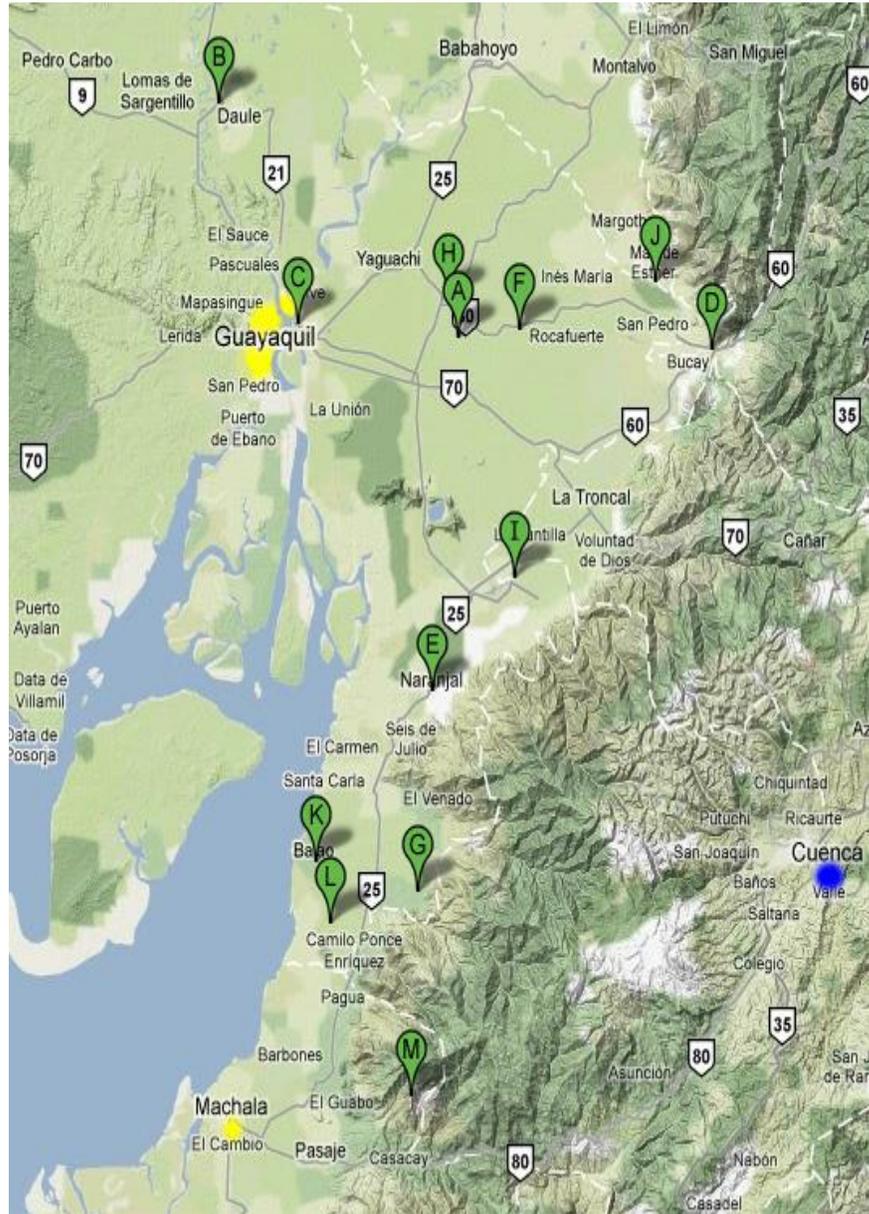
the state for the first unions in companies constituted by international capitals emerged after the crisis of the liberal state. All of these experiences aided the political movement that conquered the state. The movement of the July Revolution reformed the state in order to constitute an apparatus with the capacity to intervene.



Map 9 - Conflicts on Guayas-Santa Elena.

Symbol	Province	County	Parish	Place
A	Guayas	Guayaquil	Chongón	Casas Viejas <i>community</i>
B	Guayas	Guayaquil/ Santa Elena	Chongón/ Chanduy Julio Moreno	Chongón and Bajadas de Chanduy <i>communities</i>
C	Guayas	Guayaquil	Chongón	Chongón
D	Guayas	Santa Elena	Ancón	San Lorenzo
E	Guayas	Santa Elena	La Libertad	La Libertad
F	Guayas	Santa Elena	Ancón	Ancón and El Encanto <i>communities</i>

Table 9 - Conflicts on Guayas-Santa Elena, Map 9.



Map 10 - Conflicts on Guayas-Milagro.

Symbol	Province	County	Parish	Place
A	Guayas	Guayaquil	El Progreso	El Progreso
B	Guayas	Guayaquil	Daule	Eloy Alfaro
C	Guayas	Guayaquil	Durán	Durán
D	Guayas	Milagro	General Elizalde	General Elizalde
E	Guayas	Milagro	Naranjal	Barraganetal, Milagro, San Miguel, Los Huaques
F	Guayas	Milagro	Naranjal	Naranjito, Haciendas Venecia, Naranjal
G	Guayas	Milagro	Naranjal	Barraganetal, Milagro, San Miguel, Los Huaques
H	Guayas	Milagro	Milagro	Milagro
I	Guayas	Milagro	Jesús María	Jesús María
J	Guayas	Milagro	Mathilde Ester, Naranjito	Mathilde Ester, Naranjito
K	Guayas	Guayaquil	Balao	Balao

		uil		
L	Guayas	Guayaq uil	Balao	Hacienda Tenguel
M	Guayas	Guayaq uil	Balao	Caserío Mollepungo

Table 10 - Conflicts on Guayas-Milagro, Map 10.

CHAPTER 7: The Juliana Revolution and its Enemies: Militaries, Socialists, Unions and Communities in a Negotiated Path to Social Rights 1925-1934

At the end of the last chapters, we analyzed aspects of the Liberal Party which led to its crisis and ultimately to its complete collapse. Such an analysis permits us to understand the options for revolutionary transformation that were up for debate in the new government. The massacre was a dramatic demonstration of the fact that in one of the Latin American countries in which a liberal party had the greatest legitimacy and popularity -- due to the conditions in which it emerged and triumphed--, its leadership and mechanisms for inclusion were seriously limited. The predominance of coercion in relations with peasant communities and the fragile nature of the inclusion of workers who faced the threat of discrimination and violence was crucial for causing the deterioration of the Liberal Party's leadership. All attempts on behalf of the party's elite to maintain relative autonomy before local powers, including the financial oligarchy and the landholding elite of the Sierra, proved insufficient.

Amidst the great conflicts in the rural areas, the Liberal Party lost its capacity to control and its credibility in various regions of the country and among various social groups. Its situation worsened when its nucleus in Guayas fell apart. This is why we consider the fall of the liberal regime more political than economic.

We have also proposed that this fall did not occur in just one province but

rather was a process of multiple and diverse class confrontations in which the state lacked the capacity to mediate. As the agrarian unions closest to the Socialist Party proclaimed, internal colonialism had condemned vast populations to exclusion from civilization and progress, placing them in the “stone age,” isolated from the rule of law and from the nation.⁷⁹⁰ We have proposed that the fall of the liberal regime was not a direct effect of the financial crisis nor simply the effect of a coup, but rather the product of medium- and long-term processes. Its agreements not to intervene or its incapacity to intervene in conflicts caused it to lose control over the very state instruments that in many cases had passed private control, thus generating violent confrontations and processes of peasant and working-class political organizing that were autonomous from the working-class political identity woven by the Liberal Party. As we will see in this chapter, the actors whom we saw in conflict earlier repositioned themselves after the fall of the state in order to orient the changes that would take place in the construction of a new political field.

On July 9, 1925, political power fell into the hands of the young army lieutenants who were the protagonists of the so-called July Revolution. After the fall of the liberal regime, there began a conflictive period in which political identities transformed.

⁷⁹⁰ *Asamblea General de Campesinos de los Cantones Yaguachi y Milagro, pliego de peticiones a la Asamblea Nacional de 1928* (Quito: Imprenta del Comité Central del Partido Socialista, 1928).

Beginning with the Juliana Revolution until the end of World War II, several political transformations took place which lead to a process of democratization, nevertheless this was this was one of the least understood periods in Ecuadorian history. This period between 1925 and 1948 had been defined by the great instability of the governments and therefore was understood as a waiting period before the beginning of the democratic history of the country. Whereas it is true that between 1925 and 1948 there existed a series of civil conflicts and coups, as we will show in the last chapter of this dissertation, they should not be understood as obstacles to democracy. Rather, this period represented a conflictive process of de-colonization. and a crucial moment in the construction of Ecuadorian democracy, a democracy that we describe as corporativist in so far social organizations from the bottom up found in this decades a way of preassuring for political representation and for the response of the state for their demands for social rights As we will see in this chapter, between the Juliana Revolution of 1925 and the cycle of strikes in haciendas and industries that occurred in 1934, profound transformations took place with respect to the position of popular struggles in regional and national spaces. The July Revolution placed a military group in control of the state apparatus. This group undertook an important set of legal and political reforms that allowed for the creation of stronger ties between popular actors and the central state. In turn, the state was able to take on regional struggles as issues of sovereignty. Thus, this period between 1925 and 1934

is characterized by a rush of demands that subaltern groups presented to a central state that had once more created political and legal channels to recognize and deal with these demands. The subsequent dialogue that took place between military officials and popular organizations also involved leftist parties that quickly became key negotiators for diverse popular associations and played fundamental roles in promoting the legal transformation of the state. This chapter further documents the reaction of conservative sectors, which in turn developed a conservatism for the masses.

The following chapter analyzes a cycle of strikes in rural and urban scenarios that took place in various provinces in 1934. These strikes promoted the formation of popular national coalitions. In this process the Left played an important role in helping to establish horizontal ties between popular regional organizations. It also promoted national coalitions through congress and conferences and the development of confederations. Its formation of print media outlets also improved communication and a unified discourse among popular sectors. This Left originated from circles of the educated middle-class and popular leaders. Its strength ultimately depended on its capacity to integrate popular groups and support them in historical conflicts.

Beginning in 1934, the dialogue between popular sectors and the state did not only take place in the field of legal demands, as it had previously. Between 1934 and 1944, urban and rural unions formed and came together with indigenous communities

in coalitions that institutionalized as class federations with funding from the Socialist and Communist Parties. In this context, the relationship between military leaders and popular organizations was marked by the power that wider organization gave the popular sector. Ultimately, organized social mobilization proved critical for pressuring important political transformations. In that context leaders began to emerge in popular organizations who were able to develop alternatives to military leadership.

Instability between 1925 and 1944 was an expression of profound changes driven by a social movement, disputes between the Left and the Right, and processes of mobilization and collective action. In the period 1925 to 1944, social rights emerged with respect to issues that had been important since the founding of the Republic, including land, work, political representation, and the place of Indians in the nation. The state was transformed into a national state based on a sustained dialogue with collective legal entities that were recognized as class organizations. The reflection on the relationship between class and ethnicity took place in the context of demands regarding the contemporary system of power and the everyday practices of the state with respect to the population. The language of class and ethnicity was fundamental to the formation of the subsequent system of effective social rights.

In this period we can recognize the pressure exercised by indigenous and

peasant communities on the political system to generate a first and little recognized phase of land redistribution that preceded the land reforms of 1964 and 1973. The pressure produced multiple reactions and even processes of modernization among other classes that sought to obstruct a bottom-up transformation. This “lost link” that we characterize as a third blow to the oligarchic and aristocratic republic must be understood as part of a conflictive political process between 1925 and 1944, when an active battle over hegemony was unleashed. These two little known decades hold keys for understanding the entrance of the military as mediators of processes of change in the 1960s. They represent the search for top-down alternatives to the peasant and communist proposal for land reform that emerged in the 1940s.

As we see in the last chapters, the demands of the communities towards the state, revitalized after 1925, led to fragile reforms undertaken by the lieutenants of the July Revolution and the regime then sustained those reforms and deepened them. Many authors have spoken of the manner in which the landholding elite absorbed the July Revolution, in order to set forth a new oligarchic pact. Yet, I propose an alternative understanding of the advances in this period in terms of social rights and the formation of a popular political movement as a result of dialogue between peasant communities, trade union, and political organizations, an alternative view of how this movement affected the political landscape.

The demands for justice that went from all over the country to the recently

founded Ministry of Social Welfare and Labour (MPST) began a dialogue that generated the development of new patterns of state response to peasant demands. The internal complexity and the contradictory character of the state allowed the MPST to assert an autonomy without precedent with respect to local power. The logic of this political-social exchange and of the state practices enacted by this organism formed a potential alternative path for state formation in general.

In a moment of party reform, the various popular strategies for voicing and pressuring on behalf of its demands helped the Left⁷⁹¹ consolidate, expand, and become one of the two forces that would struggle over hegemony in the country (the other force being that of conservatism). This expansion would not be explicable without considering the dialogue that the socialists and communists had with the communities engaged in demanding justice. This dialogue positioned them in the center of conflicts that had been developing since the nineteenth century and allow them to respond efficiently since the leftists and communities were able to weave alliances that produced a national bloc without precedent.

In chapter 8, we will observe a new foray of the popular classes into politics, a process in which forms of political dialogue were explored with parties and the state. It was not, as many academics have proposed, a process in which only top-down

⁷⁹¹ The Left then referred to recently formed socialist and communist parties, circles of young intellectuals that seemed like the lieutenants of the July Revolution and perhaps even more fragile as a social force.

mechanisms for symbolic integration were offered by Jose Maria Velasco Ibarra (1934-1935 and 1944-1946). In chapter 8 we pick up on themes researched by Becker with respect to the exchange between indigenous people and leftists. Becker has seen this dynamic as formative for the indigenous movement and a diverse popular movement which in turn changed the terms of dialogue involving state, class, and ethnicity.⁷⁹² This development had an impact on the regions that we have studied throughout this dissertation.

Between 1925 and 1944 the indigenous and peasant communities were able to achieve new conditions for negotiation with the state through legal mechanisms set forth by the MPST and due to the work of lawyers and journalists of the leftist parties that accompanied communities in their struggles, ultimately pressuring land expropriation and advancing alternatives – even electoral alternatives – that challenged local power in various cantons. By 1944 popular mobilization pressured for changes in the state and integrated popular views of democratization in the national Constitution. The process had an impact at the national level through an important territorial reform that led to land redistribution in various provinces. In addition, it led to the coalescence of a group of organizations that became recognized legal brokers with the state, such as unions, communities, and agriculture associations. With the help of leftist parties, the horizontal networks of solidarity and

⁷⁹² Becker, *Indians and Leftists*.

a significant capacity for mobilization led to the formation of national confederations such as the *Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios* (FEI) and the *Central de Trabajadores del Ecuador* (CTE) in 1944. The most important effect of this revolutionary process was a new representation of the nation.

Chapter 7 is dedicated to the analysis of the July Revolution and the emergence of the popular Left, as well as to the reactions that the process of dialogue produced among the historic political parties. Chapter 8 covers the entrance of a popular movement following experiences of protest and the formation of political fronts. Two large platforms of political organization were the SAIP and the Peasant Assembly of Milagro which, accompanied by the Socialist and Communist Parties, were able to help generate a bottom-up politics of the masses that competed with *velasquismo*. In chapter 8 we study the organization of a Popular Front, and how the formulation of social rights to resolve historical conflicts in the countryside benefited the construction of democracy. We propose an analysis of the historical meaning and social origin of corporatist democracy in Ecuador.

7.1 Historiographic Positions on State Formation and the Origin of Social Rights in Ecuador: Understanding Popular Politics.

Despite all of the changes that took place in the twenty years between the fall of the liberal regime and the end of World War II, this is one of the least-well

understood periods in Ecuadorian history. Galo Plaza Lasso, a founder of the OAS and close ally of the United States' democratic program during the Cold War, linked economic prosperity – associated with the banana boom – and democratic stability during his presidency from 1948 to 1952.

Advised by international consultants to make adjustments for institutional adaptation, production, and democratic stability, Plaza Lasso described the two decades that preceded his government as violent, unstable, and totalitarian when power was in the hands of conservatives and communists.⁷⁹³ In the framework of modernization theory, he held that the cacao crisis and the political instability of the following two decades was only overcome during the period of the banana boom at the end of the 1940s and beginning of the 1950s.⁷⁹⁴

The chaotic image that Plaza constructed of the period from 1925 to 1945 was,

⁷⁹³ Galo Plaza had advisers from the Institute of Interamerican Affairs, the UN's Punto Cuatro program, in addition to various other UN (i.e. organizations such as the Nutrition and Agriculture Organization, the International Childrens Emergency Fund, and the office of Internacional Trade; as well as from the Economic Commission on Latin America of the OAS, the International Basic Economy Corporation, and the Kellogg Foundation). In *El gobierno del Sr. Galo Plaza. Presidente Constitucional del Ecuador 1948-1952, Economía Nacional* (Quito, Talleres Gráficos Nacionales, 1952). Valeria Coronel and Mireya Salgado Gómez, *Galo Plaza Lasso, un "Liberal del siglo XX." Democracia desarrollo y cambio cultural en el Ecuador de postguerra*. Serie Documentos Museo de la Ciudad 7, Quito, March, 2006.

⁷⁹⁴ Galo Plaza Lasso, "Problems of Democracy in Latin America" (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1955). Original conference in 1948 in the auditorium of Chapel Hill. Also see David W. Schodt, *Ecuador, an Andean Enigma* (Colorado: Westview Press, 1987).

in reality, part of the new rhetoric of modernization at the beginning of the Cold War. As Greg Grandin has observed, this discourse sought to detach the concept of democracy from the processes of social struggle against colonial legacies in the region and from the Left, an old ally of the democratic block. The greatest impact on national historical narratives in South America was the erasure of the role of the peasantry and the Left on the formation of the national state and of democracy.⁷⁹⁵

Together with the introduction of a normative concept of democracy that almost buried other memories, Plaza's international advisors intervened in the format of the social's security systems -- precisely the area in which the most important experiences of dialogue took place between the popular classes and the state in Ecuador--. These interventions attempted to displace notions of social security constructed between 1925 and 1948 as a relation between social collectivities with labor or ethnic identities (unions and *communities*) recognized by the state with a separate notion of social security based on principles of the North American Social Welfare system, including the nuclear family, consumption, maternity, volunteerism, the individual, and medicine.⁷⁹⁶ The relative absence of a discourse on labor risks in discussions of social issues in the United States has been described by Thomas

⁷⁹⁵ Grandin, *The Blood of Guatemala*.

⁷⁹⁶ Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in United States* (Paperback, USA: Harvard University Press, 1995). See also Thomas Bender, *A Nation Among Nations. America's Place in the World History* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006).

Bender as one of the reasons why social security and social policies came to focus on the domestic space instead of the work space.⁷⁹⁷ The change in Ecuador would have been dramatic if it had been able to obscure the agency of the social collectivities themselves and their mechanisms for social mobilization that had contributed to establishing the conditions for the advance of social rights and democracy.

In the 1970s, one of the most outspoken critics of modernization theory in Ecuador, the sociologist Agustín Cueva, proposed that after the revolution of the middle classes – that is, the July Revolution – an instability in the country began that only ended with the oligarchic pact made by Galo Plaza and the construction of a top-down modernization at mid-century.⁷⁹⁸ For Rafael Quintero and Erika Silva, the July Revolution established the conditions for that oligarchic pact since, with the rebellion of the lieutenants, state power returned to Quito and a central bank was created in the Sierra, in effect putting an end to the cycle of liberal governance – which had always found itself in tension between oligarchic and radical factions – and positioning the landholding elite of the Sierra at the fore.

The work of Quintero and Silva asserted that the true beneficiaries of the July Revolution were the landowners:

⁷⁹⁷ Bender, *A Nation Among Nations*.

⁷⁹⁸ Agustín Cueva, “Ecuador: 1925-1975,” in *América Latina: historia de medio siglo*, Instituto de Investigaciones Sociales de la UNAM N° 1, América del Sur (México: Siglo XXI Editores, 1977).

[B]y force [they] displaced the representatives of the banking commercial bourgeois that hoarded power; it sought to re-order the power-play between regional dominant classes within the State in concordance with the grade of influence and power achieved in the field of the civil society by the rest of the bourgeois sectors and the sectors of the top of the landholding class of the Sierra.⁷⁹⁹

The potentially positive contradictions of liberalism – tensions resulting from the unequal development of the country for these authors – began to be resolved from that moment on through a top-down modernization path. For Cueva, Quintero, and Silva, the legacy of the July Revolution was a *junker*-style modernization that was expressed in the democratic experiment of Galo Plaza and the agrarian reform of 1963.⁸⁰⁰

For these authors, the Kemmerer mission that came to the country in 1929 to establish a form of financial control created a tie of dependence to North American imperialism. In this sense, the North American advisory missions of 1948 and that of the Andean Mission of 1963 were merely continuances of the 1929 mission. Two economic histories of Ecuador published in the 1980s coincide with this interpretation. They proposed that the financial advice of the North American professor E.W. Kemmerer fulfilled an objective that was not financial health. The “*Doctor Dinero*” did not inaugurate financial policies based on the gold standard. He

⁷⁹⁹ Quintero and Silva, *Ecuador, Una nación en ciernes*, 365.

⁸⁰⁰ Cueva, “Ecuador: 1925-1975.”

was not the first to speak of state economic intervention – since Luis Napoleon Dillon introduced that reform in the first committee of the July Revolution – nor was he the first to speak of the need to guarantee consumption levels for the “middle class” since those programs had antecedents in the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth century.⁸⁰¹ What the Kemmerer mission did was to certify Ecuador as an economy in the eyes of the United States, which, nonetheless, was not a guarantee of cooperation given that in that same year the world financial system collapsed.⁸⁰²

The view of the July Revolution as a transition towards oligarchic consolidation has been argued by authors who concentrated on the study of a phenomenon that was dissonant with respect to the classic behavior of the oligarchies and the traditional parties under *velasquismo*. Eight years after the July Revolution, in 1933, José María Velasco Ibarra reached the presidency for the first of five periods that extended until the decade of the 1970s. He distinguished himself for his demagogic style and a notable capacity for mobilizing multitudes. Given the obscurity surrounding popular leftist organizing in the 1940s, the phenomenon of *velasquismo* was an exception in the midst of a chaotic and supposedly conventional political landscape and therefore drew the attention of academics. Various authors have attempted to characterize *velasquismo*. Several have described it as an Ecuadorian form of populism; others

⁸⁰¹ Alexander Rodríguez, *Las finanzas públicas*.

⁸⁰² Paul W. Drake, *Kemmerer en los Andes, La Misión Kemmerer 1923-1933* (Quito: BCE, 1995); Alexander Rodríguez, *Las finanzas públicas*.

have called Velasco an oligarchic leader. All agree that this represented the first entrance of the masses into national politics and see it as the first case of populism in Ecuador. Among the studies of *velasquismo*, the debate between Agustín Cueva and Rafael Quintero stands out, as do the more recent works of Juan Maiguashca, Liisa North, and Carlos de la Torre who have debated the nature of the articulation of working-class sectors that Velasco was able to achieve in 1933 and 1939. For Cueva, *velasquismo* fed off of the coastal sub-proletariat and the middle class of the Sierra. For Quintero, *velasquista* populism was a myth given that, far from being the cause of the politicization of the masses, Velasco had merely united an episodic mass movement that had already been constructed into corporations by the historical party of the church.

The most recent work of Maiguashca and North moved away from the structuralist debate over class in the *velasquista* project to a vision of the political mechanisms and identities of subaltern actors that permitted them, based on their moral economy, to integrate themselves into the collective movement. In their proposal, *velasquismo* offered an ideology of community integration to those, such as small merchants and artisans, who had lost their traditional political references as an effect of the crisis of paternalism.⁸⁰³ In this school of thought, Carlos De la Torre

⁸⁰³ Juan Maiguashca and Liisa North, “Orígenes y significado del velasquismo: lucha de clases y participación política en el Ecuador, 1920-1972” in *La cuestión regional y*

proposed that J.M. Velasco was able to shape an imagined community for a public that went beyond the conventional limits of the political party system. They were drawn to the leader in order to gain inclusion, albeit a symbolic inclusion in national politics, thus marking a transition from the politics of notables to a politics of the masses and “incorporating previously excluded people into the political community.”⁸⁰⁴

The thesis of this author identifies important changes in the Conservative leadership; however, like other authors, he does not take into account the existence of a phenomenon of profound impact upon the popular landscape in the same period that would put into question this thesis. It was the expansion of popular organization and training for intervention in the political field that began in 1925 with the presentation of demands to the state and the exchange with leftist circles that helped to unite a national popular movement. In this sense, the thesis that *velasquismo* was the first appearance of non-voters in politics ignores a series of stages in the formation of the popular political field. It even overlooks those stages that were contemporary with *velasquismo* and that help make sense of it – namely, those stages in which the Liberal, Socialist, Communist, and Conservative Parties competed. Faced with these

el poder, ed. Rafael Quintero (Quito: Corporación Editora Nacional, FLACSO, CERLAC, 1991), 89-161

⁸⁰⁴ Carlos De la Torre, “Velasco Ibarra and ‘La Revolución Gloriosa’: The Social Production of a Populist Leader in Ecuador in the 1940’s,” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 26, no. 3 (1994): 683-711.

two readings, our criticism is that by not taking into account popular organization as a force that contended over the character of the July Revolution and that developed together with the process of political party formation. These theses overlook a process that clearly affected the purportedly oligarchic character of Velasco's first period and the political culture of the so-called masses, as well as the conflicts that *velasquismo* generated.

As we will see, the military coup of the young lieutenants of the July Revolution was produced in a country subject to strong tensions at the regional level. The governing juntas were susceptible to the pressure of not only the landholding elite, as the structuralist bibliography supposes, but also the pressures of other antagonists who had become sufficiently politically sophisticated to demand responses. The agrarian conflicts did not cease in the period of the July Revolution and the decades of the 1930s and 1940s. To the contrary, such conflicts were converted into legal trials and more articulated collective mobilization. This situation would tend to deepen, as the desperate letters of the elites sent from various regions to the MPST reflected, while the elites themselves ignored measures imposed by the state and denounced the lack of morality of Indians and communists. Indigenous groups and communists were led to believe that with the support of the MPST they could successfully contend with elites and regain lands. Close attention to the communications between communities and the state; to the processes of popular

organization and the transformation of pressuring strategies, to the exchanges between Indians, workers, and the Left in this period allows us to understand how the popular movement gained so much ground before the rise of Velasco, who did not operate in a political void but rather in competition with the formation of a democratic movement. Moreover, the relationship between leader and masses benefited greatly from a dialogue with previously organized working classes and from their accumulated experience of dialogue with the state. In fact, we would have to qualify our notion of the referents of political identity that are seen as “not organized.”⁸⁰⁵

The peasant, artisan, and worker organizations were not created under Velasco; they obeyed other logics. Their formations and transformations certainly suffered a new mutation in the 1930s, but in a much more complex way than the literature on populism tends to describe. The workers' organizations that had been largely tied to conservatism were divided. The SAIP in 1932 had already turned to the Left, identifying itself with socialism and even subscribing to the Center of Laborers of Latin America (CTAL) through Colombia and Mexico. The indigenous and peasant communities were in a very important process of organization that led to the formation of the FEI, which was affiliated to the Communist Party in several cases

⁸⁰⁵ See Kim Clark and Marc Becker, eds., *Highland Indians and the State in Modern Ecuador* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2007).

(principally Cotopaxi, Chimborazo, and Pichincha). In other cases they engaged in arduous processes of negotiation with the state, with the support of socialist lawyers and intellectuals. Whereas Velasco used the discourse about the *Pueblo* against the oligarchy, he borrowed that discourse from a popular political process that preceded him. The crisis of paternalism was produced in a context of mobilizations and political organizing against the conservative project. This did not produce nostalgia but rather an opposition that opened the political space in such a way that the majorities erupted onto the national political landscape. In 1934, during the government of Velasco, popular mobilization reached one of its apexes as protests in various industrial complexes, international trusts, and *haciendas* came together.

The literature on the agrarian problem and the more recent literature on the formation of the indigenous movement in Ecuador hold keys that have not been taken into account by works on political reform in the 1930s and 1940s. Study of the role that social mobilization played in state and party reform seems very productive in this sense. With regards to the first debate over the agrarian problem in Ecuador, Oswaldo Barsky proposed the thesis that the modernizing initiative in the rural areas had come from the landholding elite before the stimulus of the banana boom of 1950.⁸⁰⁶ Andrés

⁸⁰⁶ Between 1959 and 1964, 3,000 *huasipungos* were handed over, which affected only 15% of the peasantry; 60 percent of the *huasipungos* were handed over in Pichincha. This was a province of great modernization, but also of a more efficient state presence. Oswaldo Barsky, *Los terratenientes serranos y el debate político*

Guerrero, on the other hand, argued that the *hacienda* was a social formation characterized by a profound tension between the *huasipunguero* family and the landowner's administration. The complexity of social classes found within this internally heterogeneous system of work relations marked the character of the agrarian reform; the social categories around which the distribution of lands was organized were the same that organized labor. However, in the debate over the agrarian problem, there is not a sufficiently consistent genealogy with respect to the role that the peasant movement played in pressuring for top-down reforms, let alone the bottom-up reforms conceived by the FEI, the protagonist of important uprisings in the 1960s and whose organizing activity and mobilization as a vehicle for pressuring to achieve justice began in the 1930s.

Beyond its genealogy as an organization, the FEI represented organizations with diverse demands and experiences of conflict, from those of the communities of *huasipungueros* in Cayambe, led by Dolores Cacuango (theme of the work of Marc Becker's work) to those of the free communities of Toacaso in the province of Cotopaxi that fought against the *hacienda*. However, the pressuring capacity of the indigenous peasantry cannot be summarized even by the experiences of the FEI and its affiliates. The waves of denunciations and trials that we have seen processed in

previo al dictado de la ley de reforma agraria de 1964 en el Ecuador (Quito: FLACSO, CEPLAES, 1980).

distinct political contexts were renewed and expanded in the period between the 1930s and 1960s in private and public *haciendas* in the Sierra and in conflictive parishes on the coast. In these contexts, they were renewed with the backing of political organizations such as the Socialist and Communist Parties which, through newspapers and legal services to the communities, helped to resolve long-running trials and to pressure for adjustments in the laws.

In sociologist Fernando Velasco's interpretation of the agrarian reform, in 1960 there was an important peasant mobilization accompanied by the Communist Party, the FEI, and the *Federación de Trabajadores Agrícolas del Litoral*. He observed that all of these actors demanded conditions for the reproduction of the peasant economy, either through payment with lands for unpaid salaries and the recuperation of *huasipungos* or through the issuance of lands expropriated by the *latifundio* to form populations with access to agriculture parcels on the coast. For Velasco, the peasant demands coincided with the necessity of the elite to transform itself into an agrarian bourgeois as a result of its greater insertion into the market and the development of capitalism. Whereas land was issued to *huasipungueros*, the majority of the *arrimados* became proletariat and the *huasipungueros* themselves, lacking access to credit, ended up selling their lands and joining the proletarians as well. The effect and the lesson of this experience was harsh for the young Marxist sociologist as he witnessed how the peasant struggles were subordinated to the interests of the new

agrarian bourgeois.⁸⁰⁷

Paradoxically, the struggles over land and the resistance to dismantling settlements in the extensive Andean kinship networks ended up doing a favor for the new agrarian bourgeois. From this perspective, León Zamosc put forward a criticism of the political strategy of the peasantry led by the Left for having always worked in the field of legal demands instead of promoting more confrontational mobilizations, such as those that took place in various latitudes of Latin America in the 1970s.⁸⁰⁸

The communists failed to play a salient role in the battle over the agrarian reform...because they were influential in only a few haciendas and also because their organizational blueprint (which stressed worker demands and favored strikes) was not germane to the special nature of the struggle for land.⁸⁰⁹

Zamosc proposed that peasant resistance did not have an impact nor did it find the appropriate vehicle to propose an alternative or bear on the form in which the agrarian reform took place in Ecuador in the 1960s and 1970s. He maintained that the contemporary indigenous movement has had to distance itself from that experience in

⁸⁰⁷ Fernando Velasco, *Reforma agraria y movimiento campesino indígena de la Sierra* (Quito: Editorial El Conejo, 1979), The work of Luciano Martínez coincided in this respect. See Luciano Martínez, *De campesinos a proletarios* (Quito: Editorial El Conejo, 1984).

⁸⁰⁸ León Zamosc, "Agrarian Protest and the Indian Movement in the Ecuadorian Highlands," *Latin American Research Review* 29, no. 3 (1994): 37-68. The comparative case presented by this author was that of the peasant struggle of the ANUC in Colombia that had transcended a corporatist level linked to the state to engage in a massive peasant mobilization in that decade.

⁸⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

order to convert itself into the social force that it has become. Zamosc argued that the most visible peasant political organization was directed by a “proletarian” and “legal” discourse, proving that it was subordinate to urban unionism instead of generating mobilizations like those in other countries experiencing agrarian struggles and thus ineffective in proposing the dissolution of the *hacienda* system.⁸¹⁰

Zamosc took up the position of Guerrero within the Guerrero-Barsky debate, according to which there had been a peasant struggle, but it had to be found within the space of the *hacienda* and not in the external political landscape.⁸¹¹ Despite the fact that his study of the *hacienda* described the occurrence of temporary migrations to the city to work, peasant resistance was viewed as entirely separate from urban reality and thus lacking the capacity to link up with more universal political interests.

With the experience of the contemporary indigenous movement in Ecuador, which in the 1990s demonstrated an extensive social network and great capacity for mobilization, as well as a capacity to convert itself into a referent for popular political identities across a wide spectrum, the formation of the indigenous movement has become a focus of academic literature. In this context, the study of indigenous politics in the 1940s has received new attention. Ecuadorian historiographic

⁸¹⁰ Zamosc, “Luchas campesinas y reforma agraria.”

⁸¹¹ This thesis was aided by the work of Guerrero who, in *La hacienda precapitalista* established that the *hacienda* was structured according to two complementary social organizations that were in tension – the *patronal* organization and the wider peasant family, subjected to work for debt.

production has been renewed with studies such as those of Kim Clark, Marc Becker, and Angus Lyall, and the investigations into historical sociology have been boosted by Pablo Ospina's study of the genealogy of the indigenous movement in Ecuador.⁸¹² In this field, the work of Kim Clark on the peasant protest within the *haciendas* of the *Asistencia Pública* in the 1930s speaks to us of how the peasants demanded the intervention of the state as a public institution (rather than appealing to paternalism).⁸¹³ The *huasipungueros* had witnessed the most modest pacts with paternalist administration erode and they had presented legal complaints that suggested an adaptation to the norms established by the state for organizations, labor regulation, and the institutional mediation of work in rural zones. The work of Marc Becker has studied the formation of the FEI in Ecuador, beginning with indigenous struggles in Pesillo, Cayambe. He has been able to establish links between local conflict and national politics through the negotiations of the community and political mediations through parties, the press, the use of law, and the configuration of a

⁸¹² Clark, "La formación del Estado ecuatoriano;" Becker, *Indians and Leftists*; Lyall, *Los usos de la memoria*; Pablo Ospina, "Reflexiones sobre el transformismo: movilización indígena y régimen político en el Ecuador 1990-1998," in *Los movimientos sociales en las democracias andinas*, ed. Julie Massal (Quito: FLACSO-sede Ecuador, 2000), 125-147; Pablo Ospina, "La participación política del movimiento indígena en Ecuador: enseñanzas de los casos de Cotopaxi y Cotacachi," in *Etnicidad y poder en los países andinos*, ed. Christian Büschges (Quito: CEN-UASB, 2007), 231-238; and Pablo Ospina, "Indios, militares e imaginarios de nación en el Ecuador del siglo XX," *Procesos* 24, (2006): 244

⁸¹³ Clark, "La formación del Estado ecuatoriano;" Prieto, "Haciendas estatales."

national organization without precedents in the defense of ethnicity and politics. In the work of Becker, the reciprocally formative relationship between the first indigenous movement in Ecuador and the Communist Party is clear. His proposal is innovative insofar as the notions of the vanguard are inverted and the weight of the indigenous communities seems to have forced the Communist Party in Ecuador to make reflections similar to those being considered in Peru by Mariátegui, among others, and thus strengthen itself through electoral experiences and collective mobilizations.⁸¹⁴

In this line of studies, Hernán Ibarra has emphasized the inverse relationship between the state and peasant unionism. For this author, the indigenous *community* arose as a legal construction through a process of dialogue with the state in state-led attempts to consolidate its territorial control in the countryside, as well as through the existence of conflicts between peasants and *haciendas*, labor conflicts, or conflicts between peasants who pressured the state to establish social divisions in a complex social continuum.⁸¹⁵ In a recent compilation, Becker and Clark address the theme once more. They put aside the impact of indigenous struggles on the political institution and present the image of communities that appropriated legal discourse and advanced their own agendas, positioning themselves skillfully amidst competing

⁸¹⁴ Becker, *Indians and Leftists*.

⁸¹⁵ Ibarra, “La comunidad campesino/indígena.”

state agencies. In their view, the state was not a homogeneous institution and lacked a single program for the integration of indigenous populations, while it opened up distinct spaces for negotiation for indigenous communities.⁸¹⁶

These authors have re-opened a key topic within contemporary Latin American historiography for which there has existed little information in the case of Ecuador. That is, we must take up the relationship between peasant and indigenous struggles and the formation of the nation state. In Becker's interpretation, the middle classes tied to the Communist Party developed an unprecedented horizontal relationship with indigenous organizations is crucial. This experience contrasts with representations of the indigenous people in the nation in the 1940s. The view of indigenous communities and inter-class political organizations as fundamental actors in the political landscape is key to understanding that the impact of indigenous organization was significant. Its significance went beyond its own political organization or aspirations. The impact of the multiple legal demands presented by indigenous communities before the MPST had a tremendous effect with respect to the introduction of social rights in Ecuador and to state reforms that incorporated a logic of class and ethnicity into its public policies at the same time that a dialogue ensued over the reparative and redistributive character of the state.⁸¹⁷

⁸¹⁶ Clark and Becker, eds., *Highland Indians*, 1-21.

⁸¹⁷ Ospina, Santillana and Arboleda, "Neo-Corporatism."

These legal demands, in contrast to the analysis of Zamosc, did not contradict but rather complemented the processes of mobilization, and protests created ties between popular organizations that were in turn able to create a horizontal national movement. That shift from previous politics that depended on trusting the representation offered by radical elements of the Liberal Party took place precisely in our period of study. The effects went beyond the formation of the indigenous movement's own political apparatus and organs of communication, such as the newspaper *Nucanchic Allpa*. In fact they reshaped the creation of a mode of negotiation between civil society and the state. In the Ecuador of the 1990s, the indigenous struggle in the coast and the Sierra was converted into a referent for national popular culture and for other social struggles, including those of the middle class, women, and industrial unions themselves, as we will see.⁸¹⁸ In the same way, the indigenous movement became a reference point for identity in many other struggles, even before the formation of the Communist Party. It formed part of an extensive genealogy of democratic political culture formation in Ecuador that was reconstituted and strengthened in the 1930s. The challenge of viewing social and political history from below that these authors have taken on is precisely the possibility of weaving ties between fields that had been isolated from studies of

⁸¹⁸ Goetschel, *Educación de las mujeres*; Jorge Carrera Andrade, *El volcán y el colibrí: autobiografía* (Quito: Corporación Editora Nacional, 1989).

organization and popular mobilization. Such fields include conflict over land and territory, the emergence of political parties and popular movements, and the formation of the nation state as a complex and diverse landscape in which diverse dialogues, disputes, codes, and connections combine. How can we understand that the peasants were “legalist” and that they were immersed in “proletarian” discourse without understanding the role that organized demands played in shaping notions of class during the reform of the state? The workers' circles of liberalism and the indigenous and peasant communities demanded recognition as collective subjects before the state in order to combat the role that modern civil law had on the notions of private property for the landholding elite, as well as to demand the intervention of the state in regards to a justice system controlled by *hacendados*. The pressure from organizations identified with class and ethnic demands generated the construction of a specific type of nation state with social rights.

In effect, in this third moment of state reform in the 1930s and 1940s, the social struggle that forced a response from the state was the origin of social rights. The Ecuadorian case is therefore interesting as a case that contradicts theories that propose that social rights emerge due to an evolution and forces us to confront the role that conflict has in the conformation of states capable of forging consensus. Thomas Bender, for example, has proposed that social issues and related public policies are the effects of growing demography and the cities that demand the

development of a planning system that spreads internationally through the academic technocracy, thus arriving in Latin American countries. The rise of the era of the socio-political or the national social state (which came about after World War I in Europe and after the crisis of the oligarchic state in Latin America) has been understood as an response to industrialization and to the problem of the concentration of populations in cities. For Bender, the social policies in various latitudes of the world spread from Germany and France to the United States and in turn to all industrial societies. It offered them new capacities to confront their objective demographic transformations.⁸¹⁹

As Allan Knight, Laura Gotkowitz, and Forrest Hylton observe in the case of Bolivia, state reform was possible because the peasantry negotiated a political pact with other popular classes and even the radicalized middle class, oppressed by the landowning elite and by transnational capital.⁸²⁰ In the case of Mexico, as Arnaldo Córdova has proposed, the articulation of a diverse and unequal “civil society” with national public policies during Cárdenas' regime was constituted through the recognition and promotion of work as a legal-political category, thus permitting the

⁸¹⁹ Bender, *A Nation among Nations*.

⁸²⁰ Alan Knight, “Social Revolution: A Latin American Perspective,” *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 9, no. 2 (1990): 175-202; Gotkowitz, *A Revolution for our Rights*; Hylton, “Tierra común: caciques, artesanos, intelectuales radicales.”

recognition of the worker as a subject with rights.⁸²¹

Similar to the cases of Mexico and Bolivia, in Ecuador in the 1930s paths to incorporate the working classes were explored that would be considered corporatist. It represented an effort to lessen the power of the oligarchy and control class conflict. Also, through the development of social rights, it aimed to give the organized communities and workers a representation that would permit them to advance in their negotiations without turning to insurrection or generate a violent reaction from the oligarchy. In Ecuador, paths for developing the nation state were explored, among which included clientelist *velaquismo* and other paths comparable to corporatist models in Mexico, Venezuela, and Bolivia. In these three countries, there were nationalist revolutions, which implied alliances between strongly organized working classes or peasants with the state and the military.

The legal reforms proposed by the governments of the July Revolution and those proposed by the Socialist Party would have been easily betrayed if they had not found peasant communities throughout the country that sought new strategies to initiate the struggle over lands and for new political recognition. The peasant communities allied with a middle class that told urban media of rival conflicts through journalism. But these communities also found mechanisms for negotiation

⁸²¹ Córdova, *La política*; Joseph and Nugent, eds., *Everyday Forms of State Formation*.

that were offered by the state and that gave them access to the justice system.

This alliance caused the Socialist Party to grow amongst fierce competition with the Conservative Party and the liberal oligarchy, thus becoming a new reference for democracy and a facilitator in the dialogue between the peasantry and the state. The alliance between the Left and the peasantry became a reference for workers in other branches of industry and it quickly grew, becoming an important social force by the middle of the 1940s.

In this sense, in contrast to arguments regarding the “oligarchic pact” and the analysis of the sudden entrance of the masses into politics thanks to Velasco, we observe political process that led to the configuration of a democratic alternative and an organized popular base. The transformation left a legacy with respect to the structure of the state and, moreover, with respect to the memory of the Ecuadorian social movement in the long term.⁸²² The alternative vision to that of the *junker* path that we are proposing takes into account the recognition of collective class and ethnic actors by the state and the consequent legal actions of land redistribution and labor rights (as part of the formation of social rights in Ecuador), as a result of processes of

⁸²² The contemporary indigenous movement has headed the social movement in Ecuador and the social movement (women, ecologists, new collectives, class groups, etc.) has been imagined as a composition of collective actors that guide the permanent construction of the state.

popular political organization and collective mobilization.⁸²³ The challenge to forms of servile work and processes of land concentration posed by mobilized and politically integrated peasants into sectors of the Left, workers, and parts of the middle class were crucial for weakening *gamonalismo* at the regional level and for affecting nation-state formation. In the following pages, we will propose that the nature of the transformations that occurred after 1925 can only be understood as a result of the pressure exercised by the popular political movement that was able to organize indigenous, peasant, and worker groups into a radical public sphere that was identified as democratic and was later able to transform the state into a popular state with its base in these leftist party organizations. This was also part of political contest with a renewed right that was prepared to mobilize the masses in falangist populist and other movements.

Between 1925 and 1945, a profound transformation took place that left a long-term legacy for the relationship between the “state and civil society.” Among several of the fundamental aspects of this transformation, we can mention the formation of a modern system of political parties with popular bases; the formation of a system of social security and national policies with respect to lands and labor regulations with great institutional capacity and significant redistributive results; the formation of a

⁸²³ Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba*; Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba*.

popular base organized into unions and *communities* that were recognized by the government, the justice system, and ministries; and the conformation of a democratic front with ample control of the media and a capacity to integrate indigenous, peasant, and popular organizations at a national level, thus changing the political culture of the country. This was a key moment in the transition from an oligarchic model of state configuration to the emergence of a nation-state that sought mediation between capital and labor and that placed the country outside of the limits of internal colonialism.

The popularity of the movement represented a democratizing process before the Cold War. It would later mark the horizons, organizing mechanisms, and the political identity of popular movements in Ecuador in the long term. The relationship between the popular movement and the state left its imprint on the form of negotiation and language that was used for mediation henceforth. Based on historical sources such as trials, press, correspondences, and testimonies, this chapter analyzes the radicalizing influence that the popular movement exercised on state reforms. At the same time, it will also reflect problems of leadership in the complex popular movement and of political representation that also set limits to this process.

The national popular movement, formed over two decades against which the interruption of *velasquismo* must be understood, involved the exploration of an alternative path to democracy in Ecuador to that proposed by scholars of

velasquismo. Instead of populism or conservative *caudillismo*, the popular Left was able to set in motion a model of pushing for change and of negotiating conflicts between “civil society” and the state that established popular organizations and not individual citizens as the principal actors.

The restriction on voting rights that lasted until 1979 was not an obstacle for the popular movement to be a belligerent force within the process of state modernization / democratization that followed the fall of the liberal regime. While modern conservatism increased its base of voters, the Left or the democratic front widened its organizing network and the mechanisms for voicing demands with respect to social rights. The democratic front increased its capacity for expression in public spaces through media campaigns as well as through the production of a revolutionary cultural discourse about the nation and the conditions and processes of collective mobilization through which the necessary social force could be summoned to prevent the conservative vote from detaining processes of democratization. All of this social and political effort led the Left and popular organization to force a process of land redistribution in all of the regions of conflict. In the constitutional process of 1944, the popular forces were able to overcome the limits of liberal radicalism (the historic leadership of the army and the Radical Liberal Party), replacing the liberal mistrust in the popular vote with the confidence that the popular vote was, in its majority, leftist. The urban Left and its organizations throughout the country

promoted the need to universalize the vote and, in addition, the need for the Senate to provide corporatist representation of diverse popular and democratic collective actors in order to ratify the popular control of the state and the autonomy of public institutions and its organisms of education from the power of large landowners.

Until the current moment, we have not seen in Ecuador a party of the masses similar to the PRI or MNR. The example of *velasquismo* would not be a counterexample. However, the indigenous movement, formed through corporatist representation in the three democratic advances that we have outlined in this thesis, built a form of representation before the state during the liberal revolution and negotiated in a corporatist manner with the reformed state. These experiences were legacies for the contemporary indigenous movement that, under the concept of a plurinational state, has integrated an important heritage of corporatist negotiation between social organizations and the state.

As arguments and evidence regarding this process, we will study the ties between communities and new political actors who formed new radicalisms and new conservatisms. We will analyze their expression in the events that constituted milestones in the process of dispute between these two poles. We will present an anatomy of the political content that characterized the country from the regional level to the national political organizations. The political landscape experienced substantial transformations that strengthened the peasant influence over the national political

agenda, and in this way workers and artisans discovered an alliance and, moreover, a common identity with the peasant communities. Also, the rural middle classes and a fraction of the urban middle classes entered into this dispute between the Right and the Left, developing polarized political identities that came out in moments of conflict and that contributed to the development of political mediation and parties, legal programs for the state, and even popular representation before judges, cultural programs, and the development of media. The instability that characterized the epoch (21 governments between 1929 and 1947) and that, for many authors, was a sign of incoherence, in reality expressed the growing tension over the orientation of state transformations and of popular organizations in the state. In fact, conflict was not an obstacle, but rather a vehicle for furthering agendas of democratization and redistribution.

7.2 Debates at the Heart of the July Revolution of 1925: Nationalism, Socialism, and Popular Organizations.

The *Bandera Roja* was the first socialist weekly in Guayaquil and in 1920 it published news of the Russian revolution and the advance of socialism in Latin America, including a theoretical-political section by Marxist authors. It dedicated the majority of its pages to questioning the myth of gradual democracy through accusations directed at the leadership of the workers and their relationship with the

Liberal Party. The journalists of the *Bandera Roja* criticized the preaching about the value of civilization that the bourgeois press of the port spread as part of its strategy for directing public opinion. Their articles were meant to show the manner in which the relationship between “civilization” and “progress” was exclusive since “progress” was associated with the bourgeois, which was far from being a great re-distributor of wealth: “Of that progress only those with money benefit... These vane people have refined their tastes to the decimal point; they have become less alive, more corrupted, even coming to call themselves monopolizing capitalism.”⁸²⁴

Questioning the discourse on “civilization” was clearly meant to cause the workers to question whether or not the Liberal Party represented them: “Given the fact that in Ecuador there is no proletariat politics... proving that the ex-workers that until now have directed the masses of workers have become accomplices of all of terrible things of bourgeois politics.”⁸²⁵

In order to be able to construct an alternative to the Liberal Revolution, the journalists of the *Bandera Roja* attempted to displace the image of the worker who would be granted dignity by “civilization” with popular characters who acknowledged their differences and found their own voice. Juan Cholo was the first

⁸²⁴ *Bandera Roja*, semanario socialista, Año 1, no. 3, 1920.

⁸²⁵ *Ibid.*

to appear in the public press with a popular voice.⁸²⁶ “I, Juan Cholo, proud and dignified, honorable and poor with my brain free of adoration for great potbellied white and rich men. If they were to come to ask for my vote for a bourgeois candidate, I would demand a program.”⁸²⁷

Yet this character fed off of the experience and commented on the news coming from rural areas. He was linked to the section with letters and news from the provincial surroundings, which in its own right constituted an innovative section in the workers' press since it was dedicated to registering land conflicts in Guayas and reproducing letters from Milagro, Duran, and Daule. The section caused an impact as various letters came from representatives of parish associations that offered to form a collection among workers to help finance the newspaper. The weekly was critical in many ways of the leadership of the COG and the Liberal Party; however, the relationship between them produced an umbrella identity from which it became difficult to escape. Such was the popular identification with liberalism historically that it seemed that there was no space for another popular political identification:

The same current commotion in the workers' world that had had resonance even in Colombia, where despite the ferocious conservative and clerical oppression that predominates there, the workers already have a vast socialist organization.

⁸²⁶ After a decade, they were positioned as central characters in the national popular literature.

⁸²⁷ *Bandera Roja*, semanario socialista, Año 1, no. 3, 1920.

It has not produced in our great Confederation the least effect.⁸²⁸

Liberalism was seen as a current of popular struggle. The same weekly compared the Liberal Revolution with the French Revolution. One of the accusations was that the COG had betrayed Alfaro. It said that Agustín A. Freire had passed from being a popular leader to being a broker for the Party elite and has even refused to hang a portrait of Alfaro on the wall of the COG. In the edition that was released on June 5th, 1920, when the liberal triumph celebrated its 25 year anniversary, the weekly was very expressive in establishing a *alfarista* genealogy in its program of the foundation of socialism:

On that day, the workers and liberal bourgeois fraternized against the troops that defended clerical terrorism and established that act of independence on the throne of Liberty that, threatened by reactionaries, betrayed by those who call themselves liberals, still sustains it. Our error has been great. Each new conquest of the *pueblo* has been harsh and stubbornly attacked by the coalition of all the reactionary elements of the society. But it is sustained in its pristine purity... as the remains of the conquest that with blood liberalism won after long years of harsh battle.⁸²⁹

Although the weekly had entire sections dedicated to analyzing the advance of socialism in Russia, it maintained a discourse that clearly indicated a popular

⁸²⁸ *Ibíd.*

⁸²⁹ *Bandera Roja*, semanario socialista, Año 1, no. 3, 1920. However, the weekly also celebrated the first of May in the workers' parade organized by the COG and chastised those who watched the parade as mere spectators.

appropriation of liberalism. It opposed the creation of a Liberal Workers' Party as an alternative to the crisis of the Party since the intention of the socialists was to found a Socialist Party that was independent of the Liberal Party, but enriched by the legacies of *alfarismo*.

For all of these reasons, the November 15 workers' massacre was unexpected and constituted a dramatic milestone. Only when the relationship with liberalism fell apart was the socialist criticism cultivated by circles of enthusiasts and young intellectuals recognized as a discourse of an alternative identity.⁸³⁰ The leadership of the FTRE and survivors such as Luis Maldonado Estrada and Alejo Capelo made lists of the victims just days after the massacre in order to fight against silence and impunity. A year later, despite the persecution of the survivors, socialist circles were formed.

From that year until various decades later, President Tamayo continued to try to avoid accusations and was even able to have Gen. Barriga, who was in charge of the military operation, take full responsibility for the massacre. However, another faction of the military justified the preponderant role that they had in the political history of the 20th century as a result of the tribulation caused by having participated

⁸³⁰ In Pichincha, where the ASC had carried at such an aggressive work of direction, the socialist circles formed in the 1920s. In the context of the literary magazines and the newspapers, they were able to create a link with workers' associations later and the organizations split, several remaining tied to the modern Conservative Party.

in the workers' massacre under the orders of the Liberal Party in 1922. According to the testimony of Gen. Alberto Enríquez Gallo taken down by Marcos Gándara Enríquez, the experience of finding three hundred people dead at the end of the day on November 15 caused in him such an impression that he was drawn to nationalist and socialist currents and later in 1938 became the Supreme Chief of the Republic who promulgated the Labor Code.⁸³¹

As the intellectual elites of the Liberal Party had declared, the crisis of liberalism was an opportunity for the Conservative Party to attempt to recover power. A few days after the massacre of 1922 and when Tamayo's regime found itself being pursued by the leadership that had survived, a famous letter from the Archbishop Manuel María Pólit Lasso circulated that substantially changed the discourse of the conservative elite with respect to the working-class bases. In contrast to the assertions of Archbishop González Suárez to inhibit popular participation in politics, Archbishop Pólit called for the Catholic worker movement to participate actively in politics against decadent liberalism.⁸³² A series of pamphlets attached to the letter

⁸³¹ Marcos Gándara Enríquez, one of the generals of the military government of 1963, completed an extensive study of the testimonial and newspaper sources and found that Gen. Alberto Enríquez Gallo, his uncle and the dictator tied to the Socialist Party in 1938, had converted to the Left after the November 15, in *La semana trágica de Guayaquil* (Quito: Centro de Estudios Históricos del Ejército, 1990).

⁸³² Archbishop Manuel María Pólit Lasso, *Circular que el Ilmo. y Rdmo. Señor Doctor Don Manuel María Pólit Laso, dignísimo Arzobispo de Quito, dirige al clero secular y regular y los fieles católicos de la Arquidiócesis, reproduciendo una carta*

circulated among Catholic workers and spoke of this crisis of the secular party and foresaw fatal moral errors, such as following Bolchevism.

As the moderate branch of liberalism warned, the conservatives were evolving towards a “nationalist” program. In effect, the call that Archbishop Pólit made in 1922 seemed to orient the Catholic vote to support the candidate of “Catholic socialism” and the head of the army, Juan Manuel Lasso, a landowning aristocrat who spoke of having had revelations about the need to hand everything over to the *pueblo*, including lands to the Indians and rights to the proletariat.⁸³³ Although Lasso, in his opposition to the Liberal Party, participated in the circles of founders of the Socialist Party in Ecuador, the clergy’s support for him was no coincidence. The elite intellectuals of the Liberal Party saw in Lasso an attempt by conservatism to consolidate its popular bases, and they saw how “amphibious” liberals sought a “third way,” that would be more popular than the Conservative Party and Liberal Party, as they drew closer to European nationalism. In the party's assembly of 1923, Jaramillo Alvarado compared nationalism with the first manifestations of fascism in Europe. Yet while Primo de Rivera and Mussolini had suppressed political democratization

de S.S. Benedicto XV (Quito: Imprenta del Clero, 1922) See a comparable case in Perú in Pilar García Jordán, "Estado moderno, iglesia y secularización en el Perú contemporáneo (1821-1919)," *Revista Andina* 12 (dic., 1988): 359-401.

⁸³³ *Exposición de la protesta a mano armada verificada el 18 de febrero de 1924 en la provincia de Imbabura* (Quito: Imprenta y encuadernación de Julio Sáenz R. tipógrafo editor, 1925).

and initiated direct intervention in the “economic and social problem” in order to avoid the expansion of the Left, in Ecuador, without a strong presence of socialism, he argued, nationalism would only represent the fusion of the liberal oligarchy with the Conservative Party.⁸³⁴

With this threat, various members of the Liberal Party, particularly the leadership of the party in Pichincha, decided to meet in a general assembly in 1923 to refound the party based on a program called the “*Programa de Acción y Principios*” and a new founding statute. They took up once more several features of what the COG had proposed as a Workers' Party. They were attuned to modern theories about the “social question” and the agrarian problem.⁸³⁵ Pío Jaramillo Alvarado, Julio E. Moreno, Luis Napoleón Dillon, and other members who had more recently joined, such as José Vicente Trujillo and Puig Vilazar, as well as generals Gómez de la Torre and Moisés Oliva, who had a lot of power in the army, adhered to the new program.

After arriving at an agreement between the *plana mayor* of the party and President Tamayo in order to prevent the electoral triumph of Juan Manuel Lasso in 1924, the old lawyer Gonzalo F. Córdova was presented as the only candidate of the Party and once more the electoral machine guaranteed his victory over “Catholic

⁸³⁴ Jaramillo Alvarado, *La asamblea liberal*.

⁸³⁵ Reyes, *Los últimos siete años*, 7.

socialism.”⁸³⁶ Despite the fact that conflicts had formed within the Liberal Party and that the detachment of the bases was a painful episode in various parts of the country, the party was strong with respect to its electoral machine. Beginning that year, alternatives for defeating the plutocratic regime by force were devised. The first alternative came from the conservative side and another came from the liberal institution itself.

In 1924, the conservative Jacinto Jijón y Caamaño called for a violent uprising against the Liberal Party. The so-called “conservative revolution” was headed by the *plana mayor* of the Conservative Party of Pichincha and was supported by groups from Riobamba and from the frontier with Colombia, where the elite of Quito had commercial interests. This was an army of 2,000 men armed with guns and even with hoes. Jijón, as “*generalissimo*,” mobilized Catholic workers' centers founded in Quito and the northern Sierra with people of diverse backgrounds from Tulcán, San Gabriel, Huaca, Bolívar, El Angel, Ibarra, Atuntaqui, Otavalo, Cayambe, Tabacundo, San Pablo, Caranqui, and other towns. He mobilized the *conciertos* from his sugar estate of San José de Urcuquí and the workers from his textile industry in Quito. Jijón took his troops to his *hacienda* in San José de Ambi and while the elites spoke within the *hacienda* house and the administration handed out refreshments, the national army

⁸³⁶ Ibid., 7, Gonzalo S. Córdova obtained 173,773 votes and Juan M. Lasso obtained 9,175 votes from a total of 186,538 voters in the country.

arrived and subdued them almost without resistance.⁸³⁷

The second coup attempt came from young members of the national army on July 9th, 1925, when Major Carlos Guerrero, together with the troops of the battalion of Pichincha took the president and the majority of his cabinet prisoners. In Guayaquil, the Marañón battalion and the Bolívar regiment rose up against the government under the direction of the Sergeant Major Ildefonso Mendoza. They arrested civil authorities and the manager of the *Banco Comercial y Agrícola*, Francisco Urbina Jado, together with the ex-president Gen. Leonidas Plaza Gutiérrez.⁸³⁸ The Supreme Military Committee met immediately and representatives from Quito and Guayaquil were called upon to form a provisional government and avoid accusations of regionalism.⁸³⁹ The leadership of the movement of the “July Revolution” mostly consisted of young lieutenants who formed a circle called the

⁸³⁷ BCE, *Número monográfico del fondo Jacinto Jijón y Caamaño*, Boletín Bibliográfico (Quito: BCE, 1990); *El Derecho*, “*Diario conservador de la mañana*,” 1925.

⁸³⁸ Reyes, *Los últimos siete años*, 24-30; José Alfredo Llerena, *Frustración política en 22 años* (Quito: Casa de la Cultura Ecuatoriana, 1959), 9-14.

⁸³⁹ The Supreme Military Committee was constituted by Major Juan Ignacio Pareja, Lieutenant Colonel Luis Telmo Paz y Miño, Major Carlos A. Guerrero, and Captains Emilio Valdivieso, Cesar Plaza, J. Enrique Ribadeneira, Enrique Pareja; Lieutenants Francisco Gallegos, Virgilio Molina, and Federico Struve; and Sub-lieutenants Ángel Bonilla and Luis Sierra Paredes. For the provisional government, the delegates from Quito were Modesto Larrea Jijón, José Rafael Bustamante, General Francisco Gómez de la Torre, and Luis Napoleón Dillon; and from Guayaquil were named Francisco Boloña, Pedro P. Garaicoa, and Francisco Arízaga Luque. Reyes, *Los últimos siete años*, 39-40.

Liga Militar. Their magazine, *El Abanderado*, expressed criticisms of the personal character of the military and Liberal Party leadership, and its interest in notions of professionalization and bureaucratic rationality. It promoted military reform oriented towards substituting a logic of professionalization in the FFAA for the existing *caudillista* logic. This notion was linked to the reform of the state apparatus to take into account the “nation” and the introduction of principles of social security. For these notions, several authors have proposed that the young military officers were influenced by the Italian nationalism that was introduced into the country through the military mission that came to Ecuador to modernize its army. The aspirations for a meritocracy within the military profession and the nationalist mission of the state were prominent in that school of thought. However, this revolution was more a response to long-running conflicts in which the army was considered a reserve of votes for distinct factions of the Liberal Party rather than a response to ideology.⁸⁴⁰ “The chief was the owner of lives and *haciendas*: the quarters were small fiefs and the government, due to its political obligations, issued them for a more or less long time to some of the most adept chiefs.”⁸⁴¹ One of the young military officers of the July Revolution, Ildefonso Mendoza, recalled in an interview the power that the

⁸⁴⁰ Alexei Páez, *Los orígenes de la izquierda ecuatoriana* (Quito: FIAAM and AbyaYala, 2001), 39.

⁸⁴¹ Ildefonso Mendoza, “La revolución de julio y sus actores: recuerdos y memorias del comandante Ildefonso Mendoza,” in *El Comercio*, 18 de agosto de 1930, quoted by Ycaza, *Historia del movimiento obrero*, 237

liberal generals had to dictate the vote of the army:

The Gen. Oliva, in the manner of all of the government Ministers, days before each election, gave orders and sent flyers to all of the Regional Chiefs and they sent them to the divisions, indicating to them the duty of the army in the electoral function and indicating severe penalties for those who did not follow the law; this was done ostensibly and a copy of such papers was issued to the press to be published in ostentatiously letters. On the other hand, the General would give orders to his immediate subordinates, accompanied by the list of officials that the Army should vote for, and not just for one individual, but rather sometimes more than a hundred. This produced protests among the officials on more than one occasion and one of those times I remember that such an act took place in the Bolívar Regiment of Quito.⁸⁴²

For Rafael Quintero, the regional equilibrium of the Provisional Junta expressed the formation of an oligarchic pact and he concluded that the members belonged to the dominant classes. However, many of these people also belonged to the most social branch of the Liberal Party and during its provisional government they introduced very important legal reforms. In the case of Dillon, the construction of a central bank was interpreted as a sort of favoritism for the elite of the Sierra; however, a tributary system was organized that caused the landholding elite serious problems.⁸⁴³

The landholding elite of the Sierra tried to orient the governing junta of the July Revolution in its favor, given they it had helped free it from the powerful electoral machinery of the Liberal Party. Just a few days after the coup, members of

⁸⁴² Ildefonso Mendoza, "El 9 de julio y sus actores", quoted in Luis Robalino Dávila, *El 9 de julio de 1925* (Quito: Editorial La Unión, 1973), 59.

⁸⁴³ Quintero and Silva, *Ecuador, una nación en ciernes*.

the supreme military junta and of the civil governing junta were invited to a luxurious dinner in the Savoy hotel, where the landholding elite of Quito offered to legitimize the junta at the same time that it attempted to demonstrate its innate superiority. According to the chronicle of José Gabriel Navarro, during the service of the sophisticated menu, the Quito aristocracy and the young military officers developed a certain trust and were only accompanied by two politicians from the Liberal Party who could have a personal power comparable to that of the Catholics that were present: José Rafael Bustamante, the liberal intellectual, and Gen. Gómez de la Torre.⁸⁴⁴ In the name of Catholic youth, the aristocrat Cristóbal Gangotena y Jijón spoke, congratulating the young lieutenants of the army. One of the heads of the Catholic Social Action, Don Manuel Sotomayor y Luna, promised not to get in the way of reforms if they maintained certain guarantees – specifically, the freedom to obtain a Catholic education – and if they remained focused on the “national spirit.”⁸⁴⁵ In the meantime, the discourse of José Rafael Bustamante as the director of the governing junta clearly highlighted the principles of social liberalism and the interest of the July Revolution to set forth reforms with respect to social issues.

⁸⁴⁴ JGN de *El Comercio*, N° 7156, 1925.

⁸⁴⁵ *Comunicaciones y telegramas dirigidos al General Francisco Gómez de la Torre y a la Junta de Gobierno. Documentos relacionados con la transformación político-militar del 9 de julio de 1925* (Quito: Imprenta Nacional, 1925), 3-61. The document is composed by letters sent from all around the country, chronicles about celebrations from different places in the Republic, and the first decrees of the Junta.

The movement was convinced of the need to “not overlook the social issues because no government, no party, can ignore the movement that is sweeping the world and aspires to raise the economic level of all men to constitute the true base of true liberty.”⁸⁴⁶

His discourse emphasized the return of the civil direction of the state and pointed out that the junta did not seek to remain in power but rather would limit itself to “carrying out the Constitutional Assembly called to establish the new legal order.” In the name of the military officers, Telmo Paz y Miño made reference to the reorientation of the army that had used arms against the people in the service of the oligarchy and that, after 1925, adopted a nationalist orientation:

We understand that the strength that was in our hands ought not be used to strangle that unanimous aspiration of the collectivity; we understand that our strength and our arms that are of the people ought to be applied to enhance its rights and to obtain the ends that the reestablishment of a modern nationality proposes.⁸⁴⁷

The conservative chronicler, José Gabriel Navarro, took lightly the declarations of the members of the July Revolution and told of the sarcasm and the curiosity of the Quito aristocracy that asked the lieutenants to speak of “their diverse journeys, their committees, and their meetings among which they recalled the unforgettable and very

⁸⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁴⁷ Ibid.

important act carried out in the open air at the base of Pichincha, the day of the last party in Inaquitos.”⁸⁴⁸

They asked about the thousand incidents of that celebrated night in which not only the *cordovano* regime but also the viciousness of its leaders... magistrates and Ministers, judges and legislators, employees and journalists fell forever, with the formation of a formidable circle of interests in much those who came to believe themselves exclusive owners of the nation and its politics. Those that sustained themselves, defending themselves mutually and mutually supporting each another in a shameful amalgamation.⁸⁴⁹

Navarro's chronicle permits us to see the anxiety with which the conservative elite entered into the secrets of the liberal state after thirty years of its predominance. The representatives of the governing junta were, at the same time, besieged by diverse groups and obliged to reveal “the secrets of the State... and of the deplorable state in which they have found that which was called the public administration of this territory.”⁸⁵⁰

However, beyond these proclamations, the governing junta of the July Revolution soon began a very energetic legal reform process. The junta proposed to reform the justice system, to provide land redistribution, and to centralize the finances available for the planned direction of the national economy, in addition to renewing the party system. Although the financial reform has most caught the attention of

⁸⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁴⁹ Ibid., f. 132.

⁸⁵⁰ Ibid.

academics, the junta began relevant reforms that transformed the orientation of welfare politics. While the previous regime had set forth policies on hygiene and well-being, the policies initiated by the July Revolution understood social welfare as a responsibility of the central state to direct human and territorial resources for the national economy. In this sense, it wielded the concept of “workers” in its legal discourse and had as one of its constant objectives the organization of collective legal entities, agricultural associations, unions, and cooperatives that constituted themselves as representatives of the social sector before the state and recipients of its social rights.

The first activities of the junta were very popular for having directly attacked one of the most problematic elements of popular life – namely, the speculation of prices and goods. Simultaneously, the decree of the governing junta, presided over by Luis Napoleón Dillon, of July 13, 1925, created the Ministry of Social Welfare and Labor (MPST) from branches of government related to social welfare, labor, charity, health and hygiene, agriculture, migration, colonization, and general statistics, vacantlands, and industries. The ministry was constituted as the state agency that would study, regulate, and plan the social growth of the country, creating a specific legislation for this purpose through the scientific understanding of society. It was established as an agency for research, justice, and redistribution. With the renewal of the junta on January 10, 1926, the composition of the governing junta changed and

Julio C. Moreno, Homero Viteri Lafronte, Isidro Ayora, Humberto Albornoz, Adolfo Hidalgo Nevárez, and José Gómez Gault joined. In that context, the attributions of the MPST expanded through the supreme decree of July 13, 1926, in which the General Inspector of Labor was created and which established five work commissions. The Inspector functioned in the areas of investigation, the development of social rights, and the dispersal of justice and – according to the law of territorial patrimony of the State, established in 1927 – it held the capacity to make decisions about territorial resources that were considered socially useful.⁸⁵¹

In an article published in the newspaper *El Sol*, the liberal Homero Viteri Lafronte judged the purpose of the MPST as that of political-legal reform that responded to two needs: First, it represented a global change in how to understand the State and, second, it represented an internal movement of the unsatisfied need of the Liberal Revolution to spread citizenship. Viteri noted that the use that the old powers made of the term “social issues” or the “social question” was radically different from the use that the new government of the July Revolution was making of the same term.⁸⁵²

The governing junta created a series of new plazas across the nation that

⁸⁵¹ Pedro Pablo Egüez Baquerizo, *Informe que presenta a la Nación, el Sr. Dr. Pedro Pablo Egüez Baquerizo, Ministro de Previsión Social y Trabajo* (Quito: Imprenta Nacional, 1928).

⁸⁵² *El Sol*, 15 de diciembre de 1925.

marked a growth in the public finances bureaucracy, including a group of tax-collectors who established themselves in every canton. Thus, an auditing commission for the banks, for state income, and for fiscal and municipal contracts and a law of Internal Taxes, which leveled taxes on large landowners, were produced by this government. However, the state reform could have been precarious due to the almost inexistent social base of the July Revolution. The lieutenants themselves, Telmo Hidalgo and de José Rafael Bustamante, would have been frustrated if they only relied on their own strength since they did not have significant social networks in their base and their social power, compared with the regional power of conservatism and the large political machinery of the Liberal Party, was minimal. Although a link to the military network existed, this was not a military government and it soon gave way to a civil junta. Their readings of the country's needs led to a constitutional process between 1928 and 1929 that introduced social rights into the country and reforms that had radical consequences. The most compelling reason for this was the intense process of dialogue that took place between peasant communities and the state through the MPST. This process gave the state a new base of support to introduce legal reforms and affect private power, which carried territorial implications.

The promulgation of laws and the construction of an alternative justice apparatus to that of civil rights, as well as the construction of a Ministerial apparatus

that strengthened the central apparatus to intervene in regional conflicts over land and labor issues, were made possible by an experience and a heritage that has not been taken into account much in the characterization of the period. The reemergence of peasant pressure, a process of re-organization in the form of unions, and the weaving of ties that developed out of the nascent political circle of the Socialist Party were all crucial for the construction of this new state. Until 1930, the regime of the July Revolution was sustained by the army, by social liberalism, by the Socialist Party, by all of the functionaries and publicists of the reformist cause, and, above all, by the demand for state jurisdiction to process conflicts, especially from peasant organizations.

Under the military leadership of the first *Junta de Gobierno*, several of the principal critics of the situation of the Liberal Party that had organized in the national assembly of 1923 re-emerged. The influence of social liberalism in the legal transformations came from people like Luis N. Dillon and Julio E. Moreno. With the support of the military junta, the civil junta dared to move from the municipal space and the charity framework, in which notions of labor regulations were constructed, in order to propose new national policies. The principles of social security that had gained Guayaquil the fame of being civilized among international organisms and whose application was restricted were included in the program for political reform for the central apparatus. The new ministries with this orientation could access resources

and enjoyed full authorization and operational teams. In the second civil junta, the founders of the Socialist Party, in dialogue with peasant communities of the Sierra and the coast, as well as with urban workers, began to collaborate to develop a series of regulations that represented the beginnings of the Labor Code and that were presented in the constitutional assembly of 1928-1929.

In the first three months after the July Revolution, a series of letters reached the junta from the provinces, parishes, social corporations, and various population strata to express their positions and aspirations. Among the communications and telegrams addressed to Gen. Francisco Gómez de la Torre and to the governing junta, reports from all over the country from distinct strata of the army, officials and sub-officials, manifested their loyalty and the situations of the troops and the populations under their control. One of the most interesting issues that arose, however, was the formation of popular assemblies created in localities.⁸⁵³ Beyond the cities of Quito and Guayaquil and the provincial governments where parties were organizing their juntas, meetings were being held in parishes and small rural villages. Neighbors from different villages were declaring their commitment to work for the cause of the revolution and were offering themselves up as potential functionaries. The assemblies signed petitions and tried to move the new regime to expand state presence and construct a new institutional framework for the distribution of justice.

⁸⁵³ Reyes, *Los últimos siete años*.

The enthusiasm did not come only from the northern Sierra, as suggested by authors who have described the July Revolution as a regional confrontation.⁸⁵⁴ The response was national in scope. Populations from the entire country supported the movement as communications from Tulcán, Cayambe, Babahoyo, Machachi, Ambato, Esmeraldas, and Portoviejo, among others, reached the governing junta and to military officers.⁸⁵⁵ From Guayas, letters were sent to the director of *El Universo*, who declared himself a supporter of the same measures against the decadence of the Liberal Party: “All Ecuadorians from now on are linked to the action of the government.”⁸⁵⁶

Popular liberalism experienced a transformation that passed through various emphases and, in fact, appeared in various forms of political organization with popular bases. The army was represented as a manifestation of the people and became the symbol of the fact that the liberal people had returned to save the Nation. The artisans of León (Cotopaxi) province called it the Salvation Army and, in fact, turning to the army to protect democratic advances (in the sense of redistribution) occurred frequently in the following decades.⁸⁵⁷ According to various leaders of the Left in

⁸⁵⁴ Guillermo Arosemena Arosemena and Linda Alexander Rodríguez, “Dos reflexiones sobre la crisis. Los bancos, la política y la historia,” *Cultura* 7 (1999): 16-29.

⁸⁵⁵ *Comunicaciones*.

⁸⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁸⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

the 1940s, this relationship between army and people impeded the development of a civil leadership from the social movement that could resolve the permanent dispute for hegemony.

The use of republican symbols of nationalism was a conventional way of representing the state's authority in localities. The memory of Bolívar that appeared in letters of support for the new military authorities can be considered a way of gaining sympathy from the new central junta. Yet, the letters from throughout the country also showed a new element at play. The new regime had to incorporate popular means of legitimization. This was considered a return to the years of the Liberal Revolution and a time of "social evolution," led by the Liberal Party, with images of the military in solidarity with the people and the people's legitimization of new local authorities (who tended to use balconies to address the people). Yet, this did not mean that the military assumed that it represented popular sovereignty. A popular delegation of power was not the means by which the military officers assumed new positions. In July 1925, the coup not only replaced the central government, but it also triggered local processes in the transfer of authority. Lieutenants and colonels subverted the internal hierarchy of the military and assumed local authority in the name of popular sovereignty. Symbols of popular sovereignty originated out of diverse cultural practices. The military assumed the delegation of authority, used balconies to address the population about the ideology of the new

regime, employed traditional means of public celebration including “local bands,” and even used patriotic allegories, claiming to have been the continuation of the war of independence or, alternatively, the bearers of the original values of Eloy Alfaro in 1895. The correspondence sent to the members of the July Revolution attempted to congratulate the new regime. However, these associations were identified with popular liberalism recognized the *Juliana* government as a new stage of revolution that they had known thirty years earlier.

The conservative civil organizations also announced their participation in the renewal of the state. They did not give laudatory support, but rather made clear in their communications that they had an internal agreement between different “sub-centers” in which they had decided to contribute to the “national regeneration.” This was left in the hands of the military, particularly with respect to “liberties and constitutional rights,” which for conservatives meant the right to private Catholic education and the right to organize civil associations. While most of the parishes saw in the new regime the evolution of liberalism into social areas, for the Catholics and conservatives the junta represented a possible ally since it had captured the power of the “government of the circle” that had persecuted conservatism and suppressed their “civil rights.” In contrast to the letters directed to Gen. Gómez de la Torre and to Luis Napoleon Dillon, who represented a growing interest in socialist ideas of organization and economic nationalism, conservatives directed their letters to Modesto Larrea

Jijón, a member of the aristocracy who assumed provisional authority in the Ministry of the Interior:

The García Moreno Popular Center of this city has been consulted by various provincial and *cantonal* sub-centers about the social and political attitude that they must develop in the current moment of administrative transformation promoted by the patriotic military that exhibits an essentially republican program, tending towards co-fraternity and unification of all citizens, in order to support it in its grandiose labor of national regeneration.⁸⁵⁸

The Faculty of Medicine of the Central University and an ample range of professors and teachers wrote from all over the country, subscribing to the revolution. The schoolteachers of Uyumbicho, the professors of elementary school in Chimborazo, among others, spoke of their work for the nation: “We, the soldiers of the future, work for the regeneration of the world in the consciousness of the child; we are a part... of this great mass of citizens that is called the People and the People-King and we long for the greater glory of the nation.”⁸⁵⁹ A national discourse in these public corporations had formed that oriented the support of the professors for the military. Among the public educational institutions, as Ana María Goetschel and Enrique Ayala Mora have identified, an intellectual and cultural process had begun in the epoch of the Liberal Party that pushed the radical legacy towards discourses on the

⁸⁵⁸ Ibid., *Adhesión del Centro Popular García Moreno*, 21 julio de 1925.

⁸⁵⁹ Ibid., 39.

citizenship of women and the people.⁸⁶⁰ In effect, the teachers, as a study by Ana María Goetschel has proposed, had already tried to assert within the liberal regime discourses on citizenship and educational practices for the citizenship of women and the working classes. Ultimately, they were converted into a reservoir of radicalism and a potential source of democratization in the following decades. Among other statements, the declarations made to the representatives of the July Revolution announced that teachers would be one of the greatest sources of support for the regime and for the reforms to come that were inspired by social rights in the current movement. Educators entered into politics with the July Revolution and in the following decades became tied to the leftist parties as creators of an important renewal of national discourse. Some of the most important figures in this renewal who were also political leaders in national organizations were found in the Ministry of Education, including the Socialist Emilio Uscátegui and Communist leaders Luisa Gómez de la Torre and Nela Martínez, who, together with indigenous leaders like Dolores Cacuango, supported the formation of the first bilingual schools in the zone of Cayambe.⁸⁶¹ Thus, in these spaces, groups were formed that in the long term turned out to be important within the process of state reform that was merely begun by the members of the July Revolution. Teachers from various regions of the country

⁸⁶⁰ Goetschel, *Educación de las mujeres*; Ayala Mora, *Lucha política*.

⁸⁶¹ Becker, *Indians and Leftists*.

and organized groups of young people wrote letters of support and kept up with processes of state reform. In his correspondence as president of the Radical University Assembly, the future socialist intellectual Gonzalo Escudero emphasized the need to reconstruct the liberal doctrine with the working classes: “The enormous proletariat mass feels a thirst for justice and economic liberation; the power has been in the hands of the frauds of liberalism and it is time to live up to a fully radical doctrine.”⁸⁶²

To this correspondence were added letters from workers identified as parishioners, and members of agricultural associations. Responding to the letters of support from the town notables of different municipalities, letters appeared that sought to differentiate themselves as workers and people from those notables. Letters from Imbabura, Chimborazo, and the Society of Workers and Industrialists Meeting and Progress of Tungurahua congratulated them for the foundation of the MPST. One of the aspects touched upon by the Society was that the junta should decide to include a worker – Eudoro Valarezo Crespo – in the governing junta. This same message was sent to the artisans and workers society of Pichincha SAIP of Quito and to the Ecuadorian Worker Confederation that, in addition to Guayaquil, had sites in the central Sierra. This was a concept that the *pueblo* began to take seriously as an element of “national transformation.”

⁸⁶² *Comunicaciones.*

These corporations witnessed the government of Isidro Ayora, in power between 1925 and 1930, followed by a series of governments. Whereas the July Revolution allowed for the strengthening of the military as a political actor, they presented initiatives, including the Labor Code of 1938, in the vanguard of transformations made in the name of the people. They did not monopolize the political scene. There was not a stable dictatorship. The military interventions in central government offices were episodic and were due to a polarization between, on the one hand, the Conservative Party and its multiple electoral movements and, on the other hand, a socialist pole that identified itself as “democratic,” grew steadily, and increasingly enjoyed the support of the national army. The Socialist Party grew quickly in popularity, in the formation of public opinion, and in its presence within state agencies to the point that it took the place that social liberalism had occupied previously.

On behalf of the workers' associations, their support was not just in the form of rhetoric in competition with the other parties over hegemony. The workers' associations became radical after the first signs that the declared reforms would be converted into redistributive actions. The Catholic workers circles that celebrated the fall of the Liberal Party were the object of a committed project on behalf of the Conservative Party through a new leadership represented by the brothers Velasco Ibarra, who were strengthened while the historic leader Jijón y Caamaño was out of

the country. The SAIP, on the other hand, evolved towards the Left due to an important dialogue with the Socialist Party.

All of these working-class circles that took up the flag of reform, in a moment in which the elites of the Liberal Party itself had lost control in various spaces, constituted a sign that the renewal of the political landscape was going to entail an important reactivation of working-class sectors in a new attempt to attain political participation and recognition. The expansion of the popular base within the political parties, which is an aspect that is recognized although not explained in Ecuadorean literature, can be explained according to the bottom-up mobilization of multiple actors inspired through conflict to become negotiators with the state and the parties (rather than according to the capacity of the leaderships to seduce the masses). Popular liberalism had left a base of experiences and expectations for political participation that, though they were betrayed by a process of economic and political concentration, they could be resurrected as part of popular political identities in the moment of the July Revolution.

The deepest sentiment that was able to be articulated in the short and long term among indigenous and peasant communities was the lack of access to the justice system, a sentiment which had been expressed in various provinces. From the town of Yaruqui, which had great conflicts between the communities and large landowners integrated into the Societies of Charity, clear petitions were sent asked the junta to

replace the political deputy and guarantee their access to the justice system:

A town condemned to die of thirst to the personal benefit of one of the closest members of the president's family. This was a town to which the right to defense was denied, that has witnessed its members wander through the mountains and hills desperately fleeing the procedures of the political deputy who continues to enjoy the predations to which the town has been victim rather than engage in the functions that the laws dictate.⁸⁶³

The state-owned hacienda of Pesillo, located in Pichincha, was one of the most important battlegrounds between *huasipunguero* communities and large landowners over the character of labor administration and land access. These conflicts involved the state through the MPST. They led to the formation of one of the affiliates of the indigenous political organization linked to the Communist Party by the end of the 1920s, as Marc Becker has outlined in greater detail.⁸⁶⁴ On July 15, 1925, the school director, Mario Perugachi, along with Antonio Guatemal, José Pullas, and a list of people that claim to have been writing from Pesillo, signed a letter to the July Revolution in which they presented an image of oppression as well as their expectation that the July regime would intervene in the situation:

Those of us who live among crags and breaks, without a roof nor proper cover, those of us who still do not taste the sweet nectar of freedom, those of us who live under the pressure of the Pesillo *hacienda*, who, due to the local authority, are kept humble by a tyrant and whose rights are usurped, how will we consider

⁸⁶³ Ibid., 37.

⁸⁶⁴ Becker, *Indigenous Communists*.

the mentioned transformation as anything other than supernatural and to whose protection we will turn for our salvation?⁸⁶⁵

The statement was a warning of how the peasant communities and other social corporations would appear on the scene once more and send new letters to the state in the form of petitions, demands, and printed public communications. Their presence was a result of unresolved conflicts that had worsened during the liberal regime in relation to land, labor conditions, and political representation. It was also a result of the connection that the popular movement was able to establish with the young socialist movement that installed itself in various political scenarios, thus reflecting new mechanisms of struggle for popular organizations.

The socialist movement played a key role in the MPST. In 1926 a first wave of demands were presented by communities that we have already seen – from Guayas they were presented by several populations, including the parishes of Jesús María, Gral. Elizalde, Milagro, Yaguachi, de Bucay, and Eloy Alfaro. In addition to demands from peasants, complaints were received from ex-workers of the international company Delft of Guayaquil. From Pichincha complaints were received from the valley of Tumbaco and the communities of Yaruqui and Cayambe between 1925 and 1927. These marked the beginning of a new cycle of protests. From the central Sierra, demands came from Pujili, Tigua (Cotopaxi), Quero, Tisaleo, Simiatug

⁸⁶⁵ *Comunicaciones.*

(Tunghurahua and Bolivar), and Colta in Chimborazo. In the same way, land conflicts were denounced in Loja, where the communities already enjoyed the support of teachers and socialist circles in the year 1927. The conflicts presented before the MPST also included cases from Carchi and Imbabura. In the following decades, the activity of the communities in MPST tribunals only increased and marked three additional moments of mobilization and protest. After the cycle of 1926 to 1930 that we will describe in the following pages, a cycle of protests came in 1934 that was characterized by strikes in various areas throughout the country (especially in urban areas). In 1938, a third cycle arose during the regime of the socialist military officer Alberto Enríquez Gallo, when the communities showed their disposition to use a new legal framework: the Law of the Communities and the Labor Code.

The presence of indigenous and peasant communities was followed in later cycles by workers and middle sectors who were also interested in developing social rights. However, the legal space was not the only space in which social demands were presented. The productive alliance between the social movement and the Left served to occupy other scenarios, including the so-called “small press”⁸⁶⁶ that began to forge a popular public opinion and deepened the ties between organizations, changing how the nation was conceived in spaces that were independent from the functions of the

⁸⁶⁶ The small press (*prensa chica*) referred to an ample spectrum of leftist publications that politicized the national community, diversifying opinions and creating a much more varied political landscape.

state. The construction of a popular movement during World War II in turn became recognized as a democratic front.

7.3 Socialists, Reformists, and Communities.

Although in the popular landscape, identities began to transform and multiple paths towards radicalism were explored, the Liberal Party reinforced itself with members of the elite. They defended the autonomy of the party but who were not decided to renew the party with inclusion of popular liberalism. The Second Liberal Assembly met on December 10, 1925, with internal factions of the elite, including those of Enrique Baquerizo Moreno, Federico Intriago, and José Peralta, who decided to act together with the Radical Liberal Party.⁸⁶⁷ The bases of the liberal party began to migrate to new tendencies, especially socialist tendencies. Before the two parties that sought to develop – the conservatism and social liberalism – socialism emerged as a third path.

Various circles from the provinces went to the foundational assembly of the Ecuadorian Socialist Party (PSE), which thus was formed by middle sectors, university students, and intellectuals, with the exception of the circle from Guayas that was constituted by Luis Maldonado Estrada, among other popular leaders who were then detached from the liberal experience. The socialist circle from Loja, called

⁸⁶⁷ Reyes, *Los últimos siete años*, 51.

La Vanguardia, and the circle from Quito and Riobamba were largely made up of young university students from the urban middle class who had received secular educations and educations with reflections on inconclusive processes of liberal radicalism that had mixed with socialist ideas and literary vanguardism through the press. They themselves founded a “*prensa chica*” in which the country “passed through every grade of utopia” and led “the symptoms of desire that were growing among the Ecuadorian intellectuals to get to know *what is Ecuador*.”⁸⁶⁸

The circle of *La Vanguardia* of the souther province of Loja maintained an important exchange of publications with Peruvian socialism and thus had come into contact with Amauta and the thesis of Mariátegui and Haya de la Torre; the circle from Quito was also composed of young journalists who had entered into a critical press during the liberal period. Several of them belonged to the radical university front, others to critical magazines such as *Caricatura* and the newspaper *Antorcha*, among others. This journalistic activity had given them a first experience of collaboration with the sector of typograph workers and other workers in the graphic arts. Among them were lawyers and sociologists of the *Universidad Central*, including Cesar Endara, founding member of the communist branch of the PSE, who spoke of how in 1924 there existed in Quito the “Antorcha” group, led by Ricardo

⁸⁶⁸ José Alfredo Llerena, *La pintura ecuatoriana del siglo XX* (Quito: Universidad Central, 1942).

Paredes, the future leader of the Communist Party (1931). In this group there was discussion about the Mexican and Russian revolutions with Rafael Ramos Pedrueza, who was in charge of the business of the Mexican government and belonged to the International Communist Party. He organized a small literary circle in Quito of young intellectuals and workers in the graphic arts. According to the testimony of Endara, the initial link to the working classes was almost inexistent, which he explained with the argument that there were not sufficient industries to find a proletariat. In agreement with one of the founders of socialism in Ecuador, Leonardo Muñoz (a bookseller by profession), the options available to workers and artisans were few because they were conservative. Thus, the socialists could only count on the support of university students.⁸⁶⁹

However, as Leonardo Muñoz reported, the revolutionary environment that the July Revolution initiated was propitious for the advance of the organization:

We took advantage of the six months of revolutionary government when Don Luis Napoleón Dillon commanded the *Junta civil-militar* in order to intensify propaganda. We had three or four assemblies; we named commissions to work intensively for the meeting of a PSE party congress.⁸⁷⁰

The young university students took advantage of the environment of political agitation that existed throughout the country and set up public debates on the

⁸⁶⁹ Muñoz, *Testimonio de lucha*.

⁸⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 49.

principles of socialism “with free entrance” that served them to quickly gain ground as a new popular political current under the protection of the July Revolution. The first collective actions that they took were in university spaces as they addressed themes similar to those which the lieutenants of the July Revolution were discussing. Making use of the printed press that would serve them for ends that were, at that moment, unimaginable and using fliers, as well as university assemblies, they obliged 'older, backwards' professors to quit, thus obtaining their first triumph as a movement.

In May 1925 they had a powerful encounter with the socialist nucleus of Guayas that came from a tradition of radical struggle in the liberal context and had been able to develop real ties with worker and peasant bases, including survivors of the 1922 massacre. The socialist experience of struggle in Quito was always against conservative obstacles that in various occasions took to the streets armed in order to attack the socialists as they were viewed as a moral danger.

Endara himself, after speaking of the little contact that the socialist circles had had until then with the reality of the workers of the Sierra, described the impact on them that the movement of indigenous *huasipunguero* communities of the Guachalá *hacienda* had in 1926 “with the attempt to recover – rather than expropriate – lands from the hands of the landowners.” They were shocked to observe how the army, independent of whether or not it sympathized with reform, had supported the conservative and aristocratic Bonifaz family through the use of repression and the

expulsion of the Indians from the lands. For Endara, this evidence marked the necessity to organize an alternative electorate through the creation of a political party. Within the regime of the July Revolution, the figure of the Commander Ildefonso Mendoza stood out. They began to recognize him as the Lenin of Ecuador and they decided to support him through a more consolidated political organization.⁸⁷¹

Between May 16 and 23, 1926, the general assembly took place to form the Socialist Party in the salons of the town council of Quito. In agreement with Alexei Páez, “the PSE was originally formed through an unstable agreement among the proliferating variety of tendencies [anarchism, reformism, liberalism, socialism, and bolchevism] with diverse interests and distinct ideological and theoretical perceptions, for which they opted for a decentralized and lax organization that would respect the multiple perspectives of the sectors that originally formed it.”⁸⁷² By 1927, socialism had already taken a fundamental step. It had begun to construct journalistic knowledge about social conflicts and had approached communities of workers and peasants that demanded justice in various regions of the country.⁸⁷³ In addition, exchanges increased and international publications that generated important debates little by little helped them to overcome an originally ideologically nebulous socialism. Leonardo Muñoz himself brought international marxist literature to Quito

⁸⁷¹ Ibid.

⁸⁷² Páez, *Los orígenes de la izquierda*, 106.

⁸⁷³ Muñoz, *Testimonio de lucha*.

and placed it among actors who were influential in the formation of public opinion, including professors from the *Instituto Nacional Mejía*. After a few years, the first members of the PSE distinguished themselves as lawyers in the public sector, as well as legal representatives of popular associations.⁸⁷⁴

There exist contrasting opinions with respect to the concrete relationship between socialists and the *Juntas* of the July Revolution. Leonardo Muñoz spoke of how the second *Junta* created a hostile environment for them. However, from the perspective of Germán Rodas Chaves, various socialists were called upon to collaborate in the construction of the state and, particularly, of the MPST beginning in 1926. In that context, they complemented and later substituted, as the new experts of the social issues, the classic figures of social liberalism like Julio E Moreno and they were integrated into key positions of the cabinet.⁸⁷⁵

In reality, both things happened. The socialists contributed to the reform of the political system through Ministerial and legal work in support of communities and also after 1934 in the SAIP, a space for the articulation of popular organizations. Within the socialist work and also that of one of the branches of the Communist

⁸⁷⁴ The founders who had studied law sociology and medicine as well as literatura at the central university were Ricardo Paredes, Ángel Modesto Paredes, Cesar Carrera Andrade, Jorge Carrera Andrade, Gonzalo Pozo, Hugo Alemán, Néstor Mogollón, Deli Ortiz, Julio H. Peñaherrera, Augusto Arias, and Leonardo J. Muñoz

⁸⁷⁵ Germán Rodas Chaves, *La izquierda ecuatoriana. Aproximación histórica* (Quito: AbyaYala, 2004).

Party, a powerful process of organizational reinforcement took place, in addition to the formation of horizontal alliances linked to the development of pressuring strategies. These horizontal alliances were frowned upon by other parties that, as we know, were accustomed to think of social rights as top-down concessions. However, this strategy for accumulating forces was maintained, grew, and, in fact, helped generate real legal transformations.

Moreover, the socialism and the various leftist organizations that were developing in the 1930s -- *Vanguardia Socialista Revolucionaria del Ecuador* and the Communist Party --, made electoral alliances to confront conservatism and “oligarchic liberalism” in fundamental occasions such as their confrontation in 1932 with the movement of Emilio Bonifaz, with the liberal plutocrat Martinez Mera between 1933 and 1935, and with the conservative Velasco Ibarra. Thus, in 1936 they also created a common front against Federico Paez and in 1946 they opposed Velasco Ibarra, who had suppressed the democratic constitution of 1945.

They also contributed to state reform since, together with the effort to weave a popular movement; the communists supported the demands presented by communities with respect to labor and land issues. They either gained sufficient backing to be heard by the state or they accumulated forces. Repression only took place beginning in 1930 as a reaction to a process of popular empowerment that had occurred between 1926 and 1930 (in which the PSE and the state had collaborated in

an intense dialogue with indigenous and peasant communities throughout the country). The expression of this popular empowerment was to take place in 1930 in the first congress of indigenous leaders, which would have been the last process organized by a unified PSE (before its division into communist and socialist sectors). Antecedents led to the formation of the *Asamblea Campesina* in Guayas, which had obtained the expropriation of important *latifundios* of that province in favor of peasants in 1928 with the help of the provincial and national PSE and of the state.

BeIn 1926, the *concierto* communities of the Chungalá *hacienda* in Pichincha and the Patagua *hacienda* in Imbabura began a dialogue with the state that recognized the existence of conflict to the point that the press spoke of a reality in which “bolchevist movements were obtaining favorable results for their demands.”⁸⁷⁶ In that same year, demands also arrived from Milagro, Daule, and Eloy Alfaro in the province of Guayas against commercial monopolies and high land rents in the parishes, as well as against labor obligations imposed by the large landowners.

In the magazine *La Vanguardia* (of the Socialist Party), the PSE had created a platform to spread knowledge about conflicts from distinct parishes public and thus wove among these distinct localities a common fabric that permitted them to share identity ties. Therefore, the magazine helped construct the party as a place for the

⁸⁷⁶ Rosero Vargas, Max and Pablo Carrión S., “Cronología 1920-1929,” in *Crisis y cambios en la economía ecuatoriana en los años veinte*, ed. Carlos Marchán Romero (Quito: BCE, 1988), 511.

collective representation of shared problems. In 1927, it asked the Supreme Government to listen to the petitions of inhabitants of Eloy Alfaro (Durán) and Naranjito in order to process the expropriation of lands in which these populations were located and which were subject of landlord encroachment.

They accused Leonardo C. Stagg, the owner of the Durán *hacienda*, of imposing very high rents on the local indigenous people, colonizers, and railway workers. The petition passed from the case of Naranjito onto other populations, such as Huigra, Bucay, Taura, Jesús María, Durán, and a large part of Milagro, which all found themselves trapped by *hacienda* owners belonging to powerful clans like the Vásquez, Dorn, Alzúa, Stagg, and Díaz Granados families.⁸⁷⁷

The socialist lawyer Manuel Costales asked the second *Junta* to maintain the policy of reparation and redistribution offered by the first *Junta*:

The *Junta de Gobierno Provisional* that ended its functions a few days ago, inspired the greatest enthusiasm with respect to redeeming the thirty thousand inhabitants who suffer in a situation inferior to that of slaves and I have your assurance, *señor Presidente*, as Minister who was then of the *Previsión Social*, you will know today to focus on the problem and resolve it with the urgency that the necessity of the problem requires.⁸⁷⁸

The second *Junta* of the government was directed by Julio C. Moreno, Homero Viteri Lafronte, Isidro Ayora, Humberto Albornoz, Adolfo Hidalgo Nevárez, and José

⁸⁷⁷ *La Vanguardia*, Año 1, no. 3, 1927, 5-7.

⁸⁷⁸ *Ibíd.*

Gómez Gault. Dr. Isidro Ayora was quickly named Dictator. Between 1926 and 1930, the MPST formed an important group of specialists in agricultural and hygienic issues and lawyers such as Colón Serrano, Carlos Zambrano Orejuela, Cesar Carrera Andrade, and Gonzalo Pozo, among others. They had training in legal areas and sociology and were tied to the formation of Ecuadorian socialism. They were also dedicated to the central activities of the state's development of a focus on social issues, including the diagnosis and the evaluation of the situation of the workers in distinct productive branches and regions.

The information that they accessed and the decisions that they had to take in the MPST throughout the two decades in question did not follow a systematic plan of study or development, but rather from the conflicts that they had to address in distinct regions of the country and in those that demanded the presence of the state. The aforementioned lawyers and sociologists compiled information according to the complaints they received and many technicians were sent to *cantons* all over the country. In other regions, work inspectors and *commissions* were set up in which peasant demands were received despite the protests of *landlords* who challenged the such demands and even the legitimacy of these public offices.

In 1927, as a combined effort by the regime and its socialist advisers in the MPST, an important law was passed in favor of peasant negotiations over land ownership. The *Ley de Patrimonio Territorial del Estado* established the public

function of lands expropriated for colonization, agricultural exploitation, adjudications, as well as for the establishment and growth of settlements. According to the law, the populations that successfully presented demands would not only received lands, but their possession of communal lands would also be recognized with “a just title of dominion”⁸⁷⁹ In the same way, the law held that the state could intervene, as it did in 1934 in favor of territorial sovereignty, limiting the liberty of foreign transnational companies and states to which territorial concessions had been made. According to that law, lands would be handed over to the state when the concessions ran out or for any legal reason, when lands were expropriated for public utility, or when lands were acquired by the state through any convention. According to Hernán Ibarra, the law also established state lands and affirmed the right to own communal lands, which was “a decisive step towards the definition of a protective policy for the communities, moving away from concepts that tended towards privatization.”⁸⁸⁰

In the words of the Minister of the MPST, Pedro Pablo Egües, this law rationalized land from the point of view of the agrarian economy and placed national and social interests before private interests that had been “liberally” favored up until then. For the prior regime, it would substitute what came to be called “agrarian

⁸⁷⁹ RO N° 467, October 20, 1927. Supreme Decree October 13, 1927.

⁸⁸⁰ Ibarra, “La Comunidad.”

socialism.”

This law prescribes the revision of deeds of all lands that were identified as vacantlands, according to the law of 1875; it orders the reversion to the state their legitimate owner of all private property that was not secured with titles; the reversion of lands that -adjudicated in conformance with the law cited- have not been cultivated for a certain time prior to the new law; it establishes for the future, a system of discrete conditions for general benefit so as to make the cultivation of lands obligatory; moving away, therefore, from the useless liberality with which they were conceded before. Lastly, a registry of state lands is instituted in accordance with the new tendency that prevails in agrarian policies of modern countries and that is also one of the undeniable postulates of agrarian socialism, perhaps the most intransigent of all, but surely that which can exhibit the greatest depth of justice.⁸⁸¹

In the law, complementary mechanisms were established to strengthen the state. One of these was to establish a leading institution to recognize peasant communities and affirm their land rights in conflict zones. Another was to assert the power that the state had over territory; the reasons for state ownership needed to be considered superior to those of private property and even of international concessions made earlier. Finally, the law gave the state the obligation to maintain a general registry of the land of municipalites and communities, towns and hamlets. Rather it constituted mixed commissions with participation of the municipality but also the central state and the MPST, which would listen to the regional actors and ask for reports from

⁸⁸¹ Egüez Baquerizo, *Informe*, 101.

sectional authorities.⁸⁸² According to what Minister Egüez Baquerizo proclaimed in 1928, that the MPST received an immense quantity of petitions and demands on behalf of indigenous communities: “Unexpectedly, the Ministry has had to assume a function that the law had not assigned: that of serving as arbiter in numerous litigations. Spontaneously, innumerable plaintiffs have come forth, asking for the intervention of the Ministry to resolve their differences.”⁸⁸³

One of the most important responses to the foundation of the MPST came from plaintiff communities that had confronted land concentration in new legal entities. According to Berta García, in this epoch of *Juliana* “instability,” we can locate moments of articulation in which military representatives of the state and “the subaltern sectors entered into legal processes that gave subaltern sectors the option to obtain their legal autonomy.”⁸⁸⁴ In effect, as in other experiences of the formation of corporatist regimes of democratization in Ecuador, the advance of social legislation and labor regulations, the promotion of organization, including the obligatory formation of unions, and the Law of *Communities* (1937) were among the mechanisms designed to establish the state on popular bases and guarantee the people

⁸⁸² Contrary to the interpretation given by the historian Hernán Ibarra, it did not give liberty to the municipal governments to reglament autonomously the exploitation of available lands.

⁸⁸³ Egüez Baquerizo, *Informe*, 98.

⁸⁸⁴ Bertha García Gallegos, *Militares, economía y lucha política: Ecuador en los años sesenta* (Quito: PUCE and Conuep, 1989).

rights that until then were only for the privileged ones, access to justice among these.

In its internal contradictions and diversity, the new bureaucracy of the middle class had reasons for fearing the loss of its public spaces and the withdrawal of the state. Until the 1930s, it still feared hostility and resistance to its authority in rural areas and *gamonal* territory. Therefore, the growth of organized popular support was a necessity for the very sustainability of the state. In this sense, one of the first measures that the *Juliana* regime took to sustain itself was to recognize labor as a foundational category of rights. Social rights were tied directly to the recognition of labor as a source of a collective identity. The same policies on health were constructed based on age (infant school population), membership to the military members, and corporatist principles including rural unions (*sindicatos agrarios*) among which Indian and peasant communities were included, and the working class.⁸⁸⁵

The promotion of unionism from the MPST led to the creation of propaganda by agrarian unions that had been created in Guayas by socialist leaders such as Joaquín Gallegos Lara and José de la Cuadra through newspapers and visits to zones of conflict. The inscription of unions as associations recognized by the state was crucial for the reconfiguration of the peasant struggle in Milagro, Guayas.

In 1928, peasant unions met in the “*Asamblea General de Campesinos de los*

⁸⁸⁵ Egüez Baquerizo, *Informe*, 1928.

Cantones Yaguachi y Milagro” accompanied by the socialist nucleus led by Gallegos Lara, who, in his literary and militant style spoke of the need for workers' rebellion against the atrocities of “feudalism” and the memory of the massacre:

The *Asamblea General de Campesinos*, celebrated in Milagro, is the first step towards the not-far-off social-economic normality of the workers. This desire to combine forces and exchange ideas to better achieve their objective has been spontaneous among the peasants of Milagro and Yaguachi. Under the flag of co-fraternity that sustains this great Assembly, they must join together all those who are exploited and all those who suffer from hunger. Adhesion to the viwes of the peasants represented in the Assembly will be the first conquest for the workers' demands.⁸⁸⁶

The assembly approved the petitions that the peasants of Milagro presented to the national assembly of 1928, “interpreting new aspirations which are of all our working brothers so that, brought to the terrain of reality, they constitute at least a paliative or truce for the anxious situation of the Peasant.”⁸⁸⁷

The peasant assembly sought to limit the size of the *latifundio* or estate. A first argument was to break with the criteria that the *latifundio* was a social institution; to the contrary, the *latifundio* was not productive nor did the economy that developed within it benefit its populations. If a capitalist demanded ample lands, he needed to give a productive rationale and not just expand his territorial dominium, and he was obliged to compensate any affected communities. Among the demands, Gallegos

⁸⁸⁶ *Asamblea General de Campesinos de los Cantones Yaguachi y Milagro*.

⁸⁸⁷ *Ibíd.*

Lara inserted commentaries that explained the logic of land hoarding, which was tied to the *latifundio* owners' program for impeding the development of a peasant economy:

There are unlimited virgin mountains where private property does not play any other role than to impede cultivation for which large masses of unemployed peasants exist and in dire situations. This form of respecting private property is nothing other than a betrayal of the highest interests of the well-being of the Ecuadorian people. *Latifundismo* does not fulfill a social mission of production, as it was previously believed, but rather it is a negative force in the collaboration for a better economic state in the entire country. When the workers throw their needy gaze on those extensions of abandoned lands, the *latifundista* and landowner offers to rent it at the higher prices or prices equal to rural property and under medieval conditions of slavery, abrogating for itself all rights, including the right to strip workers of their lands at any moment, and denying them their right to a defense.⁸⁸⁸

The leader used state language with respect to the social and economic reasons for limiting the *latifundio*, together with criticism of rural servitude that was part of the Andean socialist language of the time. Consistent with his readings of the magazine *Amauta* of Peru, Gallegos Lara profiled *gamonalismo* in Guayas. The principal source of this description was clearly the accusation made by the peasants themselves with respect to the expansion of *concertaje* in Milagro. It also reflected their aspiration to form a peasant economy, for which the concept of peasant community and the recognition of legitimate forms of possession in peasant society were

⁸⁸⁸ Ibid.

fundamental for combating the idea of private property as the only legal relationship with territory. On that point, the assembly in Milagro noted the multiple alternatives that would allow their recognition as peasant communities. . In article number two, they spoke of the creation of agricultural colonies, supervised by agrarian unions and by the government.

The project spoke of communities that were political units within the national state composed of peasant populations and that were also productive units that needed to be recognized as economic actors through credits and technical support. On the political plane, they proposed participation in the election of regional authorities. They denounced the role that the authorities had had until that moment as corrupt beneficiaries of *gamonal* powers:

A long history of disastrous crimes, committed by the authorities, wether Political Bosses, Deputies, gendarmes, or rural police, makes it necessary that the life of those peasants be duly protected from crimes that, through the secret of the fife, the landholders commit, with a legendary and total immunity. This procedure on the part of those called to ensure public order has been well known; the press of the coast and of the Sierra has marked it as an endemic illness from criminal virus from which so-called authority and the police suffer in all parts, especially in the rural areas, where the unexplored jungle covers all anonymous criminals.⁸⁸⁹

The assembly conditioned the presence of the state on the participation of agrarian organizations in its very structure. Thus, it demanded the expansion of the Rural

⁸⁸⁹ Ibid.

Labor Inspectors, which belonged to the MPST, but only insofar as they served to apply the laws of social welfare and the Labor Code, which had yet to be elaborated. The assembly suggested that these inspection offices should constitute the basis for a mixed government-worker commission. In the same way, they proposed the creation of a police force for rural areas that would be formed by agrarian workers:

This would replace the current group of bandits that they call Rural Police and would fulfill the purposes for which the rural police was created. With peasants as the guardians of order and the arbiters of justice, the workers would no longer view the police as genuine representatives of landholders and the wealthy but rather as brothers who have a sacred mission to fulfill.⁸⁹⁰

The demands continued and included social services from which they had been excluded, fulfillment of the *Ley de Instrucción Pública*, medical attention, access to roads, free access to the justice system, and markets where products would be correctly weighed:

There exist owners of factories who exploit even the illiteracy of workers, who, when they deposit their products do not know how they ought to be weighed correctly. The tyranny of the landowners and administrators of industrial manufacturing even demands according to custom, that farmers or tenant deliver two hundred pounds per quintal for the landlord as the owner of the harvest. From the workers' effort consecrated over the entire agrarian year production and cultivation of the land, only a laughable quantity of the product remains.⁸⁹¹

⁸⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁸⁹¹ Ibid.

The assembly's proposal could be summarized as breaking the isolation of the peasant community, which “on the coast and in the Sierra is life of man in caverns, at the margin,” through a state intervention that would break down the fence established by *gamonalismo* and bring the peasants into the nation. The position of the assembly was a proposal of reciprocity between the peasant organizations throughout the country and the state. But the way of asking for such reciprocity was not a discourse that would await philanthropy, but rather a demand:

It is important to note that the Assembly does not await greater disasters nor conflicts of incalculable consequences in order for justice to be done... The Ecuadorian peasant needs immediate attention to his problems since they are the life and death of the great mass of workers... The *Asamblea de campesinos del Milagro, Yaguachi, etc.* represents thousands of workers and they await the voice of the National Assembly.⁸⁹²

The evidence of discontent led the inspectors to worry about ensuring confrontations: “I fear that if the *hacendados* do not fulfill what is prescribed by Law, there may

⁸⁹² *Ibíd.*, For Jujan: Francisco Díaz, Tomás Fuentes, and Mariano Herrera. For Marcelino Maridueña: Enrique Saa, Abraham Granizo, and Miguel Merchán. For Boliche: Nicolás Bustos, Daniel Cabrera, and Fermín Peñafiel. For Bucay: Juan T. Arboleda, Pedro T. Sánchez, and Miguel González. For Yaguachi: Agustín Tovar F., Marcos Cortez, and Isrrael Reina. For Naranjal: Julio Franco, Francisco Alvarado, and José Tejada. For Yaguachi Viejo: Manuel Guerrero, Víctor J. Flórez, and Heladio Haro. For Naranjito: Víctor Bermeo, Francisco Núques, and Cipriano Acosta. For Garaicoa: Marcos Vázcomes, Jorge Cornejo, and León Jaramillo. For el Milagro: Gabriel Medina, Neptalí Pacheco, and Reinaldo A. Gómez Coello.

occur future socialist agitations”⁸⁹³. Hundreds of peons from various *haciendas* affected by the plague had joined the Worker Union of Guayaquil, which was run by the Socialist Party. For 10.5 sucres as an inscription fee and 40 cents weekly, they received medical attention and legal attention from lawyers like José Eduardo Sotomayor. As we saw in the last chapter, in the Barraganetal *hacienda* the peasants were occupying lands since 1925, and in 1927 they made a renters' contract with the landlord. But with the counsel of Sotomayor they discovered that these were mortgaged lands that could not be sub-let and began not to hand over to the landlord the harvest produce indicated in the contract (the so-called *redenciones*). Díaz led that the renters had taken more than three times the lands that corresponded to them, and that they owed him rent.⁸⁹⁴ The state declared that Eloy Alfaro, Naranjito, and General Elizalde were public lands in May of 1928, and permitted the purchase of the lands by peasant colonizers.⁸⁹⁵ The declaration permitted redistribution among peasants and this was not the only such case, but rather just one of many processes of land redistribution that began in this period.

⁸⁹³ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 218, *Informe de Francisco Murillo Maldonado*, August 27, 1929.

⁸⁹⁴ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 218, *Guayas-Milagro arrendatarios*, 1929.

⁸⁹⁵ Egüez Baquerizo, *Informe*, 99-100. Reyes characterized Milagro, Naranjito, Durán y Bucay as populations assented in particular terrains, declared on 1928 as public property, *Los últimos siete años*, 87.

Those decisions were extraordinary insofar as they contradicted thirty years of development of private property rights with respect to lands. They were decisions based on a detailed knowledge of regional conflicts and on the exercise of public functions, which was reported as a new experience as work inspectors, rural inspectors, and visiting technicians found themselves in communities. From these experiences, forged during the Ministry of Pedro Pablo Egüez Baquerizo, legal proposals emerged that were subsequently picked up in the constitution of 1929. The Socialist and MPST functionary Colon Serrano worked together with other socialists on labor laws proposals that made servile work illegal and modernized labor relations, regulated the termination of contracts in favor of freedom of work mobility (but prohibiting unwarranted termination), introduced the obligation of the *patrón* to attend to accidents and work risks, and prohibited the unpaid work of women and children. This legislation stemmed from multiple denunciations of abuses against family collectives in *huasipunguero* communities, as well as from land struggles that in the central Sierra had given way to violence and attempts to expel Indians from their lands. It was also informed by workers' demands coming from modern businesses, especially the transnational exporters, where work accidents were a frequent complaint. In addition to taking the union form that the peasant communities had lacked in the 1910s and that gave them recognition as actors with new social

rights, peasant communities immediately applied the arguments of the Law of Territorial Patrimony of the State.

Due to the fear that the *Asamblea Campesina* would go beyond the already broad proposals of the government, the MPST proposed to create a *Junta de Arrendamientos* in which the state would police rent contracts. Faced with the lack of agreement in the *Junta*, on September 9, 1929, President Ayora named Antenor S. Silva as the delegate of the MPST in order that he establish rent costs. He fixed them at 16 sures per hectare rented for rice cultivation (eight sures for a quintal of rice). This attempt at regulation by the *Inspectoria del Trabajo* caused discontent among *hacendados* and it could not be applied, which caused another wave of demands and reports on the conflictive situation that Guayas was experiencing at that moment.⁸⁹⁶

Various *hacendados*, threatened by expropriation and others by the new legislation and unionization of tenants, decided to end their contracts and neither charge peasants nor allow them to continue to occupy their plots. This step, which also took place in the Sierra as Marc Becker has documented in the case of Pesillo was followed by a series of actions in which the peasants became radicalized. The *hacendados* blamed the MPST and its functionaries for generating expectations among the *peones* and agitating for the subversion of *hacienda* authority.⁸⁹⁷ The work

⁸⁹⁶ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 218, Guayas-Milagro arrendatarios, 1929.

⁸⁹⁷ Becker, *Indigenous Communists*.

inspectors defended themselves in terms of the fulfillment of the law and the representation of public power.

Rosales asserts that a commission of this Department, that was dedicated to do labor supervision, was in his hacienda carrying out investigations, encouraging indiscipline and the neglect of obligations among peasants. I declare that *señor* Rosales alludes to the presence of *señor* Sub-inspector Guzmán, who went to fulfill instructions from the Sub-direction of Labor, and for whose honorable and determined conduct, I have a high regard. If, sadly, teaching the worker his rights and demanding guarantees indicated by current Law that by his lack of culture have not reached the mind of the peasant, means for the *patrones* a troublesome task, we will not be able to avoid that.⁸⁹⁸

The demands from Milagro and from various other populations of Guayas did not stop after that constituent process. To the contrary, the conflicts multiplied in various *haciendas* in which *latifundistas* imposed a required amount of produce that had to be handed in as rent for family lots and at an imposed price. Rural work inspectors from the Ministry sent reports on the situation in Milagro and claimed to be alarmed that the *hacendados* were violating the law. The *Juliana* regime and the MPST opened up a delicate issue. The communities that demanded state presence were one of the primordial sources of stability for the regime since the state could quickly create ties with an extensive network of the population based on expectations created by the truncated Liberal Revolution and a sensation of injustice in concrete local situations.

⁸⁹⁸AIFP, MPST Collection, box 218, Guayas-Milagro arrendatarios, 1929.

However, a general disobedience that would overwhelm the state was also feared.

In the case of Guayas, we can observe how the populations involved in conflicts over the process of concentration of lands sought to advance their struggle for the peasant economy (and against commercial oligopolies in the region) through legal processes that demanded the attention of a reformed state and through autonomous organization and social mobilization. The workers of the transnational oil and agro-export companies followed the same strategy. Peasants and workers rapidly picked up on union formation that had been promoted by socialist associations and by the state, which wanted to achieve dialogue legally mediated through the MPST. Rural unionism was important in that zone and demanded the widening presence of the state through rural inspectors in order to detain the landholding powers.

Unionism among salaried workers in industry and transnational companies also advanced in this period. Workers presented demands before the state through an autonomous popular organization, with the help of intense work of socialist circles in Guayas and directed by organic intellectuals, such as Luis Maldonado Estrada of the FTRE and Joaquin Gallegos Lara and Jose de la Cuadra.⁸⁹⁹ These men emerged from other organizing experiences, were linked to popular media, and were interested in

⁸⁹⁹ Both were innovators in literary narrative and founders of a cultural criticism that highlighted representations of what was popular in the nation in the 1930s.

culturally translating the voice of popular organizations. Although the COG subsisted as an organization, the popular political landscape became integrated into the Left. Until 1930, popular organization was tied to the Socialist Party and later this Party divided into a socialist branch and a communist branch that was in turn tied to International Communism (the other tendency that predominated in the port until 1952).

With two distinct regional trajectories, Pichincha and Guayas were important bastions of the popular left and simultaneously pressured for advances in social rights and the application of justice to historical conflicts. In the case of the provinces of the central Sierra, Cotopaxi, Tungurahua, Bolívar, and Chimborazo, in the *juliano* period we can clearly observe the existence of processes of land expropriation in benefit of the communities.

In Tungurahua, the communities of Tasinteo-Montugtusa took over *haciendas* and the governor of Tungurahua, Francisco A. Sevilla, presented to the MPST a plan to do away with the indigenous communities. The governor was acting on behalf of the petition of *hacendado* Inocencio Arias and other landowners of Pillaro parish in which they complained about the abuses of “*indigenas communityrios*” who had taken their properties, for which the *hacendados* had used force to “guarantee public

order.”⁹⁰⁰ The peasant mobilization in the central Sierra could not be contained by the old state functionaries who, nonetheless, demanded a military presence from the state to put down the uprisings and seizure of lands. The reformed state, however, responded to the social mobilization with a constitutional project that would bring important consequences.

7.4 Social Rights in the Constitutional Assembly of 1929.

Additional alarms went off in the country in the year of the constitutional process and more so, after the democratic laws were confirmed in 1929. The laws and the work of the labor inspectors had been very well viewed by the peasants and socialist circles. They worked frenetically to combine distinct local processes, which generated very visible projects for national meetings of unions and communities such as the one that was planned for 1930 in Cayambe. The *Ley de Patrimonio Territorial del Estado* and the announcement of the presentation of a packet of legal reforms provoked an immediate reaction from the landholding elite. According to the biographer Rodolfo Pérez Pimentel, Isidro Ayora decided a few hours before the installation of the National Convention of 1928 to introduce the complete legal packet of the territorial law and the new labor regulations that were published in the Official

⁹⁰⁰ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 280, Tisanteo-Montugtusa, February 4, 1928.

Registry on Sunday, October 7, 1928.⁹⁰¹ The reaction of the conservative assembly members was immediate, but the defense by the assembly members of social liberalism and socialism was also immediate. This assembly was, in fact, directed by a figure who passed from radical liberalism to socialism: Agustín Cueva Saenz.

The constitution of 1929 integrated several of the legal proposals of the social cabinet of the MPST that at the same time attempted to give the state tools to create consensus with the peasant population. In the first place, it redefined the function of the state, giving it the role of transcending the function of the protector of private property and fulfilling the function of placing above the interests of private property the general interests of the state, which were the “national economic development of the well-being and health of the public.” Given these principles, the state was committed to generating a legal framework that would determine its obligations and restrictions. In this sense, the constitution established the need to attend to the settlements affected by the expansion of large property that were seen as lost populations by the state and the national economy.

The towns and hamlets that lack lands and water or only have an insufficient quantity to satisfy the primordial domestic and hygienic necessities will have the right that they be given them, taking them from the surrounding properties, harmonizing the mutual interests of the population and of the landowners.⁹⁰²

⁹⁰¹ Pérez Pimentel, *Diccionario biográfico del Ecuador*.

⁹⁰² AFL, Asamblea Nacional Constituyente, *Constitución de 1929*, Art 151, inciso 14.

This stipulation at the law together with the stated purpose of the constitution in favor of the development of small properties highlighted explicitly what Colon Serrano proposed as indispensable tools for the exercise its functions of state justice, redistribution, planning, and pacification of populations in conflict. The construction of the state as a translator of conflict into a language of consensus was only viable if it had mechanisms for redistribution. Thus, article 18 of the constitution was proposed as a tool with which to protect labor and liberty:

Nobody can be compelled to provide services not imposed by Law. The artisans and day laborers will not be obligated in any circumstances to work except by virtue of a contract. The State will protect the worker and the peasant especially and will legislate so that the principles of justice should be met in economic life, assuring everyone a minimal well-being, compatible with human dignity. The law will fix the maximum [length of the] workday and determine minimum salaries in relation to the diverse regions of the country. It will also set the obligatory weekly rest period and will establish social security. The Law will rule health and security conditions in industrial establishment. Payment for work accidents is obligatory and will be made effective in the form that the laws determine... The Law will regulate, especially, all work related to women and children.⁹⁰³

In addition to providing the power to make decisions with respect to territory and regulate forms of precarious labor, the constitution promoted freedom of association and stimulated the development of social cooperation through unions and

⁹⁰³ Ibid.

professional associations. The constitution established control mechanisms for popular empowerment within the laws and regulated strikes and coalitions between unions.⁹⁰⁴ This regulation was one of the sources of tension between the state and the unions that, in effect, multiplied notably – even more so after 1929 as the unions sought to weave new horizontal ties.

The constitution also revised the party system and overcame the notion of restricted suffrage that had operated since the foundation of the republic. Its vision was coherent within the notion that the working classes would be empowered through their recognition as collective legal entities organized into unions and professional associations. Democracy was understood as a space for political representation that did not include individuals in the expansion of political rights, but rather included social collectives. Article 33, number 3, defined these as “functional senators” and organized them under the following categories: 1. A representative of the universities; 2. a representative of secondary and special professors; 3. two representatives of primary and normal professors; 4. a representative of journalism, academia, and the social sciences; 5. two representatives from agriculture; 6. two representatives from commerce; 7. one representative from industry; 8. two representatives of the workers movement 9. two representatives of the peasants; 10. one representative of the

⁹⁰⁴ Ibid.

military institution;⁹⁰⁵ and finally one representative of a senator “for the defense of the Indian race.”⁹⁰⁶

Marc Becker has been very critical of the role of the functional senators, which was presented as one of the great democratic advances in the Constitutional Assembly of 1929. Unlike the other 14 senators in which the trades or classes could choose their representative, Becker has shown how the senators of the indigenous peoples was imposed by the state and thus the voice of the indigenous peoples was stolen instead of being represented.⁹⁰⁷ This stark separation between the state and the social movement, however, must be understood in context in order to comprehend the profound, mutually woven ties that united the state with the Left and the social movement.

The indigenous and peasant communities of Milagro that we have studied as examples maintained an exchange of mutual learning with the Left at various levels. The communities turned to the legal framework of social rights that were developed by the MPST. However, the drafting of these rights was also an effect of the learning in which the socialists engaged when they entered conflict zones and found disputes between jurisdictions with respect to the same lands and also found that private property was not a neutral category but rather was in tension with the possession

⁹⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁷ Marc Becker, *Indigenous Communists*.

claimed by communities as collectivities. Functionaries and lawyers observed the political character of land disputes and saw the violence that such disputes had acquired over the previous thirty years and the exhaustion of negotiation. They noted that the development of redistribution programs and the fortification of the peasantry to develop most consensus-building programs represented the only possible solution to the endemic violence. In this sense, the socialists supported a legal recognition for collective subjects that had not existed within republican rights, and they viewed the land as not only commodity but as a political and territorial question.

The recognition of land as a political issue over which the state had jurisdiction helped produce the validation of the old ambition of the indigenous communities and also, as we have seen, of new peasant communities to secure in turn the recognition of their communal and social interests regarding land. The state positioned itself forcefully in this otherwise internal conflict. The communities, recognized as collective actors, used the legal framework elaborated by socialists to advance their causes. The same lawyers and socialists received the demands presented by the communities to the state. In addition to receiving demands in the MPST, these socialists were lawyers for the communities and contributed to the discursive construction of demands before the state, which led to processes of expropriation that were unseemly to the landholding elite.

The Left present in the universities fulfilled an important role in the journalism

landscape. From various organizational and popular newspapers, they constructed a public discourse that included critical views of labor conflicts and of land concentration, generating a public opinion that rejected violence. In several media, such as the weekly *Cartel*, young intellectual writers like Pablo Palacio offered their reflections on the role of the universities in the social movement. In an article entitled “Universidad Socialista,” he called on the students’ union to “develop a rapport with the worker and the peasant” and he spoke of how such agitation would give birth to a new and true national consciousness.⁹⁰⁸

Popular forces were strengthened from this exchange in relation to the state which allowed them to compete more effectively with their historic enemies. The state was also strengthened with respect to local powers by strengthening collective actors. The project of constructing leftist parties advanced significantly in the following two decades and they achieved great levels of popularity; however, this popularity was not reflected in the vote since, as Juan Genaro Jaramillo observed, the universal vote belonged to few. The political actor who constructed the Left as a democratic advance, was a corporative entity that could appeal for social rights and demand attention to regional conflicts through processes of mobilization. The democratic process in which the popular movement advanced was that of the

⁹⁰⁸ *Cartel*, no. 7, 1932. This newspaper included among its journalists the socialist members Agustín Vera, Jaime S Chávez, Jorge Andrade Marín, Jorge Escudero, Jorge Reyes, and Pablo Palacio.

construction of a dialogue between the state and social corporations.

This was not be a corporatist state due to the fact that, although the state supported social organizations, these organizations were relatively autonomous. For the PSE, the process of democratization in which it became associated with various organizations was best reflected by the existence of functional voting, but that democratic expression was certainly less significant than that of the construction of social rights and processes of legalization and social mobilization that the resolution of conflicts implied.

The laws that the socialists approved, and that defined the functional senators were completely novel and responded to peasant demands that lingered from the nineteenth century. If we analyze the nature of the functional senators, we can observe that they did not represent a conservative aspect of the constitution but rather one of its most daring aspects with respect to the political control that the proletariat had exercised up until that point. The politics of positive affirmation were inaugurated through political participation. Until that moment, the vote had been an individual right and also part of a client-patron relationship, but from this moment on the vote was based on a grouping tied to labor identity. Four of the functional senators were from the radical and socialist guild of education; three entered the terrain of greatest oligarchic influence (agriculture, commerce, and industry); four more were offered to the working classes that largely identified with socialism (the

conservative workers' vote had diminished in those years and the peasantry voted for the Left); the military vote was, since the nineteenth century, a radical liberal vote (and continued to be until the 1970s).⁹⁰⁹ The indigenous vote, therefore, joined a front within the senate that was largely defined by class and the social tendency.⁹¹⁰

The PSE made an announcement before the national convention with respect to this reality. The Conservative Party denied the growth and importance achieved by the PSE and claimed that it was disappearing in order to “deny it representation in the contests between the two historic parties in Ecuador.” The weekly *La Vanguardia*, directed by the socialist Juan Genaro Jaramillo, claimed just the opposite. It asserted that the only party that truly existed was the Socialist Party, and proof of such popularity could not be demonstrated by votes but rather by the pressure that it generated for the resolution of conflicts among peasant populations.⁹¹¹

The socialist weekly considered that democracy in the country was a fallacy and a dictatorship that would allow for the fulfillment of the laws and of social rights was more desirable than an exclusive democracy. The lack of political parties for the socialists meant that the only form of governing that had existed in the country until that moment was dictatorship -- “frank and reformist or cowardly and blanketed

⁹⁰⁹ Ibid.

⁹¹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹¹ “La muerte del Partido Socialista Ecuatoriano,” in *La Vanguardia*, Año 1, no. 3, 1927, 3-4.

under the guise of democracy.”⁹¹² Even the Liberal Party was considered a movement of *caudillos* without a program or a strategy, according to Jaramillo. Although the Liberal and Conservative Parties resisted believing that the PSE had grown so quickly and had obtained so much influence, around 1928 this same newspaper published the view that the expropriation decree issued by the MPST in Guayas, Tungurahua, and Pichincha in favor of the peasant communities represented the success of the unions and the PSE.

In this context, the socialists viewed the dictatorship favorably since it would permit the substitution of an apparent democracy for a determined reform program. The new laws and the creation of institutions such as the BCE were viewed as advances that limited the actions of the bankers and empowered the state “that had to be the true representative of the people.”⁹¹³ They did not lament the fact that the constitution limited universal suffrage and the image of the deliberating citizen when the “functional vote” i.e. representation through the functional senators had been strengthened along with a reparative logic. Against bourgeois notions of freedom and equality, “which in reality only serve to oppress the most poor”, *La Vanguardia* declared:

What did it matter to the worker to have the right to vote like the bourgeois

⁹¹² Ibid.

⁹¹³ *La Vanguardia*, Año 1, no. 4, 1927, 10

when he did not have the arm of economic supremacy, that is the decisive arm, unique in all struggles? What did it matter? Nothing, I would say; a lot, the bourgeois would answer, as they continue believing in the equality that the law offers; equality between the victim and the perpetrator, between the exploited and the exploiters... let the weakening of the bourgeois and the protectionism of the worker continue.⁹¹⁴

Referring to the “functional vote” specifically, *La Vanguardia* proposed that the system of the universal vote and the representation of parties would give way to reaction and the capture of constitutional power by the traditional parties. Taking into account that the organized and active peasants did not vote, the PSE proposed that the functional system was more desirable. The functional representation was proposed in the assembly by the PSE and obtained 12 senators.⁹¹⁵ The corporatist vision of the state was not a unique initiative of Ecuador. In Mexico (1917), Peru (1933), Bolivia (1938) and in Chile (1925-1934), constitutions were formed similarly.

With respect to guarantees and social rights, the constitution offered three important resources for the social struggle outside of suffrage. The Law of Territorial Patrimony of the State, the promotion of agrarian unionism, and the explicit prohibition of unpaid community work provided plenty of legal arguments for the demands of *huasipunguero* communities. Displacing the civil code of liberal origins that defined the land as a commodity and property, the constitution redefined it as

⁹¹⁴ “Hacia la constituyente,” in *La Vanguardia*, Año 1, no. 9-10, 1928, 4-5.

⁹¹⁵ David Gómez, *Hegemonía, capitalismo y democracia. La Guerra de los Cuatro Días* (Undergraduate thesis, PUCE, 2009).

state patrimony and a fundamental element in the construction of sovereignty. The problem of a collectivity could convert itself into a problem of the state and so the peasants' appeals received state support.

The representation of indigenous interests that this constitution facilitated was certainly not direct, but rather was tied to the organization of the Left that had the strength to establish a structure for representation and such representation was expressed through legal changes. After the constitutional assembly, the discourse on the social rationale for community demands was integrated into the state and the communities could access it through the law, thereby complementing their arguments with respect to ancient ownership and prior deeds to the land.

Representation in the senate integrated corporations that had not been represented before and that had been significantly less powerful than the oligarchy. Yet, educators, peasants, workers, indigenous people, and military members not only had a functional vote but had begun to act as a coalition in order to affect changes.

In 1929, three years after its foundation and with the return of the Secretary General Ricardo Paredes of the sixth congress of the Communist International, the Communist Party was divided into two tendencies. In 1931, the socialists abandoned the General Secretary, who announced the formation of the Ecuadorian Communist Party (PCE). Despite this change that had been a theme of voluminous debates between socialists and communists, in reality neither the socialists nor the

communists should be seen as far from the emergence of peasant, indigenous, and worker demands that were reopened in 1925 and were launched from 1929 on. The reason for this was not that the two were doctrinally correct, but that there was a lot of bottom-up pressure to employ the political mediation proposed by both parties. In this sense, the work of the socialists and communists was complementary.

The communists supported peasant struggles through agitation that was independent of the state and they supported the formation of assemblies that permitted the weaving of interregional relations between organizations. They followed networks of political groups and media run by the middle class of the Left. The unionization of indigenous communities was also a response to the creation of mechanisms for dialogue between the state and communities. Thus, the mutually structuring exchange between popular pressure and the state response was as fluid as that Becker which has identified between communities and communist militants. This exchange's impact was very influential in giving form to the indigenous movement of the moment.⁹¹⁶

The socialists distinguished themselves in the important roles of lawyers of agrarian and urban unions in cases presented before the MPST. They also formed part of the team of functionaries of the MPST who received the complaints and fulfilled investigative and advising roles with respect to conflicts. Néstor Mogollón and H.

⁹¹⁶ Becker, *Indigenous Communists*.

Montalvo, socialist functionaries of the MPST, were in charge of analyzing the situation of Pilahuin in Ambato canton. Bernardo Aguilar was the defense lawyer for two communities of Pilahuin Mulanleo.⁹¹⁷ Hugo Alemán was the assistant to the Justice Department for the *communities* Yachapuzan, Matiaví-Salinas, and Chuquizungo. Estuardo Almeida and Gregorio Cordero y León were lawyers for community of Tisaleo; Gonzalo Oleas and Juan Genaro Jaramillo were the defense lawyers of the textile unions of the *haciendas* of Amaguaña in Pichincha. The socialists placed key people who had a role in the process of forming laws related to social protection.

The justice system that, as we have seen, had remained in the hands of regional elites since the founding of the republic (with the exception of attempts at state centralization by Urquinaena and later by Alfaro in the National Assembly of 1896) was one of the most important areas of transformation. The first steps towards this reform were very significant since, with the foundation of the new MPST, all of the cases of labor conflict passed to this new agency and it set up tribunals for cases involving social rights.

This undermined the innovations in civil laws that the regional elite had used to expand territorially. Work itself was identified as the base is for a new collective

⁹¹⁷ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 181, *Comunidad Mulanleo-Yaguelata-Zunezacha*, February 22, 1935.

entity reinforced by regulations that defined property as a social issue. Tribunals assume a logic on social rights and not just a logic with respect to private property in order to establish justice. The MPST received and tried an immense number of cases regarding land and labor conflicts. This reform led to the creation of a more complex justice system, the formation of social rights, and the expansion of a network of peasant, indigenous, and worker organizations that supported the transformation of the political system through forms of collective influence and pressure. This also signaled the beginning of a process of economic redistribution, which helped the Socialist and Communist Parties to establish new networks of peasant and worker political support that could not be expressed through voting but rather through high levels of organization and a massive presentation of denunciations in tribunals of the ministry. This model of state intervention also served the reformist project to generate support among the middle classes.

After the constitutional assembly, under the presidency of Ayora and with the MPST in the hands of the *juliano* Francisco J. Boloña, there were various peasant complaints in several provinces that spoke of land, liberty, and nationality, a definitive support for the state that led to processes of expropriation of *haciendas* under the concept that they were competing with national sovereignty.

In Loja province, in the southern frontier of Ecuador, three powerful haciendas were denounced simultaneously by indigenous *comuneros* and inhabitants of the

nearby parishes. In an act of personal loyalty to the *hacendado* Ramón Burneo, the political deputy denounced the indigenous peoples of Yaguangora for having held committee meetings “for entire nights in the house of Anacleto Benítez.” He accused them of being socialists who had collected money from innocent people and had sent out a request to Quito to take the *hacienda* away from Burneo. The political deputy said that the Indians had the support of the socialist Clodoveo Jaramillo and that he in turn had offered his support to Burneo.⁹¹⁸

The arguments in the complaint demonstrated notions of rights, strategies, and memories of struggle. The “neighbors of the parish Miguel Riofrío of Loja province and the day-laborer *peones*” cited a series of arguments about ancient rights. Elements of the dialogue that they maintained with leftist university circles of the region with respect to class were also incorporated into their demands as well as the notion that resolving the community's conflict with the *latifundio* was a theme of national sovereignty.

They identified themselves as the descendants of the Laonday or Laondany community that had possessed these lands and that had conserved the deeds conceded to the *cacique* Gabriel Yaguana by the viceroy of Peru. At the same time, they were presenting their demands for the abolition of the unpaid work of women, personal services, and the issuance of lots of land. Their discourse characterized servitude as

⁹¹⁸ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 181, Loja, July 7, 1929.

an “attempt against the sociological notion of a social organization” and called for the intervention of the MPST as mediator in the relations between capital and labor. The argument also spoke, in the name of the proletarian era of the humanism that contradicted colonial and racial status differences and asserted that the community demanded lands for its collective use as part of a process of the dissolution of colonial customs.⁹¹⁹

It is not possible that there should still be such big differences as those that this relationship between landowners and day-laborers assumes. The public authority has the high mission of looking after the fate of the race, and influencing appropriately a regime of improvement for the individuals who constitute it, and this imperative for public authority cannot be postponed, so as in the current moment men and ideas have verified a true revolution in the field of these new human aspirations. Thanks to them a new era is promised for the proletariat and thanks to them someday will be stripped away from our customs the vexing inequality in whose shadow class difference has been formed and conserved along with the distressing hatred born of hostility and misery.⁹²⁰

Clodoveo Jaramillo Alvarado, socialist and brother of the famous liberal *indigenista* Pío Jaramillo A., was at that time a municipal councilor (1929) who supported the cause of *peones* of the Cera hacienda against Ramón Burneo, the landlord was charged with labor abuses and the use of the unpaid labor of the community of *San Juan del Valle* in exchange for access to lands that were taken from their ancestors. In

⁹¹⁹ Ibid.

⁹²⁰ Ibid.

the demand directed to the MPST, the *comuneros* of Tacsiche claimed that they lacked access to the justice system and guarantees in the provinces, for which they had decided to send a representatives to the ministry in Quito and refused to resolve the problem with the judge in Loja.

The school teachers of Tacsiche supported the *peones* of the Valladolid hacienda in the lawsuit against the Eguiguren family and demanded the ministry's intervention to confront the governorship run by aristocrat José Miguel Carrión. They used arguments that the hacienda impeded the development of nationality, calling the parishes (in a clear appropriation of the *Ley de Patrimonio Territorial del Estado*) the “cellular organization of our nationality” (*organismo celular de nuestra nacionalidad*).⁹²¹

The same inhabitants of the *barrio* of Tacsiche who had secured an expropriation of the hacienda of the Eguiguren family participated in an uprising of *peones* and colonizers on the Horta hacienda, located four kilometers from Valladolid and that belonged to the same owner. According to the denunciations, on July 11, twenty *peones* came together with two hundred people from Tacsiche and fifty from Vilcabamba to tear down twenty blocks of *hacienda* fence in a great uproar. They were led by the professors of Tacsiche, who carried the national flag and sang the

⁹²¹ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 183, *Carta del Ministro de PS al Gobernador de Loja José Miguel Carrión, Loja, 1936.*

national hymn. After that, the *peones* took control of the land, alleging that the landowner needed to pay them for the value of their sugar cane and the improvements they had introduced into the *hacienda*, and later they needed to return to them a property that originally belonged to the community.

The socialist nucleus of Loja wrote these demands for the MPST and was able to position the community before the central state that ordered the expropriation of the captured haciendas and the turnover of the affected lands. The expropriation of La Cera hacienda in 1933, the expropriation of El Ceibo hacienda to make the parish of Valladolid in 1936, and the expropriation of the Gonzabal hacienda from the same Ramón Burneo in 1943 all took place in a similar fashion. Thus, socialism affirmed its regional political influence and conserved an important base of popularity while it was able to compete for mayorships against the weakened Liberal Party (until such strikes against liberalism led to its political re-composition in movements such as *Bonifacismo* and *Velasquismo*). The socialist nucleus of Loja sustained an important level of competition for local power.⁹²² This advance generated a reaction from the landowners that began with indignant telegrams from young aristocratic heirs. The mobilization of the regional authority that sent communications to the MPST and to the central government finally generated ties of identity among the elites of Loja

⁹²² AIFP, MPST Collection, box 181, *Moradores del barrio Tacsiche de Valladolid contra propietarios del fundo el Ceibo*, November 12, 1936.

under the flag of *velasquismo*. In 1933, in the government of Velasco, the elites of Loja found a way to reverse the expropriations. Under the pretext that the government was forcing the municipality of Loja into debt due to compensation from parceling the commons and expropriating lands, and that, by not paying, Loja's desire for potable water was at risk, a process of counter-reform began with regard to this agrarian property. The elites proposed that they required the document of the original appointment of the delegate of the MPST or the records would be declared null, and they accused Manuel José Aguirre of having issued the lots of the commons with a fake *indigenismo* (falso indigenismo) that fundamentally benefited the Socialist Party.

We are well aware of the reason why Dr. Manuel José Aguirre has presented himself before the court of Loja to ask that this tribunal addresses the Minister, under the pretext of the protection of the indigenous race, so that order given to the delegate Sr. A. Modesto Molina be suspended, with the object that he should proceed to re-validate the null deeds of adjudication. This reason is, without a doubt, that of defending himself for not having acted with the procedures that the law orders; and also because the delegate recently named by the Sr. Minister Ordeñana for that re-validation (the return of the land to the elites) does not belong to the socialist party, from which Dr. Aguirre belongs to, but rather to the *Velasquista* party.⁹²³

Although the lands remained in the hand of the communities and didn't return to the Burneo and Eguiguren families after that early expropriation, the arguments used by the hacendado elites shows that the political parties participated actively in the land

⁹²³ Ibid., July 9, 1934.

dispute between antagonistic classes.

In the case of Pichincha, the ministry also received demands from indigenous communities subjected to the *hacienda* regime and their socialist lawyers. The social situation in Pichincha was serious as various elite communications reported to the Ministry both requesting that it control the peasants and complaining that it had helped incite them by inviting them to question private property. Such was the case of Yaruqui, Tababela. On February 21, 1930, Juan Ignacio Escobar presented a request to the MPST “manifesting that many inhabitants of Yaruquí and Checa have taken over a large extension of land in the hills of Intuna that form part of the '*La Tola*' *hacienda*.” During the dictatorship of Ayora, Minister Eguez Baquerizo did not dictate a definitive resolution “in attention to the circumstances of political order, the advent of the constitution, and others,” and the peasants were left with the idea that the lands had been confirmed in their possession, as had happened in Loja y Guayas. The intervention of the socialist lawyer Juan Genaro Jaramillo facilitated the application of the Law of Territorial Patrimony of the State (Ley de Patrimonio Territorial del Estado) on behalf of these *comuneros* such that lands were expropriated in their favor. However, for Jaramillo as for the *comuneros* this was not sufficient and the conflict did not end. Peasant pressure for more lands was due to a clear policy of colonization promoted by the state and linked to the adjudication of lands based on this law.

In 1927, we find two cases related with peasant pressure for lands located in the parish of Chillogallo. The first case appealed for the effective possession of lands and, citing the inhabitants' condition of poverty, asked for the mediation of the Ministry to resolve the conflict. The second case refers to a voluntary transfer of lands to the state by an *hacendado* as a consequence of the pressure of peasants on the *hacienda*. The *hacendado* placed as a condition the transfer of this part of his lands and the elaboration of a plan of colonization to be written by the government. The pressure by of the peasants, according to the *hacendado*, was based on the false idea that the government was promoting the dispossession of the lands of *hacendados*. Between 1925 and 1929, Supreme Chief Isidro Ayora decreed the turn over of lands deemed vacant in Ilaló to the community of Alangasí, thus settling an old conflict with the community of Guagopolo.⁹²⁴

With the new legal framework, indigenous communities of the central Sierra made advances in their land disputes. Cases such as that of the *community* of Chuquipogyo occurred in various zones of conflict about which we have already spoken. In the case of Chuquipogyo, Torcuato, and Álvaro Paca, community leaders presented a complaint before the MPST on August 4, 1930, to ask for the legalization of the possession of communal lands in accordance with the Law of Territorial Patrimony of the State. “Before the orders that this Ministry is issuing in favor of

⁹²⁴ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 186, *Alangasí-Pichincha*, August 11, 1936.

other indigenous communities of the provinces of Imbabura and Tungurahua, the community of Chuquipogyo trusts that the Ministry of Social Welfare and Labor will attend to the request.⁹²⁵

In response to these processes, the violence of the landholding elite increased as a measure to punish the communities that sought state assistance. The PSE continued to observe the violence and generate public opinion in Pichincha and Guayas. Thus, the weekly *La Vanguardia* called attention to the complaint of indigenous communities of the Galte *hacienda* in Palmira parish, Chimborazo, with respect to abuses committed by the landlord Ramón Borja. Together with denunciations about forced work, missed payments, and the charging for lost livestock, the indigenous leaders and a socialist group headed by Juan Genaro Jaramillo built a case against the *hacienda*.⁹²⁶ Just as important as the denunciation of violence was the fact that these actors were collaborating despite their diverse political identities. It was significant that the indigenous colonels José Remache and Cornelio Tenelema acted along with the socialist Juan G. Jaramillo.⁹²⁷

After the Law of Territorial Patrimony of the State, the indigenous

⁹²⁵ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 180, *Comunidad Calshi contra Hacienda Chuquipogyo*, August 4, 1930; also see box 176.

⁹²⁶ *La Vanguardia*, Año 1, no. 12, 1928, 3.

⁹²⁷ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 187, Salamalag hacienda, Cotopaxi, *letter from Colonel Cornelio Tenelema to the MPST*. It seems that on communication sent from Chimborazo was lost on the way to Cotopaxi.

communities of the central Sierra tried out legal mechanisms to recover lands, but faced violent reactions from the *hacendados* who impeded these processes and ultimately they were led to collective mobilization and insurrection. In the Bolívar *canton* of Guaranda, the Indians of the San Simón hacienda rose up together with the parishioners in January 1929 in order to take the Casaiche hacienda. Las Herrerías hacienda had been attacked by about a hundred indigenous people from Casaiche led by Juan José Aguay, José María Naranjo, Ángel Moposita, and Joaquin Shela, among others. With the cry of “*viva los comunistas*” and with some armed with guns and others with sticks, they tried to take the hacienda. The attack was repelled, as the landowner Arsenio Valverde had twenty employees in the house.⁹²⁸ The head of the community Casaiche, Eusebio Chimbo, later presented an explanation to the MPST after the capture of these lands and asked for the application of the Law of Territorial Patrimony of the State to issue deeds to the communities. The *comuneros* were supported by César A. Durango and Ernesto Noboa for their defense. In the argument presented by Chimbo, his leadership of the insurrection was justified because all of the surrounding haciendas had taken the lands of the Indians and had only left them the lands of the town of Simiatug and those of Espino and Quinuacorrall, which belonged to the state⁹²⁹

⁹²⁸ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 179, San Simón, January 23, 1929.

⁹²⁹ *Ibid.*

The governorship of Bolívar in response suggested that the assembly dissuade the Indians: “The Supreme Government, after the Convention did not allow Socialism to proceed, should not permit that these lawyers and scribes exploit the credulity of a few unfortunate people who, enjoying their support, will soon proceed to great social disorder.”⁹³⁰ But it was not that simple to repress the communities and block their alliances at time when the entire country was mobilized.

The indigenous communities were willing to use the legal framework established by the state while the landholding elite resisted through all means at their disposal. The confrontation with free communities made the elite of these provinces prepare for war and use force. The conflicts in the central Sierra included large zones in Tungurahua, such as the Quero parish, where they demanded that the *hacendados* pay them all of the salaries that they had not yet received, and in Tisaleo, where there were also processes of land seizure based on the Law of Territorial Patrimony of the State.⁹³¹ In Chillanes, Bolívar, the denunciations by the indigenous communities against the *hacienda* had been heard by commissioners of the MPST, the socialists Néstor Mogollón and Luis de J. Valverde, who recommended the expropriation of

⁹³⁰ Ibid., *Informe del gobernador de Bolívar Coronel E. Baquero al MPST*, March 21, 1929.

⁹³¹ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 177, *Particulares contra la Comunidad de Tisaleo*, December 17, 1927.

lands on behalf of the *comuneros* of Chillanes on December 12, 1934.⁹³²

There were also socialist circles in Chimborazo. On Sunday, August 5, 1928, a socialist assembly took place in Riobamba in which the “*compañeros*” Dr. Gerardo Falconí, Luis F. Vela, Jorge I Yerovi, Humberto Heredia, and Luis Álvaro founded a council for the defense of peasants and workers (el Consejo de Defensa para Campesinos y Obreros).⁹³³ The violence of the *hacendados* worsened in the zone. The government of Ayora did not believe that repression was a viable solution to the conflicts and thus sought a consensus. However, such a consensus was impossible. The problem was that the only way to reduce settlement with the Indians was the return of lands. With respect to the *hacendados*, the only form of settling with them was to repress the indigenous leaders for promoting the dispossession of lands. Thus, in the conflict of the indigenous community of Zumbahua, Luis G. Alvear said that in order to recognize the demands presented regarding unfulfilled labor regulations towards the Indians, first the leaders and several Indians who “incite mutiny” needed to be expelled in order to keep the indigenous population of the hacienda peaceful.⁹³⁴ The polarization between the *patronal* elite and the functionaries that led state reform was growing and the MPST was accused of being a communist stronghold that was

⁹³² AIFP, MPST Collection, box 192, Bolívar, Chillanes, December 12, 1934.

⁹³³ “Ecos de la Asamblea de Socialistas del Chimborazo,” in *La Vanguardia*, Año 1, no. 12, 1928, 3.

⁹³⁴ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 178, Zumbahua, parroquia Pilaló, cantón Pujilí. Cotopaxi, 1929-1939.

causing the peasants to perpetrate insurrections and abuses against the *hacendados*.

The president José María Ayora, in order to calm the waters in the provinces of the central Sierra, began a process of pacification locality by locality. On January 28, 1931, the MPST was asked to name a commission to mark out the lands of the communities of Salinas, Simiátug, and Casaiche in order to determine which lands ought to be issued to the communities “in conformance with a strict and reparative justice.” In a letter to the sub-secretary of the MPST on July 30, 1931, J.M. Ayora asked that the case of these communities be investigated thoroughly and that the report issued by the MPST commissioner Manuel José Aguirre (a four line telegraph), who due to violence in the zone had asked to suppress the rights of the Indians until further negotiations, would not be accepted.⁹³⁵

The newspaper *Nuestra Tierra* (later entitled in Kichwa, *Nucanchic Allpa*) constituted one of the most notable examples of collaboration between the communist militants and the indigenous peasant organizations. The editor of this bilingual newspaper, Nela Martínez, described her role in a letter to Joaquín Gallegos Lara. For her, it was clear that the newspaper served to support indigenous struggles for lands and against racism and to promote action under the leadership of the proletariat, as the Communist International dictated. The early sensitivity of the Communist Party to

⁹³⁵ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 179, *Carta de José María Ayora al MPST*, January 28, 1931. The violence transcended in the press, see *El Día*, January 16, 1933, and February 2, 1933, 5.

the existence of the cultural realities and cultural languages that underlay the national problem was due to a permanent exchange with Peruvian socialism and also to the work of Nela Martínez. In 1937, Nela Martínez spoke to Joaquín Gallegos Lara in the following terms:

I was going to ask you to send me urgently something about the struggle of the *montuvio* peasants for “*Nuestra Tierra*.” I want to give the newspaper a new direction. That Indians, through their newspaper, might defend their rights to their culture, their nationality, and their tradition. That they might also know of the unions of Guayas. I am thinking about calling out to the intellectuals and the “democratic” men of Ecuador in that sense.⁹³⁶

The Socialist Party divided into communist and socialist factions beginning in 1930, but these factions maintained important ties with the indigenous communities of Cayambe. Senator Maldonado, Ricardo Paredes, and Luis Felipe Chávez, together with communities in conflict, attempted to form the Agrarian workers and peasants’ Meeting (*Congreso de Obreros Agrícolas y Campesinos*) in 1931, but this congress was not carried out due to the expressed disposition of the government to use any methods necessary to avoid it. That same year, in Guayas workers from Milagro were discovered to have had red flags in their houses that said “Land, Liberty, and Work.” Thus, the landlords attempted to evict them by force and, in response, on August 8, 1930, some 60 individuals from the Venecia *hacienda* rose up against the

⁹³⁶ AMM, *Carta de Nela Martínez a Joaquín Gallegos Lara, N-19371203*.

administrator and the *peones* of the hacienda in the attempt to take lands. That night, some 3,000 people met in the “Los Huaques” hacienda to support the tenants against the abuses of the *hacendado* Rosales. It was not an invention of the landholding elite that socialist influence had turned the peasant struggle into a powerful amalgam of forces.⁹³⁷

In Pichincha, the discontent of the elites was profound and they began to develop alternative politics to turn back the process initiated by the July Revolution and recover their power. Their presence had agitated class conflict and socialism had grown quickly over the previous six years. The situation of the Ministry and the reformist regime was not easy to sustain. Though Ayora, as in previous governments of the July Revolution, believed that a redistributive policy could pacify the peasants, the landholding elite did not wish to cede and the violence only intensified in the Sierra.

The regime wanted to control the process of redistribution and pacification, but the possibility that the peasants would create autonomous and horizontal alliances, strengthening themselves beyond the government's already powerful regional presence was a possibility that was feared. Socialism, for its part, sought alternatives to maintain its influence in the state through electoral initiatives. Socialists had

⁹³⁷ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 218, *Informe de la Gobernación del Guayas al MPST*, directed by the *Comisario Nacional del Cantón Milagro*, August 19, 1930

participated in the assembly of 1928 and later formed an electoral movement called Ecuadorian Revolutionary Socialist Avant-Garde (*Vanguardia Socialista Revolucionaria Ecuatoriana*, VSRE) that made explicit the articulation of the moment between social liberalism, the Left, and a faction of the army (its electoral figure was Colonel Luis Larrea Alba). In the final year of his government, Isidro Ayora felt the pressure of class conflicts and ideological disputes in the country and his governance became symptomatically contradictory.

7.5 The Liberal and Conservative Reaction.

Between 1931 and 1934, we can observe one of the most critical moments of political instability in the country. Various forces attempted to prevent that the movement of the VSRE and the Socialist Party from coming together electorally and, above all, that they constructing a platform as a popular movement. In 1930, the global crisis struck and the pressure of *patronal* sectors on peasants increased, generating a rupture in paternalism in rural areas. This led to an important increase in demands and land seizures and open expressions of discontent by the communities.

The change first came within the Ayora regime itself as he replaced the MPST Minister with a liberal, Miguel Ángel Albornoz, as the head of the institution. Albornoz wanted to recover the roles of the MPST in regard to social welfare and hygiene and thus downplay its role with respect to land and labor conflicts to calm

peasant political action. The state ratified this change, uniting the functions of the Ministry of Government with those of the MPST due to the economic crisis. The Ministry lost strength with respect to its organizing capacity and its agenda. In 1931, the labor inspectors and the rural inspectors were eliminated in the attempt to close the reception of court cases. At the same time, the state began a campaign to renew the discourse calling on the spokesmen for socialism to continue to support the state as the protector of rights, while excluding any revolutionary tendency inspired by “the dissolving labors of Communism...”⁹³⁸ In its proposal, the modernization of the state in Ecuador was being led by the Liberal Party which promoted collaboration between civilized parties and led reforms through paths that were “in accordance with the particular conditions and modalities of this nation.”⁹³⁹ By contrast, communism reproduced the conditions denounced by the governors of Loja, Pichincha, and Imbabura and had campaigned to convince the peasants “that the lands in which they lived as colonizers were their property.” The governors and the Minister exchanged correspondences in which they mentioned the spread of press accounts and of political groups through almost all of the parishes in which “the workers of rural areas, as well as the workers of population centers, avidly meet to enlist in the ranks of the New Party, drawn by the promise that soon the distribution of the goods of the

⁹³⁸ Miguel Ángel Albornóz, *Informe del Ministro de Gobierno y Previsión Social a la Nación 1930-1931* (Quito: Imprenta Nacional, 1931).

⁹³⁹ *Ibid.*

wealthy will be seen.”⁹⁴⁰

The Minister presented as one of his contributions to the return of civilized order his interruption of a peasant congress “in which they had tried to unite an immense number [of people] from all of the communities of Indians from the interior provinces, especially from Tungurahua, León, Pichincha, and Imbabura, with the visible and only purpose of inducing disorder and provoking conflicts with the government.”⁹⁴¹ Albornoz learned of the organization of the first Peasant Congress in Cayambe to which various indigenous leaders from the country were planning to attend so as to strengthen the organization and with the socialists consider the national perspective regarding their demands. Albornoz asked for help from the repressive forces to impede this encounter. He realized that the suppression of the inspectors had been akin to suicide for the ministry, which no longer had instruments with which to act during conflicts. He said that without these commissions, the ministry would become a legal adviser without regional presence or specific jurisdiction.

Conservatism was aiming to re-conquer the political power that it had not been able to achieve through the July Revolution and began to form electoral movements. The first was that led by Neptalí Bonifaz with a popular base called the National

⁹⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁹⁴¹ Ibid.

Workers Pact (CON), which has been described as a reformist program of the Right that was anticommunist and at the same time oriented towards the incorporation of a new logic with respect to labor rights. The workers of the CON listed aspirations very similar to the demands for labor regulation whose trajectory we have described, together with specific demands from the artisan sector. As Bustos has observed, even in the circles of Catholic workers, the impact of “social issues” framed in a language of the state and of the Left had had a profound impact, ultimately transforming conservatism. However, its political bid was that of the traditional parties –namely, to promise that the elites would represent a morality of protection and redistribution.⁹⁴² The aspiration to control the prices of household goods through a system of *patronal* control of their circulation had been an offer of the conservative elite in the 1920s. This program of selective redistribution to organized workers in Catholic circles expanded in the 1930s, but not sufficiently to make effective the ideal of a moral control of the effects of capitalist expansion.⁹⁴³ In this sense, Bustos suggested that the backing of the artisan workers by Bonifaz and his movement were not backwards,

⁹⁴² Guillermo Bustos Lozano, “La politización del «problema obrero»: los trabajadores quiteños entre la identidad ‘pueblo’ y la identidad ‘clase’ (1931-1934),” in *La crisis en el Ecuador, los treinta y los ochenta*, ed. Rosemary Thorp (Quito: CEN, 1991), 95-131

⁹⁴³ Valeria Coronel, “Hacia un ‘control moral del capitalismo’: pensamiento social, y experimentos de la Acción Social Católica en Quito,” in *Estudios ecuatorianos: Un aporte a la discusión*, eds. Ximena Sosa-Buchholz and William Waters (Quito: FLACSO-Abya Yala, 2006), 57-78.

but rather characterized by a certain reformism of the Right. His bid was to enter in the political ring under the banner of a reformed conservatism.

The socialist weekly *El Cartel* criticized the Catholic workers describing as an assembly what was in fact concerned an assembly “of patrones.” The political dispute between conservatives and socialists concerned fundamentally the method of how to achieve shared objectives with respect to labor regulation and social well-being. Thus, for the socialists who published in this weekly, the CON followed a clientelist method for protecting workers from oppression and want:

A promise to help from *señor* Bonifaz, that is to say, a *palanqueo* from *señor* Bonifaz, but naturally not a *palanqueo* (clientelist machinery use) to benefit during his administration all of those in the compact, since this is not possible for him, but rather only for the *patrones* of the compact who are his active agents.⁹⁴⁴

It was not only the socialist university students who viewed Bonifaz in this manner. According to Bustos, the opposition of the workers and artisans of Quito against *bonifacismo* brought about a fundamental transition in this subaltern urban sector; “[They broke through] those old mutualist frameworks and transitioned from the crisis of guild representation to a process of marked politicization that located them in the center of the national political debate.”⁹⁴⁵

⁹⁴⁴ “La asamblea de los patrones compactados,” in *Cartel*, no. 9, 1932, 3-4

⁹⁴⁵ Bustos, “La politización del «problema obrero».”

The SAIP, however, activated an extensive socialist network in various parts of the country to oppose the CON as a workers' organization. It wished to prevent this organization from placing the functional representative of labor in the assembly. They launched a campaign to disqualify the candidate from CON for functional senator. Various workers' circles that were opposed to conservatism got involved in the campaign. Thus, the Worker Confederation of Tungurahua was called upon to oppose Sr. Figueroa, who had been selected by the conservative circles. Various organizations of the country proposed convoking an Assembly of Workers of the Interior in order to select a candidate as a group. This was, in effect, an important experience of the bottom-up mobilizing of organizations with political ends.⁹⁴⁶ On April 10, 1932, artisans, drivers, typographers, carpenters, weavers, iron-smiths, and mechanics met to select a candidate for the functional senator of the workers' movement and to reject the CON and the Republican Workers' Union, denying that they were workers' societies. The debate over the nature of labor took place within the assembly itself while several of the artisans present considered that it was absurd to be oppose the participation of the elites in labor since “only honorable people are capable of working for the betterment of the workers, although they are not workers themselves.” Other artisans rejected this proposal. Finally, they decided not to support the candidate of CON because “he who could not defend the *pueblo* in the

⁹⁴⁶ *Actas de la SAIP*, Session of February 24, 1932.

Municipal Council in the request presented against the Dairy Trust... would never be able to defend the true class interests.”⁹⁴⁷ Despite the will to participate that the artisans demonstrated and their decision to elect the functional senator democratically in that difficult political moment, the Council of the State discarded this process and, without taking into account the resolution that the same Council had taken in previous elections, accepted the candidate close to the *bonifacista* movement as functional senator. The SAIP wrote a response that highlighted the undemocratic nature of this exclusion.⁹⁴⁸

In the elections of 1931, the criticisms of the SAIP and of the socialists with respect to the renewal of conservatism could not be articulated into an alternative electoral movement. They could not construct a unified platform, despite their important presence in the senate. Precisely in that year, the Left was divided into various alternatives – two electoral and one that wagered completely on popular organization and the construction of a movement. The three tendencies were not random -they expressed the formative experiences of socialism. First, the Party broke into two factions. Under the leadership of Ricardo Paredes, the Party was defined as communist, whereas a branch of the socialist assembly separated from the Party under the concept of popular organization and desirable class struggle, as a required

⁹⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁴⁸ *Actas de la SAIP*. Session of July 27, 1932.

element of national state formation that the communists did not contemplate. The socialist branch then sought electoral alternatives. Two electoral movements formed that corresponded to alliances. The first was between socialism and social liberalism, which presented the liberal Modesto Larrea Jijón as candidate. The second branch corresponded to the alliance between liberalism and the nationalist army that had been named the VSRE in the national assembly of 1928 and presented Colonel Ildefonso Mendoza as candidate. A third branch of liberalism presented Dr. Cesareo Carrera as its candidate for the presidency.

In that context, Neptalí Bonifaz won the elections with the support of CON by activating an extensive network of Catholic labor in the country, as well as due the expectations of a renewal of the paternalist contract in various sectors that were suffering because of the economic crisis. After this triumph, the branches of liberalism and socialism came together to veto the conservative triumph and disqualify Bonifaz, accusing him of being of Peruvian nationality and thus attempting to recover power.

Although the discourse of CON was conciliatory with respect to social classes, the procedure of CON was confrontational. Even before Bonifaz' triumph, the SAIP was presenting a motion “to protest the savage display of the National Workers Pact in the *bonifacista* parade, an attack that took place with arms against

the men who had not sold out their consciences or their characters.”⁹⁴⁹ That violence announced the mobilization with which the CON reacted to the destitution of Bonifaz. In the so-called Four Days War (*Guerra de los Cuatro Días*), the workers mobilized by conservatism confronted the sectors united by the Left – that is, liberals, socialists, and military representatives in a pitched battle. According to the socialist Alfredo Llerena, “The conservative people (citizens or members of the army who viewed the officials as part of the class enemy, of the Left) had a bloody confrontation with the battalions controlled by progressive officials of the middle class, opposed to power falling into the hands of the aristocracy of the Sierra.”⁹⁵⁰ For Agustín Cueva, the war was the result of a lack of hegemony. The landholding aristocracy did not have the capacity to orient and implant social order; only through a fragile pact with the coastal bourgeoisie as in the plutocratic epoch or a pact with the middle class as in the epoch of the July Revolution could they aspire for hegemony.⁹⁵¹

The most recent study on the *Guerra de los Cuatro Días*, by historian David Gómez, reevaluated the causes and the consequences of the social mobilization of 1932. In his proposal, the short civil war represented the high point of urban social

⁹⁴⁹ *Actas de la SAIP*, Session of August 17, 1932.

⁹⁵⁰ Llerena, *Frustración política*, 42.

⁹⁵¹ Agustín Cueva, “La crisis de 1929-1932: un análisis,” in *La crisis en el Ecuador, los treinta y los ochenta*, ed. Thorp, 60-77

conflict in the 1930s and 1940s and directed the democratic process towards a dead end.⁹⁵² Faced with the rise of organized conservatism, the Left came together to deny at all costs the electoral triumph of Bonifaz. Months filled with mobilizations and attacks from one side and the other created the conditions on August 27, 1932, with disqualification of Bonifaz in Congress and the imminent dictatorship Baquerizo Moreno (liberal, and ex president), for various regiments of the army and the police and members of CON to depose Baquerizo Moreno and take Quito.

The response of liberals and leftist was not slow in coming and they immediately organized the majority of the national army and, together with private citizens, entered the city to attack the conservatives. The war cost an estimated 800 to 2,000 lives. After the war, the democratic path of Ecuador deviated with the rivalry between the populism developed by Velasco Ibarra and the Left which vacillated between socialism and social liberalism, oligarchic liberalism and communism.

After the war and the process of mobilization led by the Socialist Party, Alberto Guerrero Martínez came to power for three months before new elections were called. The socialist Carlos Zambrano Orejuela took over the MPST in

⁹⁵² Gómez, *Hegemonía, capitalismo y democracia*. There exists a polemic about the conduct of the *compactados* and the Left. For most writers the *compactados* represented a type of fascist conservatism and, in general, negative. For Gómez, the opposition of Bonifaz and CON was an alternative to authoritarian inclusion. Thus, Gómez was the first to incorporate into his interpretation the concept of conservative workers' massacre executed by the state army.

recognition of the role of the socialists in the fall of conservatism; however, again, this government only lasted three months and when new elections were held, the Liberal Party elite of Guayaquil rose once more to power with Juan de Dios Martínez Mera. During his short government (December 1932 to November 1933) Martínez Mera attempted to reconstruct the power of the Liberal Party using the state apparatus to prevent popular effervescence and the growth of socialism as an alternative politics. He sought to re-conquer the army and purify it of its socialist elements at the same time that he used force to prevent the development of the Popular Assembly that the SAIP convoked through the work of the Socialist Party. These measures led to the insurrection of the *Regimiento "Sucre"* and part of the "Carchi" battalion, which the "Chimborazo" Battalion also joined. In his report to the nation, Martínez Mera associated these insurrections with the influence of the Left within the army – "several anonymous groups and communist criminals and the clerical party in association with stubborn aspirants to the dictatorship."⁹⁵³ The association between socialism and conservatism was a legacy of the discourse of 1923 since for the moment both factions began to compete for popular support and the electorate.

Although Martínez Mera was able to contain these mobilizations of the army, the opposition that he faced from other social corporations revealed a new dimension

⁹⁵³ J.D. Martínez Mera, *Mensaje presentado al Congreso Nacional de 1933, por el Presidente de la República señor Don J. D. Martínez Mera*, 1933 (Quito: Imprenta Nacional, 1933), 9.

of change in the political field that was in formation since the July Revolution. Martínez Mera sought to control of socialism and agrarian conflict through the construction of a base of liberal support and created 38 cultural centers and workers' societies from December 1932, to August 1933. Thus, he spoke of having lent his support to the loyal expressions of “healthy labor in the country” and having “rejected energetically the pretensions of the elements dissociated from communism that have sought to alter the public order.”⁹⁵⁴ However, this method seemed insufficient since the SAIP, whose fundamental base was constituted by artisans who observed Martínez Mera as a repressive president and “denounced before the workers' class of Ecuador and the world, the political repression that the Liberal Government has unleashed.”⁹⁵⁵ The Worker Assembly reported that the city was practically at a stand still, that the government impeded entrance into the House of the Worker and Student, violating all constitutional guarantees, and that various *compañeros* had been taken prisoner arbitrarily. This formed part of the attempt to construct forcibly a labor that was loyal to the Liberal Party, even through in the Sierra the SAIP had been affected by the work of the socialists for state reform and in the workers' organizations in Guayas the agrarian conflict of Milagro had given rise to the protagonism of the labor movement with the support and influence of the

⁹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 16

⁹⁵⁵ *Actas de la SAIP*, intermidiate month, 1933.

Communist Party. When a unitary manifesto by the Communist and Socialist Parties and the Central Anti-War Committee was signed, agents from the police took it from the hands of the socialist senator Emilio Uzcátegui by force. The Assembly denounced that the police had also impeded the publication of “*El Comunista*,” an organ of the Regional Committee of the Communist Party. Finally, it also denounced that the troops and police had prevented worker and student access to the house in order to carry out the Assembly.”⁹⁵⁶

Martínez Mera changed the Minister of Social Welfare and Government six times, trying to break the practice of resolving regional conflicts through alliances with worker and peasant corporations since he -along with the landholders of the coast and the Sierra- considered the work of the MPST as very much connected to the wave of demands that had spread throughout the country. Yet, rural conflicts forced the state to search for stability. In his government, two redistributive decisions were taken: The first was the expropriation of disputed lands on the Chillanes hacienda in the Bolívar province. This decision politically favored the Liberal Party with respect to the regional *velasquista* circle, the common enemy of the Liberal Party and for the commissioners of the MPST, socialists Néstor Mogollón and Luis de J. Valverde who, even without a Ministerial head remained part of the advisory team.⁹⁵⁷

⁹⁵⁶ *Actas de la SAIP*, May 1, 1933.

⁹⁵⁷ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 192, *Antonio Guapulema reclama despojos de*

The second process to which this regime had to attend was the proposal by Agustín Guaquipana, Francisco Patín, José María Zaruma, José Cayambe, Rosendo Ría, José Gavilán, and Juan Clemente Chacha, heads of the communities of Quinuacorrall and Espino, who presented a complaint against the landlords of the “Quinuacorrall” and “Espino,” haciendas of the Public Charity, for having taken lands and repressed the *comuneros*.⁹⁵⁸ On May 4, 1931, the community leaders sought the intervention of the state with respect to the authority of Bolívar, whose men “proceed like agents of the feudal *señores* of 'Quinuacorrall' and 'Espino'.” By 1933, the *comuneros* out forth their petition, “guaranteed by the political constitution of Ecuador in the demand for justice regarding our violated rights.” As the leaders expounded, “We number more than three thousand five-hundred, not counting the innumerable [people] who, in the last years, have been dispossessed of their lands by force or have had to abandon them, emigrating in search of greater and more humane conditions for work and life.” The community was large and had a population that cyclically migrated to the coast. The fundamental complaint was that Enrique Bonilla, the landlord, had raised the rent, expelling families from their *huasipungos* and obligating them to work three days a week. The defense lawyer appealed to the

tierras de comunidad en Chillanes, contra Jaime Chavez, Fernando Cárdenas y otros, January 1, 1934.

⁹⁵⁸ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 182, *Reclamo de comuneros de Quinuacorrall y Espino contra arrendatario, parroquia Guanujo, cantón Guaranda, Provincia Bolívar*, May 4, 1931.

state to apply the labor laws approved by the constitution: “As with the day-laborers, that which they demand is justice, normality, and proportionality in their relations with the *patrón*; the establishment of rules, perfected through written contracts, of the individual work contracts [that are] today unstructured, imperfect, deficient, [and] lack co-relativity of rights and duties.”⁹⁵⁹ In that context, the government had transformed the *huasipungueros* into colonizers, imposing a fief, but the landlords and the political deputy of Guanujo, who had been the administrator of the hacienda, and the police of Guaranda went to take the leaders prisoners and led them by force back to Quito, where they negotiated their petitions before the MPST. In February of 1933, the leaders proposed to the state that the Public Assistance lease them the two haciendas directly and do away with the landlords who used force to get more rent than the established amounts. Even in the absence of a ministry, the work inevitably fell into the hands of the socialists Cesar Carrera Andrade and Luis de J. Valverde, who advised that in the name of public peace the Indians' demands be satisfied through a 35% reduction of the rent of the haciendas of the Public Assistance and that this reduction be extended to the renters until these haciendas were parceled off among the *comuneros*.⁹⁶⁰

In 1933, the effect of inflation and the fall of the gold standard brought a

⁹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, f. 4v.

⁹⁶⁰ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 182, folder 5, June 4, 1931.

profound discontent to the middle classes – the bureaucracy, the army, the urban working classes, and salaried workers. Also, the indigenous peasants felt an increased pressure in their obligations, which led to them to present demands in the hope that they would obtain legal resources and socialist accompaniment in these cases of conflict.

Social polarization began to be felt dramatically. Thus, in the Miranda Grande hacienda, a private *latifundio* located in Amaguaña, Pichincha, belonging to Srta. Rosa Perez Pallares (one of the heads of the Catholic Social Action Association in Quito), the *huasipungueros* denounced increasing pressure from the hacienda in 1933 and sought the resources that had been made available by the July Revolution. The *huasipungueros* spoke of an increase in pressure in the 1930s: “[L]ately, our situation as gotten worse for which, desperate due to our suffering, we come to ask for help, protection, [and] aid from the Ministry.”⁹⁶¹ The *huasipungueros* enumerated a series of characteristics of *huasipungo* labor that included the unpaid work of women, extreme obligations, and the use of force, images that spoke of increasing pressures but also reflected a view of labor rights articulated in the legal language that resulted from dialogue between peasants and socialists during processes of conflict and political reform. The vision of the *huasipungueros* also included a notion of the

⁹⁶¹ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 177, *Miranda Grande, Indígenas contra Rosa Pérez Pallares, Amaguaña 1933*.

Ministry as a source of support in the face at the local coercions.

The pressure of the crisis and the presence of referents of political transformation constituted important detonators for which the *huasipungueros* to denounce violence on the haciendas. The *patrona* offered no mediation between the administrators and the peasants: “She authorized the servants to mistreat and harm us in our work.” The state reform and the Left were stepped in association with processes of denunciation and popular mobilization since the autonomy of the workers also represented the possibility that the public institutions would subsist with certain autonomy. In the representation of the *huasipungueros* Indians of Miranda Grande, the socialist lawyer Luis Polibio Chaves made an asking that *Sr. Valverde*, head of the relevant section of the Social Welfare, provide guarantees not only for the Indians but also for the lawyers.

Therefore, I ask that *Sr. Valverde* goes to the hacienda, he should take with him the legal representative of the Indians and be guaranteed the free exercise of his mission or, otherwise it is preferable that the task be carried out here (in Quito), since here there is no inconvenience whatsoever for the defender of the Indians to be present, while to go to the hacienda, the representative of the indigenous people needs guarantees from the representative of the ministry to not be exposed to serious conflicts with the masters of the hacienda.⁹⁶²

The Indians, he proposed, did not need to be interrogated on the hacienda but rather in a public and neutral space such as the ministry in which they would not be under

⁹⁶² Ibid.

obligation:

On the hacienda, under the view of the masters, the indigenous people will not be able to express the truth; they have to be in a different scenario, in which they will not feel inhibited nor fearful; for that, I wish that they be heard here in the Ministry, but only by representatives of the Ministry; thus they might speak with more freedom.⁹⁶³

He even asked that the book keeping for their unpaid work not be done on the *hacienda*. Instead a professional accountant should do it with a public functionary as witness. In this context, the functionary Valverde and the lawyer Chaves received the petition of the *huasipunguero* Manuel López who stated that the *conciertos* did not know how to write because there had never been schools. He asked the state that the *patrona* be obliged to obey labor laws, eliminating the unpaid work of women and *arrimados* and that mistreatment be abolished.⁹⁶⁴

The discourse of the socialist lawyer coincided with the will of the Indians to leave the private domain of *patronal* domination. Yet the situation was paradoxical and explosive. On the one hand, the state functionaries were on complex terrain since the communities had the expectation that the state would intervene in this closed space of *gamonal* power. The state was seen as a bridge towards the nation and as an entity of justice that would compensate for their disadvantages and discrimination

⁹⁶³ Ibid.

⁹⁶⁴ Ibid.

with regards to local power, particularly after three critical decades like those that they experienced after the Liberal war. Yet, the functionaries themselves were unsure of their capacity to fulfill these requirements for representation of public power and confront the landholders and local powers in the name of the nation and the Indians. Certainly, they were backed by the law and the accumulated work of the MPST, as well as by the argument for national peace. However, the *hacendados* discriminated against these functionaries and did not necessarily respect their authority during their visits. They had to be respected when the central state backed the functionaries and demonstrated political will to monopolize force. But it was precisely that will that had begun to fail after the unstable new ascendancy of conservatism and oligarchic liberalism.

Popular urban discontent added to the explosive situation in rural areas and though the increase in prices could not be seen as a direct cause of the discontent of the artisans, the SAIP had become a platform for the articulation of the Socialist Party and thus opposed the regime. In this critical context and after the frustration of 1932, conservatism sought a new opportunity. José María Velasco Ibarra took advantage of the discontent among socialists and conservatives and he took advantage of the 1929 constitution, which permitted congress to censure the cabinet to support the destitution of Martínez Mera. With the destitution of this representative Guayaquil liberalist, and the ex CON, the public profile of Velasco Ibarra began to take shape.

In that year, he began to activate circles of support among conservatives. The *velasquista* circles emerged in local spaces in opposition to democratic fronts, while the discourse of its national leader was ambiguous and offered at times liberal and even socialist views, at times moralist and nationalist ones.

In the new elections of 1933, the Liberal Party presented two candidates, Colón Eloy Alfaro, who represented radicalism, and Carlos Alberto Arroyo del Río, who came from the plutocratic circle. The Left presented two candidates as well – Carlos Zambrano Orejuela, from the Socialist Party (whose brother Miguel Ángel Zambrano Orejuela had participated in the development of the MPST) and Ricardo Paredes from the Communist Party. In the elections of November 15, 1933, Velasco received 51,848 votes, while the Socialist received 11,028, which was clear evidence of the growing impact of socialism among the educated middle class of the country. Paredes received only 696 votes that corresponded to the middle sector that participated in his network, given that the organized bases tied to the party were constituted largely by the illiterate population. Colón Alfaro received a mere 945 votes, which might be interpreted as a sign of how radicalism had passed from being a reference to the historic Alfaro to being a reference to socialism. The plutocrat Carlos A. Arroyo del Río withdrew due to the success of the nationalist campaign of

Velasco Ibarra.⁹⁶⁵

The government of Velasco Ibarra did not even last one year, from September 1, 1934 to August 21, 1935. However, many authors have spoken of the centrality of his figure in the political process, considering him the founder of mass movements in the country. Yet, taking into account the highly developed organization of the popular field and the transition to the left in which an important part of the workers' organization had participated in Quito, we could assert that rather than being the facilitator of a politics of the masses, he was just one of the actors in conflict in the political dispute over the mass movement. Although in 1935 Velasco declared himself a social liberal and proclaimed the need to re-compose the ethos of mutual responsibility (of a paternalist nature), he was viewed skeptically by those who were engaged in the construction of a mass movement.⁹⁶⁶

The *velasquista* circles struggled with processes of popular organization in localities. This was the case in Loja, where the *velasquista* circles opposed to the socialists positioned themselves in opposite poles of rural conflict. Also, in Guayas the *velasquista* circle constituted a focal point of opposition to the formation of the Committee of the Popular Struggle of Milagro, which in turn moved to the head of

⁹⁶⁵ The numbers from the elections can be consulted in the virtual library of Edufuturo www.edufuturo.com, as well as in Quintero and Silva, *Ecuador, una nación en ciernes*.

⁹⁶⁶ Juan Maiguashca, "Los sectores subalternos en los años 30 y el apareamiento del velasquismo," in *La crisis en el Ecuador*, ed. Thorp, 79-93.

the popular movement in that province.

His political role, at least in his first presidency from 1934 to 1935, was concentrated on the activation of these regional circles against the mass campaign that, in that year more than any other, was coming together as a popular front. This was an intense effort to constitute a class identity that would permit the articulation of heterogeneous actors from the labor sphere and with distinct ethnic and regional identities. This class and popular national identity, the first to have been summoned up by a mass movement in Ecuador, was backed by a diverse and less partisan Left, the companion of a movement that originated in the local experience of conflict against internal colonialism.

The leadership of the SAIP, in the hands of the socialist worker Miguel Ángel Guzmán, was crucial in the rejection of Velasco by unions of the Sierra, which found themselves integrated with the coast through printed media and their circulation in Communist Party cells, in peasant struggles in the coast, and in the Sierra in various industries and zones of agrarian conflict. In the acts of the SAIP of September, 1934, its members transcribed their internal discussions regarding the situation in which they found themselves since the rise of Velasco Ibarra, who was closely tied to the CCO and the ex CON. They expressed their fears that their organization would be

attacked by the Committee for the Workers' Defense.⁹⁶⁷ Yet, it was clear to them that they had a national network that *velasquismo* lacked. They worked with particular dedication in that year to integrate new unions and to forge solidarity through a cycle of strikes that took place that year.

The personal leadership of Velasco Ibarra was dangerously popular for several of his conservative supporters led by Jijón y Caamaño. For other sectors of conservatism, such as that represented by Alfonso Ortiz Bilbao, and the artisans tied to the CCO, Velasco Ibarra was useful. That is, Indians and peasants were not Velasco Ibarra's political targets, thus differentiating himself from the communists and socialists, as he attempted to take the entire political apparatus and the popular urban organizations away from the Left. The leftist media themselves felt this rivalry as they accused *velasquismo* of having stimulated clientelar relations of dependence with workers.

Judging for the records of the SAIP included in newspapers, together with the immense quantity of lawsuits that entered the MPST in 1934, its clear that a wide range of popular organizations rejected Velasco identified him as a conservative. The historiography has often overlooked this point. The literature has insisted that the workers of Quito sought to fill a void of deflated paternalism with Velasco and, therefore, latched onto his moral discourse. Contrary to what Maiguashca and De la

⁹⁶⁷ *Actas de la SAIP*, September, 1934.

Torre have proposed, I highlight 1934 as a year in which strikes spread across the country like none other.⁹⁶⁸ In industrial settings, transnational companies, and *haciendas*, a tremendous cycle of protests and popular mobilizations marked 1934. Velasco's government of was very fragile. Even when the later historiography explained its fall as the outcome of a military maneuver by Quito garrisons reacting to the shutdown of Congress, it was actually provoked by a multifaceted opposition.

7.6 Conclusions.

In contrast to the dominant historiographic readings of the period from 1925 to 1934, which have interpreted the July Revolution as a transfer of power from elites of the coast to elites of the Sierra, this chapter has proposed that the July Revolution promoted democratic change insofar as it permitted peasant communities and workers to access new legal and political mechanisms to process their conflicts.

After the July Revolution of 1925, the conflicts between indigenous communities and haciendas, as well as conflicts between peasants and large landowners on the coast, became the most important national issue. The reception of their petitions for justice at the MPST allowed the communities – in their persistent search for recognition as collective negotiators with the state and subjects with rights

⁹⁶⁸ Maiguashca and North, “Orígenes y significado del velasquismo;” And Carlos De la Torre Espinosa, *La seducción velasquista* (Quito: FLACSO/Libri Mundi, 1997).

– to join together with the state reformers. These reformers were socialists and some members of the Liberal Party identified with social liberalism. The peasants of the coast could also build connections to the central state in 1928 when they successfully demanded the redistribution of some lands through the use of the *Ley de Patrimonio Territorial del Estado*. The political will of the nationalist military officers, of the liberals of the assembly of 23, and of the socialists to limit the power of the plutocracy and prevent the return of the clerical party came together in those first crucial years between 1928 and 1932 along with the search for justice on behalf of a vast and diverse range of peasant communities. This articulation of interests ultimately marked the manner in which subaltern classes with common interests acquired a central role in national politics.

From the foundation of the MPST to the constitutional process of 1929, the legal measures of the reformists and the construction of leftist parties in dialogue with subaltern sectors were able to define a new context for popular sectors to struggle for justice before the state.

The struggle of popular political actors deepened and consolidated reforms that had seemed timid at first. They made the Left a political alternative. Thus, conservatism reacted by framing conservatism as an option for the masses. *Velasquismo* resulted as a reaction to a developing relationship between subaltern sectors and the state.

This developing relationship represented the advance of social rights and the formation of new political actors, but it was interrupted for a time by a cycle of competition between political movements. At play in this competition were the character of the state and the politicization of popular classes.

CHAPTER 8: The Building of a Democratic Front: Popular Movement and the negotiation of “Corporativist Democracy,” 1934 – 1944.

Beginning 1925, the practice of legal dialogue involved the workers, peasants, and the state in the resolution of concrete conflicts, and it formed the subaltern classes into subjects with rights. Moreover, the state learned a language more effective in integrating popular pressure and resolving conflicts and, therefore, developed a mechanism of institutional autonomy from the traditional private powers. The formation of social rights constituted not only a legal opening but also marked a new type of interaction between popular political identities and the state. Unions and communities were recognized not just as objects of social rights but also as political subjects who exercised pressure and negotiated. The results were a new legal framework that permitted peasants to present demands as if their local conflicts would constitute issues of national interest. Yet, beginning in 1934 and after the attempt of the Right to seize power once again, a new cycle of radicalism and new strategies for positioning popular demands consolidated. Unions, communities, and radicals formed a national movement that learned to pressure the state by means of mobilization. The national popular movement would later come to constitute a substantial element of what during the years of World War II became the Ecuadorian Democratic Front.

In the 1930s, communities required new resources to consolidate the rights they had earned, particularly in the context of a quickly changing scenario. On the one hand, the global crisis affected the country through inflation and, on the other hand, the elite of both traditional parties reacted and sought to re-conquer the political theatre. In this period, fears grew among the elites that peasant communities understood certain changes as indicating the end of social hierarchies and the legitimization of their right to take lands from *hacendados*. Such fears reached a peak when news got out about a national assembly of indigenous and socialist leaders. This generated alarm in various provinces. Elites pressured President Isidro Ayora to detain this movement and the formation of an autonomous popular power.

Beginning in the 1930s, the process of dialogue between the communities and the state stopped advancing with the fluidity with which it had in the period of the July Revolution. The communities needed to find new strategies. The fundamental strategy they pursue was to construct horizontal alliances among popular actors in various regions – that is, to form movements lift to struggle from particular contexts including the state-community exchange and reconstitute it into movements of national reach capable of reforming the state. In this context, the support of the leftist circles (brought together to constitute national parties), the development of a worker and peasant's press, and the processes of popular organization in various regions of the country were key for the formation of platforms for popular integration and the

building of a national movement.

Although several authors who studied the formation of Ecuadorian unionism were skeptical about the capacity of workers' organizations to recognize the indigenous communities as allies, there is abundant evidence of the bridges that both actors built through joint political processes.⁹⁶⁹

During the cycle of strikes of 1934 as we will show in this chapter, the concept of *class* became a key device to trace identity connections between peasant and worker struggles. Fundamentally, this process of identification was constructed by erecting platforms of political aggregation that established a dialogue and a common front in the 1930s. The *Asamblea Campesina de Milagro*, the SAIP, the *Casa del Obrero*, and the FEI were evidence of that. These federations were spaces for renewed political practices through the assemblies, newspapers, popular criticism, and collective actions. Crucial in this process were the articulation of a national public opinion through the press and actions of solidarity in support of strikes or rural conflicts, as well as the formation of electoral movements and the experience of mobilization to force state reform. The language of class, reproduced in the socialist press and in organizational language, was added to the registers of identity including popular republicanism, popular radicalism, and socialism, which had been forming in

⁹⁶⁹ Bustos, “La identidad clase obrera a revisión.” Bustos has identified discourses of exclusion in the *Congreso Obrero de Ambato* of 1938.

this century of political experience.

This chapter documents the creation of a popular movement that integrated the largest segment of the population, the peasantry, and the creation of a democratic political culture with which much of the organized popular sectors and intellectual and professional classes identified.

Periodization allows us to observe crucial moments in the formation of the popular movement as an actor and also their advance in gaining better positions to confront a renewed Conservative Party.⁹⁷⁰ This chapter describes the process that led to the formation of a popular movement that integrated popular organizations in conflicts in various regions of the country into a national movement. It documents how these collectivities came together discursively and organizationally. In gramscian terms, between 1925 and 1944 a popular movement attempted to transform a situation of organic crisis by means of a strategic preparation. This preparation can be described as a new stage in an organic (historical and not only conjunctural) struggle for position. The period in question demonstrates the results of a historical accumulation of memories of resistance and negotiation as organizations with similar memories and demands came together horizontally. A visible state transformation expressed that the popular movement, the Left, and later the Democratic Front formed during those crucial decades and forced the state to include peasant

⁹⁷⁰ Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison*, 210-218 and 5-14.

communities in processes of political representation and justice distribution. This changing relationship between the state and peasant communities preassured by popular movements consolidated in those crucial years were the nucleus of a changing relationship with “civil society” as a whole, and in consequence an expression of a deep state transformation.

The Left was a movement into which the popular sectors had entered in a federated, corporatist, organized form and not in the form of an amorphous mass. Though they did not constitute voting masses for the most part, they had developed a democratic experience in the process of their organizing and through their experiences of meeting with political parties. Unlike the first process of national articulation of peasant communities that occurred during the liberal war and later in the development of the state of the July Revolution, the articulation of the communities into horizontal democratic fronts that occurred in the 1930s and 1940s allowed for the construction of an important interaction between the urban workers and the peasant.

Before the end of the World War II, the popular movement grew close to the Socialist and Communist parties, though these were not strong parties. Neither was the reformist state, led by military members through various periods, a strong state unless they count with the support of popular mobilization. Political organizations and institutions needed to ride the wave of communities and popular associations

whose presence and political will had been sustained and had grown in those years. In the 1930s, the popular movement generated its own leaders and with the leftist parties joined and supported the social conflicts. As Becker has observed in the case of the indigenous movement of Cayambe and the Communist Party, they developed together through an exchange but they did so in various other spaces that added up to a national process.⁹⁷¹

The democratic political front was complex in its composition and often antagonistic internally, but constituted a current that highlighted common problems and competed with the Right. This leftist democratic current was expressed in various middle sectors at the *cantonal* level, and in the 1930s it was already competing with sectional power, particularly with *velasquismo*, which had also been able to develop associations at a local level in various parts of the country. The Left was found as well in the dispute between parties in the *Asamblea Nacional*, where functional representations appeared as expressions of sectorial political processes involving class, trade, and even ethnicity. The *senadurías funcionales* had motivated processes of democratic concensus in various sectors, including among the workers, and proposed a corporatist dialogue with the state; however, the origin and trajectory of corporatist democracy was more complex. Among the indigenous communities, corporatist democracy had legacies of the legal recognition awarded by the colonial

⁹⁷¹ Becker, *Indigenous Communists*.

state which had been eliminated under the republic. Through the resources of negotiation and representation before the state, the communities sought a new recognition. In the context of state reform, these representations were conceived within the codes of modern social rights that developed notably until the middle of the twentieth century.

8.1 The Formation of the Popular Movement: Networking, Identity and Mobilization.

Juan Maiguashca has observed how the Great Depression of 1929 left the sugar industry of the coast partially stable and stimulated the textile industry of the Sierra. Between 1900 and 1940, economic diversification had a profound impact on the social composition of the country. In the northern Sierra, the investment in cereal and livestock *haciendas*, as well as in the textile industry (which tripled its exportation between 1920 and 1925 from 61,000 to 198,000 dollars), generated a rise in the population of salaried workers.⁹⁷² In the 1930s this industry was affected by

⁹⁷² According to the study by Hernán Ibarra in 1928 there were 15 textile factories in the Sierra with 18,220 spindles and 485 looms; the number of employees was 124, along with 2,388 workers. *El Peral* of Ambato which belonged to Jijón y Caamaño had 21% of the labor supply of the national textile industry and 17% of the capital. Comparatively, the *La Internacional* factory of Quito had a capital of 2,200,000 sucres, 14 employees, and 370 workers. Ibarra, *La formación del movimiento popular*. With respect to economic diversification, Bustos states that in the city of Quito the industrialization process had an strong impact. The city grew from 51,858

protectionist measures in Colombia and by the Great Depression. However, the elites of the Sierra had at hand the capital they had accumulated in the agrarian zones from peasant work and they oriented their production to internal consumption with relative success, according to Maiguashca and the industrial census of 1936.⁹⁷³ In the case of the coast, John Uggen observed how the crisis of large property on the coast had given way to the reconstitution of small and medium-sized agrarian properties. “Between 1925 and 1935, the plantation economy was transformed into a system of sharecropping and the previous workers were transformed into renters. Later, when the paternal authority weakened even more, the colonizers refused to pay rent or even recognize the dominium of the *patrón* of the *hacienda*.”⁹⁷⁴ In accord with Uggen, Maiguashca maintained that in the process of diversification in the Sierra, the traditional relations of subordination and were upset opportunities opened up for subaltern sectors. A “crisis of paternal authority” arose there as well.

These proposals inspired various studies of the new Ecuadorian historiography oriented to the study of the moral economy among subaltern classes and particularly the impact of the rupture of paternalism in the “artisan-worker class” during the

inhabitants in 1906 to 101,668 in 1936, and around the city there were 10 of the 16 textile units that existed in the country until 1936. Bustos, “La politización del problema obrero,” 99.

⁹⁷³ Maiguashca, “Los sectores subalternos.”

⁹⁷⁴ Uggen, *Tenencia de la tierra*, quoted in Maiguashca, “Los sectores subalternos,” 86.

1930s. As Milton Luna observed, the divorce between the artisan apprentices and teachers was prefigured within the workshop, and later under the coverage of greater associations like the SAIP, the apprentices described the relationships inside the workshop as relations of exploitation.⁹⁷⁵ For his part, Jaime Durán Barba took an interest in the birth of unionism within the artisan circles, while Bustos and Maiguashca emphasized the role fulfilled by the workers of the textile factories in the displacement of the mutualist organization of artisan-workers by a union-style system of organization.⁹⁷⁶ Kim Clark and Mercedes Prieto have observed that the rupture of paternalism in the agrarian zone and greater social conflict occurred in the *haciendas* of the state, those of the *Asistencia Pública*, where the peasants questioned the right to tutelage on behalf of the *patronal* sector because the state were administered by landlords.⁹⁷⁷

Bond on the long history of conflicts we have traced, we prefer to speak of a permanent tension within the labor regimes of the *hacienda* that does not permit finding a particular moment in which paternalism would function without conflict. The trials among free communities and *huasipunguero* communities against the *hacienda* that were presented before the MPST reveal the fact that conflicts increased in the 1930s in terms of intensity and numbers. The increase in collective activity was

⁹⁷⁵ Luna, *Historia y conciencia popular*.

⁹⁷⁶ Bustos, "La politización;" Maiguashca, "Los sectores subalternos."

⁹⁷⁷ Clark, "La formación del Estado ecuatoriano;" Prieto, "Haciendas estatales."

not derived from a rupture of paternalism but rather from the opening of opportunities by new frameworks of legal and political representation, which these actors themselves had helped to forge. In this sense, we can observe that in Clark's documentation of the conflict on the *hacienda* of Tolontag in Pichincha in the 1930s, the Indians sought aid outside the confines of the *hacienda* and in public institutions as the landlords looked on with a skeptical gaze.

The archives of the MPST demonstrate that suits were filed opened because of “abuse”, increased pressure on labor in various scenarios, but also shows a new stage of conflict and legislation. There existed a notable presence of confrontations between private *haciendas* and communities, both huasipunguero communities and communities external to the *haciendas* that sought to negotiate the terms of their work. In both types of conflicts the presence of a large mass of landless “*arrimado*” peasants was also evident and they pressed as community members for the fulfillment of new labor regulations and the right to natural resources. Among the most frequent conflicts of this decade, were cases of water and private land dispossession. The state resolved several cases through processes of expropriation, parceling, and adjudication. In other cases, the trials remained unresolved and were the objects of later legal disputes, collective actions, and “uprisings” and insurrections linked to groups of support.

Throughout the period, we observe a consistent process of indigenous and

peasant community inscription in the ministry to constitute themselves as agricultural associations, cooperatives, unions, and *comunas* drawing upon the language of social rights that were formed between the state and the wide range of civil society plaintiffs who promoted the use of such categories. This indicates that the communities sought out conditions to negotiate in a framework of legitimation, as they also joined processes of broader social demands. In effect, one fundamental result of the transformations of the period of the July Revolution was the feedback between the legal framework promoted by the Socialist Party and the collective organizations of the indigenous and peasant communities of the country that were interested in what they understood as the liberation of the justice system from the landholding elite.

We can observe several examples of this process, such as in the case of the indigenous community of Quero, in their dispute with the Mochapata *hacienda* over Indian access to the *páramos*. In the attempt to apply the *Ley de Patrimonio Territorial*, they adopted the identification of “*Asociación Agrícola Sanancajas*.” The name of the new legal entity required state recognition, whereas before communities depended on the local judges to recognize their colonial deeds and the testimonies of their territorial existence from ancient times.⁹⁷⁸

The recognition extended to indigenous communities was ambiguous and state

⁹⁷⁸ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 176, *Comuneros de Quero contra Matilde Coloma, Ambato, Parroquia Quero, hacienda Mochapata por apeo y deslinde del páramo de Sanancajas, 1925-1933*.

responses were contradictory, not due to a lack of institutional development but rather precisely because the institutional development that was underway had awakened the reaction of the forces of opposing parties and affected classes. In addition, the multiple democratic forces were generally fragmented. Thus, in the case of the conflict in Sanancajas, the superior court of Ambato ruled in favor of the *comuneros* in 1932, but the sentence was not executed because the governor of Tungurahua refused to obey the ruling. The intervention of the MPST was therefore requested to carry out a visit to the *páramos* of Sanancajas to evaluate the situation between the community and the *hacienda*.⁹⁷⁹ Within the MPST there also existed tensions between one of the advisers, Luis J. Valverde, who focused on industrial development in that institution and Manuel José Aguirre, *Jefe de Previsión Social y Trabajo*, who was a socialist and who concentrated on conflicts between communities and *haciendas*. While Valverde said that the technical inspector Miguel Espinosa had provoked the *comuneros* to insist on entering the *páramos*, he arrived on the conclusion that the Holguín family was right and that there did not exist such a community at the outskirts of the Mochapata *hacienda*. “This is only about the cynical audacity of the perverse lawyer who, in association with the *cabecilla* Hilario Cuzco, has left in misery a small group of ignorant peasants (they are not really

⁹⁷⁹ Ibid., f.74, 85.

Indians), who are poisoned with ideas of absurd communism.”⁹⁸⁰

For his part, Manuel José Aguirre argued in favor of the community and spoke of the need for state intervention to recognize the community, which for local powers did not exist.

My particular opinion is that the Community exists, as it has existed for hundreds of years, and that it has rights to the *páramos* of Sanancajas, but that right must be recognized by the Judge before whom the trial with regards to land boundaries will be carried out since the *señora* Coloma, I repeat, refuses any transaction.⁹⁸¹

In order to avoid the pretext that they did not exist as a community, the leaders of the indigenous communities of Sanancajas formed an agricultural association. Nonetheless, neither the suggestions of Aguirre nor the adoption of the state discourse by the community mattered when the government of Martínez Mera, through the Agreement N° 755 of September 5, 1933, dissolved the “*Asociación agrícola Sanancajas*,” In resolution N° 570 of September 29, 1933, the property was given to the Holguín-Coloma family and the civil authorities were ordered to help enforce the resolution.⁹⁸²

Knowing that the conflict could not be resolved in this manner, the Council of

⁹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, f. 153.

⁹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, f. 234.

⁹⁸² *Ibid.*, f. 172.

the state stated that, although its duty was not to formulate resolutions that were the jurisdiction of the judicial power, it would ask the authorities of Tungurahua to reconsider their decision.⁹⁸³

This conflict became bloody when the *intendente general* of the police of Tungurahua had to confront the insubordination of the Indians who occupied the *páramo*: “A considerable number of indigenous...formed into a gang and armed with sticks..., have revolted against the rifle, causing injuries with a savage attitude.”⁹⁸⁴ Even when the first years of radicalism led to resistance from the local landholders and the Liberal and Conservative Parties against the reforms, the constitution of 1929 would open a new stage of indigenous conflict against the *hacienda*.

In the zone of Pilalo, Tigua, and Apagua in Cotopaxi, indigenous peoples chose the framework of the reforms of 1929 as a propitious moment for the rebellion. Thus, the leaders Ramón Quindigalli, Luis Caisaguano, Manuel Toaquiza, and Agustín Vega de Lorenzo instigated the uprising with the declaration that “Now, in the *hacienda*, the *patrones* are not in charge but rather the community leaders (No mandan los patrones sino los cabecillas), since the lawyers have stated this and, therefore, we must not obey any order whatsoever that should come from the

⁹⁸³ Ibid., f. 239.

⁹⁸⁴ Ibid., f. 171.

patrones.⁹⁸⁵ After the uprising, the *comuneros* said that the leaders asked them to gather money and sell their things because they would begin a process in which they were going to transform the *hacienda* into a “community of free Indians” (*una comunidad de indios sueltos*).⁹⁸⁶ The same occur on the Apagua *hacienda*, and if anyone tried to remove them from the freed hacienda, they “would go to reach an agreement with the Indians of Riobamba and Guaranda.”⁹⁸⁷ In the same way, in Itulcachi of Tumbaco, in the eastern valley of Quito, the *patrones* denounced that the Indians were headed to Quito to ask for the services of the socialist lawyer Dr. Bernardo Aguilar, “who had insinuated that all of the people as a result of which should rise up on the hacienda, abandon their work, and go to Quito, in effect, all of the indigenous people have come [to Quito], even with their families.”⁹⁸⁸

The advance of social rights as a space for the expression of popular pressure and the legal tradition created by the Left were, in effect, in danger and the insurrections seemed a warning of that. Despite the expectations that the ministry had generated at the regional level, it no longer acted in an entirely autonomous way as it had at the beginning. There were multiple cases in which it became evident that the makeup of the ministry and the attempt to detain the process initiated in its tribunals

⁹⁸⁵ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 203, Reclaims of the *peones*, *haciendas* Tigua y Zumbahua, Cotopaxi, 1929-1939.

⁹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, f. 29.

⁹⁸⁸ This letter is in the court of Tigua. *Ibid.*, f. 18.

was a political decision to reverse course rather than the effect of a budgetary restriction.

Thus in Chimborazo, indigenous leader Faustino Ushca, Dionisio Yumbo, Roberto Cepeda, Lorenzo Yumbo, and Francisca Cepeda complained that their demands had not been attended to, that the employees of the ministry of Chimborazo were “attendants of the *patrones*,” that the *Comisario del Trabajo* had tried to arrive at a conciliatory agreement that only benefited the *patrones*. It had proposed dividing the harvest of the *huasipungo*, which the Indians refused with the clear argument that if “the *patron* does not pay salaries for our work nor provide us with tools, he absolutely lacks the right to share our harvests in which he has not intervened to share the costs.”⁹⁸⁹

The reference that the Indians made to the new legal rights and the intervention of socialist lawyers in several conflicts led to repudiation by the landholding elites in the central Sierra. The accusation of “communists” was one form of justifying the violent repression towards the leaders and the intervention of the rural police against the communities.⁹⁹⁰ The contradictions of the state were palpable: While the MPST legislated on a national level in favor of the communities with a network of

⁹⁸⁹ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 188, Huasipungueros of the *hacienda* Ocpote, Colta County, Chimborazo Province.

⁹⁹⁰ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 188, anejo Cherlo. *Pueblos* of Guasuntos, Tixan and Palmira, Guasuntos parish, Alausí county, Chimborazo.

functionaries who operated on the regional level, the *tenencia política* and the rural police acted as clients of the *gamonales*.

The conflicts in Pichincha were also complex for the state. Although part of the demands of the indigenous communities had been resolved through state intervention, in a large portion of the province remained in which the expropriation of *hacienda* lands involved more complex processes that were only confronted through a strong indigenous political organization in the mid-1940s.⁹⁹¹ In Yaruquí and Amaguaña, the interests of the landholding elite were powerful. As we have seen, the elite of the conservative business-oriented *hacendados* were concentrated in Yaruquí, and in Amaguaña there were various textile factories and industries with modern technology located on *hacienda* complexes. In 1934 these factories entered into conflict.

In the case of Pesillo and Juan Montalvo in the *canton* Cayambe, there were important processes of dialogue with the state, particularly in the period of the July Revolution. The assembly of 1929 considered the demand presented by the *huasipungueros* of Pesillo to receive lands and guarantee their autonomy to be rational, given that their landlords had burned their houses and expelled them from their *huasipungos* for having demanded payment for their work. In effect, according to Executive Decree, the national assembly obligated the Moyurco, San Pablo-Urco,

⁹⁹¹ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 28, Jose F. Quinga 1927-1936, Pichincha Province, Quito County, Alangasí Parish, Cerro de Ilaló, Community of Alangasí.

Pesillo, and La Chimba *haciendas* to comply with the payment of the value of the houses “because they were destroyed by those who proclaim and carry out terror and repression as solutions to social conflicts,” as the union argued. The *Comisión Legislativa* stated that the petition of the indigenous workers of these *haciendas* was “absolute” justice and asked for its fulfillment by the *Ministerio de Gobierno y Previsión Social*. This was confirmed by the president of the Senate, Agustín Cueva. On September 20, 1931, the head of *Previsión Social*, Manuel José Aguirre, pointed out in a report directed to the Sub-secretary of the *Ministry* that the section of *Asistencia Pública* of that ministry had processed and resolved the case. In 1933 the Council of State, following the criteria of the “reasoned” report of the Councilor Dr. Pio Jaramillo Alvarado, decided to order the MPST to put the resolution into effect.⁹⁹²

In January 1934 the *huasipungueros* who had been expelled were still without homes and returned to insist that the MPST carry out this resolution emitted by Congress in 1931. It was obvious that there did not exist the necessary political will to resolve the case through a legal path, and the stock’s own fiscal interests were part of the problem. Also, the case was associated with the Communist Party and, therefore, it caused panic the process of reform initiated by the July Revolution. The

⁹⁹² Albornoz, *Informe del Ministro de Gobierno y Previsión Social*; AIFP, MPST Collection, box 176.

weak will of the political regimes to fulfill the laws of the moment led to unfulfilled expectations, thus sparking even more the political will of the affected parties.

The fear of an autonomous popular movement that would arise as an unexpected effect of legal reform and of the work of the socialists associated with peasant organizing partly caused the Liberal and Conservative Parties to react against reform beginning in 1931. The fact that the interventions of Pío Jaramillo Alvarado and the legal defense of Juan Genaro Jaramillo and Luis Felipe Chaves were not sufficient to resolve this case before the state indicated that for the political parties tolerable reform would have been top-down only.

As an effect of this ambiguity, the peasant political process went to a new level. Tigua, Toacaso, Apagua, and Pesillo in the Sierra and Milagro, Tenguel, and La Isla, among others, on the coast were communities that, in turn, unleashed a series of new political strategies. These includes the strengthening of alliances with parties of national scope; the formation of an inter-class popular movement between workers and peasants; the formation of regional and national peasant assemblies; the development of a national leadership tied to the parties and the movement, and stemming from unresolved agrarian conflicts; the development of a popular press as a platform for the articulation and communication of movements; the development of a peasant and indigenous press; and the social mobilization of these more complex groups to pressure for state intervention and advance the re-structuring of the national

state.

In this process, indigenous political leaders emerged along with peasant unions. The first indigenous union “Juan Montalvo” arose as a consequence of the appearance of various collective demands on the *haciendas* of Cayambe, particularly in Pesillo, Moyurco, and la Chimba, in which the “el Inca,” “Pan y Tierra,” and “Tierra libre” unions were founded between 1926 and 1930. In the indigenous politics of Cayambe, the *huasipungueros* Jesús Gualavisi, Dolores Cacuango, and Amadeo Alba stood out. Cacuango and Gualavisi demanded that the state comply with the current labor legislation on their *haciendas* and pushed the state to introduce nationalist policies in these *haciendas* that had previously been reserved for urban nuclei, including secular education, the right to unionize, and labor regulations. The lack of conflict resolution in Pesillo led to the radicalization of the leaders and the search for an alternative for empowering the peasants that would no longer follow the socialist method of using the legal system to bring the state in line with popular struggle. Rather they would adopt a method through which all popular actors needed to become involved in order to advance the reform process that had stalled in 1931. The construction of horizontal alliances, the construction of a popular movement, and the search for alternative to generate pressure and the search for hegemony were the instruments for achieving state reform despite competition with other political forces.

From a national perspective, the case of Pesillo was the first to reach the limit

of the reforms of the July Revolution, forcing it to evolve towards forming a popular front. However, the SAIP also entered into an alliance with the Left and the construction of a social movement to support cases of urban industrial and popular conflict in the midst of the crisis that the popular sectors were experiencing at the beginning of the 1930s. In the meantime, the processes of agrarian unions in Milagro (Guayas), were fundamental for the formation of a national class identity amidst the tremendous ethnic diversity and labor heterogeneity in the country.

In response to the reaction of other actors in the political system that after 1931 attempted to halt the process of inclusion, 1934 was a year in which the agrarian unions, indigenous communities, industrial associations of workers, and the Left of the universities entered into a new cycle of pressure leadership, and political construction. In Quito and in Guayaquil, platforms were erected to merge workers' and peasants' organizations into a common front.

Between 1933 and 1938, the level of confrontation reached a new high that was due to the new mechanisms for pressing the state to apply justice in cases of conflict. Between 1925 and 1934 the demands presented to the state were backed by the organization of communities and the legal support of militant socialists. Yet after 1934 unionism increased notoriously in distinct branches of the complex and heterogeneous labor force, including in the peasantry, but also among the artisans and the industrial workers. Beyond the numerical increase in unions, beginning in 1934

the popular organizations entered into a process of horizontal articulation through two mechanisms: the SAIP in Pichincha and the *Asamblea Campesina* in Guayas.

The weekly *Lucha Popular* of Guayas had a dialogue with two other printed media that also had the purpose of promoting dialogue between popular and leftist organizations. One was *La Tierra*, which was tied to the work of the SAIP, and the other was *Ñucanchic Allpa*, which was a collaborative project of the indigenous leadership of the Sierra (particularly of Cayambe), the Communist Party, and a middle sector of intellectuals tied to public education, such as Nela Martínez, who was its first editor and also worked on the weekly *Lucha* together with Joaquín Gallegos Lara. This newspaper was described itself as the “organ of the Unions, Communities, and Indians in General” until 1944, and then became the organ of the *Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios* (FEI).

The reaction of the liberal elite and of conservatism led to a change of strategy that strengthened popular organization. The three principle articulating platforms for unifying a popular movement were the unions and guild organizations of Milagro (of peasant origin), the SAIP in Pichincha, and finally the network of unions, communities, and “Indians in general” the Communist Party attempted to create throughout the 1930s and that led to the aggregation of various “federated” communities in the FEI.

8.2 Popular Struggle: Peasant Initiatives, Communist Circles, and the Building of a Popular Movement in Guayas.

Lucha Popular, a popular weekly that began in 1928 in Milagro, was one of the products of the dialogue between peasants and rural workers of Guayas and circles of militant Communists. The weekly emerged in the midst of conflicts in this area in which peasant aspirations ran up against the power of the agrarian exportation capital of private and international investors. It served as a platform to build ties between peasant and urban organizations in Guayaquil, to pressure the provincial council, and to create contacts with similar organizations in the Sierra.

This weekly generated dialogue with specific organizations and with parties, but also with popular public media such as *Bandera Roja*, which by 1933 was the organ of the central committee of the Communist Party directed by Ricardo Paredes and Rafael Coello Serrano. *Lucha Popular* differentiated itself from *Bandera Roja*, a newspaper of doctrine and education that followed the Communist International, insofar as it was a space for news and commentary on local conflicts and invited participation through the letters of peasant assemblies and popular organizations. As the weekly stated, its intention was that it be an organ of popular expression of the peasant bases in which members of the parties could participate, but not an organ of any single party. Its intention, in other words, was to strengthen the movement

through horizontal alliances, and “if within the organization there are communists, it is because it is the only front to which all workers belong.”⁹⁹³

One of the clear objectives of *Lucha Popular* was the interpretation of strong organizations that might bring in other organizations. This process of convocation occurred at a regional and national level. Regionally, a “committee of struggle” was constituted to exert pressure on the *cantonal* council.⁹⁹⁴ The popular grouping was formed in Milagro by workers of all the parties, similarly to the committees of the *Lucha Popular* formed in Quito, Riobamba, Ambato, Cuenca, Guayaquil, and Esmeraldas to struggle “for the betterment of the living conditions of the workers and against the government of hunger and terror of Martínez Mera.”⁹⁹⁵

The fundamental concept was that the organization would help to confront conflicts in a more general way – first with respect to the *hacendados* and then with respect to regional and national political re-configuration. The denunciations highlighted obstacles for the formation of a peasant economy with access to the market. The abuses of San Carlos de Naranjito of *La Angélica hacienda* were denounced, as well as those of the paradigmatic Barraganetal *hacienda*, which maintained tight controls on the escape of money from his businesses coffers – “the

⁹⁹³ *Lucha Popular*, Director Segundo Ramos, Segunda quincena de febrero de 1934, no. 1, 1.

⁹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

payment for a workday of 11 hours is of 1.50 sucres maximum, but it is not paid in coins but rather with chips or papers that need to be exchanged in the *hacienda* shop where the owner of the hacienda imposes the prices that, due to which the workday payment is not even enough for subsistence.”⁹⁹⁶ The workers of the *hacienda* were called upon to resist, avoid exploitation, and struggle for rights, with the support of the *Asamblea Campesina*.

The formation of committees was seen as a measure to summon the forces of workers of the region and also combine forces to pressure the state to comply with labor laws, guarantee sovereignty with respect to transnational companies, protect against the speculation of oligopolies, and advance in the process of expropriating lands that the July Revolution had begun. In contrast to the method of Velasco Ibarra, who, according to the weekly, trusted the moral will of the classes, the alternative presented by the *Asamblea Campesina* was to exercise organized pressure until they were recognized as negotiators by all of the political powers – the councils, the governorships, the central state -- “as a powerful organization of the popular masses in their decisive struggle for their demands.”⁹⁹⁷

They wanted the committees to be able to generate regional and national movements that would offer support to the workers in regional conflicts. Thus, in

⁹⁹⁶ *Lucha popular*, June 2, 1934, no. 8, 2

⁹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

1934 the committees and the *Asamblea Campesina* of the coast announced their support for the strikes of the Sierra, where a large cycle of protests had started up among industrial workers. *Lucha Popular* maintained active its pages for opinions and denunciations, and it even mobilized in support of the industrial workers who were striking in *La Internacional* and other factories.

The Organ of the exploited [workers] of Milagro, *Lucha Popular*, adheres to the campaign of the striking *compañeros* of the factory *La Internacional* and states, do not give up a single one of your demands, be tough with our tyrant, you will have our columns to denounce [him] before the workers of the world [for] the police and *patronal* maneuvers used against you. The bakers, the *Confederación Obrera de Guayaquil*, *La Internacional*, the *Sindicato de la Madera*, the *Sindicato del Cuero*, and more workers' societies in Quito are fighting for better well-being and are gaining by force that which the exploiters do not give to them by reason, but which justly belongs to them.”⁹⁹⁸

Lucha Popular reported on similar processes in various cities of the country:

We will recall only the role that the committees of popular struggle played in Quito, Riobamba, Ambato, Cuenca, Guayaquil, and Esmeraldas for the betterment of the living conditions of the workers and against Martínez Mera's government of hunger and terror. In reality, the fall of was due to the active mobilization of the masses, organized by these committees directed by the same workers who fight based on their own program.⁹⁹⁹

The regional objective of *Lucha Popular* was, by 1934, the expropriation of Milagro *hacienda* to construct a peasant economy and prevent that it be sold to the United

⁹⁹⁸ Ibid., March 24, 1934, no. 3, 1.

⁹⁹⁹ *Ibíd*

Fruit Company (UFCO). The rumor was that the landowners of Milagro were willing to put an end to peasant pressure and the MPST through the sale of lands to the UFCO.

This sinister company that is taking immense extensions of land in Central America, Colombia, and Ecuador and that carries the blame for incredible crimes like the massacre of thousands of workers in the banana plantations of Santa Marta, Colombia, this company will redouble its extortion of the population of Milagro and the peasants. Many workers away remain without a home.¹⁰⁰⁰

Before this could happen, the *Asamblea Campesina* stated that it would position itself at the head of the organizations to represent them as a committee to the state and demand the expropriation of lands in favor of the population of Milagro. It called for the strengthening of the peasant economy through the reduction of rent and the distribution of parcels of the *hacienda* (that by that time belonged to the UFCO) to peasants who were cultivating them, and the prevention of further concessions. It denounced the Colombian Arcesio Echeverri of the UFCO, who was the first to buy *hacienda* lands for the company and who reportedly abused the peasants in their first parcel called “La Isla Rocafuerte:”

The exploitation there is double and all means of deception and fraud are used against the workers...We protest against the abuses of Echeverri. We protest against the ferocious imperialist company United Fruit. We demand that the

¹⁰⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 2.

government annul the purchase of Tenguel... We should fight so that Tenguel be handed over to the unemployed peasants.¹⁰⁰¹

In their rejection of the UFCO, seen as a national danger, the workers said that the battle against imperialism was part of the peasant struggle and that this struggle would require the support of all of the workers' organizations in the country.¹⁰⁰²

The committee stated that in Guayas the popular organization needed to fight against the sugar “cartels,” the group of powerful industrial elites that had formed the *Sindicato del Azúcar*, a conglomerate that pressured the government to tax imported sugar in order to be able to raise the prices without having to compete. The committee denounced the sugar monopoly formed by the principal members of this group, San Carlos, Valdez, and Inés María, among others. The committee also addressed the problem among peasant rice growers who rented lands at very high costs imposed by the large landowners who also demanded rice as payment and set rice prices. The weekly denounced this chain of speculation and tried to force the popular committee to pressure for the payment of rent in money and for a fixed price for rice. It called on the peasants to buy their own rice processors to gain autonomy.¹⁰⁰³

In the same way, the method for ending the violence of the rural police in

¹⁰⁰¹ Ibid., June 23, 1934, no. 9, 4.

¹⁰⁰² Ibid., Segunda quincena de febrero de 1934, no. 1, 4.

¹⁰⁰³ Ibid., June 2, 1934, no. 8, 1.

Guayas would have to be worked out through the formation of a defensive front for peasants. To establish this power, the committee called on the organizations that had still not taken a stand. They described the success that this call had among the workers of the COG and the capacity that Communist leaders like Joaquin Gallegos Lara, Segundo Ramos, and Luis Maldonado Estrada had to bring organizations together into a unified front.

The crisis of subsistence in which the workers of Guayaquil found themselves due to land concentration and inflation led to another committee experience of “struggle against hunger.”¹⁰⁰⁴ The committee demanded the establishment of municipal stores controlled by government delegations, by workers' societies, and by popular committees in order to sell goods to the people. The popularity of this proposal led to the committee's growth.

On April 7, 1934, a unified front was organized in Guayaquil in which almost all of the workers' organizations participated, including the committee to lower subsistence costs, women's organizations, and the Communist Party, which was able to bring the Socialist Party into the fold as well. More than thirty entities from Guayaquil – that is, thousands of organized workers – came together to oppose speculation. Agrarian unions, workers' societies from the Valdez mill, the sports centers of young workers, and the unified front of Milagro constructed a large

¹⁰⁰⁴ Ibid., March 17, 1934, no. 2, 1, 4.

organization represented by the unified committee. A potent movement of organized popular masses developed in this moment in the country and had Guayaquil as one of its principal sites.

This assembly -“the voice of Guayaquil”- wanted to be heard by the cantonal council on an “open meeting,” (cabildo abierto) but this was denied. “The organized forces felt that they had been made fun of,” due to which they formed a rally “to make the petitions that represent the vital interests of the masses heard by the public powers.” But the head of the police, “skipping over the constitution that guarantees liberty to meet without arms,” impeded the rally. The *Comité de Unidad Contra la Especulación* thus called a general strike and ignored the authority of the Council that did not respond to popular pressure despite the presence of thousands of organized individuals.

The restriction of constitutional guarantees: - prohibition of meeting, limitation of the right of the workers to meet only until 11 at night, the prohibition of radio to spread discourses to local workers -; had been met with the powerful unification of workers who rejecting divisive manipulation, united in this committee, to prepare themselves for a new battles to fulfill the demands of the moment: to lower the price of subsistence and [address the issue of] a minimum salary, which would benefit the workers, employees, peasants, artisans, small merchants, soldiers, police, and sailors. They offer an invitation to the general strike.¹⁰⁰⁵

On September 22, 1934, the fifth assembly of the *Sindicato de Asalariados Agrícolas*

¹⁰⁰⁵ Ibid., April 21, 1934, no. 5, 1,4.

y Campesinos Pobres y Obreros Rurales del Guayas took place and in this meeting they recalled the most important actions of the unions of Guayas. They mentioned the resistance to the UFCO, which had already taken lands from certain peasants in the Tenguel *hacienda*. Due to the organization of peasants on the Isla Rocafuerte *hacienda*, after eight months of struggle they were able to force the payment of compensation (thanks in part to the work of the communist lawyer Neptalí Pacheco León). The lands of *La Angélica hacienda* had been taken by force. The *Cooperativa Agrícola Ideal de Producción y Consumo* was formed by “the colonist *compañeros* expelled from La Isla, whose capital they have underwritten with the value of their indemnities and who will organize in their own lands a small workers' republic.”¹⁰⁰⁶

The organization was headed for a general confrontation with the landholding elite, and it demanded the integration of all the organized forces. It denounced the Mercedes *hacienda* in Samborondón for impeding the members of the committee from working on certain lands. It observed the manner in which the peasants associated with guilds protested before Congress. And at the same time, it circulated information asking for public support from the COG, the Communist Party, and the *Sindicato de Trabajadores Agrícolas del Guayas*.¹⁰⁰⁷

The popular front mobilized collectives to protect workers in their

¹⁰⁰⁶ Ibid., September 22, 1934, no. 12, 2.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Ibid., October 13, 1934, no. 14, 4.

confrontations with *hacendados* and also to constitute a political alternative in the Guayas' elections. In this sense, they used public spaces and dedicated sessions to expose Velasco Ibarra as a false alternative. They organized debates to make his positions and programs visible. In one of these debates organized by *Lucha Popular*, the representative of *velasquismo* in Milagro Dr. Ernesto Albuja Aspiazu challenged the validity of the perspective of several workers about a crisis of subsistence, as it seemed to him "that going to pass through the farms would provide enough to live." The workers spoke of the violence that awaited peasants on the farms, the need to stop direct negotiations between the unions and the state, and the problem of clientelist relations between workers and parties, particularly those relationships that characterized *velasquismo*.¹⁰⁰⁸ With these debates and denunciations of corruption in the council, the popular organization attempted to win spaces in the council and formed *El Frente Único* in the "electoral battle" in which they called upon workers "of all the parties" to come together against the council of *gamonales*.¹⁰⁰⁹ In the presidential campaign of 1933, the *Central Sindical Campesina de Milagro* presented Ricardo Paredes as their candidate.

One of the issues of the *Asamblea Campesina* and the regional nucleus of the Communist Party in Guayas, which promoted popular integration at a national level,

¹⁰⁰⁸ Ibid., September 22, 1934, no. 12, 4.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Ibid., October 27, 1934, no. 16.

was the case of the imprisonment of Eustacio Torres. In 1932, the rural police entered the Chilintomo *hacienda* to repress one of the first peasant committees formed in the zone. In this confrontation two peasants and two policemen died. Torres was arrested for one of those deaths and in 1934 he had been in prison for over a year without a trial. With the object of dealing with the case of Torres, the unions of Milagro called a meeting with the participation of the *Comité de Delegaciones Obreras Gremiales*. At stake were the rights of the unions. The question was to whom did justice belong as they denounced the police violence impunity. Getting Torres out of jail would demonstrate that the force of the popular movement could obtain justice. People from the Sierra and the coast attended, including socialists who had had important public functions like Colón Serrano, young communist intellectuals like Joaquín Gallegos Lara, and members of the central committee of the Communist Party, such as Floresmilo Romero, Julio Viteri Gamboa, Rafael Coello Serrano, Alfonso Orellana, and Javier Cárdenas.¹⁰¹⁰ The central idea was the construction of national unity for which it was very important to trace comparisons between their experience and the violence against organized indigenous groups in the Sierra. They denounced the massacres of the indigenous groups of Cayambe and together with the violence of the rural police they called these “crimes of *gamonalism*.” They sought to merge these cases to propose alliances between unions

¹⁰¹⁰ Ibid., November 3, 1934, no. 17, 4.

until the day of “agrarian revolution” that might “expropriate the large landholdings and distribute them into parcels... and return the *comunas* stolen by the *gamonal* power to indigenous groups.” With this discourse, they attempted to construct alliances to reinforce their organizing with favorable public opinion and national mobilizations.¹⁰¹¹

The meeting served to discuss the construction of the *Frente Único de Izquierdas*, which would not be subordinate to the Liberal Party but rather would have its own leadership that would direct the popular front. The objective of national unity became central to the proposal. Thus, beginning in 1935, the newspaper of Milagro included parts in Kichwa and consistently attempted to establish a bridge between peasant struggles in that province and struggles in the Sierra. In 1935, the newspaper invited Ricardo Paredes to interpret the birth of the popular movement in 1934. Paredes proposed that the popular movement began in opposition to the oligarchic-liberal president Martínez Mera, but that in 1934 it entered into a phase of consolidation. Yet, in his opinion, there existed a disproportion between the movement's influence, its popularity, and its insufficient level of organization. In rural areas, aside from the *Sindicato de trabajadores agrícolas del Guayas* (with its center in Milagro), there did not exist enough force to attract vast labor sectors to the struggle. The indigenous movement still had its principal influence in Cayambe and

¹⁰¹¹ Ibid., December 22, 1934, no. 23, 2.

Chimborazo, but after that year this situation began to change.¹⁰¹² In 1935, the *Comité de Lucha Popular* transformed into the *Sindicato General de Trabajadores del Milagro*, taking on a more explicitly communist posture and considering itself as a newspaper that explicitly opposed *velasquismo*, circulating nationally and internationally: “*Lucha Popular* has not only arrived there [to national workers], but also [has circulated] in the entire world, [International workers] know that in Milagro there exists a newspaper for their class.”¹⁰¹³

In this sense, they convoked the PSE, “which included a large quantity of workers that sustain a program that is oriented to the demands of the workers,” and workers and worker parties like the Communist Party in order to direct the Left to be able to face up to Velasco Ibarra.¹⁰¹⁴ Whereas early criticisms of Velasco Ibarra had focused on his method so of illusion, by 1935 the criticisms of Velasco were clearer. They focused on his closeness to the industrial elite of the Sierra, associated with the strikes of 1934, and his support of the transnational companies of the coast. Finally, Rafael Coello Serrano summarized the position consolidated by 1935 that highlighted how Velasco stood for the same interests as Bonifaz: “Velasco represented a sharp offensive of the *gamonales* of the Sierra and their allies, marching under yankee capital, against the old gang of Guayaquil and its traditional bosses, the imperialist

¹⁰¹² Ibid., February 24, 1935, N° 31, 4-5.

¹⁰¹³ Ibid., 1-4.

¹⁰¹⁴ “La situación nacional” in *Lucha popular*, December 1, 1934, no. 21, 1.

British.”¹⁰¹⁵ Velasco represented an attempt of the dominant classes to stabilize the depression, maintaining the same level of exploitation of the masses. Through the sale of the country to imperialism, Velasco sought an alternative to crush “the new resistance of the masses, which along with the revolutionary movement in general is no longer a simple resistance, [and has transformed] itself into a counter-offensive.”¹⁰¹⁶ For Coello Serrano, whereas the mass movement was of the Left, Velasco Ibarra (1934-1935) in his first government and Carlos A. Arroyo del Río, who came from the Liberal Party representing renewed and international elite, stood for “the fascist reaction to the formation of communism.”¹⁰¹⁷ In that context, the *Sindicato General de Trabajadores del Milagro* announced that its intention in the national struggle was accompanied by an international force as members of the *Consejo Central de los Sindicatos* who adhered to the *Confederación Sindical Latino Americana*.

The leftist newspapers and the weeklies, which organizations delivered to the largest possible number of organized groups, were fundamental in this process of class identity articulation.¹⁰¹⁸ Socialist newspapers such as *La Vanguardia* and *La*

¹⁰¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰¹⁶ Rafael Coello Serrano, “La política del país a comienzos del 35,” in *Lucha Popular*, February 24, 1935, no. 31, 10.

¹⁰¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰¹⁸ For a comparable process of articulation of class and ethnicity in the formation of class identity and popular nationalism, see Hylton, “Tierra común: caciques,

Tierra emerged in alliance with popular organizations, while the newspapers *Lucha Popular* and *Nuestra Tierra* (later *Ñucanchic Allpa*) were formed among peasantry and the communist circles. Newspapers such as *Bandera Roja* and *La Vanguardia* wished to reform public opinion on themes related to the peasantry and attempted to demonstrate to peasant communities that their struggles were common to those of other communities in other contexts in the country.

The newspaper *Ñucanchic Allpa* of the Communist Party, in its first edition edited by Nela Martínez and later progressively built up by the indigenous leadership and Ricardo Paredes, was a case of collaboration between indigenous militants and the university Left. It reflected on organizing processes to strengthen the struggle for lands and began a dialogue on culture and revolution in an ethnically complex context.¹⁰¹⁹ The newspaper *Lucha Popular* depicted an “imagined community” throughout the national territory, connected by popular nuclei through a narrative on shared experiences of conflict. Although *Lucha Popular* promoted the formation of an internally diverse popular movement, *Bandera Roja*, in its new stage directed by Ricardo Paredes, proposed a purification of the Left, distancing itself from socialism. According to Vicente León, the PCE began its campaign to organize agrarian workers of the coast from their nucleus in Milagro, a campaign that would lead to the

artesanos e intelectuales radicales.”

¹⁰¹⁹ Becker, *Indigenous Communists*.

formation of the *Federación de Trabajadores Agrícolas del Litoral* (FTAL) in 1954.¹⁰²⁰

This experience advanced along with the symbolic construction of a narrative about the *montubio* peasant and Indians that marked a new cultural referent for the nation in the 1930s. The conservative representation of these groups as essentially determined by race and mythological believes was criticize and they were recast as subjects with conflicts and sexuality who besieged Ecuador's unequal cities.¹⁰²¹ The literary vanguard wrote about popular subjects whose voices expressed incredulity about the cultural fictions that ordered paternalist hierarchies.¹⁰²² At the time of this challenge to the *gamonal* property, the conflicts over lands between peasant communities and large *latifundistas* were re-opened before the state tribunals.

This cultural work of the intellectual circle of the organized Left – the “artists' and writers' unions of Ecuador” – accompanied the experience of political organizing. Thus, the news of rural conflicts in the Sierra provoked the press and were heard in the meetings of coastal peasants. The formation of a national space, in which problems of the coast and the Sierra became evident, was on the agenda. The new

¹⁰²⁰ Uggen, *Tenencia de la tierra*, 68.

¹⁰²¹ The cultural changes of the 1930s included socialist and communist artists like Joaquín Gallegos Lara and Demetrio Aguilera Malta and in plastic arts Kingman and Galo Galecio. See Llerena, *La pintura ecuatoriana del siglo XX*.

¹⁰²² *Revista del sindicato de escritores y artistas del Ecuador SEA*, no. 2 (July and August 1938).

social organization and the new parties promoted a new national culture and politics.

8.3 SAIP, the Popular Movement in the Sierra, and Alliances during the Protest of 1934.

In the case of the SAIP, the organization of artisan guilds transformed between 1934 and 1938 into a vehicle that aimed to unite a popular movement in the Sierra. The first experience registered was the confrontation with conservative *obrerismo* tied to Neptalí Bonifaz and Velasco Ibarra¹⁰²³ and the liberal *obrerismo* of Martínez Mera. After 1934, the strikes that spread across the Sierra and the country provided a major space for learning and represented a shared experience of collective action, mobilization, and solidarity among organizations.

The conflicts in rural areas were also a focus of the discussions in SAIP over the presence of socialist unions that worked on cases of conflict throughout the Sierra and that participated in the organizational development of SAIP. Throughout the 1930s, however, the indigenous movement was most closely associated with the Communist Party and the organization of *Ñucanchic Allpa* as a vehicle for the organization of an indigenous political movement with its own leadership. The Socialist Party and its lawyers continued being essential in the resolution of indigenous conflicts with the *hacienda* in the space provided by the MPST.

¹⁰²³ See Gómez, *Hegemonía, capitalismo y democracia*.

One of the most important features of SAIP was its capacity to serve as a bridge for communication and organization between textile unions of the industries of Quito and the central Sierra. In 1934, protests took place in the electric company, the tramcar, and among the street-cleaners of the municipality in Guayaquil; there was a work stoppage due to the devaluation of the sucre. There was a strike in the weaving factory El Inca, located in Uyumbicho, and another in the cotton industry of Ambato, where a large part of the industry of the Sierra was concentrated. Added to this was the general strike of the railway workers. The intervention of SAIP for different demands for a minimum salary and labor regulations were seen with suspicion. Rumors circulated about “revolutionary movements erupting in diverse places of the republic.”¹⁰²⁴ In that year, innumerable rural conflicts were registered, but there were also industrial strikes.¹⁰²⁵

¹⁰²⁴ *El Comercio*, March 13, 1934.

¹⁰²⁵ See table at end of the chapter

Table 11 - Conflicts registered in the MPST during 1934 ¹⁰²⁶

Province	Place	Conflict
Bolivar	Cunugyacu - Pacobamba and Sinchen <i>haciendas</i>	Ignacio Chico against Ernesto Cordovez for stealing livestock.
Bolivar	Cunugyacu- Pacobamba <i>haciendas</i>	Community of Salingas against Ignacio Chico for lands.
Esmeraldas	Borbón	Expropriation of lands.
Imbabura	Quichinche	Ezequiel Andrade against indigenous population over lands.
El Oro	Portovelo	Miner's strike
Bolivar	San Lorenzo and San Simón	<i>Comuneros</i> against Lorenzo Lema for corruption.
Pichincha	Tolontag <i>hacienda</i>	<i>Peones</i> against landlord for abuses

¹⁰²⁶ AIFP, MPST Collection

Pichincha	Quito	Reports of textile factories for strikes.
Chimborazo	Moyocancha <i>hacienda</i>	Quislag and Pilshishig <i>Communities</i> against Julio Teodoro Salem over lands and abuses.
Imbabura	Pimampiro	<i>Colonia Agrícola Los Puruhaes</i> over lands.
Imabubra	Otavalo – San Rafael	Demans over lands Tocagon and Cachimuel
Tungurahua	Leito	Agreement over water between inhabitants and the Leito, San Javier, La Merced, Pitula, Patate Viejo, La Joya, and Lligua <i>haciendas</i> .

In 1933, the workers of the textile factory *La Internacional* of Quito demanded adjustments to their salaries and the cancellation of fines that the German administrator imposed for any minor error, which had seriously diminished their incomes. The factory was founded by Luis Napoleón Dillon himself and was one of the most modern factories in Pichincha in labor and administrative terms. Unlike other factories, its workers all had salaries; there even existed a union. However, none of the labor laws approved by the assembly of 1929 was complied with entirely. All

practices were subject to the will of the *patron* and his administrators.

In contrast to the union, known as being “of the minority,” the *Cooperativa de trabajadores de la Internacional* was known as “of the majority” and had been established in 1933 with the old SAIP that had experienced a change in its political identification, rejecting the CON and identifying itself as socialist. According to the socialist newspaper *La Tierra*, in December of 1933 the union of *La Internacional* was constituted with nearly 200 workers who met in the *Casa del Obrero*. In that context, the union criticized *bonifacismo* harshly, as well as nascent *velasquismo*, saying that the electoral victory of Velasco was due to the ignorance of the masses and to the false promises of liberalism and conservatism, which “will not know how to attend to the problems of the worker or of the indigenous [person].”¹⁰²⁷ The newspaper *La Tierra*, as in other media at the time, simultaneously maintained two fields of discussion that formed part of the political identity of the Left.

An important artisan sector that established ties with industrial workers from 1933 on and circles of journalists tied to socialism considered the two fundamental themes to the crisis of subsistence of salaried workers and the labor situation in rural areas where there existed colonial domination. In the legal and political discourses during the process of strikes and land occupations in that year, a link was made between these actors who had been strategically differentiated in the construction of

¹⁰²⁷ *La Tierra*, January 1, 1934.

internal colonial space (the workers) and the radical sector of the political process (the peasantry). The meeting of union leaders in the peasant struggles of the moment like Juan Genaro Jaramillo and of the lawyers for the unions of industrial workers like Padilla Cox at the heart of SAIP was crucial for the discursive articulation of two processes that, in fact, were happening simultaneously – the renewal of the peasant struggle and the emergence of worker struggle. In the textile industry of San Juan in Amaguaña, the workers also complained that the labor laws were not complied with due to the large flow of Indians willing to accept temporary jobs. The *mestizo* workers denounced the especially harsh treatment and the reduced payment of the indigenous workers who were compared with women and children in the factory. After the Minister took the matters up with the administrator, he promised to fulfill labor regulations; however, two months later, those who had signed the labor demand had been fired.¹⁰²⁸ The case of Chillo Jijón in Amaguaña complemented the picture in Pichincha. It was the model of labor administration that best reflected a *patronal* articulation of agrarian servitude to industrial production. Faced with the increasing conflicts in the textile firms, the Jacinto Jijón administrator fired 150 workers, anticipating a rise in demands similar to those of San Juan. In this context, the industrial workers sought out the socialist lawyer Juan Genaro Jaramillo in SAIP so

¹⁰²⁸ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 181, Informes de Fábricas 1934.

that he might help them in their defense.¹⁰²⁹ Textile owners carried out layoffs in response to the strikes. They feared the advance of communism in Guayas and Pichincha as strikes were seen as the possible beginnings of larger mobilizations. The factories *La Victoria* and *Bretaña* also fired workers after its unions announced their solidarity with the workers of *La Internacional*, imagining that this solidarity was the beginning of a revolutionary movement.¹⁰³⁰ In this process, one of the most notable proposals was that of the unions and the popular assembly that met in SAIP together with members of the Socialist Party. They saw the need to expand the unions beyond their traditional industrial branches in order to integrate the indigenous problem and the urban indigenous workers who came cyclically to form part of urban informal work. The proposal assumed a growing consciousness of the implicit ties between urban and rural workers and, in addition, such ties were cited to project the conformation of a popular front that could link unions and indigenous communities. If the labor laws were not complied with, claimed the union representative of the textile industry, Juan G. Jaramillo, it was because the *hacienda* system provoked the cyclical migration of peasants without land to the city to offer informal work, only later to return during the other half of the year to do the same in rural areas.¹⁰³¹

¹⁰²⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰³⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰³¹ Ibid., *Fábrica de San Juan y de Chillo Jijón*, 1934, Alegato del síndico Juan Genaro Jaramillo.

This discussion emerged powerfully in the factories, one of the places in which the landholding elite invested its greatest efforts to join colonial legacies along with labor administration in modern installations. The factories did not have a standard for unified labor administration. Several of them were characterized by a labor and ethnic complexity that reflected the agrarian origin of their capital and labor force. Even the most modern industries were characterized by the cyclical supply of rural labor. In *La Internacional*, the labor group proposed as a solution to the presence of a large informal labor supply to extend union membership to ex workers of the factory, including to those who had been fired. The union leader proposed that the union should stop being a corporatist representative of the state in the territory belonging to the firm, and should instead be the source of a more general solidarity. Also, he spoke of placing institutional limits on the informality that had spread throughout the *gamonal* structure, and of unifying the workers' class to consolidate the state. The union leader proposed to the MPST that it become a public union to guarantee the fulfillment of its regulations.¹⁰³²

In the context of the strike, the union proposed that the state take up once more the idea of strengthening its union bases to be able to sustain the development of social legislation that, without the construction of a popular base would be inoperable. Also, as the work of the Communist Party continued, an indigenous

¹⁰³² Ibid., Fábrica La Internacional.

political leadership formed that sought out alliances with leftist parties and, above all, added to the formation a popular movement in the Sierra through its own political organization, the FEI.

SAIP began a campaign to spread information about the daily situation of the striking workers in the Sierra. Such information was spread through the newspaper *La Tierra* and various socialist weeklies. In that year, SAIP organized public manifestations in support of the strikers. Word of that support spread to the provinces of the coast, where solidarity with unions was also a theme.¹⁰³³

In *La Internacional*, the focus of attention of the entire popular movement, the *patrón* fired the union leadership and then turned to violence. However, the cooperative also had been certain not to confront administration without a wide backing of Pichincha union organizations united through SAIP. In this sense, the formation of a *Comité de Huelga* and the naming of socialist Ezequiel Padilla Cox as the secretary of the committee lent greater scope to the process. The use of force had a contrary effect, as the record of the meetings of SAIP demonstrate. This confederation “united with Representatives of the Workers' Organizations accredited before this Society” addressed themselves to Abelardo Montalvo, president of the republic, who asked for the heads of the soldiers who had put down the strike and

¹⁰³³ “Nuestra adhesión y solidaridad con los compañeros trabajadores y trabajadoras de la Fábrica de Tejido La Internacional de Quito,” in *Lucha popular*, March 24, 1934, no. 3, 1.

threatened a national strike if this was not resolved.¹⁰³⁴

SAIP received commissions of striking workers from various factories in Quito and the central Sierra to participate in the popular assembly. The case of *Industrial Algodonera de Ambato*, with 800 men on strike, was also a theme of discussion in the grand assembly in the *Casa del Obrero*. On September 14, 1934, more than 500 workers met to vote on whether or not to support the strike.

The protest movement from Ambato may be crushed. To that end, there is a conspiracy: the deafness of public powers and the false interpretations that were made about the character and motives of the brave movement begun by those workers. Eight hundred men, for a long time exploited, raise their voice up today in protest and demand more humanity to alleviate the weight of their pain. A duty of proletarian solidarity requires that the working classes of Quito, lend decisive support for these struggles of the workers of the Factory “*La Industrial Algodonera*.”¹⁰³⁵

Although the strikes alarmed the private sector, they represented an important success for the MPST. In the socialist platform established in Pichincha in SAIP, organizations came together and in 1934 gave support to the strike until that led to negotiations in which the state intervened, breaking down the habitual use of force. In these negotiations, they stressed the place of class and ethnicity in the construction of

¹⁰³⁴ Acts of the SAIP, March 13, 1934, “La Artística e Industrial del Pichincha considera el problema de La Internacional,” under the presidency of José Pastor Pérez.

¹⁰³⁵ Acts of the SAIP, September 24, 1934. More than 500 workers met at the Casa del Obrero in order to plan the strike and assembly. Acts of the SAIP, September 29, 1934.

a nation. The union, as an organizational vehicle, went beyond the limits laid out in labor legislation and began to be thought of as a cell of the organized civil society that demanded recognition and had a voice in the decisions of the state. According to the socialist proposal formulated by Jaramillo and Padilla Cox, the union was the only guarantee that the state could implement the law.

The communists accused the socialists of being too dependent on the MPST. Together with SAIP, the MPST was a space of socialist influence. From that platform they developed a dialogue with indigenous communities and workers. The memories of MPST functionaries César Carrera Andrade, Miguel Ángel Zambrano, and Alfredo Pérez Guerrero recall how in distinct moments social dialogue emerging from the ministry's tribunals of justice shaped the bureaucracy's particular personality. At the same time, a model of the state was taken shape one that Carrera Andrade defined as a state with a unionized base and that Zambrano identified with an institutionalist cultural revolution.¹⁰³⁶

Between November 1933 and September 1935, the ministry accepted the trials backed by the strike and attempted to impose regulation on the *Internacional*, *Industrial Algodonera de Ambato* textile factories and Jacinto Jijón y Caamaño's *El Peral*. While José Rafael Bustamante was in charge of the MPST, regulation of *La*

¹⁰³⁶ Miguel Ángel Zambrano, *Breve historia del código del trabajo Ecuatoriano. Su génesis elaboración y expedición* (Quito: Editorial Casa de la Cultura Ecuatoriana, 1963).

Internacional factory was approved and served as a model for other unions of workers in textile factories. The unions were able to obtain a favorable response from the state with respect to the formation of a mixed commission to deal with workers' problems in textile factories including *La Internacional*, *La Victoria*, *El Prado*, *La Industrial*, *La Inca*, San Juan, *La Breña*, San Pedro, *La Cabuya Internacional*, *Luz de América*, *La Industrial Algodonera*, San Miguel, *La Joya*, *El Peral*, and *La Sultana*. Abelardo Montalvo justified a series of decisions taken by the MPST as forced by the anti-national behavior of many *patrones*, including the *hacendados* of Loja, and their lack of compliance with labor laws. They observed that the process of applying social rights would advance insofar as the workers registered as organizations in the ministry.¹⁰³⁷ Between October 1933, and August 1934, 47 institutions had been registered, including workers' unions, cultural centers, and cooperative and charity societies.¹⁰³⁸ The same president proposed that this agency for resolving conflicts could be much more efficient in redistribution and pointed out that “the lack of adequate technical personnel that should be dedicated exclusively to expropriations and to land parceling solicited by the indigenous communities for various places of the Republic”¹⁰³⁹ impeded a much more effective process.

¹⁰³⁷ Abelardo Montalvo, *Mensaje que el doctor Don Abelardo Montalvo presenta al Congreso Nacional de 1934* (Quito: Talleres Tipográficos Nacionales, 1934).

¹⁰³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰³⁹ *Ibid.*

Between September 1934, and September 1935, five changes of president took place. Liberal Party and *velasquista* candidates were among them, but as the leftist press had noted, they both attempted to avoid a bottom-up transformation. The advance of social rights was not detained despite the attempt of *velasquismo* and liberalism to recover the state and the MPST. Due to the mobilization of indigenous families of Guamote, against the impositions that accompanied tenancy with the *Compañía del Ferrocarril del Sur*, lands were expropriated and issued to peasants. The bulletin of the MPST demonstrated as one of its achievements the parceling of the *haciendas* of Loja.¹⁰⁴⁰

The ministry became the mediator of labor problems and land access. In practice their functionaries discovered the need to strengthen the institutional apparatus as well as expand the presence of functionaries to achieve autonomy and a national dialogue with indigenous communities. In reference to the strikes of 1934, Abelardo Montalvo explained to the unions “the justifying reason of such movements has been, in all cases, the incompliance with labor laws by the *patronos* and the eagerness to get out of the salaried [worker] the maximum output for capitalist businesses.”¹⁰⁴¹ Minister Colón Serrano insisted on the need to install once again the work commissions that were closed in 1931 because this would facilitate state

¹⁰⁴⁰ Ibid., 28.

¹⁰⁴¹ Ibid., 30.

intervention in productive zones:

The role of simple mediator that corresponds to this Ministry, for lack of jurisdiction in these issues, in the majority of cases, the only thing that has been achieved is to calm the struggling spirits for a period of time that does not exceed five years because then the same indigenous interests and the interference of foreign people who exploit them soon change the situation of stability achieved into odious legal labyrinths in such a way that periodically the same issue returns to the attention of the Ministry, except very rare cases in which, having come to agreement, the litigants naming the Department as the arbiter have obeyed the ruling.¹⁰⁴²

8.4 Unions, Communities, Leagues, and Federations.

In August 1929, the socialist newspaper *La Vanguardia* reproduced a communication of the *Sindicato de Obreros Agrícolas y Campesinos de Cayambe* and the *comunas* of Abatag and Valenzuela in which they denounced the abuses of the *latifundistas*, merchants, and functionaries of the state, among others, and asked that the workers organize themselves, without fear of *patronal* repression, in the form of unions that would later join leagues and federations. This document was signed by, among other indigenous leaders, Jesús Gualavisí in name of the union of *Obreros Agrícolas y Campesinos de Cayambe*. The document produced by the MPST declared:

In the *haciendas* where there are at least 50 workers, a union of the *hacienda*

¹⁰⁴² *Informe del Ministro de Previsión Social y Trabajo, para el año de 1936* (Quito: Imprenta Nacional, 1936), 48.

will be formed that will have a Central Secretary, a Treasurer, a Secretary responsible for the records of the sessions... When in the *haciendas* there are few *peones*, a union will be formed with the *peones* of two or more *haciendas*. The day-laborers who do not live in the *haciendas* can form a union outside of the *haciendas* when in the place there should be at least 50. To the contrary they will enter into the union of the closest *hacienda*. The free peasants who own a piece of land and are not salaried will form leagues of peasants. The agrarian communities will be organized as leagues, with the name of *comuna*. Both the peasant leagues and the *comunas* will have two secretaries and an officer for every twenty workers. Each month, a general assembly will be carried out with all members of the union, league, or *comuna*... All leagues, unions, and *comunas* of a province will name a provincial directory, composed of representatives of all unions, leagues, and *comunas* of the province with a representative for every hundred members...When in all of the provinces the agrarian workers and peasants are organized, a National Congress of agricultural workers and peasants of all the provinces will meet to form the National Federation.¹⁰⁴³

After having ruled in favor of the community in Juan Montalvo, the MPST had not demonstrated sufficient power or will to fulfill the law. With Jesús Gualavisi, the indigenous leaders stopped directing their demands to the MPST. The unions, promoted by Gualavisi, were no longer aiming to express themselves briefly before the state but rather join together and form spaces for collective decision-making as part of a massive, organized popular movement. The socialist method to present demands before the MPST had shown its limit in the experiences of the *comunas* of Cayambe and the state did not recognize other legitimate forms for arbitration of

¹⁰⁴³ This instruction was signed by Jesus Gualavisi, of the *comuna* Juan, in the complaint against the Changalá *hacienda*. He was the founder of the first indigenous union in Ecuador and the future national leader of the FEI. *La Vanguardia*, Año II, August 20, 1929, no. 24, 4.

conflicts and land redistribution.

Gualavisí, a “peasant intellectual” as Becker has described him, pushed the collective to form a union that would transcend local complaints with respect to property. This union became the *Sindicato de Trabajadores Campesinos de Cayambe*. As representative of this union, Gualavisí was a delegate to the foundational assembly of the Ecuadorian Socialist Party in 1926. The Socialist Party promised to support the agrarian struggle that began almost a decade earlier in Cayambe.¹⁰⁴⁴

When the Socialist Party divided over its alignment with the Communist International, Gualavisí maintained his leftist affiliation among the communists headed by Ricardo Paredes. They called a *Conferencia de Cabecillas Indígenas* in the *Casa del obrero* of SAIP in which representatives of diverse local conflicts met to consider the agrarian issue in its national dimensions. Gualavisí offered himself as the contact for news on local agrarian conflicts which would then be transmitted rationally. This group published the bilingual newspaper *Ñucanchic Allpa*.

It was not the first time that the Indian peasants directed complaints tribunals of justice. The local courts were filled with complaints. The novelty of leaders such as Gualavisí and Cacuango, according to Becker, was the fact that they represented their community and did not delegate such representation to such figures as the “protector”

¹⁰⁴⁴ Becker, *Indigenous Communists*.

of Indians or the lawyers who defended the “unfortunate indigenous race.”¹⁰⁴⁵ Gualavisi was, in Becker's words, “a bridge between two dramatically different worlds” as an active promoter of local community organizations that were transforming themselves from kinship groups into associations oriented towards ends of the public good and as allies in the construction of a political party.¹⁰⁴⁶ The indigenous leadership allowed for the airing of agrarian conflicts on public terrain and before the opinion of distinct urban sectors. Their alliances with political parties of the Left led to the production of national projects of popular coalition that reciprocally strengthened the Left and the agrarian movements.

The attempt to construct a popular movement to pressure for political decisions from the state was a great challenge. The perspective was to create platforms of articulation of the indigenous communities engaged in secular conflicts within a *Federación Nacional*. In effect, Jesús Gualavisi and Dolores Cacuangó, among other *comuneros* who lost their lands through confrontations with the *hacendados* in Cayambe, found in the Communist Party and leaders Ricardo Paredes and Gregorio Cordero y León a space for exchange and projection that served to accumulate forces and to consider their conflicts in a broader perspective.¹⁰⁴⁷ Thus, they began to

¹⁰⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴⁷ Marc Becker states in his work on the FEI that the relationship between the Community Party and the indigenous leadership was an exchange and a learning

construct a third vehicle for the aggregation of popular organizations and indigenous communities. In 1935, after the pressure of the popular movement had achieved demonstrable effects *Federación Indígena* began to take form through the work of organization and press from *Nuestra Tierra*, an “organ of the indigenous masses” presided over by indigenous leader José Farinango and administered by militant communist Modesto Rivera. The paper was bilingual and held a role similar to that of *Lucha Popular*. It demonstrated the organizing processes that had carried the communities beyond the conventional legal mechanisms to the formation of strong movements and collective actions. Thus they narrated, for example, the process in the *Pul hacienda* in Chimborazo, where the community advised the president of the republic and the president of the MPST that they did not have any other resource than to strike for labor regulation and the end of servitude on that *hacienda*.¹⁰⁴⁸

According to Becker’s study many complaints about the paper’s distribution in the rural communities, due to its criticism of the central elements of rural domination. It served as a tool for organization of the indigenous movement as well as establishing communication with a wider public. The first known number from 1935 was produced after a meeting in the *Casa del Obrero* of the SAIP which addressed the need for a national organization was defending indigenous interests. The editor of

process the social movement acquired a consolidated structure.

¹⁰⁴⁸ *Ñucanchic Allpa*, March 1935, Año I, no. 6, 1.

the newspaper was the young communist leader Nela Martínez, while Jesús Gualavisi presented himself as the general secretary of the *Consejo General de Cabecillas Indios*. Becker notes that there were opinion sections on diverse themes from different contributions. Among these, the complaints of *huasipungueros* from various *haciendas* of the *beneficencia pública* were expressed. The newspaper made reference to the special case of abuses in Cayambe and requested intervention from the government of Federico Páez. The president blamed the MPST for the complaints, attempted to contain the demands, and persecuted the Communist Party.

This provoked forceful reactions from the state and 80 Indians were arrested and carried to the prison of Riobamba. While the Liberal and Conservative Parties spoke of insurrection, the Communist Party explained how the constitution of 1929 gave legitimacy to peaceful strikes and justified this measure through a description of the relations of illegal servitude in Ecuador that were practiced on the *hacienda*.¹⁰⁴⁹ In this confrontation, the leader Ambrosio Lasso from Pul was taken prisoner similarly to the case of Eustoquio Torres in Milagro who was in jail for two years because he confronted rural repression in Guayas. For the liberation of both popular leaders the Communist Party mounted a national campaign particularly in the case of Lasso this campaign included reflections on “inhumanity” of the country towards the Indians. The *Consejo General de cabecillas indios*, directed by Jesús Gualavisi in Cayambe

¹⁰⁴⁹ Ibid., 2-3.

and Joaquín Gallegos Lara, the communist author and leader from Guayaquil, among many other organizations, collaborated to pressure for his release.¹⁰⁵⁰

Gallegos Lara was part of the organization “*Defensa obrera y campesina*” of Guayaquil. Similarly, a group called “*Comisión de ayuda indígena*” mobilized in Quito and the Left spoke of the Indian problem as a problem of all of Latin America. The conference of Indian leaders called on all peasants, including blacks, *mestizos and mulatos* to unite to defend themselves against common enemies. In the newspaper, a special attention was shown to the alliance among different types of “*peones*” and the need to break ethnic barriers and establish efficient organizations with spokesmen (secretaries de propaganda).

A council of Indian leaders (Conferencia de Cabecillas Indigenas) was created based on solidarity over multiple agrarian conflicts between indigenous communities and local powers. The denunciations of violence in the central Sierra and the northern Sierra piled up. At the same time, the paper communicated reflections on how to advance the organization, and how the peasants of the coast might create an class identity that would permit them to be integrated into the general peasant struggle. However, in this period there existed a particular concern about the theme of the cultural diversity of the indigenous groups. This is evident in the intimate correspondence between Nela Martínez and Joaquin Gallegos Lara, her husband.

¹⁰⁵⁰ *Ñucanchic Allpa*, March 17, 1936, año I, no. 8, 1.

In dialogue with the *Conference of Cabecillas Indios*, the journalists of *Ñucanchic Allpa* began to elaborate a class concept together with one of “oppressed nationalities.”¹⁰⁵¹ This had important implications for the way of conceiving the cultural process that accompanied the revolutionary process. A bilingual press and bilingual schools were two projects in which the same actors participated. At the same time that common class identities were promoted, the terrain of ethnicity was explained in the organization: “The communities will need to organize themselves into indigenous *comunas* and the loose or free Indians into Peasant Leagues. A national organization or General Indigenous Council needs to be formed.”¹⁰⁵²

In the correspondence section of the paper, a space for expression was created in which unions gave their testimonies on struggle against the *haciendas*. It published denunciations from Pucará, Tigua, Poaló, Chimba (Pesillo), and San Pablo Urco among other.¹⁰⁵³ *Ñucanchic Allpa* tracked the organizations of industrial workers, gathered into a social movement with 5,000 workers who formed the unions of the factories *La Joya*, San Pedro, San Juan, *La Inca*, that of Atuntaqui, *La Internacional*, *La Industrial*, *La Victoria*, that of Uyumbicho, *La Jatunyacu*, San Jacinto, *La Industrial Algodonera*, *La Sultana*, *El Peral*, *La Bretaña*, and *El Prado*.¹⁰⁵⁴

¹⁰⁵¹ *Ñucanchic Allpa*, March 17, 1936, año I, no. 8, 2-3.

¹⁰⁵² *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵³ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹⁰⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 4.

The paper followed the work of the MPST closely between 1936 and 1938. In these years two new important laws were issued: The Law of *Comunas*, together with the legal statutes of peasant communities, and the Labor Code. The town council of the *comuna* of Maca Grande, after several years of dispute in which the political parties attempted to withdraw social rights, issued a call “to all the *Comunas* and Town Halls of the *Comunas*, to all the peasants, to the Indians and *montubios*” to prevent the industrialists and the landowners from modifying the rights they had already won.¹⁰⁵⁵

8.5 Top-down and Bottom-up Corporativism: Disputes over the Meaning of the Law of Communities (1936-1937).

In response to the cycle of strikes and the growth of unions-state dialogue, the liberal elite proposed a top-down corporativist model of state-civil society relation. President Federico Paez attempted to motivate the business elite to lead an industrial project and reform the policies of social inclusion of the MPST while blocking the role of unions in it. the president restructured the ministry aggressively and developed new Social Security policies which included a Law for the recognition and regulation of Indian Communities. In year 1936 the constitution of 1929 was abolished and the constitution of 1906 was established, all of the functionaries of the

¹⁰⁵⁵ Ibid., August 22, 1938, época II, no. 12, 2.

MPST who were tied to socialism were fired. Although there were attempts to reduce agrarian conflicts to an economic problem, separating them from the political tensions over labor relations, the president did preserve the position of the socialist Miguel Ángel Zambrano in the legal department in order that he compile labor laws and trials and write a Labor Code.¹⁰⁵⁶ Thus, between October 1935 and August 1937, 2,148 trials were attended to in commissions and in the labor inspectors together with 20,000 verbal demands that were resolved through negotiation in the ministry.¹⁰⁵⁷ The president idea was to pact benefits for labor unions managed by the industrial elite at the same time that he pursued to de-politizice the indigenous movement by separating them from the popular movement and by regulating the indigenous communities.

After firing the entire group of functionaries of the institution and substituting all of the lawyers and sociologists for agricultural and civil engineers, a series of changes in the field of labor organizations and land conflicts were proposed.¹⁰⁵⁸ Two apparently unconnected but in reality complementary laws were passed. Firstly, a Chamber of Agriculture and Industry was created that substituted for the old National Association of Farmers of the oligarchic period. According to his explicit proposal, the representation of the branches of production was to be handed over to these

¹⁰⁵⁶ Zambrano, *Breve historia del código del trabajo ecuatoriano*.

¹⁰⁵⁷ *Boletín del Ministerio de Previsión Social, Trabajo, Agricultura e Industrias*, Año 1, no. 1, enero de 1937.

¹⁰⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

corporations. In 1937, two agricultural zones were established (coast and Sierra) with their respective Chambers of Commerce, Agriculture, and Industry that were viewed as an umbrella that would include unions of industrial elites (the cartels) and workers' unions. All of the farmers of the republic would be part of Cantonal Agrarian Centers governed and represented by the Chambers of Agriculture before the state.¹⁰⁵⁹ Although it was evident that he wanted to strengthen the MPST once more, re-establishing the labor commissions and creating an office of labor on the coast, it was re-oriented to promoting agriculture and supporting industry, closing off all treatment of agrarian conflicts as political themes. The *patronos* would be in charge of demanding security for the workers and they would contribute to this cause. The new Law of Social Security established that the unions ought to register themselves with these business chambers, and only through a previous agreement between distinct classes and their representatives were they to seek state intervention. The organization of social security attempted to take away the relevance of the unions as actors making demands for labor reforms. He attempted to de-politicize associations that the Left conceived of as laboratories for corporatist citizenship. At the same time, the Law of Social Defense was passed and served to declare the as criminal all social protest, including that of the Indians in the areas with the greatest and most conflictive organization -- Cayambe, Tigua, Tisaleo, Toacazo, and also the zones of

¹⁰⁵⁹ Decree N° 24, February 10, 1937.

conflict in the coast.¹⁰⁶⁰ The law diminished the autonomy of the unions to interact with the state, but it was complemented with the second law, that of the Organization and Regime of Communities.¹⁰⁶¹ This substituted for the agrarian union with the objective of institutionalizing the peasant collectives. The law defined the *comuna* as a collective for the management of inalienable property and denied it functions of representation in labor and land conflicts.

Since the Law of Territorial Division of the Republic did not take into account the population centers that with the name of hamlets, *barrios*, communities, or *parcialidades* subsisted “within the nationality,” Páez ordered that they be given “due legal and administrative representation with the purpose of promoting their intellectual, moral, and material betterment.” He therefore proceeded to designate as communities all such settlements, maintaining the name with which they had existed.

The law recognized the community rather than the union, the other legal identification to that which the populations had turned. Although their rights would be supervised by the MPST, they were subject to the jurisdiction of the urban or rural parish within whose territorial circumscription they were located. The community

¹⁰⁶⁰ *Actas del Primer Congreso de Industriales del Ecuador* (Quito: Imprenta Nacional, 1936). *Boletín del Ministerio de Previsión Social, Trabajo, Agricultura e Industrias*, no. 2-3, febrero-marzo de 1937. *Boletín del Ministerio de Previsión Social, Trabajo, Agricultura e Industrias*, no. 4, mayo de 1937.

¹⁰⁶¹ *Ley de Organización y Régimen de Comunidades*, executive decree of July 30, 1937.

had rights to collective goods and representation in a town council. The town council would represent the community in all acts and contracts and was to be elected every December in a general assembly presided over by the political deputy of the parish and the community of registered Indians belonging to it. Alternatively, the ministry could name the town council.

These regulations that reduced the community on the territorial plane, subordinating them to sectional power, cannot be understood independently from the program of modernization of relations between the state and civil society proposed by Páez strengthen the business elite and especially the industrial elite through their representation in the chambers. However, the recognition of indigenous communities by the state had been part of a long-running negotiation. Moreover, due to the initiative of the communities themselves the concept of the *comuna* transformed into something distinct from what was expected during the promulgation of the law in the period of Páez. In the technical visits of the rural inspectors to Pilahuin, functionaries demonstrated the lack of state understanding of the communities. There the socialist functionaries described their work as commissioned by the state as researchers who were going to get to know the indigenous communities, a palpable and little-known reality: “to collect all data in reference to the Community; to observe its social and economic state; to research the causes of dispute, the de facto situation and structure

of the Community, even its system of production and lifestyle.”¹⁰⁶² The researchers called attention to the fact that the communities did not exist in the legislation, despite how crucial they were as actors in local disputes and with respect to the state.

In Ecuadorian legislation, the communities were undefined. The Civil Code, which was that which regulated patrimonial rights, did not contain a single disposition about them. Moreover, in these social units the law that was “lived” was in absolute opposition to the laws indicated in the procedure of the Law of Territorial Patrimony of the State, which did not determine the legal nature of the communities. Our laws – copies of foreign ones – make an almost complete abstraction of the modalities of an enormous sector of the Republic. We cannot even affirm that Article 534 of the Civil Code, which defines legal persons understands communities; because they are neither corporations nor foundations since no community has fulfilled the legal requirements for being such.¹⁰⁶³

Were the communities collectives with territorial rights of possession? Were they kinship nuclei? Had they come from unions or leftist cells? These were questions being argued. In reality, if the context of the promulgation of the Law of Communities was the attempt to suppress the political discourse of the agrarian unions, the dispute over the meaning of the new legal category was more complex than Páez' program assumed. The need for recognition of the communities as collectives with territorial possession and its own authorities was part of a long process of conflict during the republic. However, their recognition arrived precisely

¹⁰⁶² AIFP, MPST Collection, box 218, *Informe técnico sobre la Comunidad de Pilahuin*, September 19, 1930, f. 5.

¹⁰⁶³ Ibid.

in a moment in which the new political entity was the agrarian union and ethnic identity was conceived as nationality. The legal space of the community was more restricted than that which the groups of unions had organized politically in federations promoted by councils of indigenous leaders.

The first recognized community was the community of Indians of Yaruqui, whose trajectory of conflict we have studied. This recognition took place in 1936 in response to the new demand for expropriated lands in the eastern valley of Quito and that had been in dispute between the Catholic corporation of the *Señoras de la Caridad* and the indigenous community. The first rural town to organize as a community following the instructions of the Law for the Organization and Regimen of Communities of 1937 appeared in the MPST in 1936 to demand the intervention of the state to resolve a situation of enclosure and persecution of the population by the neighboring *haciendas* of San Antonio and Guambi.¹⁰⁶⁴ Impressed by their account, the head of the engineering section of the MPST, Suárez Davila, backed their demands for expropriation of a section of El Guambi called *El Aguacate*. Suarez was a functionary formed in the idea of productivity and territorial planning and agreed that the haciendas were affecting the subsistence of this growing population. He had a different notion of the internal market than the members of the Tabavela peasantry

¹⁰⁶⁴AIFP, MPST Collection, box 183, Pichincha, Yaruqui. Trial for the expropriation of the *hacienda* Huambi. The commune *Tabavela* demands *Señoras de la Caridad*, Pichincha, Yaruquil, 1936.

had, yet the idea of a landowner blocking the roads to the market affected the engineer's report. He recommended that the Ministry expropriate *El Aguacatem*, which belonged to the Catholic lay corporation *Señoras de la Caridad*, to divide it into plots among the newly formed households and to open an access to the roads. Between 1936 and 1941, the neighbors had expanded their demands to the expropriation of the whole *hacienda* of El Guambi, as well as the haciendas of San Antonio, Santa Rosa, Oyambarillo, and Yacupamba, which had appropriated most of their principal source of water. In his letters from the field to the Minister Victor Gabriel Garcés, Suárez Davila described the contentious situation of the agrarian surroundings of the capital city, particularly in the eastern valleys, as a problem of a lack of land for a demographically expanding farmer class. For Suárez, the Yaruqui peasants could become a prosperous economic actor. They were described as industrious, serious, and honorable and economically more competitive than other peasants in similar conditions. Suárez highlighted their ability to make economic decisions.

Suárez argued first that their ethnic memory was vague. In fact, their relatively successful combination of private agricultural production and market activities and their lack of communal land for pastures seemed to be proof that these *vecinos* were *mestizo* peasants. For Suárez, these *mestizo* peasants were still in a process of gradual integration into the internal market, but they came from a class prone to such

integration. The contradictions of Suárez' views on *El Aguacate* suggest some of the contradictions between the standard view of the peasants as a group of the population in a gradual process of integration into modern civilization and a more complex, diverse, and rich popular approach to the relation between ethnic strategies of economic diversification and identity diversification that included *mestizo* and Indian segments of kinship networks.

Modernization replaced social integration in the state rhetoric during the regime of Federico Paez (1935-1937). The MPST started a restructuring process which included the hiring of engineers as advisers and visiting evaluators (such as Suarez), the repression of unionization and agrarian protest, the expansion of charity through social security mechanisms, and the linkage of elite associations transformed into the Chamber of Industries and the Chamber of Agricultural Corporations. In fact, the Paez regime did not have a particular interest in fighting the highland elite, but was determined to give stronger support to agrarian entrepreneurs and industrialists who followed the rules of modernization. The chambers (of industry and agriculture) warranted all the protection and benefits that the state could provide them. Yet the state had to replace socialist policies with alternative actions for avoiding social conflict.¹⁰⁶⁵

¹⁰⁶⁵ *Actas del Primer Congreso de Industriales del Ecuador; Boletín del Ministerio de Previsión Social*, no. 2-3; *Boletín del Ministerio de Previsión Social*, no. 4.

In the Paez regime the workers' unions (seen as close to the left) persecuted, shut down, and then suddenly reopened with state support. Paez sent a message of integration, but under conditions of repression of social conflict. The elite felt disrespected, but the threat of social conflict made the restructuring of landed property urgent for the purpose of an elite-led industrial modernization.¹⁰⁶⁶ As a solution, he recommended that the state pay a high price for the lands, allowing the Catholic corporation to better fulfill its commitment as a public charity and making it possible to sell plots of land to the Tabavela peasants, thus avoiding a rural conflict.

The case presented by the Tabavela peasants and small merchants caused an undeniable tension between functionaries and the landowners. But this process of purchasing hacienda lands and selling them to peasants with legal recognition as communities became characteristic of the most well known agrarian reforms of 1964 and 1973.

I recommend that the government buy land and then sell it. The formulas (of credit) through the mortgage bank are dangerous. I fear that the education of our very low level people will be a source of conspiracy. Only Guambi, not Oyambarillo, should be sold, until they are able to accumulate better economic conditions. More security and fewer difficulties would be characteristic of an economic operation in a free or open market than in a directed or planned economic experiment because the operations based on credit require more than economic capacity a certain degree of cultural development that the peasantry

¹⁰⁶⁶ Dolores Jijón de Gangotena, *Manifiesto de las señoras de la Caridad. Sus derechos y sus fines* (Quito: Tipografía y Encuadernación Salesiana, 1909).

has not yet attained.¹⁰⁶⁷

In exchange for their intervention, the ministry required that the peasants form a legally constituted community, as established in the Law of the Organization and Regime of Communities that was promulgated during the regime of Paez. At the same time, the engineer Suarez recommended that the state pay special attention to the seriousness of the transaction by nominating a reputable representative. Colonel Nicolas Solis became the first president of the town council of the new *comuna*, a position conventionally conceived as pertaining to the *cacique* or *cabecilla*.

The idea of a military figure representing the people and the Indians was especially attractive to Paez. Once the Left was discussing the possibility of creating an autonomous leadership, top-down liberalism represented by Páez determined that recuperating the credibility of the military as a national corporation was a good option and placed a military member as head of the first community. The message was clear. A *comuna* was not a union – a conflictive organization directed by a leadership – but rather a *comuna* was an entity of the national state, directed by that level of the state that was closest to the *pueblo*. In the perspective of the top-down modernization program promoted by Páez, a military member at the head of an indigenous community represented the inclusion of the people, but via a leadership

¹⁰⁶⁷ Ibid., Reporte de Suárez Dávila, Ingeniero Jefe de la sección ingeniería, f. 43.

that was already linked to the state. Thus, the state avoided the risk of a politically autonomous entity such as the union or, worse yet, a popular front.

Although this was the state program, the communities appropriated the new legal framework in a way that was closer to the radical agenda. *Communities* integrated into this framework in order to seek state recognition as they had earlier as unions. This was the case, for example, of the indigenous peoples of Zumbahua, who constituted a *comuna* with a constitution and election of a directive from among 205 family heads, 410 young adults, and 325 women in order to face up to the *hacienda*.¹⁰⁶⁸ Social groups simultaneously and strategically adopted different types of identification. An indigenous community could have various names as collectives and speak as communities, unions, associations and even federations depending of the context.

In one of the paradigmatic cases, that of Toacazo in Cotopaxi were one of the branches of the FEI was founded in 1944, the community of *huasipungueros* and *yanaperos* of the Bartolo de Toacazo *hacienda* accumulated an experience of various strategic identities use. They constituted a *huasipunguero* community with some landless peasants who were part of its kinship network. Seeking out the political deputy, they named themselves as unions and declared their “eagerness to be taken

¹⁰⁶⁸AIFP, MPST Collection, box 203. Zumbahua parroquia Pilaló cantón Pujilí, Cotopaxi., 1940-1942. Letter of *indigenas de Zumbahua* al MPST, [November 10, 1941], f. 65.

into account by the enlightened Ministry of Social Welfare and Labor.” Therefore, the political deputy directed himself to the ministry in order to have the statutes presented by the twelve families of the *hacienda* recognized to form an agrarian union.¹⁰⁶⁹

But they were not only communities and unions at the same time, they were also cells of a political federation. The authority posts went to various men by the name of Tocte, Chacha, and Cofre and they named six federated representatives whose functions included summoning twenty members to the assemblies. On June 21, the six local leaders once more turned to the political deputy but this time as the local leaders of the FEI. They demonstrated their loyalty first to the FEL, greeting the secretary Modesto Rivera and other constituents of the Federation, and once more they requested recognition as union members in order to speak not only with the Federation and the Communist Party but also with ministry.¹⁰⁷⁰

The clear interest of this varied legal and political strategy went hand in hand with another characteristic of the formation of indigenous political identities in the period. Toacazo had become the terrain for a strategic advance of communities, unions, and federations. Similar processes took place in other parishes, in the Quillusillin *hacienda* of Toacazo an organization federated within the FEI, and which

¹⁰⁶⁹ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 280.

¹⁰⁷⁰ Ibid.

included *huasipungueros* and *yanaperos* (landless peasants who engaged in cyclic migrations) approached the political deputy to request legalization as a union recognized by the state.¹⁰⁷¹ Whereas the Law of Communities only recognized the residents of a locality and did not take into account *arrimados*, peasants without lands who formed part of the kinship network and economic exchange, in their search for justice in the courts the communities register also *arrimados* as members of the collectivity before the state.

Among the statutes of the union of Quillucillin, the union proposed to defend the interests of workers and of Ecuadorian Indians in general to build ties to workers around the country and make its members patriotic citizens, and to channel them into forms of production that would aid unions and their members.¹⁰⁷² The proposal for the union was negotiated and mediated by the FEI and the Communist Party. The existing kinship groups and the complex networks of community membership were represented in the new association and supported a longer-term political strategy. In the statutes on organization we can observe the criteria for association that indicate the influence of the Federation: “All adult men and women at least eighteen years old who work on the hacienda, though they not be indigenous people, can belong to the

¹⁰⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷² Ibid.

union, except for administrators and servants.”¹⁰⁷³ At the same time, the union indicated that it intended to maintain external relations with other class and ethnic organizations.¹⁰⁷⁴

Between 1934 and 1944, two serious attempts took place to block popular pressure and to further state changes. The first attempt was during the government of Velasco Ibarra in 1934 and the second during the government of Federico Páez in 1936. The first represented an anti-communist initiative of conservative origin that sought to integrate middle-class circles nationally and subsume popular urban sectors within their vision of the nation. The second was a top-down project of state modernization, an evolution of the Liberal Party that had the support of part of the industrial and commercial elite of Quito. Their project viewed elite corporativism directed by industrial chambers as an alternative with which to subordinate political unionism that the popular classes had developed due to legal cracks opened up by

¹⁰⁷³ Ibid. “The attributions of the representatives are: A. summon the twenty workers who answer to them with at least two days anticipation so that they are punctual in attending the meetings that the directory convokes. B. To watch over the security of the members entrusted to their care C. To inform the secretary of the organization of news about its members inside and outside of work. (14) The obligations of the secretary of women's issues are: A. To direct the organizing work among women of the union, to do everything that can be done for their progress, both economic and cultural, among the women within the union.”

¹⁰⁷⁴ Ibid. “The attributions of the secretary of Culture and propaganda are: A. Hand out propaganda, carry out the work previous to every assembly and meeting of a union nature. B. Organize courses of culturization to improve the morality and culture of the associates, maintain relations with the internal organizations of the republic for indigenous defense.”

socialism. This was an initiative to substitute bottom-up corporativism in which the working classes had been able to convert themselves into collective negotiators with the state for a top-down corporativism in which industrialists constituted powerful unions or economic cartels with institutional regulations and the concentration not only of economic power but of modern political leadership.

The height of repression against the *comuneros* who generated demands according to the Law of Territorial Patrimony of the State was in 1936, when the regime that offered to modernize the repressive apparatus of the state in favor of modernization repressed the entire spectrum of the Left. The regime of Páez persecuted Indian leaders and sent them to prison on the Galápagos Islands, but it also assailed whole communities. According to community members from the Depote hacienda in Chimborazo, the regime used the “pretext of seeking out leaders in order to take animals, tools, and having the communities terrified.”¹⁰⁷⁵

The new MPST called upon the industries to join the modernizing process. However, the results of the first congress of the *Nacional de Industriales* in Quito were not promising. The businessmen opposed modernization and state intervention in the form of the most minimal regulation. Years later, in 1948, Harold B. Hoskins coincided when he argued that the greatest problem with the textile industry of the

¹⁰⁷⁵ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 188, Huasipungueros de la hacienda Ocpote, Cantón Colta, Provincia Chimborazo.

Sierra was not the lack of technology but rather the nature of *patronal* worker relations. The true problem with productivity lay in the combination of *patronal* racism and a worker field married to unionism and demanding the attention of the state. The *patronal* culture refused to expand the circulation of money and was convinced that the Indians had no tendency toward consuming merchandise.

Management determines what is to be produced, as happened in the United States before the First World War. I found few cases in which the section in charge of sales was in close contact with the desires of the consumers or that it was able to induce the factories toward the production of those progressive requirements of the market... They limit the production “to fulfill the needs of what management thinks will be the needs of the Indians and the poorest classes of Ecuadorians.”¹⁰⁷⁶

The unionized workers supported the fact that Ecuador had a “very advanced labor code that, in principle, gives the workers many rights and pays for vacations as well as what is called the 'integral week.’”¹⁰⁷⁷ According to Hoskins, while the labor code was evaded by businesses, the high level of unionization of the workers in the textile industry was also notable. The situation of the MPST was difficult given the politicization of the popular classes and the resistance of the elites to modernization.

¹⁰⁷⁶ Harold B. Hoskins, “Industria textil ecuatoriana, informe,” International Basic Economy Corporation to the Government of Presidente Galo Plaza (1948-1952), in Vol. 4 of *Administración del Presidente Galo Plaza*.

¹⁰⁷⁷ Ibid.

The socialists who still collaborated with the ministry attempted to maintain the state's autonomy:

Until now the concentric spheres of political and social activity are not delimited successfully. On the one hand, *gamonalismo*... defends itself as vigorously as possible to make the administration of the State fit into postulates that the capitalist flood wipes out. On the other hand, under the pretext of worker demands, communism, an essentially political party, promotes violence in the workers' movement. And the Government, in search of the truth encapsulates the demands of the working class that lives among elements that are to a certain degree antagonistic, analyzing the facts and rejecting biased interpretations, can affirm categorically that, under the empire of law, it has conceded the widest guarantees for the working, indigenous, and peasant class.¹⁰⁷⁸

An intermediate position was impossible. The illegitimacy of Páez was growing given the lack of support for the modernizing project among business elite, at the same time that the use of force against the Left was creating enemies within the democratic bloc. In this context, the Liberal Party feared the return of the Conservative Party, and the Minister of Defense Alberto Enríquez Gallo declared himself the Supreme Chief of the Republic and changed the state's direction.

¹⁰⁷⁸ *Informe del Ministro de Previsión Social y Trabajo* (Quito: Imprenta Nacional, 1936), 26.

8.6 A New Cycle in the Search for Justice and Social rights: State-popular Politics Dialogue in 1938.

During the year of his dictatorship (1937-1938), Enríquez Gallo showed a new moment of popular movement-military alliance. He supported the meeting of the Congress of Ecuadorian Workers in Ambato, which was called by union assemblies and leftist parties in various regions of the country and sought to create a National Workers Center (The catholic Compactación Obrera Nacional, CON). The promulgation of the Labor Code helped to reconstitute the power of bottom-up corporativism to the detriment of visions of top-down modernization. In this government, unionism was promoted to the point of making it obligatory, forcing the *patronal* to formalize contracts and recognize workers' rights.

The Labor Code was an ample text, including regulations that went back to 1925. In rural areas, the sub-inspectors of agrarian labor filled roles in labor conflict mediation and regulation. Minimum wage commissions were created and put in charge of fixing salaries for rural and urban workers. The code also spoke of a path towards agrarian reform.¹⁰⁷⁹ Enríquez Gallo gave various signs of renewing the work and the demands of the Left, including support for unionism and the promulgation of the organic labor code. He also established conditions for new processes of land

¹⁰⁷⁹ Supreme Decree N° 210, of August 5, 1938, (RO N° 78-81, November 14-17, 1938)

redistribution and attempted – in a nationalist discourse – to strengthen the state *vis-a-vis* transnational companies. His position echoed the analysis of the maximum communist leader of the country, Ricardo Paredes, who argued against the North American mining company SADCO, and imposed severe restrictions obligating the company to formalize work and pay taxes.¹⁰⁸⁰

In a show of democracy, Enríquez Gallo called a national constitutional assembly and renounced his presidency. The constitution of 1938 nationalized natural resources and, in order to prevent the return of oligarchic liberalism, established that no trustee of international companies could be president of the republic. Also, the constitution increased the functional senators, giving space for two representatives of farm workers, and eliminated indigenous representation at the same time it established the possibility for an agrarian reform.

In this context, a new and powerful cycle of peasant and indigenous activation began. The regime decided to place socialists in the MPST once more, and the lawyer of indigenous communities in Pichincha, Néstor Mogollón was put in charge of the study and the modification of the legal framework pertaining to lands and communities. Mogollón introduced important modifications to the Law of the Organization and Regime of Communities, including the establishment of the

¹⁰⁸⁰ Mining company settled in Portovelo, El Oro province. South American Development Company. In Paredes, *El imperialismo en el Ecuador*.

community's ability to request of the MPST land expropriation and adjudication.¹⁰⁸¹ The reformed Law of *Communities* and the Labor Code opened a crack for indigenous legal struggle¹⁰⁸².

The successful renewal of a pact between the military and the popular movement in opposition to the project of modernization from above reflected the vitality and strength of the search for democratization from below among various groups in Ecuador. These actors built in the language of the time a "Democratic Front" in which popular organizations were essential. The project of a top-down corporativism not only failed because of the lack of collaboration among industrial and agrarian elite with the Paez view of modernization, but also because the social movement from below was able to resist as organizations and communities came together into powerful coalitions in search of democratization. In 1938, popular organizations from all over the country showed their determination to defend the social rights which they had helped to build, in addition to their ability to use the legal system to obtain justice and to mobilized to protect the revolutionary process.

In 1938, the MPST received an increase in demands to which the state responded in favor of popular demands. Court cases and demands were accompanied by a generalized demonstration of force in various regions on behalf of the popular

¹⁰⁸¹ Supreme Decrees N° 165 and N° 181 of July 13 and July 29, 1938

¹⁰⁸² See table at end of the chapter.

movement. As the list below indicates, people actively used the legal framework to demand the restitution of lands, the recognition of their communities and unions, and protection against the hacienda. Various popular organizations showed their capability to mobilized and the state responded to their mobilization with a very significant process of recognition and redistribution. Between 1938 and 1944, the strength of the popular movement and their capability to pressure for state response reached their apex with respect to the first half of the twentieth century.

Table 12 - Conflicts registered in the MPST in 1937-1938¹⁰⁸³

Province	Place	Conflict
Bolivar	Guaranda	Community vs Rafael Calero
Bolivar	San Miguel, Balzapamba	Daniel Villagómez and Diego González against the municipality of San Miguel over lands.
Bolvíar	San Miguel	Ramón Augusto Gaybor against the Council of San Miguel over lands.
Pichincha		Land ownership between Luis

¹⁰⁸³ AIFP, MPST Collection.

		Tumipamba and Federico Tumipamba
Pichincha		Dispossession of lands between Juliana Guanuna and Victoria Guaygua. Community of El Murco.
Los Ríos	Quevedo, <i>Comuna</i> Valencia	Expedient of the <i>Comuna</i>
Esmeraldas	Pailón	Report for the reception of lands of the Ecuador Land Co.
Pichincha	Puembo	Expropriation of the Viteri <i>hacienda</i> among Puembo <i>comuna</i> – Chiche and Conferencia San Vicente de Paúl.
Los Ríos	Babahoyo	Demarcation of lands between the Fisco and purchasers of Victoria <i>hacienda</i> .
Imbabura	Pataquí	Freile Zaldumbide Family against landlords.
Chimborazo	Chuquipogyo	Communitiy against <i>hacienda</i> over lands.
Imbabura	San Agustín de Cajas	Inhabitants of González Suárez against

		the <i>Asistencia Pública</i> for land expropriation
Bolívar	Guranda - Guanujo	Lands of Vela family, Tablas – El Café lands
Pichincha	Huagrahuasi	Ubillis and Huagrahuasi against <i>Asociación Agrícola de Militares retirados</i> over the purchase of lands.
Cotopaxi	Guaytacama	José Antonio Gualpa against Miguel Yugsi for the return of lands
Los Ríos	Babahoyo	Farmers of Quevedo against <i>Compañía Agrícola</i> over dispossession of lands.
Imbabura		Angel María Garcés for goods of Antonio Vásquez
Pichincha	Pacto	Eliana Barrera for lands
Imbabura	Colimburo	Juan J. Tobar of the Chaupi <i>hacienda</i> against the indigenous people of Mariano Acosta for lands.

Guayas	Milagro - Naranjito	Naranjito against Aguirre Overguez for expropiaton of lands.
Cañar	Honorato Vásquez	Tambo Viejo Grande <i>Comuna</i> for lands
Pichincha	Ascázubi	Ascázubi against Juan Elías Donoso for water
Imbabura	San Antonio	Inhabitans of San Antonio against Carlos M. Tobar for expropriation of <i>Chorlavi hacienda</i>
Imbabura	La Esperanza	Rumipamba <i>comuna</i> against <i>Asistencia Pública</i> for expropriation of San José de Cacho <i>hacienda</i> .
Pichincha	Sangolquí	San Rafael <i>comuna</i> against varios parties over land parceling.
Imbabura	Apuela	María and Adelaida Miño over lands.
Chimborazo	Capsol	Capsol <i>comuna</i> against Leopoldo Santa Cruz overl ands.
Imbabura	Otavalo	Bernardo Aguayo against Pedro Asama over lands.

Tungurahua	Ambato	Requests of the <i>Asociación de Trabajadores FADISA</i>
Esmeraldas	Esmeraldas	Bienes de Juan A. Parodi
Esmeraldas	Isla La Lucha	Commander César Plaza against Herminio Campo over lands
Los Ríos	Pueblo Viejo – Zapotal	Expropriation of 25 blocks of the <i>Aldea hacienda</i>
Guayas	Chongón	Casa Viejas <i>comuna</i> against the political deputy for abuses
Guayas	Santa Elena – Julio Moreno	Bajadas and Limoncito <i>communities</i> against Ramón Alvear
Tungurahua	Pelileo	Community struggles for sources of water of La Moya.
Pichincha	Tupigachi	Demand of <i>peones</i> of Tupigachi <i>hacienda</i> against his owners.
Guayas	El Progreso	Demands of inhabitants.
Manabí	Portoviejo	Vallejo Serrano against <i>Cabildo</i> of the parish
Manabí	Montecristi	Study of land possession

Tungurahua	Píllaro – Montugtusa	Demands of Montugtusa <i>community</i>
Cotopaxi	Pujulí – Poaló	Maca grande <i>comuna</i> against Salamalag <i>hacienda</i> for hillsides
Loja	<i>Comuna</i> San Juan de Puzol	Enclosures of lands of the community
Bolivar	Guaranda	Sale of lands between José Alfredo Vela and Santos Manuel Barragán
Imbabura	La Rinconada	La Rinconada <i>comuna</i> against Curia de Ibarra for lands.
Azuay	Chuquipata y Santa Marta	Rental of <i>Junta de Asistencia</i> over Chuquipata and Santa Marta lands
Azuay	Sigsig	Dominion deeds for lands for the Sigsig community.
Loja	Macará – Zazoranga	Mambilango <i>comuna</i> against insurance box of employees
Chimobrazo		José Nugshi against José Ulloa for lands.
Chimborazo	Huigra	Carlos E. Mora for lands of Linge
Chimborazo	Ocpote	Peones of Ocpote <i>hacienda</i> against

		Rosana Gallegos for abuses.
Los Ríos	Babahoyo	Hortencia Vargas Macucha against Hernández Montalvo for dispossession of lands of Limaton and Josefina
Guayas	Boliche	La Vainilla <i>hacienda</i> against Manuel Lara Balarezo for lands
Tungurahua		José Guachambala against José Chicaiza for lands.

In Zumbahua in 1938, the well-known indigenous representatives José Trinidad Chaluisa, Ventura Chaluisa, and Nicolás Chaluisa sent a letter to the MPST about a land dispute with an *hacienda* in which the appropriation of the language on labor rights can be recognized. In the letter, they demanded the effective use of natural resources belonging to them. In other words, they declared personal services abolished, land was defined within a language of co-ownership and co-participation in its fruits.

With *concertaje* abolished, all personal work must be remunerated with the corresponding salary... We therefore demand the payment of salary in accordance with the corresponding laws; the abolition of work contributions involving pasture, water, transit. The tasks assigned to a single man which, however, cannot be fulfilled by less than four individuals of a family, must be reduced to the limit of the individual work capacity... In a word, we want the work of the Indian to be accepted as of human quality since at least legally he

has stopped being a farm mule... and is it wrong that the indigenous person be deprived of the *páramos* that nobody cultivates and that only he takes care of... »¹⁰⁸⁴

The case of Zumbahua became a source of public conflict in which labor rights for Indians was debated. Also, it was a cause of dispute between political parties. The landlord of the hacienda was Gen. Gómez de la Torre, representative of liberalism and *hacendado* of the central Sierra who also participated in the July Revolution. On February 4, 1941, before the agitation in the hacienda and the protest of the *comuneros*, he directed a letter to the director of the *Junta Central de Asistencia Pública*. There he highlighted the danger of the Indians employing the language of labor problems in the context of conflicts between communities and *haciendas*.

The issue of Zumbahua, after the commissions that were sent and the favorable reports that they issued, does not constitute any problem with respect to work, but rather a police problem and one of social security. Theft and pillage have dominated in Zumbahua without any authority intervening or attending to the complaints and denunciations that the employees make almost daily. The workers of Zumbahua demand co-dominion of the land and with this co-dominion, participation in everything that exists on it: this, nor here nor in Constantinople, constitutes a work problem. It is a very creole Communism that is -- do not be shocked -- supported indirectly if not directly by the condescension of the authorities called upon to prevent it.¹⁰⁸⁵

¹⁰⁸⁴ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 178, Zumbahua, parroquia Pilaló, cantón Pujilí. Cotopaxi, 1929-1939. Abusos de hacendados contra huasipungueros. *Carta de José Trinidad Chaluiza, Ventura Chaluiza y Nicolás Chaluiza, representantes de los indígenas de Zumbahua al MPST*, [June 28, 1938], f. 179.

¹⁰⁸⁵ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 203, Zumbahua parroquia Pilaló cantón Pujilí, Cotopaxi, January 27, 1940, f. 81.

In July 1938, a complete regulation was sent to the landlords, clearly indicating the demands of the *comuneros* that accompanied a Ministerial decision to permit unions and communities to seek the expropriation of private lands. A series of services of the community for the hacienda were abolished. The time and value of pasturing sheep was regulated, as was payment for work. The decree, signed by socialist Eduardo Ludeña, sub-secretary of the MPST, warned the *hacendados* of sanctions if they did not comply.¹⁰⁸⁶ The indigenous movement also showed its interest in the situation of Zumbahua and *Ñucanchic Allpa*, in addition to making public the motives of the conflict, dedicated various issues to reflecting on the utility of the Labor Code and the opportunity of the Law of Communities, as well as the interest of the *hacendados* and industrialists in cancelling them.¹⁰⁸⁷ Thus, it called upon “all communities and leaders of communities, all peasants, Indians, and *montuvios*” to organize themselves into “unions or into communities” and that they send communications to the Congress so that their demands become visible.¹⁰⁸⁸

Not only had the socialist lawyers and sociologists returned to replace the engineers

¹⁰⁸⁶ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 178, Cotopaxi, Zumbahua cantón Pujilí, parroquia Pilaló, 1929-1939 Abusos de hacendados contra huasipungueros, f. 177-178. Signed by the lawyer Gonzalo Oleas.

¹⁰⁸⁷ *Ñucanchic Allpa*, February 1938, año I, no. 9, 3.

¹⁰⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, August 22, 1938, época II, no. 12, 2, *Comunicado del Cabildo de Maca Grande*, August 11, 1939.

and agricultural experts that Páez had placed in their jobs, but the Law of the Communities was linked to the promulgation of the Labor Code. In 1938, before the declaration of the socialist Gonzalo Oleas in favor of the *comuneros* of Sanancajas, Minister Rafael Quevedo Coronel issued the *huasipungueros* additional extensions of land for collective use and even symbolically gave the community the *huasipungo* of the deceased leader Francisco Ushca.¹⁰⁸⁹

The visibility of the communities and of the indigenous movement was prominent and thus the reaction of the Liberal and Conservative Parties did not delay. In 1938, in the *Congreso Obrero de Ambato* at the heart of the Centro Catolico de Obreros, a proposal for the reconstruction of conservatism was generated among the workers. Alfonzo Ortiz Bilbao and Pedro Velasco Ibarra, the brother of the ex-president, participated actively in proposing an *obrerismo* of the Right that could combat the “communism” that, according to their criteria, was growing due to

¹⁰⁸⁹ This boundary dispute is known as the conflict of limits in conflict in the *páramos* of Sanancajas (demarcation) between the indigenous community of Sanancajas and the Mochapata *hacienda*. On December 10, 1927, by executive decree, president Ayora recognized the petition of the community to recognize its legal status as the *Asociación Agrícola Sanancajas*. In September of 1933, one month before the end of the presidency of Martínez Mera and by the recommendation of the sub-secretary of *Previsión Social*, Valverde, and the governor of Tungurahua, this association was legally dissolved. The community registered under the regime of *communities* in 1938 and their *páramos* were recognized. AIFP, MPST Collection, box 218, Sanancajas vs. Sra Coloma 1927-1938. Sobre su inscripción 1938 en *Ecuador en cifras 1938-1942* (Quito: Dirección Nacional de Estadística and Imprenta del Ministerio de Hacienda, 1944).

militant nationalism and the Left. He warned of the “dangers and campaigns that are sustained by sectors of the Left” and the ruinous deceit to which part of “the Ministry of Social Welfare and the Central Labor leadership has been subjected.”¹⁰⁹⁰

In July 1938, members of the Centro Catolico de Obreros (CCO) were demanded by the conservative elite not to participate in the workers' congress in Ambato. Thus several associates of the socialist SAIP spoke of requesting the state to close down the CCO because the bosses were boycotting the labor movement despite the support of the state. However, catholic workers Octavio Palacios and Miguel Villacís had already drafted their presentations and only lacked the approval of the directorate established by Pedro Velasco Ibarra to participate. The directorate decided to inaugurate on July 31, 1938, a large Catholic crusade in favor of the workers Right (obrerismo de derecha) as well as an assembly of delegations of diverse Catholic societies.

It was proposed to update the communications media with a radio program called *La hora católica* and open a space for the workers' discourse in the newspaper *El Debate*. The campaign implied a closer vigilance of the catholic workers heads “*decuriones*,” charged with enlisting new members, maintaining close relations with ten other members of a *barrio*, and confirming their participation in the meetings. The *decurión* had the task of visiting the associates in their houses in order to obtain larger

¹⁰⁹⁰ Acts of the CCO, August 11, 1938, 3.

sessions in the assembly. The *decuriones* were the only ones authorized to speak and vote in the Labor Center. The *barrios* of Rocafuerte, Bolívar, Aguarico, la Chilena, la Veinticuatro de Mayo, la Tola, San Blas, Mideros, and la Loma, among others, were included in the work of the *decuriones* in Quito.¹⁰⁹¹

In the CCO, the members of the directorate argued over the union law and spoke out against “the danger of obligatory unionization in Russia, Spain, and Mexico” that impeded the work of private societies and the “criminal spirit opposed to the institutions of Catholic charity.”¹⁰⁹² This warning was accompanied by the introduction of a nationalist course in Spain, stimulated by an international vision of the Right in which examples of the dictatorship of Franco in Spain (*falangismo*) were discussed. Many Ecuadorian workers began to identify with the civil nationalist war in Spain. In this process, the conservative intellectual Alfonso Ortiz Bilbao had a great influence. He had interviewed Franco himself, awakening the general's interest in the antiquity of social Catholicism in Quito, the experience of the CCO, and the renewal of the Right in Ecuador.¹⁰⁹³ In a letter to the Falangist Movement, members of the center thanked him for having a constant delegation. They asked the committee for suggestions about the current international environment and they asked its head

¹⁰⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹² Acts of the CCO, April 21, 1938.

¹⁰⁹³ Personal communication of Alfonso Ortiz Crespo. See an autobiography of Luis A. Ortiz Bilbao, *La historia que he vivido: de la guerra de los cuatro días a la dictadura de Páez* (Quito: Corporación Editora Nacional, 1989).

for his “personal opinion about the inconvenience of a war” between the Right and the Left in Ecuador.¹⁰⁹⁴

The struggle between top-down and bottom-up corporativism was expressed in two highly elaborated proposals for social organization set forth during the catholic workers and directorates meetin in Quito in 1938, and the socialist backed workers meeting in Ambato the same year. The right constituted the *Confederación Ecuatoriana de Obreros Católicos*, CEDOC, and proposed the substitution of the liberal and socialist state with a “*Consejo de Corporaciones*” that would lead a network of representative organizations of “different trades.” This was conceived as a network of institutions from the heart of different “professions” that would step out from the private sphere and become public institutions with legal jurisdiction over its members to impose norms and punish crimes. Whereas the unionized state was also a type of corporativist state, this was a top-down corporativist political model, forged through a long tradition of social power at the regional level.

Enriquez Gallo had consolidated the frameworks for popular struggle, however, the oligarchies and parties sought to return to the status quo and the National Assembly was a tense space without an apparent solution. In these conditions, that which had been achieved through organization and resistance had to confront the frequent battering of electoral processes at the congressional level that time and time

¹⁰⁹⁴ Acts of the CCO, April 1938.

again threatened to do away with negotiation and give way to violence. Yet, violence did not guarantee triumph either. To the contrary, the relationship between communities and the state was gaining political ground and conservative reaction attempted to impede that process without offering a viable alternative. Between 1938 and 1944, the country experienced a new period of instability and conflict in which the communities recognized their legal advances and took strength from the social movement that it had been able to form, while the conservative Right justified violence against “communist Indians” at the local level. The Liberal Party found the opportunity to re-emerge in the face of the socialists and conservatives.

During this transitional period, a new agreement with the MPST surfaced in the already public case of Zumbahua. It abolished earlier regulations and declared valid the eviction of the indigenous peoples. With this act Unions and communities passed from legal complaints to insurrection while local authorities resorted to violence imprisoning twelve community leaders (cabecillas) for over a year.¹⁰⁹⁵ There were other cases like that of Zumbahua. The case of Tisaleo in Tungurahua stands out. There the contradictions between ideals of justice and actual practice, along with the willingness of the Indians to turn to the social movement of which they formed part and to the Left for collective action led to violent confrontations. The lawyer of these indigenous groups, Dr. Estuardo Almeida, was imprisoned by “people of doubtful

¹⁰⁹⁵ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 178, Cotopaxi, Zumbahua, 1929-1939.

national condition.” *Hacendados* as well as governors, according to Almeida, used the name of the ministry to cause conflict and exasperation among the Indians and functionaries -- “my ill-treated *compañeros* ever persecuted and never with rights to protection from the authority of the precinct.”¹⁰⁹⁶

Another public case was that of Apagua in Cotopaxi. After sixty-one *comuneros* were issued sixty-one lots in Apagua, Choasill, and Pilaló, the community complained that “the Vásconez family and Sr. León, appeared with the aim of controlling several zones of 'Apagua,' supported by influential people during the dictatorship of Arroya.”¹⁰⁹⁷ The reaction to Arroya's regime was widespread, and the indigenous movement clearly came together to reject it because of these concrete cases of conflict. The movement ultimately participated in the insurrections of 1944 that led to the constitutional process known as the Glorious Revolution. With the regime's suspension of rights and guarantees, the unions of Apagua joined the indigenous movement to reject the landlord's attempt to return to an earlier era of impunity. Selling indigenous lands as vacant lands was no longer acceptable in the republic but instead bold and irrational, barbaric and anti-national in the eyes of the communities. For the communities of Apagua, it was logical that the constitutional assembly of

¹⁰⁹⁶ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 177, particulares contra la Comunidad de Tisaleo, December 17, 1938.

¹⁰⁹⁷ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 200, Cotopaxi, cantón Pujilí, parroquia Pilaló, hacienda Apagua, carta de Andrés Pilatasig presidente de la Comuna Apagua al MPST, August 25, 1944.

1944 do away with any colonialist pretensions of the *hacendados*. Twenty years of struggling for social rights had made such pretensions anachronistic.

The opposition of the regional elites to the central state in this period of union and leftist empowerment was violent, but that violence ought not to be interpreted as indicating the dominance of the elites. The process of democratization was one of daily local struggle and one in which important political networks grew, spreading a democratic common sense. Thus, *Ñucanchic Allpa* described the origins of the strikes in Quito as an offensive by the bosses that began in 1939 and was supported by the government to overthrow the Labor Code and crush worker and student protests:

The university was assaulted, the students dispersed; the textile factories were invaded by spy forces and police and the workers were dispersed with clubs and sticks, bayonets, and even guns... Next, the houses and high schools, workers unions, factories, and even the university were occupied by police guards, and until today and we do not know how long freedom of thought and civic works will remain restricted.¹⁰⁹⁸

The sites of repression were also places in which democratic organization took form. In this sense, the correspondence directed by communities to the constitutional assembly of 1944 did not speak of the beginning of a democratic process. Rather it indicated that they already lived in a distinct epoch in which a democratic common

¹⁰⁹⁸ *Ñucanchic Allpa*, April 27, 1939, época II, no. 11, 4.

sense prevailed based on the evidence of popular power, the nature of the state, and the type of dialogue that those twenty years of experience of conflict and negotiation had taught.

Now, under the protection of the Legal Statute on Peasant Communities that was just initiated by the popular Government, we ask that the Ministry in your worthy charge, reject the pretensions of the Vásconez family and Sr. León... who still imagine they live in the colonial regimes of the fearsome *encomenderos* and of the Viceroy¹⁰⁹⁹

8.7 Irreversible Changes: Socialists' Reflections on the Weight of Indian Communities in the Building of Ecuador as a *Corporatist Democracy* among the *Indoamerican States*.

In 1943, the socialist intellectual Ángel Modesto Paredes presented a study before the International Federation of Jurists in Washington D.C. in which he evaluated a period of significant political transformations in Ecuador. They were two decades in which social policies were developed by new state organisms and reflected signs of a new post-war culture. Ultimately, Paredes, dean of the law and sociology department of the *Universidad Central*, characterized the period running from the crisis of the oligarchy in Ecuador and the July Revolution up to the end of the Second World War as the entrance of new social sectors into a dense interaction with the state

¹⁰⁹⁹ AIFP, MPST Collection, box 200, f. 38v.

in a process of democratization. Based on his experience as an intellectual and as a functionary of the Ministry of Social Prevision and Work (MPST), he concluded that this period was a promising moment in the formation of an Indo-American democracy.

The work of the Socialist and Communist militants as functionaries of the state devoted to the development of public policies regarding labor and land, the evidence of popular mobilizations in most of the provinces of the territory, and the confrontation between the Left and the Right over the definition of national hegemony were evidence that the popular classes had entered into the political arena as subjects of social rights and as political actors increasingly integrated into political movements, even if they were not yet allowed to vote. In fact, there were diverse solutions to the crisis of the oligarchic state, and the growth and diversification of political movements show the competition between popular political movements regarding how to define this crisis and the contrasting visions of integration and political rights in the reconstruction of the nation.

Paredes' sociological analysis contributed to the knowledge of political participation mechanisms and redistribution strategies that could incorporate the Indian as a citizen in the moment in which the resolution to the crisis of the oligarchic State and the model of social mobilization that would be the base of a system of political parties were being disputed among conservatives and socialists. In this work

three fundamental actors of political change promoted by the Left and by liberalism appeared in contrast to those of conservatism and the Right: firstly, the MPST (which was for most of this period also the Ministry of Government), headed by functionaries linked to the Socialist Party; secondly, popular organization, represented by unions and *communities*, including activists for public intervention in labor and land problems, as well as activists for political rights; and finally, the Communist Party, which was working to excite popular action at a national level, but above all to develop a public opinion attentive to social conflicts and oriented to legitimize popular participation and the indigenous peasantry in politics.

In the decade of the 1930s, the Left promoted the development of the public sphere, which had been initiated during the liberal regime, and introduced a new perspective on the actors who disputed labor arrangements and *gamonal* justice in rural areas throughout the country. This public sphere, nourished by its links to social organization, is one of the still unexplored factors of the “crisis of paternalism” of which Juan Maiguashca and Liisa North have spoken to characterize the crisis of the 1930s.¹¹⁰⁰

The year 1943, when Angel M. Paredes shared his work, was one of complex transition. The war with Peru in 1941 had channeled a nationalist sentiment that silenced active ideological debate among Conservative, Socialist, and Communist

¹¹⁰⁰ Maiguashca and North, “Orígenes y significado del velasquismo.”

parties. In 1941, the war seemed to have put the breaks on all discussion of regional and class conflicts. Thus, even the *Boletín Previsión Social* had stopped talking about the issues of land and agrarian unions in order to dedicate its pages to asylum politics with respect to those displaced from the province of *El Oro* and the need to populate the Amazon¹¹⁰¹. The publication of Ángel M. Paredes broke the silence and brought the conflict over the political and social inclusion of the Indians back into national life. It is clear that he intervened in a more moderate fashion than his brother, communist leader Ricardo Paredes. Ángel Modesto, in accordance with his Socialist alignment, was counting on legal reform so that peasant organizations (unions and *communities*) would be considered entities of a “corporatist citizenship” (*ciudadanía corporativa* was Paredes’ concept). He highlighted the work of functionaries of the Ministry of Social Welfare and Labor and praised this organization’s mediation in regional conflicts. Meanwhile, his brother Ricardo was working together with the Communist Party on agitation at the regional level. By 1944, both agreed that it was the moment for the indigenous population to attain citizenship. For Ángel Modesto, there was no doubt that the Indians had practiced the virtues of citizens within their community meetings and unions.

¹¹⁰¹ *Boletín del Ministerio de Previsión Social*, no. 9, abril-diciembre de 1941 (Quito: Imprenta del Ministerio de Educación Pública, 1942).

He proposed that dialogue between the socialists involved in legal developments and the public policies of the MPST, the protesting organizations, the Communist agitators, and other builders of the public sphere had permitted the state to gain greater presence in the provinces to resolve conflicts that had traditionally been submitted to regional, *gamonal* authorities. Furthermore, mechanisms of representation had been developed that could serve to spread citizenship to the vast indigenous population that was excluded from suffrage. In his conception, the recognition of legal unionized entities as interlocutors with the State before labor tribunals, in addition to the recognition of issues involving the social use of land, created spaces for learning about democracy.

Paredes' thesis nurtured the concepts of a popular front management of the state appropriated by *Alianza Democrática Ecuatoriana* an organization that intended to direct the political process through social mobilization recognized the Left's role as actor in the construction of "Indo-American" democracy. This type of citizenship--requiring that labor associations give way to the recognition of legal subjects—for a long time existed without individual citizenship. But it did allow the state to introduce the politics of redistribution and granted some degree of political representation independent of *gamonal* power. Even though the expansion of suffrage was postponed until the end of the twentieth century, the policies for shaping corporatist citizenship defined mechanisms for political participation and post-oligarchic social

mobilization.¹¹⁰² These mechanisms helped determine social demands, the profile of political subjects, and the landscape for state action.

Paredes suggested that workers had accumulated enough political experience in their deliberative exercises and through elections in the communities and unions that the moment for conferring the right to vote to all literate people, Indians and workers, was drawing nearer. Just one year later, in the constitutional debates of 1944, this would become a central issue.

The socialists and functionaries of the state like Ángel M. Paredes, considered this process as the end of a long period of exclusion and violence in the “specific Indo-American state physiology.” The Ecuadorian legislator, inspired by the leftist parties, had been able to define the social conflicts of the *hacienda* and factory and to formulate new laws accordingly. He stated: “The incorporation of the Indian into Republican life that we socialists demand is understood as qualifying them as citizens, subjects of effective, social, political rights and with opportunities equal to those of the whites ...”¹¹⁰³ The burgeoning practice of negotiating social rights linked forms of corporatist citizenship with forms of individual citizenship which was historically restricted to other social groups. Thus he envisioned the “preparation of a

¹¹⁰² Marc Becker, “El estado y la etnicidad en la asamblea constituyente de 1944-1945,” in *Etnicidad y poder en los países andinos*, ed. Büschges, 135-150.

¹¹⁰³ Ángel Modesto Paredes, “Los nuevos signos de la cultura en el mundo de la post-guerra. Destino de Indo América,” *Revista Forense y Federación Interamericana de Abogados* (1943): 143.

new independent network of populations” (communities and unions) to join in citizenship to those of the old establishment within the national territory (literate and white).¹¹⁰⁴

The closeness of Paredes to the liberal intellectual Pio Jaramillo Alvarado inscribed this law in the framework of Latin American *indigenismo*. Initial *indigenist* thesis when he was a liberal intellectual as part of the discourse to limit the powers of the landholding elite. In “*El indio ecuatoriano*,” Jaramillo Alvarado developed a thesis that highlighted the entrepreneurial spirit of the Indians of free communities and proposed that state protection of this sector was advantageous for its progress. Jaramillo compared the will for progress among free communities with the demoralization of *conciertos*. While outside the hacienda structure, Indians could be converted into modern citizens, according to Jaramillo. In a recent study, Mercedes Prieto has established a change in the discourse of this Ecuadorian *indigenista* at the end of the 1930s. The first version of *The Ecuadorian Indian* offered an idea of the community of free Indians as an intermediate institution in which Indians would learn of the entrepreneurial spirit and values of citizenship in order to integrate later. After participating in the American – *indigenista* congress in Patzcuaro in 1940, Jaramillo Alvarado was powerfully affected by Mexican *indigenismo* and transformed his discourse into one that gave the indigenous community a permanent institution. In

¹¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 193.

this new position, the Indians were seen as collective cultural subjects who needed to be integrated into the nation exclusively on a communitarian basis.

His vision of the community also changed dramatically, as Paredes noted, due to indigenous political action that had modified the state and educated Ecuadorian society through several decades of struggle. Whereas in the nineteenth century, the indigenous community was not recognized legally by the state, the agrarian conflicts obligated their recognition by the MPST, which had to develop institutions and social rights to deal with the conflicts of an internal colonial society. In that process of modernization of the state and the regulation of violence in civil society, alternative authorities emerged, such as Federico Páez, who introduced the concept of the community within a corporatist and territorial framework in which the elites of every economic branch, grouped into chambers that integrated unions, represented the voice of civil society to the state. However, this model of community as a strictly territorial ascription was overcome by the tremendous political will developed by communities that practiced politics within the spaces of socialization, consensus, assemblies, democracy, and corporative citizenship that Paredes identified. This was not just a practice inside the communities but rather a process that took the form of indigenous mobilization at the national level and led to its confrontation with a popular leftist movement, which was identified in the context of the world war as a

democratic front in Latin America.¹¹⁰⁵

Referring to the Law of the Communities and its legal regimen, the functionary proposed that the legal entity of the community in Ecuador fulfill a function distinct from that which it fulfilled in Mexico. In Ecuador it was a category linked to new forms of citizenship, part of a policy founded on labor identities and not in forms of administering property. For Paredes, the principle of the community was more important as a reform of the state and an extension of political rights rather than a way of organizing property.

The economic aspect of this regulation appears to be secondary. The community might or might not have goods, and if it has them it does not enjoy a particular benefit: in this sense it is completely different from that which inspired cooperative legislation in Mexico and contrary to protectionist eagerness.¹¹⁰⁶

The community, like the union, was in the eyes of this legal scholar a form of popular assemblage. Paredes emphasized the practice of deliberation and popular voting among the members of the community at the moment of choosing representatives, even when they were not citizens in practice.

Men and women, should they know to write or not, vote in the presence of the sheriff (jefe político) as the leaders consult the popular assembly. For that, to

¹¹⁰⁵ Carrera Andrade, *El volcán y el colibrí*; See also Raymond Mériguet Cousségal, *Antinazismo en Ecuador años 1941-1944: autobiografía del movimiento antinazi de Ecuador* (Quito: Raymond Meriguet Conssegal, 1988), 415.

¹¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

the individual's vote is added the corporative vote with regards to the most important collective actions: among these actions are those of every industrial or productive branch, those of the educational institutions or of certain categories of state employees—the school teachers, the soldiers. The brutally general and individual vote picks up on fictitious opinions about unknown things with popular, direct vote; it must be substituted with the methods of indirect election of second, third, or fourth degree... Every borough will have its delegation elected among the neighbors and these delegates will elect the representatives of the city, who will in turn determine who should be the representatives of the region; and in this way, from degree to degree, up to the highest representatives.¹¹⁰⁷

The bulletin of the MPST of 1940 evaluated the impact of the labor code of 1938.¹¹⁰⁸

It offered detailed statistics on work accidents that had been presented before labor leadership in artisan workshops, industries, mining companies, oil companies, and international finance firms. It also described the effort of the *Inspectoría del Trabajo*, which acted through the commissioners' offices throughout the country. In the statistics presented by the MPST the urban workers' associations included 387 organizations, of which 36 were professional, 144 were unions, 76 were trade unions, 112 were societies, 3 were management groups, 13 were central workers' groups, and 3 were business committees. The application of the law had helped to resolve a series of conflicts. The document observed that priority had been given to establish a minimum salary in different branches of production.

¹¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 281.

¹¹⁰⁸ *Informe del Ministro de Trabajo Carlos Dousdebes Director General del Trabajo 1940* (Quito: Talleres Gráficos Nacionales, 1940).

The commissions on the minimum wage are in charge of fixing, for their respective territorial circumscriptions within each county, the minimum salaries. The commissions are integrated by a member of the national commission of work, a doctor designated by the security funds of private employees and workers, and a delegate of the municipality, respectively, in each case involving a representative of the employer and of the workers.¹¹⁰⁹

The statistics presented by the National Directory of Statistics in 1938-1942 showed a very important result of this process of organization, and selective expropriations of land. The project of corporatist citizenship they needed to attend to at least 39% of the population—that is, the Indians out of a total population of 3,089,078 inhabitants.¹¹¹⁰ Between 1938 and 1943 602,473 people were part of the 1,212 communities, legal entities within the model of corporatist citizenship. In Chimborazo, where the allocation of lands was particularly complicated, there was a tremendous process of formation of communities. In this province, 56,308 inhabitants were integrated into 135 communities, even though they were only able to recuperate 8,960 hectares. The result was a historic advancement in the capacity of negotiation of the indigenous peasant population. This also reflected the state's interest in a dialogue with this population, while the hacienda owners of Chimborazo resisted institutional regulations. A similar process occurred in Cotopaxi, while in

¹¹⁰⁹ *Boletín del MPST de 1940*, no. 7 (Quito: Talleres Gráficos Nacionales, 1940).

¹¹¹⁰ *Ecuador en cifras, 1938-1942*.

Tungurahua, despite a more modest number of communities, 48,152 hectares were distributed.

The territorial transformation put forth during two decades of the reformist state included not only the building of peasant capacities to expropriate the hacienda and integrate as communities, but also the formation of parishes and support for the subsistence of populations. The reform of space was focused on the integration of populations to fortify the state rather than on other possible economic development ends (the discourse on economic development appeared later, in 1950, and more fundamentally in the 1960s). The paid and free allocations awarded between 1927 and 1943 included 112,803 hectares, handed-over to 1,572 collective entities. The free vacant lands that we could consider the fruit of colonization consisted of 4,505 hectares largely in Pichincha and Imbabura. Among the purchased vacant lands, 1,302 hectares were handed-over, covering an area of 108,298 hectares. Among these lands, those that were handed-over to indigenous communities between 1937 and 1943 were not included.¹¹¹¹ The state statistics counted them separately and indicated that to the 1,212 legally recognized communities in these years, 139,766 hectares were handed-over, of the 252,568 hectares affected by territorial rearrangement.

¹¹¹¹ Vacant lands were issued mostly in Pichincha and Imbabura, but they were also issued in Pailón in Esmeraldas, where they were expropriated from the Ecuadorian Land Co.

This quantity was not far from that which was handed-over during the agrarian reforms of 1964 and 1973 altogether. However, this earlier phenomenon corresponded to a process of negotiation and decision-making very distinct from that of the later agrarian reforms. It was written into a conception of political integration of the subaltern population. The advance of the state over rural zones had a more political than economic character. A significant quantity of lands were expropriated and negotiated, but these expropriations took on meaning as part of a political dialogue rather than an efficient national economic reform.

8.8 Initial Approach towards a New Social Map of Political Participation during the Glorious Revolution of 1944.

When General Enriquez Gallo gave the power back to the civilians, the elite parties immediately reacted. In effect the plutocratic elite of the Liberal Party received support of the minority of voters and between and two of their members hold the presidency, Aurelio Mosquera Narváez (1938-1939) and Carlos Alberto Arroyo del Río (1940-1944). In that period, although the regime sought to strengthen its repressive apparatus and hold back the Left, the conditions had changed considerably since the oligarchic regimes. 1,185 *communities* were inscribed in the MPST, including a population of 592,660 *comuneros*. The state accessed immense lots of close to 100,000 hectares turned over by the Ecuadorian Land Company, which had

administered lands in Esmeraldas since the nineteenth century, but the ministry was stripped of its jurisdiction over the vacant lands, which passed into the hands of the Ministry of Defense. The law of legislative power of September 26, 1941, conceded “*Poderes Omnímodos*” to Arroyo. The Left achieved a new level of organization and in 1942 created the *Federación de Estudiantes Universitarios del Ecuador* (FEUE) and the *Unión Sindical de Trabajadores* in Guayas and nationally it formed the *Comité Nacional de Trabajadores del Ecuador*.

The popular vote was no longer what the Liberal Party feared in its golden era—that is, a vote that would be captive to the interests of the paternal class. The statistics provide details about the degree of illiteracy in the communities of each province. The level was higher in Cotopaxi, Imbabura, Loja, and Manabí, where a little less than half of the inhabitants were illiterate. This contrasted with statistics for Los Ríos, where the majority was literate. They did not have experience as voters but the political participation had already made important progress. Regional alliances between peasants and the socialist party in municipalities such as Riobamba, Tulcán, Loja, and Ambato were read by the Left as a conquest of popular support for the democratic program, and that they were at the same time territorial bastions of the reformed state. The ADE’s discourse on the “Nation” was registered within anti-fascist and anti-oligarchic democratic movements, and this idea of national unity

proposed to go beyond corporatist citizenship towards economic redistribution and the expansion of the vote.

The Indians and those who did not know how to read and write had demonstrated continually that their problem was the need to be owners of the earth they cultivated and of the product they harvested, as well as to be the merchants who sold their products in the marketplace (instead of intermediaries). If an effective democracy in which all progressive forces participated was indeed desirable, then the unifying organization of the working classes merited all support, either from the popularly elected government or from the popular forces fighting for democracy.¹¹¹²

The social liberal notion of corporatist citizenship had proposed direct representation of each union through its special board. For its part, the ADE advanced the need to join these corporations in political assemblies. Enrique Gil Gilbert, the ADE's director of propaganda, perceived an active element of democracy in the union. In his view, each union was a dike for the forces that threatened the sovereignty of the state and the liberty of its *pueblo* from within or from without.¹¹¹³ In this sense, in contrast to a nationalist discourse on the need to civilize the working classes, the ADE proposed another view of the nation as a democratic organizing process. The union and the *comuna* constituted nuclear spaces for political practice

¹¹¹² Alianza Democrática Ecuatoriana (ADE), *Los postulados de la revolución de Mayo: programa de Alianza Democrática Ecuatoriana* (Quito: Talleres Gráficos Nacionales, 1944), 5

¹¹¹³ Ibid.

from which the voice that would lead the constitution of a national life would arise with middle-class support.

When they speak of incorporating the Indian and the *montuvio* into national life, in general they think that this was the work of others and the subjects themselves -- the Indians and *montuvios* -- ought to be passive beings in this project. This is a basic error. They must be active subjects. They themselves are the ones who must organize their cooperative societies, agrarian ties, communities, unions, cultural groups, etc. It is necessary to understand that we must read their own lips and listen to their own expressions about what their needs are and to support the development of their demands. Those of us who compose the other quarter of the Ecuadorian population must intervene as active helpers¹¹¹⁴

In a form that is comparable to what Knight describes for Bolivia, the peasant mobilization in Ecuador entered into a functional alliance with “bourgeois reformers” and the professional, educated middle-class or the regional middle-classes who sought a model of state reform as a “social vocation.” Within this reform state—in contrast with the radical revolutions of the third world—the Ecuadorian peasantry was able to make a multi-class alliance. A political force was produced that seized control of the state from the landowning elite.

In 1944 the opposition to Arroyo del Rio increased and national mobilization called the Glorious Revolution lead to his deposition from power and to a constitutional process. The Glorious Revolution has been a theme of interesting recent

¹¹¹⁴ Ibid.

literature highlighting the tie that developed between the masses and the leader Velasco Ibarra after various months of struggle in the streets during a constitutional process that had high levels of participation. I wish to highlight other characteristics that come from knowledge of processes of local conflict that demanded state intervention and organizing processes in which indigenous peasants began to convert their conflicts into public and national problems. The first characteristic was the participation during the Glorious Revolution of communist organizations of Guayas and socialist circles that had been able to unite into a vast popular movement. The Glorious Revolution began with unions and the peasant assembly in Guayas in 1944 as they confronted the forces of the military presidency in may 1944. The Colegio Mejia and the National University, newspapers, unions, and workers participated as they demonstrated a specific identity associated with a democratic process and an “Indigenous and Peasant Mobilization,” as leftist journalism reported, “has embarrassed the quiet and decent streets of the cities of the Sierra.”¹¹¹⁵ The Indians arrived in Quito in November 1944. Its presence as it was reported in newspaper *Ñucanchic Allpa* represented a powerful disruption of all of the myths that sustained internal colonial relations. This entrance demonstrated that their political practice had eroded the exclusive frontier between the city and rural areas.

¹¹¹⁵ José del Campo [pseud.], “La movilización indígena y campesina,” in *Ñucanchic Allpa*, November 5, 1944, época II, no. 16, 1 and 6.

It was not a multitude that answered the call of the leader but rather it had formed through ongoing conflicts and political formation. Indigenous communities and federate members of the FEI came from the provinces of Chimborazo, Cotopaxi, Pichincha, and Imbabura. These mobilized organizations were formed in decades of resistance, as Ñucanchic Allpa reported “it (their mobilization) does not stem from artificial forces of one interested sector as the reactionaries want it to seem, but rather from a long process of injustice and oppression.”¹¹¹⁶

Their presence in the city had to do with the purpose of carrying out “the first indigenous congress of Ecuador” that they had attempted before in Cayambe though it had been repressed. In preparation to the new constitutional process the communist and indigenous *Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios* (FEI) elected Ricardo Paredes as their functional representative for the national assembly.¹¹¹⁷

During and after the constitutional process of 1944-1945 much litigation between communities and haciendas was put to rest. Among the representative cases of Tigua in Cotopaxi and Galte in Chimborazo were resolved by expropriations of lands by the state and redistribution among the original owners, also projects to build new community economies were implemented. Tigua was the first hacienda managed by Indians in Ecuador. It resulted from the purchase of the hacienda (about 2,300

¹¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹¹⁷ Ibid., 2.

hectares) by the Indians with support of the state. The price was reduced in the amount of salary payments that were overdue, and the remainder was paid with a loan from the *Banco Nacional de Fomento*, which was directed by the old socialist functionary of the MPST, Carlos Zambrano Orejuela.¹¹¹⁸ Litigation in the communities of San Miguel of Pomachaca and the Galte *hacienda* in Chimborazo ended with the payment of salaries and the purchase of lands. The trial between the community of Maca Grande and the Maca *hacienda* was resolved through the purchase of lands by the community and the intervention of the FEI. The Revolution of May had strengthened the powers of the MPST and it had returned to the ministry jurisdiction over trials and controversies in the communities.¹¹¹⁹

By November 1945, the alliance of conservative Velasco Ibarra with the democratic front had broken down. Competition against the plutocratic elite of liberalism no longer united them. In March 1946, the constitution of 1945 was overturned, and in November 1945 the Communist Party was declared an illegal party and the socialist functionaries of the MPST were fired once more. Velasco Ibarra did not recognize the Indians. They did not constitute one of his allies, but rather a population that was to be incorporated through their submission to “conversion.”

¹¹¹⁸ “La cooperativa Tigua de producción, crédito y consumo,” in *Ñucanchic Allpa*, February 8, 1946, época III, no. 18 [sic], 1-2, 5.

¹¹¹⁹ Decree N° 600, August 4, 1944.

We must save the Indian and incorporate him into the nation through technology and hygiene so that he might support and strengthen the fatherland. With great psychological shrewdness, with the skill of our pedagogical resources, we must continue little by little, teaching the Indian about nature, how nature can be dominated, what geography, parish, city, and nation are. Later, he will discover the meaning of general morality and abstract ideals.¹¹²⁰

In effect, the FEI reported new incidents of violence in the central Sierra in which, according to testimonies recorded by *Ñucanchic Allpa*, the state had participated. The FEI warned Velasco that though his participation in the revolution had been crucial and organization willing to support legislative, peaceful change. It was also willing to continue fighting for its objectives if the moment for justice had not yet arrived. However, Velasco could not govern until he had given the state a new profile, for the program of modernization from above had not yet been conceived the only program for development and integran democracy that existed in 1945 had been forged in the contest against internal colonialism and it was of substantially peasant origin.

8. 9 Conclusions.

Ecuadorian literatura generally considers the indigenous participation in the Glorious Revolution to have been insignificant. However, if we contextualize the Glorious Revolution in a long-term political process, we can understand the crucial

¹¹²⁰ José María Velasco Ibarra, *Mensaje del Excmo. Sr. presidente de la república José María Velasco Ibarra a la honorable Asamblea Constituyente de 1944* (Quito: Imprenta Nacional, 1944), 27.

role that peasant communities played as they sought strategies to question internal colonialism and democratize the Republic during the period of liberal modernization.

The mobilizing capacity shown during the Glorious Revolution developed through a decades-long process of dialogue between the state and the communities. After the July Revolution, both sides drew closer. Later, throughout the party competition of the 1930s, indigenous and peasant communities promoted a tremendous democratizing movement to which unions and leftist organizations united.

The limits of peasant inclusion had marked the nature of the state and its various crises, as we have seen in earlier chapters. Moreover, ultimately the peasants and indigenous peoples were crucial agents in the development of a political strategy that democratized the state. They formed complex alliances to be able to foment a national social movement. The mobilization had constituted a form of resistance to the political Right and expressed itself to pressure for collective negotiation for rights and recognition from the state. In the third political phase to which I have referred in this thesis (1925-1944), this mobilization underwent two subphases. Between 1925 and 1934 its principal actions were local resistances and local mobilizations that were directed at a national level through lawsuits. After the Right's return to power and the cycle of strikes of 1934, the social movement attempts to strengthen itself. Its social bases came together through common notions of class and

nation that integrated processes of political identification and local organization and resistance. Many of these groups carried with them memories of land and labor struggle, which were renewed within new discourses on class and nation that promoted worker organization and mobilization. Print media aided in this integration of disperse identities and memories. In the 1930s and 1940s, important episodes of collective mobilization took place in 1932, 1934, 1938, and finally in 1944, but these moments merely represented a continuous, organic process of political formation.

Ecuadorian Indians carried out the revolution of May 28, 1944, and they gained a few advantages through it. But as *Ñucanchic Allpa* explained, “the Indians expected that through peaceful means they would obtain justice. They acted under the protection of the Constitution and the Labor Code, but they were willing to mobilize again to make this possible.”¹¹²¹

¹¹²¹ “A los Indios Ecuatorianos,” in *Ñucanchic Allpa*, October 5, 1946, época IV, no. 18, 1, 4.

CONCLUSIONS

This dissertation reevaluates social change, political negotiation, and state formation in Ecuador from the 1840s to the mid-1940s. I present a new interpretation of the broad scope of Ecuadorian nation and state formation and highlight the importance of shifting relations between the state and subordinate groups in these processes beginning in the early republican period. I emphasize processes of political negotiation by engaging Gramsci's work and showing how shifting fields of power and negotiation affected relations within communities and, in some ways, I also redefine the concept of the indigenous and peasant community.

In accordance with other work on Ecuador and Latin America in general, this study offers a long-term, dynamic view of multiple class, ethnic, and state actors in order to provide a set of new arguments. Seen together as a "revolution in stages," we learn that indigenous, peasant, and popular initiatives built upon one another in successive historical cycles, leading to national political reform, democratization, and the acquisition of social and political rights

This study takes such a long, sustained view of social and political change in Ecuador with a clear methodological purpose. In *The Modern Prince* Antonio Gramsci suggests that in the analysis of political situations and relations of force it is not sufficient to explain political change based exclusively on the analysis of conjunctural events. That is, he suggests that beyond the public figures who often

represent “historic events,” we can identify long-term processes or formations that Gramsci coined “organic movements,” which are animated by broad social groupings. During these processes, structural contradictions mature while political forces struggle to conserve the status quo and forces of opposition organize. Oppositional forces seek to demonstrate that necessary and sufficient conditions exist to generate new social configurations. From this point of view, historical-political analyses ought to seek “the correct relation between what is organic and what is conjunctural” in particular struggles or crises that may last for decades.¹¹²²

By analyzing long-term processes of the formation of the Ecuadorian state, characterized by internal colonialism and also by subaltern strategies for pressuring the state, I have identified a more complete explanation for the profound, conjunctural changes that took place in the 1930s. For many Ecuadorian authors, changes that included a significant state democratization can be explained according to the initiative of certain public figures such as José María Velasco Ibarra or General Alberto Enriquez Gallo, who renovated elite mechanisms of political domination. This thesis, however, demonstrates that the substantial political events and the ascent of such public figures in the 1930s emerged from long processes of transformation and conflict dating back various decades. Subaltern sectors forged a more inclusive, organic transformation through struggles against internal colonialism. This alternative

¹¹²² Gramsci. Selections from the Prison Notebooks, 177- 178

strengthened through the accumulation of experiences of resistance and of memories of negotiation and alliances.. Peasant communities and radicalized middle-class circles promoted democratic identity formation throughout one hundred years of struggle, fomenting popular liberalism in the nineteenth century and a democratic front of leftist movements in the twentieth century.

In its entirety this thesis questions the historical studies that have characterized the Ecuadorian state as a coherent mechanism for imposing elite interests. It proposes that important transformations, such as the formation of political parties in the first half of the twentieth century, came from a long social struggle to change the exclusive character of the Republic. In turn, recurring social pressure from subaltern sectors transformed the state at precise moments and in particular state branches that opened up to negotiation. My work in state institutional archives, including communications between regional functionaries, corregidores, governors, Indian authorities, and the State in the nineteenth century, and in the archives of Ministry of Social Welfare and Labor beginning in 1925, helped me explore the internal complexities, tensions, and contradictions within and between state institutions.

The first chapters demonstrate that alliances between *hacendados* and the Republic were not established on the foundations of a powerful state. These were fragile alliances, and for a long period elites privatized state resources rather than

seek to strengthen the state apparatus. Populations with extensive social networks struggled to maintain their autonomy and subsistence strategies as they coordinated with diverse classes and ethnicities. Throughout a century they sought to create ties to force state recognition and they looked to strengthen the autonomy of the state with respect to the landholding elites to access the justice system and economic redistribution. The first chapters take a comparative approach to labor regimes and the end of coercive labor in Ecuador. This was a process comparable to those in Cuba and Peru, where historians have demonstrated the crucial nature of popular insurgency and political alliances around national projects in order to end slavery and forced labor. This analysis also offers a new understanding of corporativism (from above and below) that is comparable to the formation of corporativist nationalism in the southern cone and in Mexico.

This thesis documents resistance tactics and strategic alliances between peasant communities and nascent political movements. Among these regional alliances included that of the first factions of Jacobin liberalism in the middle of the nineteenth century with freed slaves and peasant communities in their confrontation with the landholding elites. The memory of this alliance resurfaced during the national alliance of the Liberal Revolution, forged in 1895. In turn, the experience of the Liberal Revolution generated an even more profound memory of popular participation in state transformation under the flag of liberalism. The thesis goes on

to describe the conflictive decades of the liberal regime during which the expectations of the indigenous and peasant communities for inclusion were heightened, but at the same time the elites attempted to consolidate the social hierarchy through an exclusive modernization from above. In this context, the Liberal and Conservative Parties transformed, as did popular political identities. Finally, I reconstruct the formation of the popular Left through the analysis of the social support that the July Revolution received. Popular communities observed the opening of a new opportunity to transform a state in crisis when reformist military officers took control of the government. In turn, the Right sought to appropriate the concepts of “*pueblo*,” class, and nation in order to construct a reactionary popular movement. I observed the advance of popular class positions and alliances together with the Left to understand the transformations of the 1930s as an effect of organic processes during the formation of a national popular culture. This was a process of state democratization that, after a century-long struggle, incorporated peasant demands and recognized the peasantry and indigenous communities as political actors.

While much Ecuadorian historiography has elucidated the structures and rootedness of “paternalism” in rural and urban labor regimes as well as in the religious and intellectual discourse of elites, my dissertation has shown that this key feature of conservative rule reflected an internal colonial project on the part of elites that existed in tension with popular projects for political autonomy, struggles for

subaltern rights, and challenges to elite hegemony going back to the early republican period. In fact, this approach can help to understand “paternalism” as precisely a reaction to the movements of national-popular liberalism and radicalism between the mid-nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries.

In the nineteenth century in Ecuador, indigenous communities implemented strategies to confront an aggressive campaign to auction their so-called “vacant lands.” They also implemented strategies to resist attempts to extend a tributary tax to groups that had traditionally been exempt. These communities became strong opponents of the aristocratic regime that had begun the Ecuadorian republic, as they continued to be excluded from forms of citizenship. They later became vital allies for the regime of “the democrats,” a liberal segment that formed a pact with the peasantry beginning in 1845, thus proposing a new idea of the nation that contrasted with that of the landholding aristocracy.

The declaration of vacant lands, one of the pillars of the aristocratic regime in the central Sierra, reflected elite attempts to constitute themselves as *señores territoriales* with populations internalized within their dominions. Within this territorial sphere, they embarked on missions ranging from the “civilization” of the internal populations to the collection of taxes. This structure of the aristocratic regime always assumed unpaid labor in exchange for the debt of extensive kinship networks. Local or regional elites supposed that communities would accept, if only under the use of force,

newly imposed limitations and constraints; however, in time it became evident that the effective power of the state to control these populations was much less than elites had assumed.

The charge of a tributary tax recalled the colonial period. Yet, communities and, above all, the *forastero* populations were subject to a much more aggressive system than that of the colonial era. By the end of Flores regime in 1845, communities of peasants and *forasteros* adopted a deliberately anti-state attitude. This stance brought down the fiscally weak state through regional struggles and initiated confrontations, which led to the emergence of a new regime that negotiated with the communities and peasants.

Indigenous communities advocated new legal frameworks, new policies on land and tribute, as well as political representation. The most common community and peasant strategies for negotiation included everyday evasion and resistance, communications with the state, civil disobedience, and collective mobilizations. The forms of resistance to the sale of vacant lands and tribute reflected the breakdown of the aristocratic state in 1845.

In the context of the central Sierra, the predominance of the hacienda, far from being an almost natural reality as the literature has described it, was the construction of regional actors who were precariously associated with military leaders. Indigenous communities asserted themselves as crucial actors in regional and national political history and thus revealed the true nature of the state as an entity dependent on alliances

with regional and even local actors.

The privileges of the landholding elites included the evasion of fiscal payments, the use of force to appropriate resources, and pretensions of administering the population in a personalized way instead of through public functionaries. These conditions put at risk the sustainability of state authority at a regional level. In its beginnings, the state was too structurally weak to control regional elites who disputed the control of territory and its resources. Upon coming to an agreement with the elites, the state allowed a greater degree of confrontation with the communities and peasants who resisted an onslaught of aristocratic landowners in such a way that the state became discredited and was dismantled by 1845.

The national regime of Urquina and Robles struggled for a new sovereignty and control over territory based on an alliance with communities and peasant sectors that, nonetheless, was answered by the conservative regime of García Moreno on 1861. This regime represented the Conservative reaction and was counter-revolutionary and more sophisticated with respect to its mechanisms of control as it sought state centralization to benefit the landholding elites.

Ultimately, this pact between the elites and the state destroyed the state's legitimacy as the administrator of territory according to modern and rational logic. The state was not able to overcome the internal colonial limitations that the aristocratic families imposed. It was in this foundational moment that we find one of the most

flagrant contradictions in the construction of democracy in Latin America: the lack of a consensus among the majority of the population along with restrictions on their citizenship. This tension weakened the state and, in certain episodes, caused it to collapse.

A first experience of negotiation between indigenous communities and the state took place under the regime of the March Revolution (1845-1861), a period in which the central state experienced difficulty in controlling different regions of the country. This initial experience of negotiation can be considered the historic basis for indigenous and peasant organization and intervention in national issues. Though conditions varied in different regions, these subaltern actors identified the heart of conflicts as being related to land access and the need for political, economic, and social rights that would recognize the communities and peasants as foundational members of a democratic republic.

The period of Flores (1830-1845) revealed unsalvageable contradictions and a political regime that lacked negotiating capacity. Its breakdown led to a massive insurrection in 1843. The subsequent transformations that took place in the period of 1845 to 1861 help us to understand the reasons why in those years there were very few insurrections. The community-state negotiations over the state's insertion into civil life and the end of the tributary tax, as well as negotiations over land ownership, began to strengthen communities and to break up hacienda lands. These negotiations had a

profound impact on regional configurations and even set conditions for state democratization in the long term.

The governments of José María Urvina (1852-1856) and Francisco Robles (1856-1859) set forth a legal framework to take power away from the landholding aristocracy and to bolster the state through social alliances at the regional level. They decreed radical measures such as the declaration of “vacant lands” as national lands (1849), the abolition of slavery (1851), the pardoning of *rezagos* or old debts (1851), the general abolition of the tributary tax (1857), water and land grants to peasant communities (1851), and the expulsion of the Jesuits (1851). The alliances widened the range of dialogue with the state, integrating the freed population and indigenous communities into the regime and the “democratic” bloc in Ecuador.

The nationalist regime (1845-1860) produced a foundational experience of negotiation and a language for exchanging political support among emerging factions that occupied state leadership, indigenous communities of the central Sierra, and a growing group of autonomous peasants. At the regional level, a balance of power that had favored the landholding class inverted and became favorable for the indigenous agenda. Peasant negotiations led to political support from the regime and the generation of popular identification with democratic liberalism.

Within peasant-indigenous communities, the new discourse and the new nationalist practices led to a rupture with traditional ethnic authority and entailed an

internal reorganization of community hierarchies. The *forasteros*, *arrimados*, and other groups in the communities who had been marginalized as a survival strategy in times of crisis, now demanded access to resources and recognition under the new conditions of the nationalist regime. The central authority, the *cacique*, and older forms of population control were questioned and in many cases fell apart in a way that transformed the community. The tensions over *cacique* authority can be understood as an effect of the democratization process, this time within communities.

When popular mobilization achieved intolerable levels for the aristocratic elites of the coast and the Sierra, the nationalist regimes fell apart. Even when the allies of the regime constituted a majority of the population, the landholding elites refused to participate in the democratic state and preferred to call on the leader of the aristocracy, Gen. Flores, whose military war under the command of a young Gabriel García Moreno, to put an end to popular mobilization.

During the period from 1861 to 1874, conservatives made a concerted effort to stop the process of democratic change proposed by the nationalists and revoke legal changes instituted by Urzúa in the legislation of 1854, especially with regards to the freedom of *conciertos*. The declarations of vacant lands resumed. García Moreno's regime established regulations through cantonal councils to impede the free movement of workers. This regime represented an alternative state project that was forced and lacked mechanisms for negotiation to integrate the indigenous peasantry.

A second period of democratic possibilities opened up between 1883 and 1897. After the aristocratic regime of García Moreno, the more moderate factions of conservatism took power but were not able to advance the agenda of democratization. The possibilities for change only coalesced in the face of a possible revolution. The Liberal Revolution on 1895 in fact entailed a confrontation between aristocratic-landholding visions and radical-*montonero* visions of the republic, which only was settled by civil war.

In the revolutionary scenario of civil war subaltern sectors seized the initiative and their intervention in political negotiations gained legitimacy. Various authors have pointed out how this scenario constituted a crucial moment for the political empowerment of the peasants as national subjects with a notion of rights despite the dissemination that they had suffered under the republican institutions since the beginning of the nineteenth century. Their participation in processes of mobilization and collective action gave them a capacity to pressure that they would hang on to thereafter.

The entry of peasant soldiers from the coast into the liberal army forced a radical reorientation of the Liberal Party and impeded a “top-down” pact with the moderate faction of conservatism: *el progresismo*. Radical liberalism had to incorporate a growing and complex range of popular actors who served as soldiers in two episodes of confrontation throughout the country in 1884 and 1895. The

transformation required integrating more forces than those that the political regime had been willing to integrate until that moment and supported the construction of new national political identifications. This process also stopped the political culture of radical and the *montonero* circles.

The coalition between the radical Liberal army and the indigenous communities of the Sierra was essential for the Liberal Party triumph and reflected the capacity of liberalism to bring together forces in the Sierra as part of a national political strategy. The conditions of conflict in the country began to change with the triumph of the Liberal revolution. One of these transformations was the articulation of radicals with peasants in a national project that struggled for hegemony. The alliance of indigenous communities and the Liberal army sought to replace the legal framework established by conservatism in the last decades of the nineteenth century into a new republican model.

The Liberal Revolution must be considered in a regional dimension since the process of mobilization and then pacification of the communities depended on the heterogeneous composition of each one of the regions. On the coast and especially in peripheral zones, radicalism indicated that the conditions to achieve pacification would only be reached by arms. In Guayaquil, the triumph was supported by agro-export elites who wanted to use the state as an ally to obtain economic benefits at the cost of the communities and peasants in the peripheral zones. In the meantime, in the

northern and southern Sierra, radicals, moderates, and conservatives divided up into zones of influence. More moderate factions quickly displaced the radical to block the possibility that communities would access lands and certain rights that liberalism had proposed as central to its struggle for the state. In the central Sierra, radicalism was less necessary as the communities and peasant sectors demonstrated a significant capacity to take action and the landholding elites were weaker.

The liberal state defined itself as “Repairer and Protector” of subaltern classes faced with the public enemy of *gamonalismo*. During the period of armed conflict, the discourse on reparations for victims of *gamonal* violence served to strengthen pressure on the landholding class and marked the presence of new political actors in alliance with the state, as representative of a social alliance without precedents during the 1910s, this discourse was tied to practices of an ambiguous paternalism.

In the liberal period, the state accepted peasant pressure for adaptations and transformations, through institutions of integration, redistribution, and gradual emancipation. Yet, the state’s “gradualist” policy meant that the transformations demanded by the peasants were not completely fulfilled.

Beginning in 1900, the democratic process that had begun with the Liberal Revolution began to recede. A pact between the liberal elites who had taken the state and the hacienda elites of the Sierra came to characterize liberalism in Ecuador. During the period from 1900 to 1925, we can observe a “modernization from above”

that was directed by liberal elites tied to the banks and to agricultural exportation. The conservative elites, generally landholders who were in the process of industrial, commercial, and financial diversification, also promoted the modernizing agenda, which was tied discursively to a purported civilizing progress.

The ideological division between rural areas and the city characterized the most important tension during the liberal epoch. In the city, the Liberal Party and the Catholic Social Action (ASC) targeted artisans and workers to adapt them gradually and incorporate them as citizens in the future; and, in the meantime, workers in rural areas and communities were segregated and marginalized from all political processes. The new liberal leaders denied the alliances that communities and other subaltern sectors had formed with radical leaders. Therefore, the advances achieved during the revolution led to unrest and discontent among *comuneros*. The reaction of the communities to the lack of agreement and negotiation took the forms of insubordination and insurgency that were met with violence by regional elites.

In the large “civilized” centers of Quito and Guayaquil, the liberal and conservative elites validated their positions with notions of gradual integration for artisans and workers, but this integration was for the time being separated from political life. This type of paternalist integration was insufficient to maintain control over artisan and worker organizations that, after the oligarchic crisis of the 1920s, adopted a new line of thought reflecting “social” liberalism. It also fed off of

socialism to achieve a new stage of political and social organization that advanced democratic processes in Ecuador.

The Pichincha's Artistic and Industrial Society (SAIP) and Catholic Workers Centre (CCO) were institutions intended to maintain a moral control over the artisans and workers of Quito by party elites. Whereas the Liberal Party opened up mechanisms for gradual integration to urban subaltern sectors, those mechanisms did not present a true democratic alternative. Rather, they were controlled from above by conservative elites of the Sierra.. While the conservative elites control lasted, these organizations could not offer mechanisms for integration between urban and rural sectors, but rather discriminated against the rural population.

Institutions of charity and philanthropy during the liberal-oligarchic period played a preponderant role in the segregation of rural areas from the city. Whereas the philanthropic discourse was maintained in accordance with Christian charity, new forms of thinking among elites of the Sierra excluded those populations seen at the margin of "civilizing" urban spaces. The strategy of charity agencies such as the *Conferencia San Vicente de Paúl* or the *Asociación de Señoras de la Caridad* in rural areas clearly demonstrated that they sought to deny negotiation with the communities and peasants. The institutional scheme of these institutions reflected this double purpose of generating a Catholic civil society and consolidating landholding predominance through modern legal strategies.

A lack of state mediation led to violence in Pichincha during the Liberal period. *Hacendados* with a new modernizing ideological program, in which the concept of “civilization” was adopted into a new internal colonialism, were reluctant to negotiate with peasants and indigenous communities. Violence was consequently one of the elements that led to the crisis and the fall of the oligarchic liberal regime on 1925.

The land question was ultimately not only one of property but also of politics. The debate generated at the birth of the republic with respect to land access for *gamonales*, communities, and peasants, and that throughout 120 years of republican life was resolved by various regimes that occupied the state, was central to the entire political system, and it marked the fundamental difference between authoritarian and more democratic regimes. During the liberal-oligarchic period, the negligible negotiation that occurred with respect to the land question was a meaningful indicator of the achievements and limitations of the liberal state.

Conservatism in the central Sierra undermined the social bases of the liberal state, breaking down its power and de-legitimizing its authority in the eyes of communities and peasants. When they rose up against *gamonal* power only to be repressed by the forces of the state, they keenly felt the lack of protection that the state supposedly owed them. The crisis of hegemony that conservatism created led to the downfall the liberal state and allowed for the return of the conservative elites to power. However, this also created the possibility for the emergence of a much more

democratic popular movement that would follow the new postulates of social liberalism and socialism itself.

The indigenous communities of the Sierra developed their own interpretation of the political moment. They pointed out the inconsistency of the liberal state as they witnessed local public functionaries in clientelist relationships with the administrative agents of the hacienda, thus breaking with the negotiated codes regarding territorial occupation and labor in the region. The crisis of the hegemony of the oligarchic state was not only evident in their dispute with conservative elites but also in the peasantry's questioning of the liberal state's conduct.

In Cotopaxi, Tungurahua, and Bolívar, as well as in Chimborazo, indigenous communities created an environment in which to confront elite visions of modernization. Some of these communities were solitary and others were made up of large constellations of discontinuous populations headed by political leaders who set conditions for local power and the liberal state. This interpretation allows us to understand how the reconfiguration of communities and their regimes of representation unfolded in an interaction with other classes and with the state.

The pressures regarding land that began to be felt dramatically in the 1910s and the attempts at privatization of lands that had been held collectively or in co-dominion, led to conflicts between communities and haciendas and also between communities that had shared lands in the highlands. Communities were forced to

reconstitute themselves and in several cases fragmented under state and elite pressure.

As in the case of Pichincha, in the central Sierra the lack of negotiation and the violence that was generated in response to continual uprisings and insurrections among the communities were the principal causes of the oligarchic state's crisis. When the state could no longer sustain the vision of civilizing progress and the economic crisis emerged, the communities' questioning promoted a new type of social and political thought that needed to include both urban and rural subaltern sectors. The reformist state of the July Revolution on 1925 represented a plausible answer to the denunciations generated in the prior period.

Liberalism in Guayas created a project of gradual inclusion that also segregated the "civilized" urban space from the rural spaces of "barbarism." This served as a method to gain a certain popular acceptance and support in the city, while it disarmed radical processes that were supported by the peasants of the coast – the *montuvios* – and the communities that had supported liberalism and that, at the beginning of the 20th century, were seen as a threat to national peace and security. The pacification of conflicts that the Liberal Revolution had engendered implied the renunciation of the radical agenda.

Worker and artisan organizations such as the Workers Confederation of Guayas (COG) and the *Sociedad Hijos del Trabajo* were created by liberals from the coast as a way to include the subaltern population gradually within the civilizing plans of

liberalism. They were institutions that demonstrated the popularity of liberalism and its paternalist character. However, their organizational tactics were overcome during two decades of global crisis and of new global conditions that entailed the appearance of anarchism and socialism.

In the rural areas of Guayas, the export elites, international trusts, and other privileged actors once more segregated spaces to set the limits between civilization and barbarism. Violence and a lack of negotiation were felt on the agrarian coast and informed the critical thinking of communities that sought new possibilities for inclusion in markets and in a democratic regime and, above all, who sought access to lands and natural resources.

In the case of Guayas, these scenarios of conflict took place in Milagro, Daule, Eloy Alfaro, Tenguel, and *La Libertad*, and the political actors who emerged later intervened in state reform. These areas constituted nuclei of the Left in the peasant struggle and also one of the sites of struggle against transnational capital. The political process of articulation of all of these forces determined a profound transformation of the state and of the national political culture between the fall of the liberal regime on 1925 and World War II.

Neither the artisan workers organization of the Sierra nor that of the coast developed radical positions until their identification with the Liberal Party fell apart. The artisan-workers of Guayaquil began to identify themselves with the organizations

and conflicts of other workers – those of the transnational companies of public services and transportation, and the peasants of the agro-export zones who had, for various decades, subsidized the modernization of the port and its privileges. The rural workers in Guayas also felt their exclusion from rights issued by the government to urban workers and artisans. Throughout their organizing process, they expressed the desire for labor regulations, in addition to demands to access lands and the justice system.

In the three regions under study – the central Sierra, Pichincha, and Guayas -- during the Liberal period, highly conflictive scenarios developed. Means of pacification and programs of selective inclusion were explored to orient a conservative institutionalization of changes that the revolution had proposed. Yet, these strategies proved insufficient given that the forces that carried out the revolution did not calm down but rather intensified their demands, though in contradictory ways. The influx of capital awakened ambitions to reinforce internal colonialism in the three regions. At the same time, the political expectations that the civil war had generated were accentuated among the indigenous peasants of the Sierra and the peasants and workers of the coast as they witnessed the “injustice” of the regime that had begun with radical promises.

The massacre of the November 15, 1922 in Guayaquil was a clear symptom that the liberal state was in a crisis that obliged it to attack its old allies, the workers

and artisans of the urban guilds. The massacre only deepened the liberal crisis and provoked a series of criticisms and a struggle for power that led to the collapse of the regime. It had effectively lost the support of a social base that was distancing itself from the scheme of gradual democracy and civilizing progress.

Although between 1925 and 1948 a series of civil conflicts and coups took place, these did not represent an obstacle to the development of democracy. These conflicts arose from a process of decolonization and the disputes, mobilizations, and collective actions were filled with political content. They were an effective expression of competition between alternative projects for change. This was the third moment of democratization during the republican life.

Under the July regime, and Ayora's regime, the state was transformed into a social national state based on a sustained dialogue with class organization recognized as collective legal entities. A reflection on the relationship between class and ethnicity took place in a context of complaints leveled against a system of power that permeated the most mundane state practices. The language on class and ethnicity served as a foundation for the recognition of collective social organization and was fundamental for the foundation of the system of social rights.

In this period, indigenous communities and peasants pressured the political system to generate a first and little-known stage of land redistribution that preceded the agrarian reforms of the 1970's. This also produced multiple reactions and

processes of modernization among other classes that sought to stop bottom-up state transformation.

The demands for justice coming from all over the country and that were channeled through the recently founded Ministry for Social Welfare and Labour (MPST- 1925) began a dialogue that generated new patterns of state responses to peasant demands. Given the internal complexity and contradictory character of the state, the MPST represented a new state practice characterized by an autonomy with respect to local *gamonal* power there were two earlier precedents. The logic of this social-political exchange and of the practices of the MSPT led to an alternative path for state formation.

Through their own growth, indigenous communities and peasants of the coast and the Sierra established the conditions to develop bottom up a corporatist proposal for political participation. They attempted distinct forms of articulation with the state through agrarian unions in the 1930s, through confederations of Indians within leftist parties, as part of democratic fronts in the 1940s, and through functional state representation sanctioned by the constitutions. They joined up with the Left and contributed to the popular movement at key junctures, such as that of the constitutional process of 1929, that of the mobilization to consolidate state recognition of indigenous communities and unions as organized bases of the state and subjects with rights in 1938, and that of the formation of a popular front that led to

the constitutional process of 1944.

Much of the literature on “populism” and “corporativism” in twentieth-century Ecuador has posited that these were legacies of the country’s conservative and authoritarian past. Deeper study of the reform period between the fall of the oligarchic state in 1925 and the onset of World War II, and of the little known archive of the MPST in particular, reveals a more complex story. In fact, the “corporatist” experience in this reform period turns out to have been crucial to the development of a more democratic state, one in which subaltern actors gained greater access to land, labor rights, social security, the judicial system, state recognition, and national collective representation. These were not simple concessions from elites through a model of “corporativism from above,” as is often ascribed to other “populist” regimes in Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina in the mid-twentieth century. They were also the product of popular demands, mobilizations, and alliance-making that constituted a type of “corporativism from below.” Processes from above and below converged into a new model of “corporatist citizenship” that sought to overcome the internal colonial control of conservatives and supersede the limitations of oligarchic liberalism. A reading of the legacy of this political experience in the transformation of the Ecuadorian state in the twentieth century helped us to understand how the formation of a corporatist state was also a field of dispute. Corporativism from below, though it was subsequently redeployed by Velasco and conservative forces,

remains a part of indigenous and popular political cultures today and is an integral part of the state's discourse.

GLOSSARY

Alfarismo: Followers of Eloy Alfaro and his revolution.

Anejo: Minor rural community linked to a parish. Sometimes the indigenous community is also named anejo.

ASC: (Acción Social Católica) Catholic Social Action.

Arriero: Man who carries goods on animals, generally donkeys or mules.

Arrimado: Landless peasants who depended on families with land, either as free communities or under the concertaje regime.

Caballería: Colonial unit of measure. Two caballerías are around two hectares.

Cacique: (Principal or Varayuc) The major authority of the community. Later known as cabecilla.

Cartacuentero: Tax collector's assistant.

CCO: (Centro de Obreros Católicos) Catholic Workers Centre.

Cholo: "Indians dressed as Spaniards." Social category.

COG: (Confederación Obrera del Guayas) Worker's Confederation of Guayas.

Comunero: A member of the indigenous community.

CON: (Compactación Obrera Nacional) conservative labor organization.

Concertaje: (régimen de trabajo por deuda) debt labor regime.

Concierto: Peasant under concertaje regime. (Campesino sometido al régimen de

trabajo por deuda).

Corregidores: Civil authority of the colonial period. Were used to control and contain the indigenous communities and peasants.

Diezmo: An important tax or tribute in the colonial period. It was maintained during part of the nineteenth century.

ELC: Ecuadorian Land Company.

Forastero: Peasant or indigenous merchant with no mita or tributary obligations; a type of immigrant; a landless peasant like an arrimado.

FTAL: (Federación de Trabajadores Latinoamericanos) Federation of Latinamerican Workers.

FTRE: (Federación de Trabajadores Regionales del Ecuador) Federation of Regional Workers of Ecuador.

Gañanes: Like conciertos; peasants inside the hacienda.

Gamonales: Landholders.

Huasipungo: Refers to a parcel of land and/or a hut (with access to natural resources of the hacienda) given by the landholder to an indigenous family in exchange for individual and collective services.

Joint ownership: (condominio) Refers to the multiple jurisdiction and sharing of a land. These lands were regularly in dispute between indigenous communities and landholders.

IC: International Communist.

Llactayos: Peasant with access to lands and with mita and tributary obligations.

Mita: Colonial regime of work for indigenous communities and peasants.

Montoneras: Peasant guerrillas of the coast. They joined Alfaro's army during the Liberal Revolution and after his murder they fought against the civilist governments.

MPST: (Ministerio de Prevision Social y Trabajo) Ministry of Welfare and Work.

Páramo: Highlands located in the Sierra.

PC: (Partido Conservador) Conservative Party.

PCE: (Partido Comunista Ecuatoriano) Ecuadorian Communist Party.

Peasant: An agricultural laborer or small farmer.

Pesillo: Location of a state-owned hacienda in the province of Pichincha

PL: (Partido Liberal) Liberal Party.

Progresismo: The moderate part of conservatism during the last 25 years of the nineteenth century.

Protección (Protector de Indios): Colonial representative of the indigenous community in courts; it was suppressed in 1854.

PS: (Partido Socialista) Socialist Party.

PSE: (Partido Socialista Ecuatoriano) Ecuadorian Socialist Party.

Realengas: Lands of the King of Spain during the colonial period. Some of them were assigned to the indigenous communities, but were disputed with the hacienda since

the founding of the Republic.

Rezagos: Part of the taxes or tributes that were not collected by the authorities in a specific year.

SAIP: (Sociedad Artística e Industrial del Pichincha) Pichincha's Artistic and Industrial Society.

UFCO: United Fruit Company.

VSRE: (Vanguardia Socialista Revolucionaria Ecuatoriana) Ecuadorian Socialist Revolutionary Avant Garde.

Vacant Lands: Lands declared by the state as uninhabited that were actually often occupied by peasant communities.

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AHA. Archivo Histórico de Ambato.

Gobernación Series

AHICC. Archivo Histórico de Iván Cruz Cevallos.

Empresas de la familia Jijón y Caamaño collection.

AIFP. Archivo Intermedio de la Función Pública.

MPST Ministerio de Previsión Social y Trabajo Collection.

AMC. Archivo Ministerio de Cultura (Ex AHBCE)

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RP. Cartas y Comunicaciones Ricardo Paredes

FEI. Cartas y Comunicaciones Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios

N. Cartas entre Nela Martínez y Joaquín Gallegos Lara

ANH/Q. Archivo Nacional de Historia, Quito

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Ministerio de Hacienda 1843-1857 Collection.

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