

**Class and Ethnicity in the Canton of Cayambe:
The Roots of Ecuador's Modern Indian Movement**

by

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Submitted to the Department of History and the Faculty of the
Graduate School of the University of Kansas in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of
Philosophy

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Abstract

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My research examines changes in ideologies of class and ethnicity within rural movements for social change in Ecuador during the twentieth century. It explores how popular organizations engaged class analyses and ethnic identities in order to influence strategies of political mobilization among Indigenous and peasant peoples. Although recently ethnicity has come to dominate Indigenous political discourse, I have discovered that historically the rural masses defended their class interests, especially those related to material concerns such as land, wages, and work, even while embracing an ideology of ethnicity. Through the study of land tenure and political mobilization issues, this project examines the roles of leadership, institutions, economics, and class relations in order to understand the formation of class ideologies and ethnic politics in Ecuador.

Although various Indigenous revolts occurred during the colonial period, these were localized and lacked a global vision for social change. In contrast, beginning in the 1920s Indian organizations emerged which understood that immediate and local solutions would not improve their situation, but rather that there must be fundamental structural changes in society. Moving from narrow, local revolts to broad organizational efforts for structural change represented a profound ideological shift which marks the birth of Ecuador's modern Indian movement.

An examination of how these early organizations and movements developed and operated elucidates the emergence of subsequent Indigenous organizations. This study utilizes a sequence of organizing efforts in the Canton of Cayambe in the northern Ecuadorian highlands from the formation of the first Indigenous *sindicatos* (peasant unions) in the 1920s to the promulgation of agrarian reform legislation in 1964 as a case study. This story reveals the demands of Indigenous movements, the organizational strategies which they implemented to achieve those demands, and the influence which this history had on the formation of Ecuador's modern Indian movement. It is the thesis of this study that Ecuador's Indigenous movement has its roots in leftist organizational efforts, and that its character must be understood as an integral part of that history. In fact, it is the nature and content of that relationship with the left which has led to Ecuador witnessing perhaps the strongest Indigenous movement in Latin America in the 1990s.

Acknowledgments

In the process of a project such as this one, a person naturally accumulates many debts. It is customary on this page to profusely acknowledge the assistance of everyone involved, but that is an inherently risky endeavor because inevitably someone is forgotten. In any case, let me make an attempt to fulfill this duty.

My initial introduction to Ecuador came with Oregon State University's study abroad program in Quito during the summer of 1990. Marleen Haboud, my anthropology professor at the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador, introduced me to Indigenous politics in Ecuador and encouraged me to think critically about many of the themes which I develop in this dissertation.

I returned to Ecuador for six months of preliminary dissertation research during 1993-1994 and for another year during 1995-1996. John and Ligia Simmons, friends in Lawrence, put me in contact with their family in Ecuador who assisted with my transition to that culture. In particular, Cristóbal Galarza graciously shared of his time. Cristóbal introduced me to Marco Maldonado who, together with his wife Nancy Pinos and family, openly welcomed me into their home in Cayambe. I am forever indebted to Marco for his assistance.

Mercedes Prieto provided me with valuable material and assistance with this project. Antonio Crespi and the late Eduardo Estrella kindly provided me access to the Junta Central de Asistencia Pública archival collections. Likewise, Ramiro Avila capably assisted with materials in the Fondo Bonifaz at the Archivo Histórico del Banco Central del Ecuador. The Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO) provided me with an institutional affiliation. I would also like to extend my appreciation to the many other people who helped me in Ecuador.

I received a Summer Graduate School Fellowship, Pearson Fellowship, University of Kansas Dissertation Fellowship, and five (three summers and two years) Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) graduate fellowships which funded this work. I also received a two-year award from the Social Science Research Council of an SSRC-MacArthur Foundation Fellowship on Peace and Security in a Changing World. This award allowed me to greatly expand and deepen this dissertation project, including a year as a Visiting Scholar at the Center for Latin American Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, and an Intern at the South and Meso American Indian Rights Center (SAIIC), in Oakland, California. In particular, I would like to thank Nilo Cayuqueo who made that an exceptionally valuable experience.

Back in Kansas, Elizabeth Kuznesof capably directed the dissertation. Charles Stansifer, Anton Rosenthal, John Hoopes, and William Tuttle all graciously sat on my

committee and provided me with helpful feedback. Finally, thanks also go to Cheryl and Koosa.

For Shelley

Solo los obreros y campesinos irán hasta el fin
A.C. Sandino

Huaranca, huaranca, tucuncapac ticramushami
Tupac Amaru

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Chapter One
Introduction:
Class Ideologies and Ethnic Politics in
Ecuadorian Peasant and Indigenous Movements

For a week in June of 1990, Indigenous peoples¹ in Ecuador blocked roads and paralyzed the country in an attempt to force the government to address issues of land ownership, education, economic development, and Indigenous peoples' relationship with the state. This uprising or *levantamiento* was one of the most significant events in the history of popular movements in that country. Unlike most twentieth-century revolutionary movements which appealed to a working-class or peasant identity as a basis for social mobilization, this *levantamiento* identified with a new coalescence of ethno-nationalist identity.

This uprising forced an ideological realignment within Ecuador's social movements with important consequences for the nature of popular organizing efforts across the continent. It was part of a long history of popular revolts which began during the period of Spanish colonial domination and even earlier.² The nature of these rebellions, however, has changed significantly over time. During the colonial period, these revolts were local and isolated and lacked a unified strategy or broad

1. The use of a capital "I" in reference to Indigenous peoples in this document is intentional and based on, and in respect for, a specific preference which the all-Indigenous board of directors of the South and Meso American Indian Rights Center (SAIIC), a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) based in Oakland, California, has established as a strong affirmation of their ethnic identity. Furthermore, the plural "peoples" indicates the broad diversity among Indigenous groups not only in Ecuador but throughout the Americas.

2. Segundo E. Moreno Yáñez analyzes this history in *Subelevaciones indígenas en la Audiencia de Quito: Desde comienzos del siglo XVIII hasta finales de la Colonia*, 3d ed., corrected and expanded (Quito: Ediciones de la Universidad Católica, 1985).

vision for social change. Beginning in the twentieth century, such uprisings assumed a broader and more popular character than earlier movements, developed close relations with leftist political forces, and built on a class analysis of society. By the end of the twentieth century, Indigenous organizations led many of the most prominent social movements in Ecuador, and their leaders had eschewed a class analysis in favor of one rooted in their identity as Indigenous peoples. This situation created a new ideological arena which forced people to reassess the role of Indigenous peoples in popular protest movements and to consider the importance of ethnicity, rather than class, as a primary mobilizing force for social change.

A large body of literature has been written about these recent Indigenous movements in Ecuador. Anthropologists, political scientists, and sociologists both within and outside the country have analyzed the significance of the 1990 uprising, related actions, and the corresponding ideological shift within Indigenous politics and Indigenous attitudes toward nationalism and state power. In a manner rarely seen in Latin America, Indigenous actions literally spawned an academic "Generation of 1990" with countless books, articles, and doctoral dissertations (many still in the process of completion) on the subject of Indigenous politics in Ecuador.³ This dissertation is not

3. See, for example, José Almeida, Hernán Carrasco, Luz María de la Torre, et al., *Sismo étnico en el Ecuador: varias perspectivas* (Quito: CEDIME-Ediciones Abya-Yala, 1993); Diego Cornejo Menacho, ed., *INDIOS: Una reflexión sobre el levantamiento indígena de 1990* (Quito: ILDIS, 1991); Luciano V. Martínez, "El levantamiento indígena, la lucha por la tierra y el proyecto alternativo," *Cuadernos de la realidad Ecuatoriana: El problema indígena hoy* 5 (1992), 71-79; Segundo E. Moreno Yáñez and José Figueroa, *El levantamiento indígena del inti raymi de 1990* (Quito: Ediciones Abya-Yala, 1992); Fernando Rosero, *Levantamiento indígena: tierra y precios*, Serie Movimiento Indígena en el Ecuador contemporáneo No. 1. (Quito: Centro de Estudios y Difusión Social, 1990); Jorge León Trujillo, *De campesinos a ciudadanos diferentes: El levantamiento indígena* (Quito: CEDIME/Abya-Yala, 1994); Melina H. Selverston, "The Politics of Culture: Indigenous Peoples and the State in Ecuador," in *Indigenous Peoples and Democracy in Latin America*, ed. Donna Lee Van Cott (New York: St. Martin's Press in association with the Inter-American Dialogue, 1994), 131-152; Leon Zamosc, "Agrarian Protest

about the 1990 uprising, and is not intended to question the historical significance of that event and the ideological realignment of Indigenous politics which it represented. Indeed, those events heavily influence and inform it. Rather, the purpose is to deepen understanding of the roots, history, and formation of Ecuador's modern Indian movement. With a solid understanding of the past we will be better equipped to confront the challenges of today and chart a path into the future.

Academics and activists alike have come to see the 1990 uprising, the organizational process leading up to it, and the political negotiations following it, as representing the birth of a new type of Indigenous ideology and organizational structure. Nina Pacari, one of this movement's leading intellectual theorists, noted that the new organization had replaced previous economic or class-based demands with more political ones, including "the right to self-determination, the right to our cultural identity and our languages, and the right to develop economically according to our own values and beliefs."⁴ Accompanying this attitude, however, was the assumption that earlier organizations were under the control of external agents including labor unions and the Socialist and Communist Parties which did not truly embrace an Indigenous identity or agitate for Indigenous concerns. It became a commonly repeated assumption that, "Indigenous people who became involved in politics usually did so under the banner of the traditional left, which considered the indigenous struggle to be subordinate--or even inimical--to the larger class struggle."⁵ Academics

and the Indian Movement in the Ecuadorian Highlands," *Latin American Research Review* 29:3 (1994): 37-68; Xavier Albó, "El retorno del Indio," *Revista Andina* 9:2 (December 1991), 299-345; Lynn A. Meisch, "We Will Not Dance on the Tomb of Our Grandparents: 500 Years of Resistance in Ecuador," *The Latin American Anthropology Review* 4:2 (Winter 1992): 55-74.

4. Nina Pacari, "Taking On the Neoliberal Agenda," *NACLA* 29:5 (March/April 1996): 25.

5. "Gaining Ground: The Indigenous Movement in Latin America," *NACLA Report on the Americas* 29:5 (March/April 1996): 14. Also see Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador (CONAIE), *Las nacionalidades indígenas en el Ecuador: Nuestro proceso organizativo*, 2d ed., revised and expanded (Quito:

have uncritically echoed this supposition that "the basic constructs of ideology based on class struggle" by its very nature contradicted "the goals of the indigenous communities."⁶

As this study demonstrates, it is a mistaken assumption that early twentieth-century Indigenous and peasant organizations were subordinate to a political Left which suppressed Indigenous interests in favor of ones far removed from the reality of Indigenous peasants in rural communities. Furthermore, although there are deep racial divisions in Ecuador, it is a simplistic misinterpretation of these ethnic dynamics to assume that such discrimination would automatically preclude alliances across ethnic boundaries between rural and urban workers. In fact, these cross-ethnic alliances have been one of the main characteristics of Indigenous organizing efforts in Ecuador throughout the twentieth century.

Although it was important for recent Indigenous organizations such as the Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador (CONAIE, Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador) to express their political independence from the ideological line of these previous organizations, a careful evaluation indicates that early twentieth-century class-based rural movements contributed much to subsequent Indigenous and peasant movements in Ecuador. Certain philosophical elements within these movements such as attitudes toward nationalism have changed, but there are important continuities in terms of key issues, organizational strategies, alliance building, and choice of tactics. Although new elements appeared in the Indigenous movements of the 1990s, this study demonstrates that in Ecuador these movements had clear and important roots in earlier organizational efforts.

Most academics and activists who study or participate in current Indigenous movements in Ecuador and in Latin America in general have missed, denied, or rejected the significance of earlier rural organizing efforts in Ecuador and their

Ediciones Abya-Yala, 1989), 32.

6. Selverston, 133.

influence on later movements. For example, in the introduction to a special issue of its journal *NACLA Report on the Americas* which focused on Indigenous movements in Latin America, the North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA) contends that "before 1980, indigenous organizing was largely confined to local communities."⁷ When scholars do explore the roots of the Indian movement, the discussion often does not extend beyond the founding of the Shuar Federation in the southern Amazon in 1964, an event which many people use to mark the beginning of political ethnic-based organizational efforts in Ecuador. Others point to agrarian reform in the Sierra in the 1960s as providing the roots of modern forms of Indigenous organization.⁸ While these actions were significant steps forward for Ecuador's Indigenous movement, more than thirty years earlier rural leaders in the highlands attempted to organize similar federations with comparable issues, demands, and organizational strategies. In reality, as this study demonstrates, as early as the 1920s and 1930s Indigenous peoples in the Ecuadorian highlands were forming broad organizations which addressed macro-level issues that went far beyond local community concerns. Moving from narrow, local revolts which addressed immediate problems to comprehensive organizational efforts which sought to effect structural societal change represented a profound ideological shift which marks the birth of Ecuador's modern Indian movement.

The Indigenous peoples from the canton of Cayambe in the northern Ecuadorian highlands were key players in defining this historic ideological shift within Indigenous organizing strategies. Although scholars have largely ignored this history, Ecuador's modern Indian movement was born out of earlier agrarian organizing efforts.⁹ This dissertation traces that history from the formation of the first Indigenous

7. "Gaining Ground: The Indigenous Movement in Latin America," *NACLA Report on the Americas* 29:5 (March/April 1996): 14.

8. Selverston, 137; Anthony Bebbington, "Organizations and Intensifications: Campesino Federations, Rural Livelihoods and Agricultural Technology in the Andes and Amazonia," *World Development* 24:7 (July 1996): 1165.

9. Much of the research on these organizational strategies in Cayambe has been in

sindicatos (peasant unions) and Indigenous leaders' participation in the formation of the Partido Socialista Ecuatoriano (PSE, Ecuadorian Socialist Party) in 1926, through strike activity in the 1930s, failed and then successful attempts to establish the Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios (FEI, Ecuadorian Federation of Indians) in 1944, and constant agitation which finally led to the passage of an agrarian reform law in 1964. An analysis of land tenure and labor relations underlies this entire study. An overarching issue is the formation and evolution of what it meant to be "Indian" in twentieth-century Ecuador.

Most critical to the thesis, however, is an analysis of the demands of Indigenous movements, the organizational strategies which they implemented to achieve those demands, and the influence which this history had on the formation of Ecuador's modern Indian movement. An examination of how these early organizations and movements developed and operated will elucidate the evolution of subsequent Indigenous organizations. This study focuses on organizational strategies and leadership styles to uncover ideologies of class and ethnicity and their relation to power structures. It is influenced by works such as Peter Winn's study of Chilean factory workers which presented a view not "from the presidential palace, but history from the bottom up."¹⁰ This study seeks, following Leon Zamosc's suggestion, "to 'bring the rural actors back in'" in order to see them "as effective forces that shape

the form of largely unpublished Masters Theses and Doctoral Dissertations, many of these at Ecuadorian universities which has further reduced their exposure to a broader audience. See, in particular, Mercedes Prieto N., "Condicionamientos de la movilización campesina: el caso de las haciendas Olmedo-Ecuador (1926-1948)," (Tesis de Antropología, Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador, 1978); Cristóbal Landázuri, "La hacienda estatal y su transformación en cooperativas agropecuarias: el caso Pesillo, 1913-1977" (Tesis de Antropología, PUCE, 1980); and Lucía Salamea, "Transformación de la hacienda y los cambios en la condición campesina" (PUCE/CLACSO, Master en Sociología Rural, 1978).

10. Peter Winn, *Weavers of Revolution: The Yarur Workers and Chile's Road to Socialism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), vii.

historical outcomes."¹¹ It is the thesis of this dissertation that Ecuador's Indigenous movement has its roots in leftist organizational efforts, and that its character must be understood as an integral part of that history. In fact, it is the nature and content of that relationship with the left which has led to Ecuador witnessing perhaps the strongest Indigenous movement in Latin America in the 1990s.

Three themes are intertwined in the development of this dissertation. First, there are the ideological divisions which resulted from debates over the role of class and ethnicity in movements for social change. Leftist intellectuals forwarded analyses of Indigenous society based on economic factors which tended to denigrate the significance of Indian ethnic identity. Commonly Westerners throughout the political spectrum from Conservatives to Marxists believed that with the advent of modernity, Indian societies would abandon ethnicity as a category of identity. Increasingly, however, in recent decades, Indigenous organizations have successfully employed ethnicity as a tool for political mobilization. The result has been a furious debate over the question of whether ethnicity or class should form the basis for identity and political organization. As the literature on Latin America shows, leaders of popular organizations often stressed class forms of organization even when the membership of their movements retained a strong ethnic identity. For example, during the Mexican Revolution, political leaders sought to organize Indigenous peoples as peasants thereby usurping their ethnic identity. In Guatemala, Marxist guerrilla groups considered the oppression and exploitation which Maya Indians faced to be a result of their class position as a rural proletariat rather than due to their ethnicity. Similarly in Peru, the *Sendero Luminoso* guerrilla group's membership was overwhelmingly Indigenous, but its *mestizo* leadership refused to use ethnicity as a category of analysis.

11. Leon Zamosc, *Peasant Struggles and Agrarian Reform: The Ecuadorian Sierra and the Colombian Atlantic Coast in Comparative Perspective*, trans. Charles Roberts, Latin American Issues Monograph, No. 8 (Meadville, PA: Allegheny College, 1990), 1.

The refusal of Marxists to see Indian oppression in anything other than class terms hindered their ability to understand Indigenous societies or to join with them in unified movements of social protest. These historical and ongoing differences in ideological orientation over issues of class, ethnicity, and nationalism sometimes led to deep divisions between political leftists and Indigenous activists who sought to mobilize rural masses into a popular movement for social change.¹² Galo Ramón has persistently argued for an ethnic interpretation of Ecuador's peasant movement. "Although externally it has taken a classist form, it has a profound ethnic dimension" which although not always explicitly articulated as a political program is still present in "the growth of *comunas*, the persistence of symbols such as the Quichua language, dress, Andean behavior patterns, challenges to modernity, and even in the emergence of a more explicit ethnic discourse among Indian intellectuals."¹³ A careful analysis of organizational strategies and demands, however, reveals that both class and ethnicity have always been critical to the success of an Indigenous movement; the two cannot be separated.

12. Andean anthropologist Xavier Albó observes this long debate between class-based and ethnic-based strategies for organization in Ecuador's Indigenous and peasant movements in Albó, 308. José Sánchez Parga represents a class-based analysis in his various works whereas Roberto Santana emphasizes the importance of ethnicity in Indigenous movements. See, for example, José Sánchez Parga, *Presente y futuro de los pueblos indígenas: análisis y propuestas* (Quito: Ediciones Abya-Yala, 1992); the essays in José Sánchez Parga, ed., *Etnia, poder y diferencia en los andes septentrionales* (Quito: Ediciones Abya-Yala, 1990); and Roberto Santana, *¿Ciudadanos en la etnicidad? Los indios en la política o la política de los indios*, trans. Francisco Moscoso, Colección Biblioteca Abya-Yala 19 (Quito: Ediciones Abya-Yala, 1995). Alicia Ibarra also contends that the class content of Indigenous movements is more important than their ethnic elements in her book *Los indígenas y el estado en el Ecuador: la práctica neoindigenista*, 2d ed. (Quito: Ediciones Abya-Yala, 1992).

13. Galo Ramón Valarezo, "Indios, tierra y modernización: Cayambe-Ecuador 1950-1990," *El regreso de los runas: la potencialidad del proyecto indio en el Ecuador contemporánea* (Quito: COMUNIDEC-Fundación Interamericana, 1993), 197, 205.

A second critical issue concerns organizational links with non-Indigenous actors. This dissertation argues that Indigenous organizations' relationships with the left were not essentially "peon-patron," but rather were relatively equal and reciprocal alliances in which urban Marxists and rural Indians joined forces to address common concerns and build relationships which were mutually influential and beneficial. In fact, given that Indians from Cayambe helped found the Socialist Party and rose to positions of leadership in the Communist Party, it is a mistake to cast this as a "leftist" versus "Indian" division because Indians could also be leftist Marxists. Perhaps the more critical social dynamic was bridging the cultural divide between urban and rural worlds, and Indians and whites coming to see that they shared common political interests. The dissertation explains the importance of these relations to Indigenous movements and the continuing significance which they exert over organizational patterns.

The third issue builds on the previous two. Despite the close relationship with the left and the presence of a classist ideology, ethnicity has always been a defining characteristic of Cayambe's rural population. There is an ethnic-based culture of resistance which dates back to at least the Inka invasion of the northern Ecuadorian highlands. Later, ethnicity defined Indigenous economic relations with the Spanish and creole elite. Although class and gender remain significant defining characteristics of human experience, recent Indigenous movements in the Americas have shown that ethnicity and national identity also contribute important elements to the definition of group identity and can be critical for interpreting the nature of group actions. In an effort similar to that of Mark Thurner for the central Ecuadorian Andes, this dissertation "seeks to reconceptualize the recent history of peasant politics along ethnographic

lines."¹⁴ Ethnicity, thus, is a key issue necessary for understanding the evolution of rural organizing strategies in Cayambe.

The conflicts between class and ethnic analyses are partially due to historic deficiencies in Marxist theory, particularly as applied to Latin America. Specifically, Latin America lacked the advanced capitalist economic formation which characterized the nineteenth-century Western European world which Karl Marx critiqued, as well as the large homogenous urban working class which Marx had tagged as the basis for a social revolution. Furthermore, Marx presented a progressive view of history which saw as inevitable the replacement of Indigenous cultures with a Western European way of life. He wrote that "the bourgeoisie . . . draws all, even the most barbarian, nations into civilization."¹⁵ This claim that "Western hegemony is human destiny"¹⁶ and the denial of ethnicity as a mobilizing factor in a revolutionary struggle led many Indigenous activists to reject Marxism outright. In addition, such goals as "the bringing into cultivation of wastelands,"¹⁷ which in the Western hemisphere typically meant colonization of Indigenous lands, led many Indigenous leaders not only to reject Marxist thought as not offering a solution to the situation in which they found themselves, but also as a perceived part of the problems they faced. Arguably, a Marxist view of history with its emphasis on material causation over spiritual factors, class over ethnicity, and a pervasively progressive view of history in which "advanced" societies triumph over "primitive" ones was at the very root of the problems which

14. Mark Thurner, "Peasant Politics and Andean Haciendas in the Transition to Capitalism: An Ethnographic History," *Latin American Research Review* 28:3 (1993): 42.

15. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, "The Communist Manifesto," in David McLellan, ed., *Karl Marx: Selected Writings* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 225.

16. Marshall Sahlins, "Goodbye to *Tristes Tropes*: Ethnography in the Context of Modern World History," *Journal of Modern History* 65:1 (March 1993), 2.

17. Marx and Engels, 237.

Indigenous societies confronted as they struggled for survival in the face of the onslaught of Western culture.

These divisions between a Marxist class analysis and the cultural or ethnic interpretations of Indigenous activists was not limited to one specific time or place, but is a constant theme across the Americas in the twentieth century. Ecuador is not alone in grappling with the contradictions between an ethnic and a class analysis, nor is it the only Latin American country to experience revolts based on an ethno-nationalist sense of group identity. In the past decade, movements built on a sense of ethnic identity have become common in other Latin American countries with large Indigenous populations including Bolivia and Guatemala. In these countries, recent Indigenous uprisings demonstrate that ethnicity often becomes a rallying cry for what are essentially class demands. Traditionally, however, the left has favored a class analysis over an ethnic one which has limited the left's understanding of Indian movements. Worse, such misunderstandings of Indigenous demands have resulted in the subversion of Indigenous agendas.¹⁸

A large part of the difficulty in bridging these gaps was due to Marxist insensitivity to ethnic concerns. An emotional introduction to these issues appears in an exchange between American Indian Movement (AIM) leader Russell Means and the Revolutionary Communist Party in Ward Churchill's edited volume *Marxism and Native Americans*. Means criticizes Marxism as simply part of the "same old story" of European domination of Indigenous cultures. The Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), for its part, reacted against a call to emphasize traditional culture, and instead embraced its faith that Western science and technology would lead to progress beyond

18. See, for example, Charles R. Hale, "Between Che Guevara and the Pachamama: Mestizos, Indians and Identity Politics in the Anti-Quincentenary Campaign," *Critique of Anthropology* 14:1 (1994): 9-39; and Guillermo Delgado-P., "Ethnic Politics and the Popular Movement: Reconstructing a Social Justice Agenda," in *Latin America Faces the Twenty-First Century*, eds. Susanne Jonas and Edward J. McCaughan (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994), 77-88.

an underdeveloped state. An irony which emerges out of this situation is that Marxists had more in common with the ideology of the state which they were attempting to overthrow than with “oppressed” Indigenous masses which they hoped would ally with them in a popular struggle. Means argues that it is because of their racial status as Indians, not because of their lower class status, that Indigenous peoples are exploited. In this debate, ethnocentric biases in politics and culture, as well as radically different ideas of progress and development, emerge.¹⁹

In a special issue of *Latin American Perspectives* on minorities in the Americas, William Bollinger and Daniel Manny Lund examine elements of racial, national, and class oppression. They emphasize elements of class oppression over those of race and appear willing to embrace radical indigenist struggles only when the latter's eventual aims dovetail with those of Marxists who seek to overthrow an exploitative capitalist system. On the other hand, in an article on the “National Question” Juan Gómez-Quiñones notes that Marxists are often willing to accept and even defend self-determination as a strategy to further a socialist revolution, but later subjugate the concerns of Indigenous nationalities to the state's interests.²⁰ Glenn Morris and Ward Churchill have also commented on the contradiction between class-based and race-based organizing strategies. Marxists are willing to struggle for the self-determination of Indigenous peoples "so long as they are subordinated to a 'reactionary state.' Once encapsulated within a 'progressive state,' however, such rights mysteriously disappear; they are then bound by duty to integrate themselves with 'the revolution.'"²¹

19. Russell Means, "The Same Old Song," in Ward Churchill, ed., *Marxism and Native Americans* (Boston: South End Press, 1983), 19-33; The RCP, "Searching for a Second Harvest," in Churchill, *ibid.*, 35-58.

20. See William Bollinger and Daniel Manny Lund, "Minority Oppression: Toward Analyses that Clarify and Strategies that Liberate," *Latin American Perspectives* 9:2 (33) (March 1982), 2-28; and Juan Gómez-Quiñones, "Critique on the National Question, Self-Determination and Nationalism," *Latin American Perspectives* 9:2 (33) (March 1982), 62-83.

21. Glenn T. Morris and Ward Churchill, "Between a Rock and a Hard

It has been difficult for Marxists to see beyond the blinders of economic and class-based analyses to understand and respect the cultural and ethnic elements of native struggles. This repeated historical occurrence is not only evident in the Soviet Union where the Bolsheviks believed that individual national group economic and social interests would be best served through integration into a dominant multinational state thereby crushing smaller ethnic groups in the process. It can be also seen in Nicaragua where the Sandinista government attempted to integrate the Miskitu Indians into their Western notions of socialist revolution and state formation.²² With this history, it is no wonder scholars would assume the same relationship to be true in Ecuador.²³ Nevertheless, this study notes that class and ethnicity have not always been at polar extremes, nor do they have to be ideological opposites. In fact, as this study demonstrates, they can complement each other and assist in the construction of a stronger movement for social change.

Defining slippery terms like class and ethnicity is a difficult, unfortunate, and perhaps even unnecessary task. Furthermore, with recent geo-political realignments in the Western world, the language of class appears to have fallen into disuse, and anthropologists question whether "ethnicity" is really a concept. In addition, this is not a treatise which intends to work out new definitions and concepts of class and ethnicity. Instead, the hope is to utilize these concepts as valuable categories of analysis in order to understand the ideological underpinnings of organizing strategies within Ecuadorian popular movements.

Nevertheless, some base line definitions can be established. Marx and Engels began "The Communist Manifesto" with the statement that "the history of all hitherto

Place--Left-Wing Revolution, Right-Wing Reaction and the Destruction of Indigenous People," *Cultural Survival Quarterly* 11:3 (1987), 23.

22. Bernard Nietschmann, *The Unknown War: The Miskito Nation, Nicaragua, and the United States*, Focus on Issues, No. 8 (New York: Freedom House, 1989).

23. Guillermo Delgado-P., however, notes that Ecuador may present an exception to this history. See Delgado-P., 84.

existing society is the history of class struggle" between two camps: the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.²⁴ Expanding on this, E.P. Thompson in his classic work *The Making of the English Working Class* defined class as "an historical phenomenon, unifying a number of disparate and seemingly unconnected events, both in the raw material of experience and in consciousness." Thompson noted that "class happens when some men, as a result of common experiences (inherited or shared), feel and articulate the identity of their interests as between themselves, and as against other men whose interests are different from (and usually opposed to) theirs."²⁵ For this study in the case of Cayambe, regardless of whether one is discussing a "peasant" class or a rural "proletariat," the term is largely used in an economic sense to mean the members of a lower class who understand their interests as being in opposition to those of a wealthy elite. This occasionally expressed itself within the context of a class struggle, usually within the confines of leftist political parties and often the Communist Party in particular. It is common in Latin America to speak of the "popular class" instead of a peasant, working, or lower class. The popular class can be defined as "the workers, peasants, artisans, employees, etc. who, in short, are the vast majority of impoverished people who are victims of social injustice."²⁶ Although this definition has its roots in Marxist concepts, its conflation of distinct classes into one "popular class" moves it beyond this category.

Ethnicity tends to be situational in nature which makes it more difficult to define than class.²⁷ In the context of this study, ethnicity is explicitly used to mean an

24. Marx and Engels, 222.

25. E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Random House, 1963), 9.

26. Paul Cliche, *El animador popular y su función educativa*, Manuales didácticos CIESPAL (Quito: Centro Internacional de Estudios Superiores de Comunicación para América Latina (CIESPAL), 1985), 10.

27. For definitions of ethnicity, see Fredrick Barth, ed., *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Cultural Difference* (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1969). Also see Anthony Giddens, *The Nation-State and Violence*

Indigenous ethnic identity. In Latin America, someone who lived in a rural Indigenous village, spoke an Indigenous language, wore Indigenous dress, ate Indigenous food, and practiced traditional religious practices would, in essence, be an Indian. The same person, however, might migrate to a city to work as a day laborer and begin to speak Spanish, attend a Catholic mass, wear western clothes, and, in essence, become a *mestizo*. A corollary of situational ethnicity is that ethnicity is fluid; definitions of what is "Indian" and how Indian ethnicity is perceived change over time. In certain situations, as with United States federal policy, "Indian" has taken on highly racialized meanings such as determining "Indianness" by, for instance, if a person is one-sixteenth Cherokee. Generally in Latin America, especially with the history of *mestizaje*, definitions based on race do not work well. The 1950 census in Ecuador attempted to break down ethnic categories based on language, but critics have noted that one can be an Indigenous person without speaking an Indigenous language (or, conversely, speak an Indigenous language without being an Indian). Rather, ethnologists have developed a group of cultural factors to determine Indian identity, which include language, occupation, religion, dress, and geographic location. Although historically these indicators have been important in defining who is an Indian, during the course of the twentieth century they have become less so. This definition, also, becomes problematic in the Canton of Cayambe where many of these traditional identifying markers have long since been lost. Particularly for those who study urban Indians, it becomes clear that a loss of these external markers does not necessarily correlate with a loss of ethnic identity. Increasingly, culture, which is not as obvious to outside observers as physical markers, denotes "Indianness." A further matter which complicates this issue is the phenomenon of people assuming constructed forms of identity when they found it beneficial to be identified as an "Indian."

(Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).

Historically “Indian” has been a pejorative term, one which implies a colonized state. Ironically, recent movements have capitalized on this derogatory term to construct a powerful movement for social change. Marie-Chantal Barre defines Indians as those with “a civilization and a group of common values” who share a “unified history forged through five centuries of domination.”²⁸ In his book *El discurso de la indianidad*, Fernando Mires outlines three typical definitions of “Indigenous.” The first defines people as Indians in terms of being descendants of precolombian cultures, the second defines Indians as belonging to a cultural group, and the third defines Indians according to their socio-economic role in society.²⁹ A problem with all of these definitions, as Mires notes, is that they represent outsiders’ perspectives on what it means to be Indian, rather than considering how Indigenous peoples have defined themselves. In 1974 at a preparatory meeting for which would later become the World Council of Indigenous Peoples, the following definition was accepted:

The term Indigenous People refers to people, living in countries which have a population composed of different ethnic or racial groups, who are descendants of the earliest population living in the area, and who do not, as a group, control the national government of the countries within which they live.³⁰

This socio-political (and partially biological) definition of ethnicity reflected an increasingly urbanized Indigenous population not only in Latin America but around the world. Other than heritage, it does not attempt to define ethnicity as a function of dress, language, religion, location, etc. Rather, ethnicity is a matter of political exclusion and alienation from state power. This perspective marked the beginning of a

28. Marie-Chantal Barre, *Ideologías indigenistas y movimientos indios*, 2d ed. (Mexico: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1985), 9.

29. Fernando Mires, *El discurso de la indianidad: la cuestión indígena en América Latina*, Colección 500 Años No. 53 (Quito: Ediciones Abya-Yala, 1992), 13.

30. “The International Conference of Indigenous Peoples will be held in Canada in 1975,” *IWGIA Newsletter* 11 (September 1974): 2.

"Fourth World" analysis in which Indigenous peoples examined their lack of political power in their traditional territory and defined their interests as different than those of the dominant sectors including the state and leftist political forces.³¹ A limitation of this definition, however, is the unanswered question of what would happen to Indigenous identity if they were to gain state power.

Instead of using physical, historical, economic, or cultural markers to establish ethnicity, this study employs vaguer and more subjective definitions which rely on people self-identifying themselves (both consciously and unconsciously) as Indians. In concrete terms, this might include how people interact with a community or the roles which they assume in a fiesta. This allows for the phenomenon of situational ethnicity in which Indigenous identity may emerge or disappear given the specifics of a particular situation. In this study, if a person claims to be an Indian or participates in an Indigenous organization, that fact is more determinative as an ethnic marker than any academic or sociological definition. Even those who assume a constructed identity are sometimes important actors in the formation of ethnic politics.

Traditionally within Latin America, scholars have assumed a high correlation between class and ethnicity. Although distinct as political/economic and identity categories, in Latin America there has been a great deal of overlap between peasant and Indigenous groups.³² Since the terms are often used synonymously, it can be difficult to discuss one without the other. In fact, agrarian reform laws in the 1950s in Guatemala and Bolivia deliberately substituted the word "*campesino*" ("peasant") for

31. Rozanne Dunbar Ortiz, "The Fourth World and Indigenism: Politics of Isolation and Alternatives," *Journal of Ethnic Studies* 12:1 (Spring 1984): 79-105.

32. As an example of this, Florencia E. Mallon in her very detailed and careful studies *The Defense of Community in Peru's Central Highlands: Peasant Struggle and Capitalist Transition, 1860-1940* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983) and *Peasant and Nation: The Making of Postcolonial Mexico and Peru* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995) discusses Indigenous peoples, but she freely uses the term interchangeably with peasants and it is never clear that she truly understands ethnicity or Indigenous identities as something separate from a peasantry.

“Indian.” Although recently some activists and scholars have challenged the merging of Indigenous and peasant categories, in the Canton of Cayambe and during the time period under consideration here, this correlation generally holds true. Poor people tended to be “Indians,” and rich people were usually “white.” As originally conceptualized, this study intended to contrast class with ethnic identity. As the research progressed, it became obvious (particularly in the area of Cayambe) that this is a false dichotomy. There was little (perhaps nothing) that prevented the same person from assuming a class (peasant or rural proletarian) and an ethnic (Indian) identity simultaneously. Furthermore, in terms of organizing strategies, both forms of identity have been utilized concurrently, though with varying degrees of success. Thus, although these are analytically distinct categories, in fact they can be mutually reinforcing.

It is difficult to establish a proper definition of the word “peasant,” and, as Sidney Mintz noted in a 1973 essay in the first issue of the *Journal of Peasant Studies*, this issue has invoked a lengthy debate.³³ In his classic study *Peasants*, Eric Wolf defined peasants as

rural cultivators whose surpluses are transferred to a dominant group of rulers that uses the surpluses both to underwrite its own standard of living and to distribute the remainder to groups in society that do not farm but must be fed for their specific goods and services in turn.³⁴

In a later study of peasant resistance, Wolf presents a broad definition which includes tenants and sharecroppers but excludes landless laborers. Peasants, according to this definition, are those who are “existentially involved in cultivation and make autonomous decisions regarding the processes of cultivation.”³⁵ On the other hand, tightly restrictive definitions “would limit peasants to those of medieval or early modern

33. Sidney W. Mintz, “A Note on the Definition of Peasantries,” *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 1:1 (October 1973): 91-106.

34. Eric R. Wolf, *Peasants*, Foundations of Modern Anthropology Series (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966), 3-4.

35. Eric R. Wolf, *Peasant Wars of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1969), xiv.

Europe," noting that the situation in Latin America differs "so profoundly from the European feudal situation as to make the analogy misleading."³⁶ Douglas Kincaid in a study of peasant revolt in El Salvador identified peasants simply as "rural cultivators from whom an economic surplus is extracted in one form or another, freely or coercively, by nonproducing classes."³⁷

These issues are further muddled in an English-language study by the Spanish-language term *campesino* which is often (including in this study) imprecisely translated as "peasant." The term is not an ethnic marker; a *campesino* could be white, *mestizo*, Indian, or even a foreigner. More often, it is used as a designation of rural residence, which could "include both landless agricultural workers and the owners or operators of small-holdings."³⁸ Gary Wynia defines *campesinos* as

the *mestizo*, Indian, and Negro subsistence farmers and laborers who populate rural Latin America. Nearly all of them earn barely enough for their physical survival and enjoy few opportunities for improving their condition.³⁹

Wynia proceeds to define four groups of *campesinos*: *colonos* who work as sharecroppers or tenant farmers on *latifundios*, migrating wage laborers, plantation workers, and those engaged in subsistence agriculture. Even these categories are not easily isolated from each other, or necessarily mutually exclusive. "Peasants" in Cayambe experienced the debt peonage of *colonos* but also engaged in wage labor and

36. Henry A. Landsberger, "The Role of Peasant Movements and Revolts in Development," in *Latin American Peasant Movements*, ed. Henry A. Handsberger (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1969), 3.

37. Douglas A. Kincaid, "Peasants into Rebels: Community and Class in Rural El Salvador," in *Constructing Culture and Power in Latin America*, ed. Daniel H. Levine (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1993), 145.

38. Solon Barraclough, ed., *Agrarian Structure in Latin America: A Resume of the CIDA Land Tenure Studies of: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Peru* (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, D.C. Heath and Company, 1973), 297.

39. Gary W. Wynia, *The Politics of Latin American Development*, 2nd ed (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 64.

faced the problems of low levels of technology and inefficiency which dogged subsistence agriculturalists. But *campesino* does not necessarily imply an economic role in society. More literally, *campesino* was simply a "rural dweller" or a person who lived in the countryside ("*campo*") and worked the land. The term conveys a sense of social status more than an economic role or ethnic identity. There is no Spanish term which implies the relation to the means of production indicated in the English term "peasant," nor an English term which indicates the possible range of identities which the Spanish word "*campesino*" encompasses. As a study of agrarian reform in Latin America in the 1960s noted, "the fact that modern English has no exact equivalent of this concept [*campesino*] tells much about the different social structures in the English-speaking countries and Latin America."⁴⁰

Thus, although the rural Indigenous population of Cayambe and elsewhere in Ecuador and throughout Latin America are often called "peasants," this can be a very inaccurate label. Given land tenure patterns in Cayambe, it was common for *campesinos* to speak of themselves as *trabajadores agrícolas* (agricultural workers) which can be taken to mean a rural proletariat. In addition, although contemporary press reports from the first half of the twentieth century would sometimes refer to this population as *campesinos*, other terms were also employed. For example, a report on a rural strike on a hacienda in northern Cayambe called the Indians *obreros* ("workers").⁴¹ A congress which was planned for February 1931 in Cayambe but which governmental repression prevented from taking place planned to create a Confederation of Agrarian Workers and Peasants (*Confederación de Obreros Agrarios y Campesinos*), which emphasized both labels. Similarly, press reports from a 1954 strike on the Pitaná hacienda in southern Cayambe used the terms *trabajadores*

40. Barraclough, 297.

41. "Se soluciona el problema creado por los indígenas sublevados en las haciendas Pesillo y Moyurco: compromiso entre patrones y obreros," *El Comercio*, January 8, 1931, 1.

(workers), *trabajadores agrícolas* (agricultural workers), *peones* (peons), and *indígenas* (Indigenous peoples) almost completely interchangeably, but never described the strikers as *campesinos*. Anthropologists who studied this Indigenous population utilized a similar vocabulary. For example, Aníbal Buitron and Bárbara Salisbury Buitron introduced their book on *campesinos* in the province of Pichincha in the 1940s as a study of the life of *trabajadores agrícolas* (agricultural workers).⁴²

There have emerged various efforts to bridge the conceptual gaps which this terminology produces. Some scholars have noted that these workers were not truly peasants but formed a type of rural proletariat. They were more likely to struggle for common class interests rather than individual economic needs. Particularly in Cayambe by the 1920s, where most of the rural population worked as wage laborers on haciendas, there was already a process of proletarianization in place. Some have spoken of a "semi-proletariat" to indicate a poor, exploited group of people who are "neither entirely landless nor purely wage laborers nor all renters but some combination of the three." Rural mobilization, therefore, resulted from "their peripheral location in the agro-export economy and shared oppression by the landowning classes."⁴³ In his study of the Mexican Revolution, John Womack refrains from using the word "peasant" because "what they were is clear in Spanish: *campesinos*, people from the fields."⁴⁴ Similarly, Jeffrey Gould rejects terms such as "rural proletariat," "peasant," and "semiproletarian" in favor of retaining the Spanish "*campesino*" on the

42. Aníbal Buitron and Bárbara Salisbury Buitron, *Condiciones de vida y trabajo del campesino de la provincia de Pichincha* (Quito: Instituto Nacional de Previsión, Dept. de Propaganda, 1947), 8.

43. Jeffery M. Paige, "Land Reform and Agrarian Revolution in El Salvador; Comment on Seligson and Diskin" *Latin American Research Review* 31:2 (1996): 133. On semi-proletarianism, also see Carlos Rafael Cabarrús, *Genesis de una revolución : analisis del surgimiento y desarrollo de la organizacion campesina en El Salvador*, 1a ed, Ediciones de la Casa Chata ; 16 (Mexico, D.F: Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social, 1983).

44. John Womack, Jr., *Zapata and the Mexican Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1968), x.

basis that it was "the word used by the subjects of this study to describe their own social condition and class."⁴⁵

In a study of a similar situation in Chimborazo in Ecuador's central highlands, Mark Thurner eschews the term "peasant" in favor of "peasant-worker." Although more cumbersome, he utilizes this label

because it depicts the twentieth-century hacienda peasant's dual circumstance more accurately than either "peasant" or "worker" alone, and it is more descriptive than "semiproletariat." They have been workers *and* peasants in a political sense, since throughout the Ecuadorian Andes they struck for unpaid and higher wages but were usually content to accept payment in land from their landlords.⁴⁶

Another term which activists within rural movements recently have commonly employed is *campesino-indígena*. It is usually used as an adjective rather than a noun, and thus generally does not represent a hybrid or hyphenated identity. Rather, it is often used to describe an organization (such as a *Federación Campesino-Indígena*, or Peasant-Indigenous Federation) or the nature of a movement. Nevertheless, even with this problem of terminology it is revealing to examine when organizations, political activists, and intellectuals discussed these issues in terms of a peasant, Indigenous, or proletarian population.

Historically, Karl Marx's perspective on the peasantry has further complicated a study of rural populations in Latin America. Marx considered the peasantry to be "not revolutionary, but conservative." He proceeded to note that "nay more, they are reactionary, for they try to roll back the wheel of history."⁴⁷ In the 1970s, reacting to Marx's charge that peasants were like a "sack of potatoes," a large body of literature

45. Jeffrey L. Gould, *To Lead as Equals: Rural Protest and Political Consciousness in Chinandega, Nicaragua, 1912-1979* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 7.

46. Mark Thurner, *Hacienda Dissolution, Peasant Struggle, and Land Market in Ecuador's Central Highlands (Canton Colta, Chimborazo Province)*, LTC Research Paper 99 (University of Wisconsin-Madison: Land Tenure Center, 1989), 34.

47. Marx and Engels, 229.

emerged which argued that peasants were more revolutionary than was sometimes thought.⁴⁸ This historiographic trend challenged the conventional interpretation of peasants as a pre-capitalist and politically anachronistic group which was only concerned with defending their traditional values and institutions. Indeed, Marx's European perception of the peasantry is a poor fit for the situation in Latin America. He describes them as a group with a mode of production which "isolates them from one another instead of bringing them into mutual intercourse." Since "the identity of their interests begets no community . . . they do not form a class." They are incapable of representing their own interests; they must rely upon others, who then become their masters."⁴⁹ If this were indeed the relationship between Marxists and peasants in Ecuador, a leftist paternalistic attitude toward the Indigenous population would seem almost necessary.

Scholars such as Sidney Mintz and Jeffery Paige who have studied peasants in Latin America claim that although land ownership tended to make peasants more conservative, agricultural workers engaged in wage-based labor were more likely to revolt. Thus, Mintz contends that in Cuba it was a rural proletariat and not a peasantry which led the 1959 revolution.⁵⁰ Jeffrey Gould's work on rural Nicaragua has further blurred the distinction between a peasantry and rural proletariat as he focused

48. Karl Marx, "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte," in David McLellan, ed., *Karl Marx: Selected Writings* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 317. For the 1970s literature on peasants, see, for example, Wolf, *Peasant Wars of the Twentieth Century*; Howard Handelman, *Struggle in the Andes: Peasant Political Mobilization in Peru*, Latin American Monographs, No. 35, Institute of Latin American Studies, The University of Texas at Austin (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1975); and Brian Loveman, *Struggle in the Countryside: Politics and Rural Labor in Chile, 1919-1973* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976).

49. Marx, "Eighteenth Brumaire," 317-18.

50. Jeffery M. Paige, *Agrarian Revolution: Social Movement and Export Agriculture in the Underdeveloped World* (New York: The Free Press, 1975); Sidney W. Mintz, "The Rural Proletariat and the Problem of Rural Proletarian Consciousness," *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 1:3 (April 1974): 291-325.

on the economic role of rural actors. Steve Stern has also presented an analysis of peasant resistance which encompasses the broader dynamics in social protest movements.⁵¹ James Scott's various works have also had a significant impact on the study of peasant politics because of his emphasis on everyday forms of resistance.⁵² Although these common actions are more frequent than the relatively rare violent uprising, the implication of Scott's argument is that organizational strategies, particularly those which socialist and communist parties have sponsored, are less significant than isolated pre-political local actions. But it is precisely during these major upheavals that the informal organizational structure of society becomes most apparent. Furthermore, to belittle organizational actors at work during these historic junctures is to ignore major forces in the formation of society.

Social protest and revolt have been a common subject of academic investigation. This work is situated at an intersection between the classic 1970s studies of peasant resistance and newer Latin American labor histories which emphasize worker actions rather than organizational strategies. Studies on ethnicity and national formation in Ecuador, mostly from anthropologists, strongly influence this study.⁵³ It

51. Steve J. Stern, "New Approaches to the Study of Peasant Rebellion and Consciousness: Implications of the Andean Experience," in *Resistance, Rebellion, and Consciousness in the Andean World, 18th to 20th Centuries*, ed. Steve J. Stern (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), 3-25.

52. James C. Scott, *The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976); and *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).

53. There is a rich body of archaeological, anthropological, and ethnohistorical literature on Ecuador, much of it focusing on the Amazonian region. Segundo E. Moreno Yáñez's *Antropología ecuatoriana: Pasado y presente*, Colección Primicias de la Cultura de Quito, No. 1 (Quito: Editorial Ediguías C. Ltda., 1992) gives a comprehensive survey of this literature. A basic ethnographic introduction to Ecuador's various Indigenous groups is Lilyan Benítez and Alicia Garcés' *Culturas ecuatorianas: ayer y hoy*, 7th ed. (Quito: Ediciones Abya-Yala, 1993). A good volume, though now somewhat dated, that gives a broad overview of the ethnic diversity in Ecuador is Norman Whitten's edited 1981 volume *Cultural Transforma-*

builds on the existing literature on issues of the creation of class and ethnic identity in Ecuadorian peasant and Indigenous movements, as well as the formation of national identity. It contributes to an understanding of the divisions between class and ethnic-based strategies for political organization, as well as to an understanding of factors that led to shifts in class, ethnic, and national identities.

Ecuadorian anthropologist Diego Iturralde has noted that in Ecuador "the traditional historiography has given very little attention to the peasantry and generally has minimized the importance of their struggles."⁵⁴ The literature on Indians in general and on Ecuador's Indigenous population in particular has traditionally portrayed them in a very negative light. For example, political scientist George Blanksten in his 1951 treatment of Ecuadorian politics typified Indians as fatalistic, submissive, obedient, docile, retiring, unable to revolt or change their situation in society, and contributing to the creation of an authoritarian state.⁵⁵ Similarly, in his survey text *A History of Latin America*, Hubert Herring condescendingly referred to the Indian rural masses as "too ignorant and too poor to play an intelligent role in democratic decisions" and considered the Amazonian Indians "little removed from the Stone Age."⁵⁶ He described the struggle to "civilize" Ecuador, and the progress of Indigenous Otavaleños toward prosperous and independent citizens.

tions and Ethnicity in Modern Ecuador (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981). A new book, José Almeida Vinuesa, ed., *Identidades indias en el Ecuador contemporáneo*, Serie Pueblos del Ecuador 4 (Quito: Ediciones Abya-Yala, 1995), presents perspectives from Indigenous intellectuals on these issues of ethnicity.

54. Diego A. Iturralde G., "Notas para una historia política del campesinado ecuatoriano (1900-1980)," in *Nuevas investigaciones antropológicas ecuatorianas*, ed. Lauris McKee and Silvia Agüello (Quito: Abya Yala, 1988), 32.

55. George I. Blanksten, *Ecuador: Constitutions and Caudillos*, University of California Publications in Political Science, vol. 3 no. 1 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1951), 17.

56. Hubert Herring, *A History of Latin America From the Beginnings to the Present*, Second Edition, Revised (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962), 526, 535-36.

Newer studies, however, have presented a more sympathetic view of these popular struggles. For example, in 1983 Enrique Ayala Mora laid out a theoretical orientation for an alternative view of the country's history. Not only did his survey incorporate new historical methodologies, but it was also committed to "a new inclusive and pluralistic social project that is radically innovative and opens doors in the history of Ecuador and Latin America."⁵⁷ In the 1980s, this represented a significant new historiographic trend in Ecuadorian history. No longer did history focus on the actions of presidents and military generals or limit itself to the genre of biographies of "notable" people. Ayala Mora noted that "the great actors of our history are those of the social collective, and not isolated individuals."⁵⁸ History had been expanded to include the actions of common people such as peasants, artisans, workers, teachers, Indians, street vendors, and others. who make up the majority of the population but are excluded from traditional historical treatments.

Indigenous and peasant organizing efforts in Ecuador, thus, have recently garnered more attention from scholars.⁵⁹ A series of publications from the Centro de Educación Popular in Quito present a basic popular political history of organizing

57. Enrique Ayala Mora, "Introducción general," in Enrique Ayala Mora, ed., *Nueva historia del Ecuador*, vol. 1, *Epoca aborígen I* (Quito: Corporación Editora Nacional, 1983), 12-13.

58. Enrique Ayala Mora, "Historia de las luchas populares," *Historia, compromiso y política: ensayos sobre historiografía ecuatoriana*, Colección País de la mitad; no. 10 (Quito, Ecuador: Planeta Letraviva, 1989), 79.

59. Good comparative scholarly treatments of Indigenous organizational efforts in the Andean region include Xavier Albó's essay "El retorno del Indio," which surveys the reemergence of Indigenous organizations and movements in the Andes during the last 20 years with a particular emphasis on Bolivia; and Richard Chase Smith, "A Search for Unity Within Diversity: Peasant Unions, Ethnic Federations, and Indianist Movements in the Andean Republics," in *Native Peoples and Economic Development: Six Case Studies from Latin America*, Occasional Papers No. 16, ed. Theodore MacDonald (Cambridge: Cultural Survival, Inc., 1985), 5-38, which examines the competing interests at play for control of Indigenous organizations as they have evolved through different forms (peasant unions, ethnic federations, and Indianist movements).

efforts in Ecuador.⁶⁰ Other works go beyond a basic political chronology to focus on the economic and social factors which influenced organizational efforts.⁶¹ Recent efforts at Indigenous organization and actions such as the 1990 Indigenous uprising captured the attention of scholars and led to a spate of books and articles on the subject. This body of literature will continue to grow as current research makes its way into print.

Many of the discussions concerning the peasantry in Ecuador have revolved around issues of agrarian reform. These works largely challenge earlier European Marxist claims of an inert peasantry and describe rural populations which are politically radical rather than conservative in nature. One of the earliest treatments of this subject which examined the relationship between agrarian reform legislation and peasant-Indigenous movements was Fernando Velasco's *Reforma agraria y movimiento campesino indígena de la sierra*. Velasco interprets the history of agrarian reform from the peasants' point-of-view and contends that the FEI favored a peasant over a proletarian strategy for organizing the rural masses. In Velasco's view, however, peasants, not Indigenous peoples, led the protest actions. He believed that ethnicity and culture tended to be conservative forces in struggles for agrarian reform.⁶² Unfortunately, Velasco's untimely death in 1978 ended his important

60. See, for example, Centro de Educación Popular (CEDEP), *Las luchas campesinas, 1950- 1983. Movilización campesino e historia de la FENOC*, 2d ed., Serie Movimiento Social No. 4 (Quito: CEDOC/CEDEP, 1985) and *Una historia de rebeldía: La lucha campesina en el Ecuador*, Serie Educación Popular, No. 12. (Quito: CEDEP, 1984), as well as Centro de Estudios y Difusión Social (CEDIS), *Historia de las luchas populares*, Nos. 1-5 (Quito: CEDIS, 1985).

61. In particular, see Francisco Ron Proaño, "Las movilizaciones campesinas en Ecuador: 1968-1977, El caso del movimiento Ecuarrunari" (Tesis inédita, CLACSO-PUCE, 1978), and Ibarra, *Los indígenas y el estado en el Ecuador*.

62. Fernando Velasco Abad, *Reforma agraria y movimiento campesino indígena de la sierra* (Quito: Editorial El Conejo, 1979). Manuel Chiriboga's article "La reforma agraria en el Ecuador y América Latina," *Nariz del Diablo* (CIESE, Quito) 11 (August 1988): 30-36, is a good, short introduction to the subject. The English-language reader can find a good review of the secondary literature on this subject in

contribution to the debate on the nature of rural protest and land tenancy patterns in Ecuador.

In their various works, Osvaldo Barsky and Andrés Guerrero have debated agrarian reform issues, including the question of whether elites or the rural masses were the main force behind agrarian reform legislation. Barsky initially presented the thesis that modernizing land owners initiated the agrarian reform process, whereas Guerrero argued that it was peasant initiative which forced these changes.⁶³ Galo Ramón has criticized all of these authors for adhering too closely to a class analysis which blinded them to the ethnic dimensions in the peasant struggle for land. According to Ramón, even Velasco who stressed the importance of peasant movements and Guerrero who criticized Barsky's emphasis on the actions of landholders have missed this dynamic. It was the agrarian reform which "allowed the Indians in Cayambe to consolidate and expand their ethnic territories" and achieve "ownership over the land which they historically had occupied."⁶⁴

A variety of sources provide information on the nature of land tenure relations and rural protest actions in the Canton of Cayambe during the first half of the twentieth century, the region and time period under investigation in this study. Archival sources at the *Archivo Nacional de Historia* in Quito provide land records including rental contracts, but this archive includes little material on the twentieth century. The *Archivo Histórico del Banco Central del Ecuador* includes documents from the Guachalá hacienda, one of the largest in Cayambe and indeed in the country, in its

Leon Zamosc's essay *Peasant Struggles and Agrarian Reform*.

63. Osvaldo Barsky, *La reforma agraria ecuatoriana*, 2d ed., Biblioteca de Ciencias Sociales, volumen 3 (Quito: Corporación Editora Nacional, 1988) and the various essays collected in Andrés Guerrero, *De la economía a las mentalidades (Cambio social y conflicto agrario en el Ecuador)* (Quito: Editorial El Conejo, 1991) and *Haciendas, capital y lucha de clases andina: disolución de la hacienda serrana y lucha política en los años 1960-64*, Colección Ecuador/historia; 5 (Quito: Editorial El Conejo, 1983).

64. Ramón, 198.

Fondo Bonifaz. More useful than these two sources are the archives of the *Junta Central de Asistencia Pública* which is located in the *Archivo Nacional de Medicina del Museo Nacional de Medicina "Dr. Eduardo Estrella,"* in Quito. The *Asistencia Pública* program administered state-owned haciendas throughout the Ecuadorian highlands including several in Cayambe. Unlike the first two archives which focus almost exclusively on elite landholder issues, Indigenous actions emerge in correspondence related to the administration of the state's haciendas.

Newspaper reports from both mainstream dailies (particularly *El Comercio* and *El Día* which were published in Quito) and small leftist publications which often had short life spans provide a wealth of information on rural protest actions. Especially in the 1930s, Indian demands in Cayambe were a common front-page topic in these papers. Unfortunately, organizational records both from political parties involved in defending Indigenous demands and from the Indigenous and peasant organizations themselves either never existed, have been lost, stolen, or burned, or for other reasons are not available for investigation. Newspaper records, however, have helped fill this important gap as Indigenous demands, agenda items from organizational meetings, and reports from the meetings themselves made their way into newspaper reports.

A variety of sources describe the socio-economic situation of Cayambe in the early twentieth century, which help place this history of Indigenous resistance in its broader context. Ecuador's first modern census was in 1950, and although deeply flawed it gives a general indication of the ethnic composition and land tenure relations in the area. César Cisneros' 1948 study *Demografía y estadística sobre el indio ecuatoriano* provides similar data from the 1930s. Several studies from the 1930s and 1940s, including David G. Basile and Humberto Paredes, *Algunos factores económicos y geográficos que afectan a la población rural del noreste de la provincia de Pichincha, Ecuador*, Aníbal Buitron and Bárbara Salisbury Buitron, *Condiciones de vida y trabajo del campesino de la provincia de Pichincha*, and Moisés Sáenz, *Sobre el indio ecuatoriano y su incorporación al medio nacional*, as

well as later reports from the 1960s from organizations such as the Inter-American Committee for Agricultural Development (CIDA) provide a wealth of information. Finally, several largely unpublished theses and dissertations, in particular Muriel Crespi, "The Patrons and Peons of Pesillo: A Traditional Hacienda System in Highland Ecuador" and Mercedes Prieto N., "Condicionamientos de la movilización campesina: el caso de las haciendas Olmedo-Ecuador (1926-1948)," provide information and insights, mostly from an anthropological point-of-view.

Finally, testimonies and interviews provide Indigenous perspectives on protest actions in Cayambe. Raquel Rodas has published a series of short books which highlight Indigenous protest actions in Cayambe, and in particular she emphasizes the actions of female leaders such as Dolores Cacuangó and Tránsito Amaguaña. Mercedes Prieto conducted interviews with still-surviving organizational leaders in the process of her thesis research in the 1970s. Some of these interviews, along with others, were published in José Yáñez del Pozo, *Yo declaro con franqueza*. She graciously made other, unpublished interviews available for this investigation.

This dissertation is broken into three parts and ten chapters. The first part, comprised of four chapters, establishes the historical and economic background for this study. The second chapter, "Historic and Social Origins of Revolt in Ecuador," considers the physical and human geography of Ecuador. It looks at the forces at work in the formation of ethnic and group identity in Ecuador, a necessary component for understanding the emergence and development of social protest movements. The third chapter, "Culture and Ethnicity in the Canton of Cayambe," traces these issues in the context of the specific case study under examination in this dissertation. A study of the cultural history of Cayambe reveals the nature of ethnicity in the region and the role which it played in the formation of state policies and popular organizational responses to those policies. The fourth and fifth chapters look at the evolution of land tenure patterns and labor relations on the haciendas in Cayambe. This section focuses on material life and the ways that "class" issues fit into Indigenous life in Cayambe. It

establishes a concrete context of ethnic identity and economic relations which forms the basis for the study of organization and protest in the following section.

The second part of the dissertation, "Organization and Protest" (divided into three chapters), forms the heart of the dissertation. The sixth chapter, "Una Revolución Comunista Indígena: Rural Protest Movements in Cayambe," focuses primarily on a 1930-1931 strike on the Pesillo hacienda and the impulse which this gave to organizing Ecuador's first national Indigenous organization. The following chapter, "Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios: Class and Ethnicity in a Twentieth-Century Peasant Movement," first examines governmental policies and legislative reforms in the 1930s and 1940s which came as a result of Indigenous and popular pressure and which they were able to utilize to further Indigenous demands. It then looks at the successful creation of a national Indian federation in 1944 and other organizational achievements based on advances which were analyzed in the previous two chapters. The eighth and final chapter in this section, "Una Granja Colectiva Comunista: Proletarian Pressure for Agrarian Reform," analyzes peasant pressures for agrarian reform, a goal which was achieved in 1964. This entire section builds on the analysis of the material and economic conditions in Cayambe described in the first part of the dissertation, and contrasts organizing patterns and ideological developments in the northern and southern parts of the canton.

The third and final section of the dissertation describes in specific terms the ideological, strategic, and organizational influences which these early movements had on subsequent Indigenous rights organizations. It examines issues of ethnicity and nationalism, and how these early organizations laid the groundwork for the later movements. Overall, the dissertation analyzes the ideological debates over the use of ethnic or class-based organizational strategies, the role of leftists in the formation of these organizations, and the importance of ethnicity within these organizations. Without the influence of these early organizations, the Indian movement in Ecuador would not be the strong force that it was in the 1980s and 1990s.

Part One

History and Economics

Chapter Two

Historic and Social Origins of Revolt in Ecuador

Physical and human geography has had a significant impact on the evolution of the political history of Ecuador. The first section of this chapter examines the regional geographies of Ecuador which underlie the political economies of the different ethnicities in that country. The second section analyzes the shaping of group and ethnic identity in each of Ecuador's three regions. As a whole, this chapter provides a broad historical context which is necessary to understand the emergence and development of social protest movements in Cayambe. The following three chapters will then analyze cultural and economic developments in the canton of Cayambe within this historical framework. These four chapters lay the groundwork necessary to interpret the formation of Indigenous organizations and protest movements in Ecuador.

Regionalism in Ecuadorian history

Ecuador is divided into three geographic zones: the Pacific Coastal lowlands, the Sierra Highlands, and the eastern Upper Amazon Basin, often called the *Oriente*. This regionalism is especially present in the political and economic division between the liberal commercial coastal port city of Guayaquil and the conservative administrative city of Quito in the highlands. Ecuadorians have long recognized the existence of these divisions, as evidenced by Belisario Quevedo's comments in his 1916 article "La Sierra y la Costa" in which he characterized the highlands as traditional and under the influence of the Conservative Party, while he viewed the coast as the land of nature and liberalism.¹ George Blanksten noted that "the story of Ecuador is a tale of two

1. Belisario Quevedo, "La Sierra y la Costa," *Revista de la Sociedad Jurídico-Literaria* (Quito) 16:35 (1916), 214-19.

cities" (Quito and Guayaquil).² In contrast to these two "civilized" areas is the Amazon which historically has been marginalized from national culture and creole elites stereotypically viewed as a "savage" area.

Regional divisions are so pronounced in Ecuador that even the country's declaration of political independence from the Spanish colonial power was not a unified and coherent action. Because of this, a cohesive national identity failed to emerge during the nineteenth century. Quito declared its independence from Spain in 1809 in an action separate from Guayaquil which proclaimed its independence in 1820. When Spanish forces were defeated outside of Quito at the Battle of Pichincha in May of 1822, Quiteños passively watched while foreigners and Guayaquileños fought under the leadership of Antonio José de Sucre. Since Independence, Ecuador has had eighteen different constitutions and about one hundred different executive leaders, including thirty-four between 1830 and 1895 and twenty-one between 1931 and 1948.

Over the past two hundred years Ecuador has witnessed in a "classic" form many of the social problems and types of government common to Latin American countries since Independence. Ecuador experienced a high degree of political instability during the nineteenth century, and a series of dictatorships and military governments marked much of the twentieth century. The country has endured numerous revolutions, *caudillo* and populist leaders, and forms of government ranging through conservative, liberal, populist, military, and civilian "democracy." This diversity in political institutions led John Martz to observe that Ecuador, even though little studied among scholars of Latin American issues, "serves as a microcosm for a wide variety of problems, questions, and issues relevant to various of the other Latin American countries."³

2. Blanksten, 161.

3. John D. Martz, *Ecuador, Conflicting Political Culture and the Quest for Progress* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1972), vii. In the twenty-five years since Martz made this observation, little has changed in terms of the significance of the Ecuadorian case or lack of studies about it. See Jeanne A. K. Hey, *Theories of*

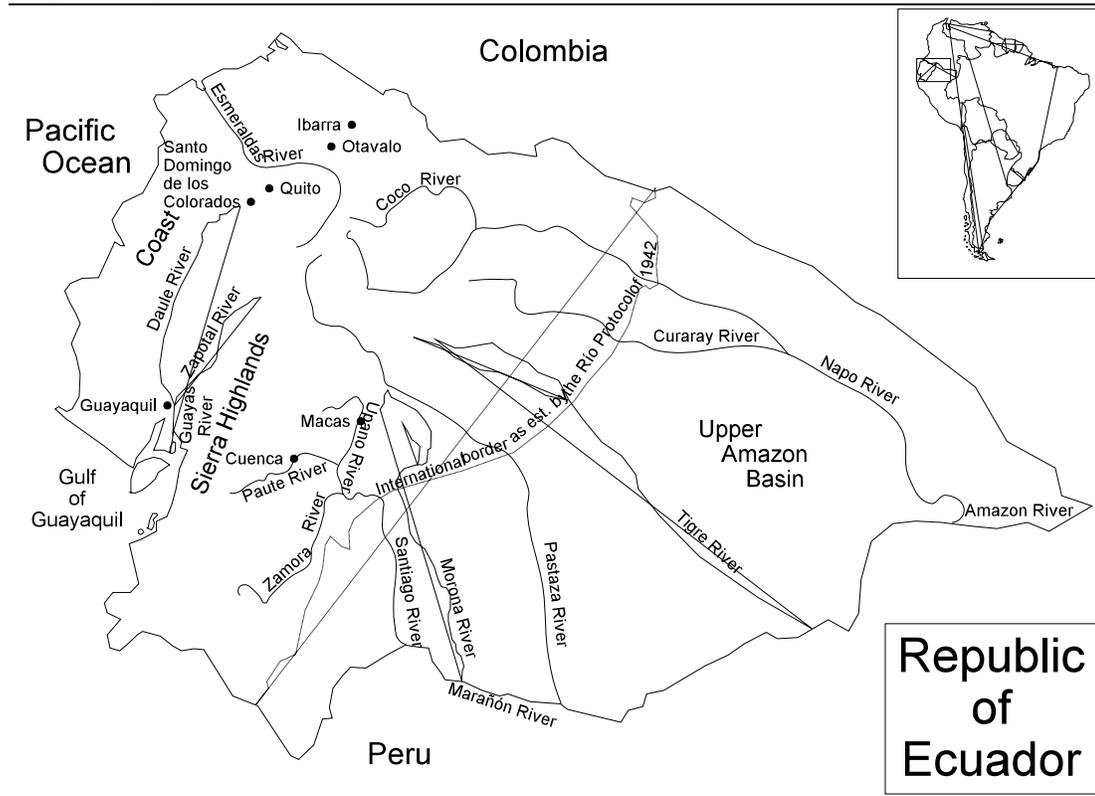
The coastal plain of Ecuador is wider than that of the Peruvian coast, and because the cold Antarctic Humboldt Current turns out to sea just before it reaches Ecuador, the coast is much wetter and hotter than in Peru. The coast, along with the surrounding low-lying hills, has an export-oriented agricultural economy which includes the production of cattle, bananas, rice, sugar, coffee, and maritime products such as shrimp and tuna. Currently, half of the country's population resides on this coastal plain, which includes Guayaquil, the country's largest city with a population of over two million people.

Counterpoised against the coast are the conservative, Catholic, Sierra Highlands with currently forty-five percent of the population. Reflecting pre-conquest demographic patterns, the Sierra had been more heavily populated than the coast during the colonial period. In 1780, ninety percent of the population in what today is the country of Ecuador lived in the Sierra, with only seven percent on the coast and three percent in the *Oriente*.⁴ Beginning in the nineteenth century, large masses of rural workers from the central Sierra migrated to the coast in search of work in the plantation economy, thereby causing a population shift to the coast. At the beginning of the twentieth century, only twenty percent of the country's population lived on the coast, but by 1950 it had risen to forty percent. By the 1974 national census, more people lived on the coast than in the Sierra.

Dependent Foreign Policy and the Case of Ecuador in the 1980s, Monographs in International Studies, Latin American Series Number 23 (Athens: Ohio University Center for International Studies, 1995), 28.

4. Linda Alexander Rodríguez, *The Search for Public Policy: Regional Politics and Government Finances in Ecuador, 1830-1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 202.

Map 1: Map of Ecuador



Two parallel mountain chains with over thirty volcanos, eight of them active, dominate the highlands. Although the Andean mountains are wider and higher further south in Peru and Bolivia, mountain peaks in Ecuador reach over six thousand meters; eight of those peaks are permanently snow capped. Cotopaxi in central Ecuador is the world's highest active volcano. The equator reaches its highest point in the world on the southern slopes of Ecuador's Mount Cayambe, and because of the equatorial bulge, the peak of Mount Chimborazo is the furthest point from the center of earth and thus once it was thought to be the world's highest mountain. Nestled between the two mountain chains are a series of fifteen fertile intermontane basins. These are separated from each other with a series of cross ridges (which are called *nudos* or knots) which join the eastern and western cordilleras and form effective, although not impassable,

barriers. Whereas export-oriented agriculture dominated the coast, domestic agricultural production such as cattle, potatoes, corn, barley, and wheat were more important in the highlands. During the early twentieth century, these basins functioned largely economically independently from one another and its agricultural production primarily served a local market.

One of the largest of these basins is the Quito Basin which is located in the northern highlands. It is about one hundred kilometers long from north to south, and from forty to fifty-five kilometers wide, with the widest part of the basin located along the equatorial line at the northern end of the basin. The Cayambe, Cotopaxi, Illiniza, and Mojanda volcanos mark the four corners of the basin. The Guayllabamba river valley provides its main drainage system. The basin is broken into six valleys, one of them the twenty-eight thousand meter high Central (or Turubamba) Valley where Quito, the country's capital, is located. Until the last twenty or thirty years, Quito remained relatively isolated. With an oil boom in the 1970s, Quito changed from a quaint colonial city to a vibrant administrative and economic center with an important banking sector. Cayambe, the region of focus in this study, is a valley located at the northeastern end of the Quito Basin.⁵

Through the first half of the twentieth century, Ecuador remained an overwhelmingly rural country. A study from the 1930s estimated that more than three-fourths of the people lived off of the land. Indians were two-thirds to four-fifths of the sierra population, *mestizos* comprised about twenty percent, and whites were a very small minority.⁶ A statistical study from the 1940s determined that fifty-five percent or 1,840,288 of Ecuador's population lived in rural areas. The majority of these

5. For a geographical examination of the Quito Basin, see David Giovanni Basile, *Tillers of the Andes: Farmers and Farming in the Quito Basin*, Studies in Geography, No. 8 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Department of Geography, 1974).

6. Moisés Sáenz, *Sobre el indio ecuatoriano y su incorporación al medio nacional* (México: Publicaciones de la Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1933), 186.

(1,270,663) lived in the sierra. The rural population in the sierra had a population density of nineteen inhabitants per square kilometer, as compared to eight per square kilometer on the coast. The total population of the country was 3,311,126 people, with 2,202,156 people or sixty-one percent of the population living in the sierra. Thirty-three percent or 1,103,302 people lived on the coast, with the balance located in the *Oriente* and on the Galapagos Islands.⁷ According to a 1960s International Labor Organization study, Ecuador remained among the countries world-wide with the highest proportion of rural dwellers. In 1962, 55.6% of the economically active population worked in the agricultural sector.⁸ Ecuador remained very similar to José Carlos Mariátegui's description of neighboring Peru in the 1920s:

Underneath the feudal economy inherited from the colonial period, vestiges of the indigenous communal economy can still be found in the sierra. On the coast, a bourgeois economy is growing in feudal soil; it gives every indication of being backward, at least in its mental outlook.⁹

7. César Cisneros Cisneros, *Demografía y estadística sobre el indio ecuatoriano* (Quito: Tall. Graf. Nacionales, 1948), 91, 121.

8. Ecuador, Instituto Nacional de Previsión, *Informe (1967-1968) que el presidente del Instituto Nacional de Previsión Doctor Manuel de Guzman Polanco presenta al honorable congreso nacional de 1968* (Quito: Imprenta de la Caja Nacional del Seguro Social, 1968), 87.

9. José Carlos Mariátegui, "Outline of the Economic Evolution," *Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality*, Translated by Marjory Urquidi with an Introduction by Jorge Basadre, The Texas Pan American Series (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1971), 16.

Table 1: Rural/Urban and Sierra/Coastal Population of Ecuador, 1950-1990

	1950		1962		1974		1982		1990	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Sierra Rural	1,370,970	73.8%			1,943,769	61.8%	2,112,919	55.2%	2,139,368	48.6%
Urban	485,475	26.2%			1,202,796	38.2%	1,712,224	44.8%	2,262,050	51.4%
Total	1,856,445	58.0%	2,359,418	51.7%	3,146,565	48.2%	3,825,143	47.0%	4,401,418	45.6%
Coast Rural		67.4%			1,708,855	53.7%	1,773,655	44.5%	1,817,388	37.9%
Urban	422,893	32.6%			1,470,591	46.3%	2,211,224	55.5%	2,976,444	62.1%
Total	1,298,495	40.5%	2,127,358	46.6%	3,179,446	48.8%	3,984,879	49.0%	4,793,832	49.7%
Oriente	46,471	1.5%	74,913	1.6%	173,469	2.7%	263,797	3.2%	372,533	3.9%
Ecuador Rural	2,288,825	71.5%	2,951,734	64.7%	3,822,988	58.6%	4,153,482	51.0%	4,302,331	44.6%
Urban	913,932	28.5%	1,612,346	35.3%	3,269,872	41.4%	3,985,492	49.0%	5,345,858	55.4%
Total	3,202,757		4,564,080		6,521,710		8,138,974		9,648,189	

Source: INEC.

Ecuador's first modern national census which took place in 1950 determined that seventy-one percent of the population continued to live in rural areas while only twenty-eight percent was urban. It was not until the 1980s that the urban population surpassed that of the rural population. As Table 1 indicates, this population shift happened some ten years earlier and more rapidly on the coast than in the Sierra.

Given this demographic reality, it is only logical that if social protest movements were to occur, they would have to emerge out of rural areas rather than an urban setting.

Ecuador's third region, the Upper Amazon Basin or *Oriente*, comprises nearly half of the country's territory but in the 1990 census represented only four percent of its population. Its population was predominantly rural, and in the 1990s was growing at a much faster rate than the rest of the country. This is largely due to an influx of settlers from the highlands searching for land to farm. In the twentieth century, outsiders, as Norman Whitten has noted, still commonly view the *Oriente* "as a mostly uninhabited, flat, Amazonian jungle morass, sparsely populated by a few groups of 'savages'" some of whom "were known worldwide for their shrunken heads" and "for spearing some North American missionaries."¹⁰ Since the conclusion of the wars of independence from Spain in the 1820s, Ecuador has been locked in territorial disputes with the neighboring countries of Colombia and Peru over the delineation of international borders in the Amazonian region. Occasionally these disputes have led to open warfare between Ecuador and Peru, as in January of 1995. The modern roots of this continuing conflict trace to the beginning of the Second World War when the United States forced Ecuador to sign the 1942 Río Protocol, which effectively ceded over half of its territory to Peru. The degree of Ecuador's loss is represented by the fact that after independence, Ecuador claimed 714,860 square kilometers of land, while currently it effectively controls 275,341 square kilometers, with a total loss of over sixty percent of its national territory.¹¹

Although important as a rhetorical device for politicians who use the issue to make nationalistic statements and to denounce their opponents, until relatively recently the Amazon remained marginal to Ecuadorian state formation. It was not until 1879,

10. Norman E. Whitten, Jr., *Sicuanga Runa: The Other Side of Development in Amazonian Ecuador* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 38.

11. David Corkill and David Cubitt, *Ecuador: Fragile Democracy* (London: Latin American Bureau, 1988), 98.

after the conservative president Gabriel García Moreno sought to modernize and integrate the *Oriente* into national life, that the region was finally organized as a province. Discovery of rich oil deposits in the Amazon in the 1970s meant that the region became more important to the country. This discovery resulted in an economic boom for the elite, ecological disaster for the Amazon, and increased impoverishment for its inhabitants. The fact that in 1920 the region was divided into four provinces, and in 1989 a fifth province was carved out of the oil-rich area in the north indicates the steadily increasing political and economic importance which the *Oriente* has gained for Ecuador during the twentieth century. Many Ecuadorians believe that the Amazon (both because of issues of territoriality and the potential economic wealth from petroleum and other mineral exploration) is key to their national salvation.

The formation of ethnic and group identity in Ecuador

In Ecuador, as in the rest of Latin America, the myth of *mestizaje* which holds that a new Latin American culture was forged from the blending of three separate traditions (European, Indigenous, and African) has been prevalent. Although this Latin American version of the “melting pot” theory held partly true for the *mestizo* segment of the Ecuadorian population, it threatened to subvert the unique history and surviving cultural traditions of the Indigenous groups. Rather than embracing ethnic diversity, *mestizaje* contended that Indigenous identity must be suppressed in order for the country to progress forward. This modernization was often associated with the “whitening” of society. This ideological framework helped create a situation of racial discrimination which placed Indigenous groups at a disadvantage in society. In addition, ideologies of *mestizaje* implied the presence of a coherent national identity in Ecuador which has never existed. Local and regional forms of identity were the primary factors in people's sense of self. The formation and structure of these identities underlay rural movements for social change. Not only did these movements utilize local and ethnic identities as organizational tools, the process of organization also changed and crystalized forms of ethnic identity. Recognizing the broader context of

ethnicity in Ecuador is critical for understanding movements which agitated for Indigenous interests.

Much research has been conducted on the dominant white and *mestizo* cultures in the Andes and little of it needs to be repeated here.¹² There has been less scholarly interest in the African population, which in Ecuador is concentrated in the province of Esmeraldas in the northwestern part of the country, in addition to Guayaquil, Quito, and the northern Imbabura and Carchi provinces. A common legend (which some historians consider to be false) is that these Afro-Ecuadorians are descendants of escapees from a slave ship which was bound for Peru but shipwrecked off the Esmeraldas coast in 1553. A man named Alonso de Illescas led other Hispanicized slaves who liberated themselves, forged inland, and formed the Zambo Republic. They intermixed, and sometimes fought over limited land and resources, with the Indigenous peoples they encountered. In addition to creating a new life for themselves, they also provided a haven and home for fugitive slaves and Spaniards who were fleeing the law. After 150 years of independence, they eventually allied with Quito and the Spanish crown on their own terms. Today about half of the population of the Esmeraldas region is of African descent, numbering about half a million people. In the country as a whole, Afro-Ecuadorians number between 700,000 and one million people, or less than ten percent of the population.¹³

12. A classic study which examines the importation of Spanish society and institutions into the Andes is James Lockhart, *Spanish Peru 1532-1560: A Colonial Society* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1968). Despite their minority status, almost the entire body of historiographic literature on Ecuador has focused on this sector of society. Although anthropologists have more commonly looked at Indigenous populations, this project seeks to correct this imbalance in the historical literature by approaching Ecuadorian society from an Indigenous perspective.

13. A good ethnographic treatment of the African population on the coast is Norman E. Whitten, Jr., *Class, Kinship and Power in an Ecuadorian Town: The Negroes of San Lorenzo* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1965).

Many different Indigenous groups have resided in the territory which is currently the country of Ecuador. In his classic study "The Historic Tribes of Ecuador" in the *Handbook of South American Indians*, John Murra mentions the Esmeralda, Manta, Huancavilca, and Puná ethnic groups on the coast, and in the highlands the Pasto (near the Colombian border), Cara (in the current province of Imbabura), Panzaleo (near Quito), Puruhá (around Riobamba), Cañari and Palta (in the southern highlands). Less archeological research has been conducted in Ecuador than in its southern neighbor Peru and relatively little is known about these early groups. "The tribal entities these names represent," Murra noted, "have been disorganized and are completely obliterated. Their different, mutually unintelligible languages are gone and lost; no written documents have been preserved and the last speakers died in the 18th century."¹⁴

Before the Inka and Spanish conquests, many more Indigenous groups existed in Ecuador than survive today. In a survey of Ecuador's Indigenous groups, José Alcina Franch described this process of "ethnocide" in Ecuador as the number of Indigenous groups dropped from twenty-four before the Inka conquest to ten in the 1980s, including a drop from twelve to three on the coast.¹⁵ At the present rate, Alcina predicted extinction for Ecuador's Indigenous groups, but he also expressed hope for the future. Although they comprised a large segment of the population, Indigenous peoples had not maintained political and economic power equal to their numbers. Since the time of the Spanish conquest, power has resided in the hands of a small,

14. John V. Murra, "The Historic Tribes of Ecuador," in Julian H. Steward, ed., *Handbook of South American Indians*, vol. 2, *The Andean Civilizations* (New York: Cooper Square Publishers Inc., 1963), 786. For more recent surveys of pre-Inka societies in Ecuador, see Karl Dieter Gartelmann, *Digging up Prehistory: The Archaeology of Ecuador* (Quito, Ecuador: Ediciones Libri Mundi, 1986) and Warren R. DeBoer, *Traces Behind the Esmeraldas Shore: Prehistory of the Santiago-Cayapas Region, Ecuador* (Tuscaloosa, Ala: University of Alabama Press, 1996).

15. José Alcina Franch, "El proceso de pérdida de la identidad cultural entre los indios del Ecuador," *Cuadernos Hispanoamericanos* 143:428 (February 1986), 94.

white elite. Many of the surviving groups, however, still retain their own cultures, languages, dress, music, and traditions.

Table 2: Indigenous Ethnic Groups in Ecuador

Area	Ethnic Group	Population (estimated)
Pacific Coast		
	Awa (Coaiquer)	1,600
	Chachi	6,500*
	Epera	150**
	Tsáchila (Colorados)	2,000
Sierra Highlands		
	Quichua	3 million
Amazon (Oriente)		
	Quichua	90,000
	Cofán (A'I)	600
	Siona-Secoya	600
	Shuar (Jívaro)	40,000
	Achuar	500
	Huaorani (Huaor or Aucas)	2,000
	Zaparos	8***

Source: These figures are based largely on Benítez and Garcés except where otherwise noted.

*"Nacionalidad Chachi," *Nacionalidades Indígenas* (CONAIE, Quito) December 1995, 15.

**Interview with José Maria Cabascango, CONAIE, December 11, 1995.

***Interview with Alejandro Ushigua, December 6, 1996, Puyo, Ecuador.

Estimates of the number of surviving Indians vary greatly, from around ten percent of the population or about one-million people to estimates as high as 3.5 million people and forty percent of the population.¹⁶ César Cisneros Cisneros estimated that in 1945 ninety percent (1,143,596 people) of the rural inhabitants of the

16. The figure of 3.5 million Indians is given in *Pueblos del Ecuador* (Quito: Ediciones Abya-Yala, 1986), 2. CONAIE often uses the figure of forty percent (CONAIE, 283).

Ecuadorian highlands and fifteen percent (113,473 people) of the urban population were of Indigenous extraction. In addition to the Indigenous population in the *Oriente* (he did not count any Indians on the coast), he estimated Ecuador's Indigenous population to be between 1,337,069 and 1,436,813 people or over forty percent of the population.¹⁷ A governmental study from the same era reflected a similar ethnic composition of society (see Table 3). There is, however, a lack of good demographic studies on Ecuador. As Jorge León and Joanne Rappaport have noted, "it is important to remember that it is not always in one's interest to identify as indigenous to a census-taker: hence many of the discrepancies in census figures."¹⁸ The fact that in Latin America boundaries between ethnic categories tend to blur further complicates placing an absolute number on the population of ethnic groups. Although during the twentieth century the absolute number of Indians has increased, due to migration and assimilation the percentage of Ecuador's population (based on language, religion, dress, culture, and geographic locale) who would identify themselves primarily as "Indigenous" has dropped with a corresponding rise in the "*mestizo*" and "white" segments of the population.

Coast

The four Indigenous ethnic groups which currently exist in the coastal region are the Awa, Chachi, Epera, and Tsáchila. They live in the northwestern part of Ecuador and speak similar languages. Each of these groups is small, and each has struggled to preserve its ethnic identity. The Awa (which means "people," but who are often called Coaiquer after a nearby small Colombian town) live on both sides of the Ecuadorian-Colombian border.¹⁹ The Chachi (traditionally called "Cayapas") often

17. Cisneros, 121-23; Gonzalo Rubio Orbe summarizes other population estimates in "Ecuador indígena," *América Indígena* 34:3 (July-September 1974): 581-603.

18. Jorge León and Joanne Rappaport, "The View from Colombia and Ecuador: Native Organizing in the Americas," *Against the Current* (November/December 1995): 32.

19. Benhur Cerón Solarte notes that "Kwaiker, Cuaiquer, Kuaiquer, and Coiquer

clash over limited resources with the Afro-Ecuadorians who occupy the same region. According to Chachi tradition, they are originally from the province of Imbabura in the highlands, but fled toward the coast in the face of the Inka and Spanish conquests. Traditionally their economy was based on hunting, gathering, and fishing, but now they engage in agriculture both for household consumption as well as growing coffee and cacao for export. Currently there are 6,500 Chachi and they are organized into twenty-eight *Centros* ("Centers") which are grouped into the Federación de Centros Chachi del Ecuador (FECICHE, Federation of Chachi Centers of Ecuador).²⁰ A previously little-known group with which CONAIE has recently begun to work are the Epera which number about 150 people.

are used indiscriminately by different authors." Cerón Solarte proceeds to cite linguist Lee A. Henriksen from the University of Nariño as an authority that "Kwaiker" is the correct designation for this group. See *Los Awa-Kwaiker: un grupo indígena de la selva pluvial del Pacífico Nariñense y el Nor Occidente Ecuatoriano*, 2d ed. (Quito: Ediciones Abya-Yala, 1988), 7.

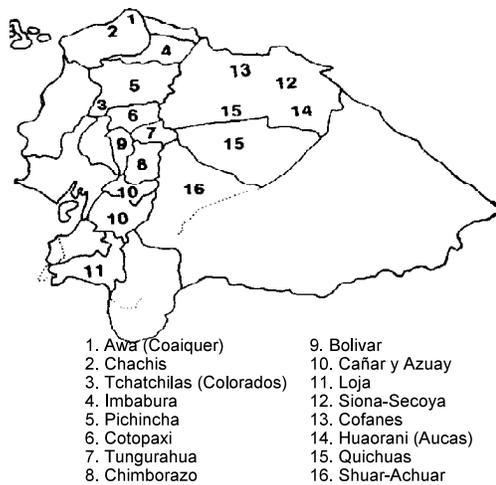
20. "Nacionalidad Chachi," *Nacionalidades Indígenas* (CONAIE, Quito) December 1995, 15. There has been little ethnographic work conducted on the Awa and Chachi. For the Awa, in addition to Cerón Solarte's work, see Carlos Alberto Villareal, *La crisis de la supervivencia del pueblo Awá* (Quito: ILDIS-IEE, 1986). For the Chachi, see Bernd Mitlewski, "Los Chachilla, los Mirucula ya no saben volar: interpretación de la tradición a la luz de los nuevos valores de la cultura nacional," in Segundo Moreno Yáñez, ed., *Antropología del Ecuador: Memorias del Primer Simposio Europeo sobre Antropología del Ecuador*, 2d ed. (Quito: Instituto de Antropología Cultural de la Universidad de Bonn - Ediciones Abya-Yala, 1989), 293-99.

Table 3: Ethnic Composition of Ecuador (1942)

Ethnic group	Population	Percentage
<i>Mestizo</i>	1,266,522	41%
Indigenous	1,204,740	39%
White	308,908	10%
Black and Mulatto	154,454	5%
Other	154,454	5%
Total	3,089,078	100%

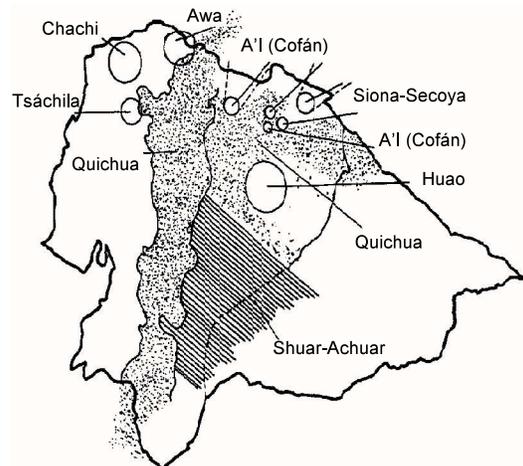
Source: Ecuador, Dirección general de estadística, *Ecuador en cifras, 1938 a 1942* (Quito, Ecuador: Impr. del Ministerio de Hacienda, 1944), cited in Rafael Quintero and Erika Silva, *Ecuador: una nación en ciernes*, 3 volumes, Colección Estudios No. 1 (Quito: FLACSO/Abya-Yala, 1991), t. 2, 141.

Map 2: Indigenous Nationalities in Ecuador



Source: Abya-Yala, *Pueblos del Ecuador*, 3.

Map 3: Indigenous Nationalities in Ecuador



Source: CONAIE, *Nacionalidades indígenas*, 284.

Better known than these three groups are the Tsáchila, which means the “true people” or the “true word,” but who are often called Colorados because of their red

body paint. The Tsáchila became a tourist curiosity because of this body paint. Until the 1950s when the government built a road through their territory and whites began to colonize the zone, the Tsáchila remained isolated from the national culture and economy. Now, however, they, more than the other coastal ethnic groups, have been integrated into the export-oriented agricultural economy and are quickly losing their traditional culture and dress.²¹

On the rest of the coast, Indigenous ethnic groups have either become extinct or have disappeared into the *mestizo* culture, frequently through the economic influence of the export-oriented agricultural capitalist development which has resulted in a rural proletariat. This large group of lower-class *mestizo* peasants on the coast are known as *montuvios*. They are descendants of coastal Indians, Africans, and Europeans (the traditional interpretation places it "scientifically" at sixty percent Indian, thirty percent African, and ten percent European²²). *Montuvios* have lost much of their Indigenous culture and have become integrated into the Hispanic world. *Montuvio* is a social and cultural category rather than a racial one which indicates a rural coastal dweller who "speaks Spanish, dresses like a poor White peasant, and overtly partakes of Ecuadorean (as opposed to Indian) culture."²³ *Montuvios* tend to be mobile and migrate among plantations during harvests and to urban areas in search of employment.

21. Both Rafael Karsten (*The Colorado Indians of Western Ecuador* [Stockholm: Ymer, vol. 44, 1924]) and Victor Wolfgang Von Hagen (*The Tsáchela Indians of Western Ecuador* [New York: Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, 1939]) carried out early ethnographic studies of the Tsáchila, but little subsequent work has been done on their culture. For an examination of the economic transformations which they have undergone, see Centro Andino de Acción Popular (CAAP), "De Tsáchelas a campesinos: Apuntes para el conocimiento del proceso de transición," in Various Authors, *Del indigenismo a las organizaciones indígenas*, 2d ed., (Quito: Ediciones Abya-Yala, 1986), 91-117.

22. Blanksten, 22.

23. Murra, 786.

John Martz stereotypically described a *montuvio* as a volatile and unstable "active, zestful, and fiercely independent being."²⁴

Amazon

With increased interest in the world's remaining rainforests, more attention has been paid to Ecuador's Upper Amazon Basin. It is from this region (known as the *Oriente*) that many of Ecuador's dominant culture's stereotypes of Indigenous groups emerge. These stereotypes have often been presented as an ethnic duality between *Cristianos* who are the civilized, Spanish, educated, proper society and *Aucas* or *Jívaros*, the barbaric, uncivilized, pagan, backward, savage, headhunters from the Amazon. Naturally, many of these stereotypes are inaccurate, and the cultural reality is much more complex. Although the richness and complexities of Indigenous cultures have begun to erode these simplistic stereotypes, it has not necessarily reduced the tension between the Spanish and Indigenous populations.

Eight different ethnic groups survive today in Ecuador's Amazon region, the largest being various groups of Quichua speakers. Even though these Indians share a language which is similar to that which the Quichuas speak in the highlands, their forest culture is quite different from that found in the Sierra. In the ethnographic literature, the forest Quichua are further often divided into the Quijos Quichua (from the Napo Province) and the Canelos Quichua (from the Pastaza Province). Although this division reflects cultural differences, their identities are often much more localized.²⁵

24. Martz, 39. A classic work on the *montuvios* is José de la Cuadra, *El montuvio ecuatoriano (ensayo de presentación)* (Quito: Instituto de Investigaciones Economicas de la Universidad Central del Ecuador, 1937).

25. Norman Whitten's various books, including *Sicuanga Runa* and *Sacha Runa: Ethnicity and adaptation of Ecuadorian Jungle Quichua* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1976), are good ethnographic treatments of lowland Quichua culture. Blanca Muratorio, *The Life and Times of Grandfather Alonso: Culture and History in the Upper Amazon*, *Hegemony and Experience: Critical Studies in Anthropology and History* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1991) is an excellent inquiry of

The Shuar are the second largest and one of the most studied Amazonian groups. Michael Harner has characterized the Shuar as the only Indigenous group in the Americas "to have successfully revolted against the empire of Spain and to have thwarted all subsequent attempts by the Spaniards to reconquer them."²⁶ They have a long history of survival and defense against outsiders, and have long had a reputation as headhunters and savages. They live in the southeastern part of Ecuador between the Pastaza and Marañón Rivers, east of the present city of Cuenca along the contested border region with Peru. It is a rocky region covering approximately 25,000 square miles along the lower eastern slopes of the Andes. The Shuar's geographic locale with the escarpment of the Andes to the west and unnavigable rapids in the rivers to the east has protected them from outside interference and has helped them retain their independence. The word *Shuar* simply means "people," and until relatively recently, outsiders (including ethnographers) have used the term *Jívaro* or *Jibaro* to refer to them. The word *Jívaro* has no meaning in the Shuar language, and they have rejected it both because it is a term foreign to their culture and because of its historic negative association with "savages" and headhunting. With support from Salesian missionaries, in 1964 the Shuar founded the first ethnic federation in the Ecuadorian Amazon. This federation used radio programs, a printing press, and other means to defend their culture from outside intrusion. Related to the Shuar are the Achuar (as well as other groups on the Peruvian side of the border) who share the same area and many of the same customs and traditions and speak a similar language.

the capitalistic penetration into lowland Quichua territory.

26. Michael J. Harner, *The Jívaro, People of the Sacred Waterfalls* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday/Natural History Press, 1972), 1. Harner's book *The Jívaro* remains the basic ethnographic treatment of Shuar culture although newer works such as those by Janet Wall Hendricks (see "Power and Knowledge: Discourse and Ideological Transformation Among the Shuar," *American Ethnologist* 15:2 [May 1988]: 216-238; and *To Drink of Death: The Narrative of a Shuar Warrior* [Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1993]) are also very important as are the works published by the Shuar themselves through Mundo Shuar and Ediciones Abya-Yala.

In the northeastern Amazon are the Sionas, Secoyas, and Cofán. These groups have historic and linguistic connections with neighboring Indigenous groups in Colombia. The Sionas and Secoyas originally were two separate ethnic groups with similar cultures and languages which were part of the Tucano language family. At the beginning of the twentieth century, they began to merge, particularly due to intermarriage, and by the 1970s were considered to be only one ethnic group (the Siona-Secoya). More recently, however, recognizing the advantages of maintaining their distinct ethnic identities, they now consider themselves to be two separate groups, the Sionas and Secoyas.²⁷

The traditional dress of the Cofán (sometimes referred to as A'I, from the name of their language A'Ingae) is an important part of their identity, and includes the characteristic perforations in their noses and ears for the wearing of feathers, flowers, and other materials. Until the 1950s when the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) missionaries began efforts to evangelize them, the Cofán had remained relatively isolated from Western society. Since that time, outside forces have devastated the Sionas, Secoyas, and Cofán. The region which they occupy has been an area of intensive petroleum exploitation, especially in the 1970s with the Texaco-Gulf consortium. Roads, pipelines, and penetrating colonists all have had a ravaging effect on their territory. During this time, "Quito planners and developers and SIL linguists talked of protecting the Cofán and of creating a park for them so that they could be exploited

27. Personal communication, Gina Castillo, March 13, 1997. For more information on the Siona-Secoya culture, see in particular William T. Vickers' various works including the articles "Ideation as Adaptation: Traditional Belief and Modern Intervention in Siona-Secoya Religion," in Norman E. Whitten, Jr., ed., *Cultural Transformations and Ethnicity in Modern Ecuador* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981), 705-30; and "Native Amazonian Subsistence in Diverse Habitats: The Siona-Secoya of Ecuador," in Emilio F. Moran, ed., *Changing Agricultural Systems in Latin America*, Studies in Third World Societies; publication no. 7 (Williamsburg, Va.: Department of Anthropology, College of William and Mary, 1978), 6-36.

more effectively for tourism."²⁸ Colonization of Cofán territory led to an increasing disruption of their traditional society which led to a further breakdown of their worldview. In November of 1993, the Sionas and Secoyas fought back by suing Texaco for more than one billion dollars for a variety of environmental abuses, including dumping more than three thousand gallons of oil a day into their lagoons.²⁹

Recently, the Huaorani (sometimes called *Aucas*, a Quichua word meaning "savages," by outsiders³⁰) have faced similar problems. The Huaorani are perhaps equalled only by their Shuar neighbors to the south for their reputation as a ferociously independent group, hostile to outside intrusions and readily willing to resort to violence to defend their territory. They are perhaps most well-known for spearing five North American SIL missionaries in 1956. Among Ecuador's Indigenous groups, they remain the most isolated from Western civilization. Since the earliest recorded contact with European society in the 1600s, violence and bloodshed have characterized their relationships with the outside world. Contacts with nineteenth-century rubber barons and oil explorers beginning in the 1940s have only provided a continuity with this earlier history.³¹ David Stoll credits the Huaorani with defying "the world market like

28. Norman E. Whitten, Jr., "Amazonia Today at the Base of the Andes: An Ethnic Interface in Ecological, Social, and Ideological Perspectives," in Norman E. Whitten, Jr., ed., *Cultural Transformations and Ethnicity in Modern Ecuador* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981), 135. For a broader ethnographic treatment of the Cofán, see Scott S. Robinson, *Hacia una nueva comprensión del shamanismo cofan*, Serie Pueblos del Ecuador, 5 (Quito: Editorial Abya Yala, 1996).

29. Agis Salpukas, "Ecuadorean Indians Suing Texaco," *New York Times*, November 4, 1993.

30. SIL linguistic James Yost notes that "huaorani" is a hispanization of *wadädi* which means "people" and is the plural of *wao* or "person." Jaime A. Yost, *El desarrollo comunitario y la supervivencia étnica: El caso de los Huaorani, Amazonía Ecuatoriana*, Cuadernos Etnolingüísticos, No. 6 (Quito: Instituto Lingüístico de Verano, 1979), 2.

31. James A. Yost, "Twenty Years of Contact: The Mechanisms of Change in Wao ("Auca") Culture," in Norman E. Whitten, Jr., ed., *Cultural Transformations and Ethnicity in Modern Ecuador* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981), 677-78.

few others" by defending seven percent of Ecuador's valuable jungle territory against those who wish to exploit the area for its natural resources and economic potential.³² The Huaorani hardly meet Jean-Jacques Rousseau's stereotype of a noble savage living in an earthly paradise. They have been plagued by spearings and revenge killings that threatened to decimate their population. James Yost reported that in recent memory, over half of the Huaorani deaths were violent, due to both intra-tribal warfare and violent contact with outsiders.³³ These violent deaths were equaled only by the subtle (and not-so-subtle) forms of violence waged on the group which result from contact with white society. These include not only the cultural disruption of contact with European society and the intrusion of tourism, but also deaths due to the introduction of diseases from which the Huaorani lack natural immunity. To defend their interests in the face of outside intrusion (including oil companies, missionaries, environmental groups, and threats from the large neighboring Quichua and Shuar ethnic groups), they formed the Organización de Nacionalidad Huaorani de la Amazonía Ecuatoriana (ONHAE, Organization of the Huaorani Nation of the Ecuadorian Amazon) in 1990.

The eighth and smallest Indigenous group in the Ecuadorian Amazon is the Zaparos. Their history demonstrates the devastating impact of Western civilization as their numbers collapsed from possibly more than 100,000 to seven, and the Zaparo may now possibly be on their way to extinction.³⁴ Their history shows the catastrophic repercussions that the European conquest which began five hundred years ago continues to exercise on native populations of the Americas. As Blanca Muratorio has observed, "the process of conquest and initial evangelization brought about an

32. David Stoll, *Fishers of Men or Founders of Empire? The Wycliffe Bible Translators in Latin America* (London: Zed Press, 1982), 278.

33. Yost, "Twenty Years of Contact," 687.

34. According to one of the surviving members, the Zaparos now number eight and are fighting to retain their ethnic identity. Interview with Alejandro Ushigua, December 6, 1995, Puyo, Ecuador.

‘ethnocidal simplification’ of the Amazon’s rich ethnic variety.”³⁵ The result is not only the disappearance of the Zaparos but also many other aboriginal ethnic groups and languages.

Highlands

Many different Indigenous ethnic groups live in the Sierra Highlands, but these are often grouped under the single category of “Quichua.” They are part of the larger ethno-linguistic Quechua group, the largest surviving Indigenous language in the Americas which stretches across the Andean highlands from Colombia to Chile and includes between eight and twelve million speakers.³⁶ As a result of the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century spread of the Inka Empire in the Ecuadorian highlands along with the subsequent Spanish missionary impulses, many of the Quichua-speaking peoples in this region lost much of their linguistic, religious, and cultural distinctiveness. Economically, many of these people have become peasants or *campesinos*. There remains, however, a strong sense of place and tradition, and it would be a mistake to lump the entire region into one category. Gregory Knapp estimates that between 0.84 and 1.36 million Quichuas lived in the highlands in 1987, although others put the number considerably higher.³⁷

35. Muratorio, 42.

36. By comparison, the next largest Indigenous language in the Americas is Guaraní with between two and three million speakers in Paraguay and Brazil. Although parts of Mesoamerica (especially Guatemala) have a larger percentage of Indigenous inhabitants than the Andes, they are divided among many more languages and hence the number of speakers of a particular language is smaller than that of Quechua.

37. Gregory Knapp, *Geografía Quichua de la Sierra del Ecuador: nucleos, dominios, y esfera*, 2d ed. (Quito: Ediciones Abya-Yala, 1987), 28. Others have also argued that Knapp was much too liberal in his estimates and that the number of Quichua Indians in Ecuador is actually much lower. See Leon Zamosc, *Estadística de las áreas de predominio étnico de la sierra ecuatoriana: Población rural, indicadores cantonales y organizaciones de base* (Quito: Abya Yala, 1995).

In the highlands, Indigenous populations have become integrated into the national culture through their economic roles. The Cañar people in southern Ecuador, for example, began manufacturing Panama hats in the 1950s as a way to cope with increasing poverty as they slowly lost much of their land to the white population. Niels Fock has expounded on the ironies of the Cañaris' adaptation to cultural imperialism and economic exploitation. The Inkas had incorporated the Cañaris' territory into their empire sixty years before the Spanish conquest, but unlike most groups that the Inkas conquered, the Cañaris never lost their separate ethnic identity. In 1532, the Cañaris were one of the groups that considered the Spanish invaders as their liberators from Inka tyranny and entered into strategic alliances with the *conquistadores*. Ironically, although the Inkas were much more successful than the Spanish colonists or their modern national counterparts in obliterating ethnic identity, now the Cañaris have assumed the identity of their pre-Hispanic Inkan oppressors in a campaign against the Spanish culture with which they had originally joined in the conquest against the Inka Empire.³⁸

The Saraguro Indians of Ecuador's southern Loja Province have earned a degree of economic independence through cattle production. Many Saraguros own large cattle ranches which sometimes puts them at odds with the rest of the Indian movement which is largely comprised of poor people chronically short of land. This has led to contradictory approaches to land reform on the part of Ecuador's Indigenous populations, which further underscores the complexity of ethnic movements in that country.

The central highland province of Chimborazo has the highest concentration of Indians in Ecuador. About forty percent of the province's population is Indigenous,

38. Niels Fock, "Ethnicity and Alternative Identification: An Example from Cañar," in Norman E. Whitten, Jr., ed., *Cultural Transformations and Ethnicity in Modern Ecuador* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981), 417-18. Also see Segundo E. Moreno Yáñez, *Alzamientos indígenas en la Audiencia de Quito, 1534-1803*, 2d ed., (Quito: Ediciones Abya-Yala, 1989), 19.

and together they number about 250,000 people. Historically, the Indigenous peoples from Chimborazo have gained a reputation as Ecuador's most rebellious highland Indians. Fernando Daquilema characterizes this history of rebellion. For a week in December of 1871, Daquilema launched an uprising from his community of Yaruquíes. It quickly spread to neighboring communities before being put down. A central issue in this struggle was not land, but taxes which Indigenous people were forced to pay to the Church and the state. This uprising is remembered as one of the largest, strongest, and most important in the nineteenth century in Ecuador. Indigenous leaders in Chimborazo during the more recent uprising in June of 1990 would make reference to Daquilema as part of their history of struggle against the dominant culture.³⁹

Various other Quichua groups also inhabit the Ecuadorian highlands. These groups include the Salasacas who live in the province of Tungurahua in central Ecuador. According to ethno-historical accounts, the Salasacas are descendants of a *mitimae* (colonist) group which the Inkas brought from Bolivia to help subdue the Ecuadorian highlands. They have gained an economic position in the dominant culture through their weavings.

The primary example of highland Indian integration into national history through economic means, however, is the one of the Otavaleño weavers from the northern province of Imbabura. About forty thousand Otavaleño Indians live in seventy-five communities spread throughout a valley which the Taita Imbabura and Mama Cotacachi volcanos surround. Otavalo lies directly north of Cayambe. Considering their geographic proximity and similar history, there is a dramatic contrast between the two areas.⁴⁰ Whereas Cayambe remains largely an agricultural area,

39. Hernán Ibarra, *"Nos encontramos amenazados por todita la indiada": El levantamiento de Daquilema (Chimborazo 1871)*, Serie Movimiento Indígena en el Ecuador Contemporáneo, No. 3 (Quito: Centro de Estudios y Difusión Social, 1993), 16.

40. In her study of Peguche in the canton of Otavalo in the 1940s, Elsie Clews Parsons stated that "between the canton of Otavalo and the canton of Cayambe the

Otavalo has gained international renown for its textile production and Saturday tourist market. This is largely due to population pressure on limited land resources in Otavalo which pushed people out of the agricultural sector and into artisan production.

Through the marketing of their distinctive textiles, the Otavaleños have become one of the most celebrated and prosperous Indigenous groups in the Americas. Whereas people in Cayambe lost much of their traditional dress and language, for the most part Otavaleños retained their traditional costume and Quichua language. The amateur sociologist Emilio Bonifaz observed Indians from Cayambe greeting Otavaleños and the latter not returning the greeting. The Cayambeños explained to Bonifaz that this was because the Otavaleños were *orejones* ("big ears"), a term used for Inka nobility.⁴¹ Anthropologists have noted the Otavaleños' cultural pride, which has translated into retention of traditional dress and language. Popular organizing efforts including that of the Communist Party and other forms of agrarian radicalism, however, have much deeper roots in Cayambe than in Otavalo. These organizational efforts also indicate the presence of an ethnic pride and heritage, though perhaps one somewhat distinct from that found in Otavalo.

The Otavaleños are considered to be an economic success story. They are the most prominent of the various highland groups and are known around the world for

natural boundary [a high ridge called the *nudo de Cajas*] is not formidable, but it is impressive." She also states "that Cayambe is closer to the Oriente, to eastern and forest Ecuador, than is Otavalo." Her comparison of Cayambe culture to Amazonian forest culture, however, is rather stretched and overstated. Elsie Clews Parsons, *Peguche, Canton of Otavalo, Province of Imbabura, Ecuador: A Study of Andean Indians*, The University of Chicago Publications in Anthropology, Ethnological Series (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1945), 7.

41. Emilio Bonifaz, "Origen y evolución de una hacienda histórica: Guachalá," *Boletín de la Academia Nacional de Historia (BANH)* (Quito) 53:115 (January-June 1970): 119. Joseph Casagrande observed a similar social and class difference between the Indians of Otavalo and Cayambe. See Joseph B. Casagrande, "Strategies for Survival: The Indians of Highland Ecuador," in *Cultural Transformations and Ethnicity in Modern Ecuador*, Norman E. Whitten, Jr., ed. (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1981), 273-74.

their weaving patterns and textiles which pre-date the Spanish conquest. During the Spanish colonial period, Otavaleños were forced to labor in textile workshops called *obrajes* in order to pay tribute taxes to the crown. The textiles were used to clothe workers in mines in Bolivia. Much of this production dropped off in the early nineteenth century because of competition from cheap industrial fabrics imported from England. In the twentieth century, Spanish looms began to replace the traditional backstrap looms. In the 1950s, a tourist trade began to flourish and the selling of textiles in a Saturday market became a significant part of Otavaleño culture. A large influx of foreign tourists began to descend upon the town, and textile designs and types of fabrics began to change in order to cater to this market. The Otavaleños began to market their products themselves in Colombia, New York, Europe, and around the world.

Although the Otavaleños retained their Indigenous customs, dress, and beliefs, the Ecuadorian elite respected them because of their entrepreneurship. The Otavaleños were different than other "*indios*." Many people perceive Otavaleños as having entered the market economy with their traditional society remaining largely untouched by European culture. "In a century that has seen the extinction or ethnocide of so many indigenous cultures," one anthropologist has written, the Otavaleños with their "preservation of ethnic identity and ability to adapt to social change, emerge as a model for other Indigenous groups which hope to control their own destiny, and as a hopeful sign for the future."⁴² Otavaleños thus provide a counterpart to the popular (but largely inaccurate) stereotype of a static, backward, doomed Indian society. The example of the Otavaleños demonstrates the possibility of retaining a separate cultural and ethnic identity but yet playing a major role in a country's mainstream economic life.

42. Lynn Meisch, *Otavalo: Weaving, Costume and the Market* (Quito: Ediciones Libri Mundi, 1987), 11.

A closer analysis, nevertheless, presents a more complex picture of Otavaleño society. Otavalo is not a singular homogenous society, but rather is comprised of a canton of rural communities that surround the town of Otavalo which historically *mestizos* have inhabited and controlled. Each community possesses its own unique dress, culture, customs and history. Over the past fifty years, developments in the textile trade have led to the creation of a middle class of Indian entrepreneurs who are becoming increasingly urbanized and westernized, and who exploit the labor of more traditional weavers and artisans in outlying villages. This has led to a social stratification where an elite controls the best locations in the Saturday Indian textile market to the exclusion of poorer members of society. Wealthier Otavaleños set up textile factories in which others work as wage laborers. Although to a certain extent economic success has meant the preservation of ethnic identity, it also has led to a pronounced class stratification within Otavaleño society. All Otavaleños have not shared equally in the economic success of the textile industry. Many Indians continue to live in outlying communities on dirt floors and without electricity or running water producing raw materials for the dominant class. Meanwhile, an entrepreneurial class has emerged which owns this means of production and exhibits its wealth through finer clothes, new cars and homes, consumer goods, higher education, and international travel and contacts. The Otavaleños' situation has demonstrated the complex relationship between class and ethnicity and the fact that they are subjective concepts which can overlap in a variety of ways. For example, many wealthy white Ecuadorians admire the economic success of Otavaleños, but a lower-class *mestizo* may still express racist attitudes toward them. In a reversal of what is normally true in the Americas, the wealth of the Otavaleño weavers often exceeds that of other non-Indian members of the community. The potential for a growing Otavaleño middle class to join a national elite challenges traditional concepts of equating class and ethnicity.⁴³

43. Lynn Walter explores some of these dynamics in "Otavaleño Development, Ethnicity, and National Integration," *América Indígena* (México) 41:2 (April-June

The Otavaleño situation has also created interesting dynamics in relation to the rest of Ecuador's Indigenous movements. On a superficial level, one would expect that ethnic entrenchment within the Otavaleño community would cause its members to emerge at the forefront of Ecuador's Indigenous rights movement. The fact that, except for some individual leaders, this has not happened highlights both the commercial nature of ethnicity in Otavalo as well as the class nature of the Indigenous rights movement. It is not exclusively or primarily ethnicity which formed the basis of Indigenous organizing efforts in Ecuador. The economic base of Otavalo has shifted from agriculture to textile production, with the result that many of the demands of the Indian movement which revolved around access to land seemed to be far removed from the concerns of the Otavaleño community. Thus, Otavaleño Indians have participated little in the large Indian uprisings in the 1990s. It would also appear that an Otavaleño elite which was enjoying economic success and was on the verge of integration into the national culture would have little to gain by challenging the basis for state power. The roots of Ecuador's modern Indian movement lie much deeper in the structure of society. In order to understand how that society was constructed, we will need to excavate in the historical formation of identity in the canton of Cayambe where Indigenous organizations first emerged.

1981): 333-35.

Chapter Three

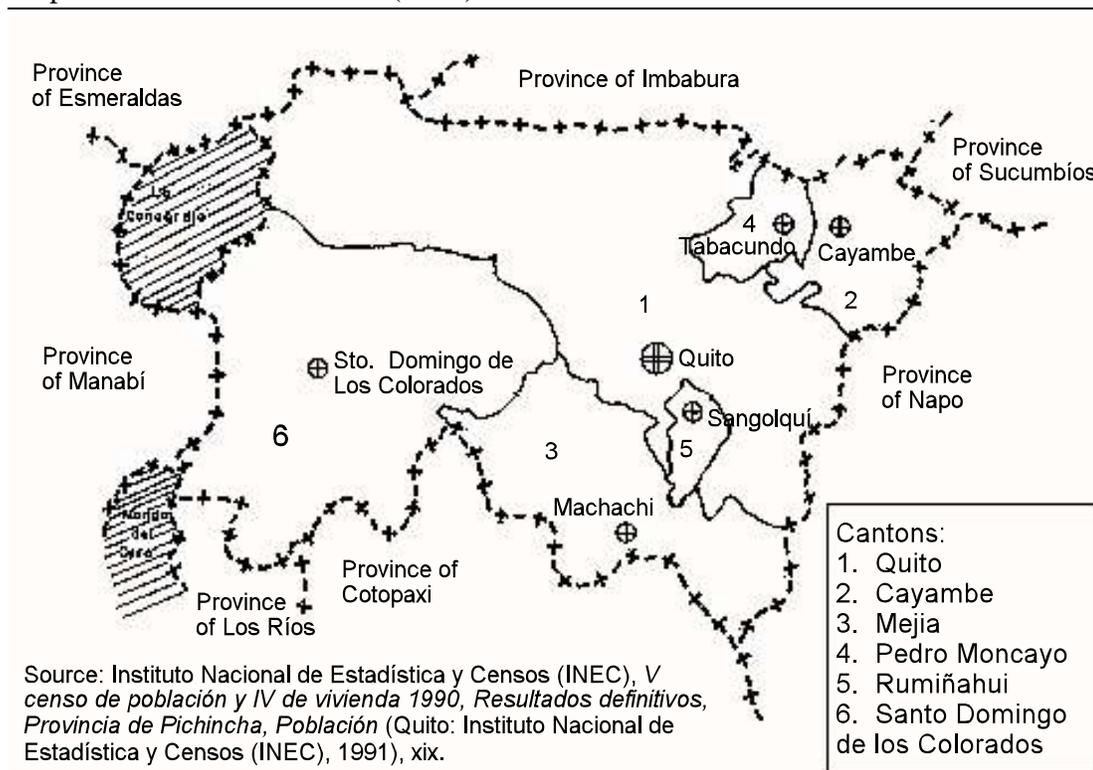
Culture and Ethnicity in the Canton of Cayambe

The Canton of San Pedro de Cayambe is located in the northern Ecuadorian highlands in the northeast section of the province of Pichincha, about seventy kilometers north of the country's capital of Quito. Cayambe straddles the equator, and the altitude rises in four ecological stages from 2400 meters above sea level at the Pisque river valley to 5790 meters at the top of the snow-covered Cayambe volcano. The four ecological zones, the hot subtropical Guayllabamba and Pisque river valleys which permit production of fruit, sugar cane, and coffee; humid valleys largely used for milk and flower production; higher altitudes where corn, potatoes, quinoa, wheat, barley, beans, and other cereal crops flourish in rich volcanic soil; and the *páramo*, a cold, windy tundra-like highland area above 3,500 meters reserved for pasture land for cattle, sheep and pigs, hunting, and gathering of firewood, are arranged in the form of a micro-vertical archipelago in which a single individual can easily move between the different zones in one day and enjoy the benefit of the production of each one.

During the colonial period, the northern part of what is today the Province of Pichincha including the Canton of Cayambe was part of the *corregimiento* (administrative unit) of Otavalo within the Audiencia of Quito. In 1563, the Spanish incorporated what is now Ecuador into their administrative system as the Audiencia of Quito under the Viceroyalty of Peru. This was one of Spain's first *corregimientos* in the New World, which indicates its economic importance to the crown. In 1717, Spain created the Viceroyalty of New Granada with the capital in Bogotá and included the Audiencia of Quito in this new administrative structure. At the time of Independence one hundred years later and on into the twentieth century, Ecuador has thus often had closer ties with countries to the north and less contact with its Andean neighbors to

the south. After Independence from Spain, Cayambe was established as a *parroquia* (civil parish) in 1824 as part of the province of Imbabura within the country of Gran Colombia. In 1851, the national legislature established a canton of Cayambe comprised of the *parroquias* of Cayambe, Tabacundo, Cangahua, Tocachi, and Malchinguí in the province of Pichincha. In 1855, Cayambe was annexed to the Canton of Quito, before being reestablished as a separate canton in 1883. In 1912 the western *parroquias* (Tabacundo, Tocachi, La Esperanza, and Malchinguí together with the *parroquias* Atahualpa and San José de Minas from the Canton of Quito) were separated to form the canton of Pedro Moncayo.

Map 4: Province of Pichincha (1990)



During much of the twentieth century, Cayambe was one of five cantons in the province of Pichincha, the others being Pedro Moncayo, Quito, Rumiñahui, and

Mejía.¹ The Canton of Otavalo in the province of Imbabura and a high ridge known as the *nudo de Cajas* which joins the eastern and western mountain ranges of the Ecuadorian Andes borders Cayambe to the north. The Cordillera Oriental mountains and the Amazon jungle forms the eastern boundary of the canton, the Granobles River (which flows into the Pisque River) and the Canton of Pedro Moncayo forms the western boundary, and the Quinche River and the Canton of Quito are to the south. The Canton of Cayambe covers a land mass of 1,350 square kilometers, and according to the most recent census figures (from 1990) had a population of 30,089 rural inhabitants and 16,849 urban inhabitants (for a total of 46,938 people). The ethnic composition of the Canton is fourteen percent white, twenty-nine percent *mestizo*, and fifty-seven percent Indigenous.²

Currently, Cayambe has three urban *parroquias* (Cayambe, Ayora, and Juan Montalvo) and five rural ones (Cangahua, Olmedo [formerly called Pesillo], Otón, Ascázubi, and Santa Rosa de Cusubamba). The northern part of the canton (especially the *parroquias* of Cayambe and Olmedo, as well as Ascázubi in the south of the canton) enjoys fertile soil, whereas hilly terrain which is more difficult to farm characterizes the southern part of the canton (in particular Cangahua, Otón, and Santa Rosa

1. For geographic and administrative purposes, Ecuador is divided into twenty-one provinces. Provinces are further divided into *cantons* (counties), and cantons are usually subdivided into *parroquias* (civil parishes). Each *parroquia* has a small central population (often with the same name as the *parroquia* itself) which serves as the parroquial seat. The administrative center for the entire Canton of Cayambe is the city of Cayambe. Unless explicitly stated otherwise, "Cayambe" here refers to the canton and not the city. The canton of Quito has subsequently been further divided into five cantons, including Quito, Santo Domingo de los Colorados, San Miguel de los Banco, Pedro V. Maldonado, and Puerto Quito (added on April 1, 1996), for a current total of nine cantons in the province of Pichincha.

2. Marcelo F. Naranjo and Helena Landázuri, "La república y la época contemporánea," in Segundo E. Moreno Yáñez, ed., *Pichincha: monografía histórica de la región nuclear ecuatoriana* (Quito: Consejo Provincial de Pichincha, 1981), 313-14, 324; Efendy Maldonado M., *El Canton Cayambe* (Cayambe: Abya Yala, 1987), 209.

de Cusubamba). The result has been that the southern part of the canton has become more impoverished than the northern part.

Map 5: Rural Parroquias in the Canton of Cayambe (1984)



Source: Ecuador, Dirección Nacional de Avalúos y Catastros (DINAC), *Proyecto integral Cayambe: Inventario de recursos* (Quito: Dirección Nacional de Avalúos y Catastros, 1986), 1.

Each *parroquia* had a local official called a *teniente político* who was responsible to the cantonal authorities. He was a civil-military authority who had the power to impose fines (up to thirty sucres in the 1930s, or six-weeks' salary) and to arrest people for up to six days. In the 1930s, this official earned thirty sucres a month at a time when manual workers earned only about twenty or thirty centavos a day. He was always a "*mestizo bien blanco*," a person who racially represented a person of high authority.³ The national government in Quito appointed the *teniente político*, and in areas such as the rural *parroquias* in Cayambe, this official represented the extension of white state power into local Indian communities and affairs. The *teniente político*, together with the local parish priest, who was also either a white or *mestizo*, worked hand-in-hand with the large landholders (*hacendados*) to consolidate control over their haciendas. Thus, civil, religious, and landed interests converged against those of the large Indigenous population in the area.

On the cantonal level, the central government appointed a person to the office of *jefe político*. The *jefe político* was the equivalent of the *teniente político* for the canton. Part of this office's duties was to oversee the *tenientes políticos* in the local *parroquias*. Together, these officials represented the imposition of central governmental control over local affairs. In addition to a *jefe político*, each canton had a *consejo* (Municipal Council) which, unlike the *jefe político* and *teniente político*, was comprised of locally elected officials. As in presidential elections until 1978, voting was not universal but rather limited to (and compulsory for) literate men and optional for women. This meant, of course, that the *consejeros* (council members) came from the same elite, white class as the government-appointed local officials. In practice, this meant yet another element of state power which worked against the Indigenous peoples' interests.

3. Sáenz, 130-31.

Cayambe has a long and deep cultural history which can be broken into four main periods. The first is the Caranqui period, followed by a brief Inka occupation, then the Spanish colonial occupation, and finally the period of the Republic of Ecuador. Each of these periods is important for understanding the formation of state policies and popular organizational responses to these policies. A study of the cultural history of Cayambe reveals the unique nature of ethnicity in the region and identification with place. During the Inka and Spanish colonial periods, a culture of resistance was added to this ethnic identity. Legislative and economic changes during the nineteenth century created a concrete historical context for the emergence of Indigenous and peasant organizations in the twentieth century. Cayambe cosmology, together with an analysis of the cultural geography, provides the historical infrastructure necessary to understand the culture of resistance in Cayambe. This history, thus, underlies the emergence of the modern Indian movement in Ecuador and forms an integral part of it.

Cayambe-Caranqui period

Prior to the Inka and Spanish conquests, a variety of different groups inhabited the area of what is today northern Ecuador. There are few traces of the first inhabitants of the Cayambe valley. Archaeologists have conducted few investigations in the area, and compared to the central Andes of Peru and Bolivia, the ethno-historical literature contains relatively little information on this zone. Nevertheless, scholars have identified several pre-Inka groups who inhabited the northern sierra including the Pastos, Quillacingas, Caranquis, Cayambes, and Quitos. One of the largest of these groups was the people known as the Caranqui⁴ who occupied the highland area from the Guayllabamba River just north of present-day Quito north to the Chota and Mira rivers close to the Colombian border. The entire territory was about seventy-five

4. "Caranqui" is sometimes spelled "Carangue" and the culture has also sometimes been called the Cara or Quitu-Cara. In archaeological terminology it is occasionally referred to as the Imbaya or "Urcuquí phase."

kilometers long and sixty-five kilometers wide (stretching from the eastern to western mountain ranges), and encompassed about five thousand square kilometers. This area included in its southern reaches the valley that is currently the canton of Cayambe.

The original name of the Caranqui civilization has been lost; the word "Cara" was a creation of the eighteenth-century historian Padre Juan de Velasco. The origins of these people are also unclear; some archaeologists and ethno-historians believe that the people they call the Caranquis migrated south from the area of Colombia perhaps a thousand years ago. Linguists believe that the Caranqui language (which died out about 250 years ago) was related to the Chachi (Cayapa) and Tsáchila (Colorado) languages on the Ecuadorian coast, and separated from these about a thousand years ago. Based on an analysis of pottery shards found in the region, some experts have attempted to demonstrate trade with and influences from eastern lowland and western coastal cultures including the early Valdavia period, although this later culture is probably much older than those in the highlands. Archaeologist J. Stephen Athens has found evidence of maize cultivation four thousand years ago at the San Pablo lake, located north of Cayambe. He also discovered human occupation about 2500 years ago at the edge of the agriculture frontier at La Chimba in the area of Olmedo in northern Cayambe. Human occupation at 3160 meters just below the *páramo* grasslands indicates the probable existence of population pressure from the valleys below.⁵

The Caranqui were an agricultural people who grew corn, potatoes, yuca, and beans, and raised guinea pigs and possibly llamas. The La Chimba site includes

5. J. Stephen Athens, *Prehistoric Agricultural Expansion and Population Growth in Northern Highland Ecuador: Interim Report for 1989 Fieldwork* (Honolulu, Hawaii: International Archaeological Research Institute, Inc., 1990). One of the most extensive (though perhaps not always accurate) ethno-historical treatments of the Caranqui (or Cayambe-Caranqui) civilization is Waldemar Espinosa Soriano, *Los Cayambes y Carangues: Siglos XV-XVI; El testimonio de la etnohistoria*, 3 vol., Colección Curiñán, no. 3-5 (Otavalo: Instituto Otavaleño de Antropología, 1988).

evidence of the hunting of rabbit, rodents, deer, fox, and tapir. The Caranqui also wove blankets and other textiles on backstrap looms, and they traded these products with people both in the eastern jungle as well as in the western coastal region.⁶ Around 1250 A.D., a more complex form of socio-political organization emerged in Caranqui territory. Athens has called this the "Late Period Cara," and truncated ramp mounds and a distinctive pottery style characterized it.⁷ Based on a study from 1973, archeologist Thomas Myers concluded that the Cayambe culture was more stable, stratified, and much more populous than previously believed. He concluded that the economy was based on agriculture which an elite class directed. The elites controlled surplus labor and utilized this to build temples, pyramids, and other monumental structures. Intensive agricultural practices (including irrigation ditches, terraces, and ridged fields) provide evidence that at the time of the Inka conquest the population was reaching an ecological limit and was ready for state development.⁸

Experts disagree over the political nature of the Caranqui civilization. Archival records from the early colonial period mention a *cacique* (chief) from Cayambe named Nasacuta Puento who led the Caranqui confederation in their fight against the Inkas. Aquiles Pérez Tamayo built on this to construct the idea of a unified Caranqui nation with Nasacuta Puento as supreme leader.⁹ Ecuadorian anthropologist Segundo

6. John Stephen Athens and Alan J. Osborn, *Archaeological Investigations in the Highlands of Northern Ecuador: Two Preliminary Reports*, Series Archaeology, Year 1, Number 1 (Otavalo, Ecuador: Instituto Otavaleño de Antropología, 1974).

7. Athens places the date of the Late Period-Cara from 1250 to 1525 A.D., or to the Inka conquest and up to a mere nine years before the Spanish entered Caranqui territory. John Stephen Athens, *El proceso evolutivo en las sociedades complejas y la ocupación del período tardío-cara en los andes septentrionales del Ecuador*, Colección Pendoneros; 2, Serie Arqueología (Otavalo, Ecuador: Instituto Otavaleño de Antropología, 1980), 18.

8. Thomas Myers, "Evidence of Prehistoric Irrigations in Northern Ecuador," *Journal of Field Archaeology* 1:3-4 (1974): 313.

9. Aquiles R. Pérez T., *La minúscula nación de Nasacota Puento resiste la invasión de la gigantesca de Huayna Cápac* (Quito: Casa de Cultura Ecuatoriana, 1978). In *Los señoríos del norte andino del reyno de Quito: Los Puento, Angos,*

Moreno also referred to this group (as well as the other pre-Inka civilizations in the northern Andes) as "nations" and defended this designation with the observation that they comprised "social groups with sufficient population and political development to construct distinct groups."¹⁰ J. Stephen Athens and Alan Osborn calculated that it would take two hundred laborers two years to construct the types of sites located in the Caranqui area. This level of labor control indicates that the Caranqui did not have an egalitarian society. Athens and Osborn do not, however, believe that this indicates a state-level social organization. Rather, they argue that the Caranqui culture was based on a chiefdom level of societal organization.¹¹ Others have rejected terminology such as "nations," "chiefdoms," and "kingdoms" as nothing other than an imposition of western concepts on pre-Inkan societies.¹² It may have been, though, that the Caranqui was a confederation of various groups including Cayambe (sometimes spelled Cayambi), Cochasquí (roughly equal to the current canton of Pedro Moncayo located to the east of Cayambe), Otavalo, and Caranqui (both to the north of

Tulcanasa, Taques, Paspuel, Tusa, y Guachagmira, Colección Ecuador Mestizo, Volumen 1 (Quito: Ediciones SAG, Abya-Yala, 1993), Piedad and Alfredo Costales trace the history of the Puento family from Nasacota's ascension to power in about 1475 to the end of the colonial period. They were *caciques* of the Cayambe region for the entire period and were never subjected to the exploitative Spanish labor practices. "Cacique" is a term which the Spanish introduced, probably as a linguistic import from the Caribbean. A more appropriate Andean term is "kuraka," sometimes spelled "curaca."

10. Segundo E. Moreno Yáñez, "La época aborigen," in Moreno, ed., *Pichincha*, 99.

11. Athens and Osborn, 10-12. Athens later noted that the two-year two-hundred laborer estimate was conservative. J. Stephen Athens, "Ethnicity and Adaptation: The Late Period-Cara Occupation in Northern Highland Ecuador," in *Resource, Power, and Interregional Interaction*, ed. Edward M. Schortman and Patricia A. Urban (New York: Plenum Press, 1992), 205.

12. Chantal Caillavet, "La adaptación de la dominación incaica a las sociedades autóctonas de la frontera septentrional del Imperio: (Territorio Otavalo-Ecuador)," *Revista Andina* (Cuzco) 3:2 (December 1985): 419; Galo Ramón V. *La Resistencia andina: Cayambe, 1500-1800*, Cuaderno de discusión Popular no. 14 (Quito: Centro Andino de Acción Popular, 1987), 41.

Cayambe). They may have competed fiercely over land and other limited resources and only united their forces when faced with a common problem or outside enemy such as the Inka invasion.

Most of what is known about the Caranqui civilization in Cayambe is through archaeological remains, although relatively little study has been conducted in the area. Three main archaeological sites are located in the area, and each one apparently served a different purpose. East of the present town of Cayambe and just north of the equator is a site known as Puntachil or Puntayzil. One interpretation of the name of the site is "sacred house of the powerful."¹³ The site may have been an administrative center and indicates that humans occupied the current location of the town of Cayambe long before the arrival of the Spanish. Puntachil is comprised of two pyramids one in front of the other as well as several other smaller mounds. The larger pyramid is called the pyramid of the sun and a smaller one the pyramid of the moon. The site is still utilized for the annual summer solstice celebration known as the *Fiesta del Sol* (sun feast), or sometimes by the Inka name *Inti Raymi* or the name of the Catholic saint's day, *San Pedro* or Saint Peter.¹⁴

In 1740, Jorge Juan and Antonio de Ulloa, two captains in the Spanish navy, accompanied the French Geodesic Mission which traveled through the Cayambe region in their attempt to establish the exact location of the equator. They noted that

13. Gerardo Alvarez Vaca, "El templo o adoratorio de Punyatzil," *Orientación* (Cayambe) February 15, 1979, 9. In addition to the three sites mentioned here, Galo Ramón argues for the significance of a fourth site called Chizi or Ichizí, which apparently was a small *tambo* (way station) on the route between Otavalo and Cochasquí. See Ramón, *Resistencia andina*, 65-66.

14. Athens contends that originally three of the mounds had ramps, and one is no longer visible (Athens, *Proceso evolutivo*, 266-67). On the San Pedro celebrations, see Irene Cabay, Nancy Correa, Pablo Endara and others, "*Año por año*" *Las fiestas de San Pedro en Ayora - Cayambe* (Quito: Abya-Yala, 1991) and Pablo Guaña, Pedro Camino, and Quimbia Ulco, *Inti Raymi Cayambi: la fiesta sagrada del sol en la mitad del mundo; la fiesta de San Pedro en Cayambe* (Cayambe: CICAY-Museo Cayambe, 1992).

throughout northern Ecuador they encountered burial mounds and other monumental structures. These were, however, "most numerous within the jurisdiction of the town of Cayambe, its plains being as it were covered with them."¹⁵ Juan and Ulloa drew a sketch of the Cayambe area which included small hills which they identified as tombs, as well as a round temple. They described the temple as standing "on an eminence of some height" and as a perfectly circular structure, about fifty meters around, five meters high, with walls about one and a half meters thick, and an inside diameter of about sixteen meters. The walls apparently were constructed of a hard adobe (probably *cangahua* bricks which are made of hard volcanic ash¹⁶) which had survived for more than two hundred years despite being exposed to the elements. They described it as one of the principal temples in Ecuador, and as "the burial-place of the kings and caciques of Quito." They noted that local tradition claimed it to be a temple, and that the nature of its construction indicated that it probably was a public building rather than a private residence. The smallness of the doorway required visitors to enter "on foot, in token of veneration" rather than being carried.¹⁷ Although Juan and Ulloa did not state exactly where this temple was, local tradition placed it at Puntachil on top of the pyramid of the sun. At some point during the next one-hundred years, the temple disappeared although no one knows when or how. Numerous treasure seekers, beginning with the troops of the Spanish conquistador Benalcázar who were looking for Rumiñahui's treasure, desecrated the temple, pyramids, and surrounding area.¹⁸

15. Jorge Juan and Antonio de Ulloa, *A Voyage to South America*, trans. John Adams (Boston: Longwood Press, 1978), 461.

16. Basile gives a geological explanation of *cangahua* as "a loess-like eolian deposit, consisting mainly of fine-grained pyroclastic material, much of which has been reworked." Basile, 12.

17. Juan and Ulloa, 461, 469.

18. In the 1970s, both J. Stephen Athens and Thomas Myers conducted some preliminary archaeological work at Puntachil, although this was not very extensive or definitive. See Thomas P. Myers, *Salvage Excavations at Puntachil, Pichincha* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska State Museum, 1976). In 1995, the province of Pichincha once again began archaeological excavations at the site.

Whereas archaeologists generally believe that the Caranqui utilized Puntachil for administrative purposes, two other Cayambe sites may have served distinctive but complementary purposes. Twenty kilometers west of Puntachil also just north of the equator in the neighboring canton of Pedro Moncayo is a site known as Cochasquí. These two sites line up with the peak of the Cayambe volcano, which also lies just north of the equatorial line. Many archaeologists believe that the Cochasquí site served ceremonial purposes, and perhaps originally contained solar and lunar calendars. The pyramids at Cochasquí, like those at Puntachil, are constructed of bricks made from *cangahua* and have distinctive long ramps which point eastward toward the Cayambe volcano. In total, there are fifteen pyramids (nine of them with ramps) and about fifteen funeral mounds. The site dates to around 950 A.D. Treasure hunters have partially destroyed the pyramids, which has complicated archaeological exploration in the area.¹⁹

In addition to these administrative and ceremonial sites, a third site called Pambamarca which probably served military purposes lays to the south of Puntachil. This site is comprised of a series of at least seventeen hilltop fortresses called *pucarás* (from the Quichua word "fortress"), which the Caranqui constructed to defend their territory from the Inka invasion. The largest one, which may have served as a command center, is known as Quito Loma. Juan and Ulloa briefly described this site in the 1700s, but there have been virtually no archaeological excavations at Pambamarca. The German archaeologist Udo Oberem was one of the few people to study this site. Oberem claimed that Huayna Cápac constructed these fortresses "during the time of combat with the Caranquis in order to protect the Quito region from the rebels," and that "the Caranquis either captured and occupied them after Inca

19. Jacinto Jijón y Caamaño conducted research in the Cochasquí region from 1909-1916, and Max Uhle continued further research in 1932. An extensive discussion of the site is Udo Oberem, ed., *Cochasquí: estudios arqueológicos*, 3 vol., Colección Pendoneros, Serie Arqueología Nos. 3-5 (Otavalo, Ecuador: Instituto Otavaleño de Antropología, 1981).

Túpac Yupanqui withdrew, or built other structures imitating the Inca model."²⁰ Experts currently working in Cayambe dispute Oberem's claim of a non-Caranqui origin of the Pambamarca site. These fortresses have a distinctive spiral shape unlike any Inka construction, which lends credibility to the belief that they are pre-Inka structures. In fact, oral tradition in the area states that they were garrisons which the current inhabitants' ancestors had built to protect themselves from the Inkas who invaded from the south. Rumicucho, another archaeological site closer to Quito, more likely was an Inka fortress utilized in their battle against the Caranquis.

In the mid-1970s, the Instituto Otavaleño de Antropología sponsored an archaeological survey of thirty-seven such fortresses throughout the northern Ecuadorian Andes, including the ones at Pambamarca. Their study concluded that the native inhabitants of the area utilized these *pucarás* during the Inka conquest. According to their study, the fortresses at Pambamarca not only had a defensive character, but also an offensive one. Their presence testifies to the weakness of the Inka Empire, especially along the periphery of the areas they colonized. In addition, the fortresses demonstrate the strong local resistance which the Inkas encountered in northern Ecuador. It also indicates the presence of a cohesive identity, and incipient organizational structures to defend and preserve that identity.²¹

20. Udo Oberem, "La fortaleza de montaña de Quitoloma en la sierra septentrional del Ecuador," in *Contribución a la etnohistoria ecuatoriana*, ed. Udo Oberem and Segundo Moreno Y. (Quito: Banco Central del Ecuador, Instituto Otavaleño de Antropología, Ediciones Abya-Yala, 1995), 54, 55. This article presents the results of a 1965 study which was published in Berlin in 1968. Unfortunately, this reprint does not include the photographs or drawings of the site which were included with the original article. Also see Juan and Ulloa, 473.

21. Fernando Plaza Schuller, *La incursión inca en el septentrion andino ecuatoriano: antecedentes arqueológicos de la convulsiva situación de contacto cultural: primer informe preliminar*, Serie Arqueología; no. 2 (Otavalo, Ecuador: Instituto Otavaleño de Antropología, 1976); Fernando Plaza Schuller, *El complejo de fortalezas de Pambamarca: contribución al estudio de la arquitectura militar prehispánica en la Sierra Norte del Ecuador: proyecto, la incursión inca en el septentrion andino ecuatoriano: segundo informe preliminar*, Serie Arqueología; no.

Athens has disagreed that sites such as Puntachil or Cochasquí served religious or specialized purposes, or that the Caranqui culture can be divided into only three or four (Cayambe, Cochasquí, Otavalo, and Caranqui) social units or "chiefdoms." Rather, he has identified between eighteen and twenty-one sites with ramp mounds such as those found at Puntachil and Cochasquí, and argues that each one represented a chiefdom polity. He identified four types of mounds or *tolas* (a Quichua word which means "hill") at each site: small hemispherical mounds six meters wide and one to two meters high used for burials; larger hemispherical mounds thirty meters wide and five meters high used for houses; and two types of truncated quadrilateral mounds (with and without ramps) which could be over eight meters high, eighty meters square, and with 150 meter long ramps. The larger the mound, the more authority, prestige, and control over other people's labor the leader or "chief" exercised.²²

Athens believes that all of the ramp mound sites appear to have been of equal importance and were spaced at regular intervals throughout Caranqui territory. This would indicate contemporary instead of sequential occupation and possible competition between the chiefdom polities. In addition to the sites at Puntachil and Cochasquí, Athens identified another site about five kilometers northeast of Puntachil at Paquiestancia with forty-six mounds including five with ramps and another site south of Puntachil at the Guachalá hacienda with a ramp mound. Two more possible ramp mound sites exist at Perucho and Nanegal west of Cochasquí in the canton of Pedro Moncayo. North of Cayambe in the neighboring canton of Otavalo, sites are also found near the towns of González Suárez and Zuleta, as well as further north in the province of Imbabura. The Zuleta site is the largest of all the sites, and contains 148 mounds, thirteen of these with ramps.²³

3 (Otavalo, Ecuador: Instituto Otavaleño de Antropología, 1977).

22. Athens and Osborn, 5.

23. See Athens, *Proceso evolutivo*, 203 for a map of these sites, and pages 259-68 for brief descriptions of each site.

These archaeological sites represent a cosmology which continues to mark Indigenous culture in Cayambe. Indigenous intellectuals from Cayambe have conducted studies which demonstrate that their ancestors who constructed these sites were aware of their geographical positioning in relation to the other sites, the snow-capped Cayambe volcano, and the path of the sun.²⁴ Perhaps most importantly, the Caranquis celebrated the harvest at the June solstice when the sun was at its furthest point north in its yearly path across the sky. The critical importance of this harvest festival to Cayambe culture is evidenced through the fact that every June 29, Indigenous peoples from throughout the canton of Cayambe return to the pyramids of the sun and moon at Puntachil for a ritual celebration. It is perhaps in this celebration that the continued persistence of Caranqui culture together with its deep attachment to land and ritual patterns is most evident. Although not always overtly obvious to outsiders, it is this cultural strength which lent power to Indigenous organizing efforts in the twentieth century.

Athens describes Caranqui society as closed with little cultural diffusion to or from neighboring groups. There were abrupt boundaries with the Pasto to the north and the Panzaleo or Quito to the south; for the most part, the Caranqui maintained an autochthonous development. Although the Caranqui polities feuded with each other over limited resources, they maintained a closed and unified society in order to resist land pressures from outside groups. Athens notes that "an extremely large conquest state--the Inca--nearly met its match with the small and loosely organized Caranqui polities." Because "the small Caranqui polities were able to flexibly coalesce and disunite in direct proportion to the strength of the opposition," they were able to resist the Inca's vastly superior military strength for seventeen years. Athens concludes that "lesser challengers than the Inca would never have had a chance."²⁵ Thus it is that

24. Pablo Guaña, *Cosmovisión indígena* (Quito: Tupac Producciones Didácticas, 1993), Guaña, *Inti Raymi Cayambi*.

25. Athens, "Ethnicity and Adaptation," 212.

Cayambe has a long history of resistance to outside forces, one that possibly even predates the Inka invasion by a millennium.

Inka occupation

Despite the commonly perceived importance of the Inka culture to Andean societies, they represent only a brief (although crucial) interlude in Cayambe's history. The Inkas were late arrivals in Ecuador, but their occupation erased much of Ecuador's early history. The Inkas began their imperial expansion out of their capital of Cuzco only with the ninth Inka ruler, Pachacuti Inka (1438-1471). His son Tupac Inka (1471-1493) continued this expansion, but it was not until the rule of the eleventh Inka, Huayna Capac (1493-1527), that there was a serious attempt to conquer Ecuador. Huayna Capac placed much of his hope, identity, and imperial effort in Ecuador; he spent much of his time there and established a second capital at Tumibamba (near present-day Cuenca). In a brief fifty-year period, the Inkas, with their great "civilizing project" which imposed their superior religion, Quechua language, and customs on the "barbarians" which surrounded them, were able to destroy or modify more Indigenous cultures than the Spanish could over the course of the next five hundred years.

The Inka conquest of the Cayambe-Caranqui region came much later and slower than in the southern highlands. Ethno-historical sources report seventeen years of intense fighting before the Inkas finally defeated the Caranqui forces. Scholars disagree on the date when the Inkas finally emerged victorious in their campaign, although some believe it to be as late as 1515, less than twenty years before the Spanish entered the area. Although the Caranqui may never have represented a unified state, the Inka invasion forced them to unite their disparate forces. According to the historian Aquiles Pérez Tamayo, the battles between the Inkas and Caranquis began at Cochasquí, continued at the *pucarás* of Pambamarca, and concluded north of Ibarra.²⁶

26. Pérez, "La minúscula nación de Nasacota Puento."

When Huayna Capac finally defeated the Caranquis, he slaughtered thousands of warriors and threw their bodies into a lake north of present-day Ibarra. The lake hence became known as Yawar Cocha, a Quichua term which means "Lake of Blood."

The fighting between the Inkas and Caranquis ended with a marital alliance between the Inka leader Huayna Capac and a Caranqui woman named Quilago Túpac Palla. Atahualpa, the last Inka leader, was born out of this union. For this reason Atahualpa, although of Inka nobility, is considered a son of Ecuador and is occasionally used as a nationalistic symbol for the Indigenous movement. Upon the death of his father, probably from a disease spread in advance of the Spanish conquest, Atahualpa governed the northern part of the Inka Empire which was called Tahuantinsuyu (a Quechua term meaning "land of four quarters"). Reportedly he raised an army of 100,000 men from the Caranqui territory in order to march against his brother Huascar and once again unify the empire. It was after achieving this goal and during Atahualpa's march from the north to the Inka capital at Cuzco to take control of the empire that he encountered Francisco Pizarro and his small army of mercenaries at Cajamarca on November 16, 1532.

As part of the Inka plan to subjugate conquered peoples, they moved colonists (called *mitmaes*) who were loyal Inka subjects into Caranqui territory in order to civilize the unruly population and teach them the royal Quechua language, the official state religion, and to incorporate them into the Inka Empire. The Inkas also moved thousands of Caranquis into the heart of the Empire where they were to be assimilated and to learn to be loyal subjects. Many people from Cayambe were taken to Ancara in what is now Peru and were replaced with colonists from Collao. Widespread disruption of Ecuador's Indigenous peoples resulted from these population transfers. Segundo Moreno has described this great demographic movement as one of the first examples of large-scale *mestizaje* to occur in Ecuador.²⁷ According to a study of

27. Moreno, "La época aborigen," 151, 155.

surnames of Indian workers in the southern part of the canton of Cayambe in 1685, almost two-thirds of the Indigenous population may have been *mitmaes* and only one third of local Caranqui extraction.²⁸ Undoubtedly, these migrations had a dramatic impact on the ethnic and cultural landscape of Cayambe. Nevertheless, in non-Quichua place names and in communal historical memories, the idea remains among Ecuador's Indigenous peoples that they are not descendants of the Inkas.

Since the Inkas held this territory for such a short time before the arrival of the Spanish, many Inka institutions never became a permanent part of the Cayambe society. The Inkas introduced coca production, but the Spanish colonial government outlawed this practice.²⁹ The Inkas built forts, temples, and *tambo* way stations, but the Spanish dismantled these for use in their own constructions. The Caranqui language continued in use for hundreds of years after the Spanish conquest, but by the end of the colonial period Spanish priests finally succeeded in replacing it with Quichua which they used as a pan-Andean language for religious instruction of the Indians. Furthermore, many traditional "Andean" institutions such as the *ayllu* kinship units never took root in northern Ecuador. The unique cultural history of the region meant that protest would develop in a different manner than in Peru and Bolivia.

Spanish colonial period

Contrary to popular perceptions, the Spanish conquerors did not encounter passive and easily subdued populations in the Andes. Ecuador, as do most other countries in the Americas, has a long tradition of Indigenous revolts against European control. Traditional historiography, however, has focused on elite Inka actions in this

28. Ramón, *Resistencia andina*, 84. Ramón extends this discussion to the large *forastero* and vagabond population in Cayambe during the colonial period, and paints a picture of the hacienda as a space where a pan-ethnic Indian identity (though he does not use that term) first emerged in Ecuador. See Ramón, *Resistencia andina*, 223.

29. Plutarco Naranjo, "El cocaísmo entre los aborígenes de Sud América: Su difusión y extinción en el Ecuador," *América Indígena* 34:3 (July-September 1974): 605-28.

process. After Atahualpa's capture and execution at Cajamarca on November 16, 1532, Rumiñahui, the General of the Inka army in Quito, unified the remaining Inka forces in order to stop the Spanish advance. In July of 1534, Rumiñahui encircled Sebastián de Benalcázar's troops in the Ecuadorian Sierra and was at the point of crushing the Spanish army when the Tungurahua volcano erupted. The Inka troops interpreted this as a sign of the anger of the gods and withdrew to Quito. In Quito they continued their battle against the Spanish and finally burned the city when they saw that all was lost. The Spanish captured Rumiñahui and other Indigenous leaders and burned them alive in January of 1535 in what would later become the Plaza de la Independencia in Quito. Rumiñahui has hence come to embody the spirit of Inka resistance in Quito, and in the rhetoric of Ecuadorian nationalism is considered an early nationalist hero (for both the Indians and the whites) for his struggles against the Spanish. Further indication of his acceptance into the pantheon of Ecuadorian national heroes is his representation on the one thousand sucre bill.

Thoughtful reflection on Andean history, however, demonstrates that such a historiographic approach is, in its most fundamental sense, a continuation of the traditional Spanish-centric history rather than a refutation of it. Such a history is one of elites and a clash between two imperial powers, and ignores the actions and perceptions of the majority of the population. Inka resistance against the Spanish invasion, therefore, becomes not a popular movement against a foreign invasion or against human rights abuses, but an elite action in defense of an empire and to maintain the *status quo*. The inhabitants of what later became the Ecuadorian republic endured from 1450 to 1550 what could be termed a one-hundred year Age of Conquests. Inka expansionism and the Spanish conquest came as a very rapid one-two punch that displaced not only their cultures and traditions, but also deprived them of political independence. Much of this subsequent history has been a struggle to regain their freedom from elite domination and to establish a more egalitarian social order.

In this framework, local popular resistance to the Spanish invasion is more important than Inka resistance. Coastal groups such as the Atacames, Caráquez, and Punáes resisted repeated Spanish attempts to penetrate the South American mainland between 1524 and 1531. The Huancavilcas burned the port city of Guayaquil three times before the Spanish finally established control of the city.³⁰ Segundo E. Moreno Yáñez' studies clearly demonstrate a high level of resistance from many different sectors against the Spanish conquest and colonization. Moreno describes the histories of nineteen individual uprisings in Ecuador during the colonial period.³¹ The Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE) has compiled an impressive list of about 145 Indigenous uprisings over the past five hundred years.³² These sources recount a large number of actions against the Spanish confiscation of lands, tribute payments, labor drafts, censuses, and in general, the abuse, mistreatment, and exploitation of the Indigenous peoples at the hands of the Spanish. Often these acts of resistance were of an individual nature, such as committing suicide, but other actions, such as those taken by the many *forasteros* who fled to inhospitable regions in order to escape the Spanish abuses, required a more unified community response.³³ What emerges is not the traditional picture of Indians passively accepting Spanish rule, but increasing resistance (especially during the eighteenth century) with more than one

30. Centro de Estudios y Difusión Social (CEDIS), *De la Conquista a la Independencia*, No. 1, *Historia de las luchas populares* (Quito: CEDIS, 1985), 6.

31. See Moreno, *Sublevaciones indígenas en la Audiencia de Quito*, and Moreno, *Alzamientos indígenas*.

32. CONAIE, 258-303.

33. Ann M. Wightman, *Indigenous Migration and Social Change: The Forasteros of Cuzco, 1520-1720* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990); Karen Vieira Powers, *Andean Journeys: Migration, Ethnogenesis, and the State in Colonial Quito* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995). Also see the essays collected in Steve Stern, ed., *Resistance, Rebellion, and Consciousness in the Andean Peasant World, 18th to 20th Centuries* (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987).

hundred uprisings which resulted in the elimination of the labor drafts and eventually in political independence for Ecuador.

It is difficult to understand, given this context of resistance, why the Spanish were able to subjugate the Caranqui territory so rapidly. The Spanish *conquistador* Sebastián de Benalcázar entered Caranqui territory in July of 1534 after Francisco Pizarro had captured and killed Atahualpa in Cajamarca, Peru. He moved north through the territory, beginning with a massacre of women and children at Quinche, in search of Atahualpa's treasures. With this goal in mind, he destroyed a temple at Puntachil in order to abscond with the gold and silver. He then proceeded to subject the Indian population to Spanish domination. Why, then, after resisting the large Inka army for seventeen years was Benalcázar's small army able to overrun Cayambe so quickly and easily? A partial answer perhaps lies in the Inka's disruption of the Cayambe traditional social structure which had proved so effective in resisting incursions from outsiders. In their program of *mitmaes*, the Inkas had removed large numbers of people from Caranqui territory. In particular, they removed leaders and others who were capable of rallying the population against outside invaders (such as the Inkas and later the Spanish). In addition, the Inkas replaced the Caranqui's decentralized social structure with that of a centralized empire. Because of this, Cayambe society was no longer capable of responding quickly to outside pressures. In their attempt to squash any possibility of future resistance to their imperial domination, the Inkas destroyed the one chance the Caranquis (and, perhaps by extension, the Inka Empire itself) had to resist the Spanish invasion.

Spanish abuses led to a series of revolts in the area around Cayambe. For example, in 1791 Indians from Cayambe rebelled against a public works *mita* labor draft through which the colonial government wished to build a road by the Lita River.³⁴ One of the largest and most significant revolts occurred in 1777. The

34. Bonifaz, "Origen y evolución de una hacienda histórica," 120; Osvaldo Albornoz Peralta, *Las luchas indígenas en el Ecuador* (Guayaquil: Editorial Claridad

Catholic Church had ordered a census in the Audiencia of Quito, and the Indians feared, based on previous experience, that the census would result in increased tribute payments. The revolt began in Cotacachi on November 9 before spreading to Otavalo, San Pablo de Laguna, and Atuntaqui during the next several days and south to the valley of Cayambe on November 14 and 15. A group of Indians attacked several haciendas (including the Jesuit hacienda La Compañía and the Dominican hacienda Santo Domingo) and burned the *obraje* textile workshops, houses, the owners' belongings, and records from the *obrajes*. The rebels entered the town of Cayambe and marched around the central plaza while the elites took refuge in the church. The Indians attacked the church and killed three white men before troops from Quito arrived. The troops killed an unknown number of Indians and imprisoned others in the *obraje* of the hacienda Miraflores south of the town of Cayambe. On December 18, the president of the Audiencia of Quito Joseph Diguja traveled to Cayambe to pass judgement on the imprisoned leaders of the uprising. Although he could have executed the leaders, the sentences which he imposed included cutting the leaders' hair, one-hundred lashes with a whip, and forced labor in *obrajes*.³⁵

Unified Indian opposition to Spanish exploitation, however, should not be assumed. In fact, numerous pre-Spanish elites managed to maintain themselves in privileged positions through alliances with Spanish interests. Quimbia Puento, *cacique* of the Cayambes at the time of the Spanish conquest and a person who had also led the fight against the Inkas, quickly allied himself with the Spanish. In 1578, his son Gerónimo Puento organized an army of two-hundred Cayambe Indians and joined forces with Don Francisco Atahualpa (the son of the last Inka leader) to help put down a Quijo uprising in the eastern jungle. In this uprising, the great leader Jumandi had

S.A., 1971), 38-39.

35. Efendy Maldonado, 91-98; Albornoz, *Luchas indígenas*, 31-34; Moreno, *Subelevaciones indígenas*, 152-202 (see especially 189-202 on Cayambe). Resistance to the taking of censuses based on the fear that it would lead to increased taxes lasted until the twentieth century. See Buitron, 13.

attacked and destroyed the Spanish towns of Avila and Archidona. In this case, as in others, elite Indian leaders allied themselves with two enemies of the people: the Inkas and the Spanish. Gerónimo's son Fabián followed a similar strategy in order to increase his political power.³⁶ These *caciques* did not utilize their privileged position in society for the benefit of the common Indians. Rather, they mediated a bridge between the Indian and Spanish worlds which may have helped the Spanish exploit the Indians and resulted in the enrichment of a few people to the detriment of the masses.³⁷ They utilized marriage and other devices to solidify their power base and deepen an economic and social stratification of society. Indigenous power and social structures did persist well into the colonial period and perhaps even beyond, but it was not an egalitarian model upon which one could build a more equal and just social order. Rather, it became part of those societal structures which the masses sought to overthrow.

North of Cayambe across the provincial border of Imbabura is the Canton of Otavalo. The *encomendero* Rodrigo de Salazar, reputed to be one of the richest people in Ecuador, set up a large *obraje* (textile factory) in Otavalo in 1550. He died without leaving a will, and at the end of the sixteenth century the Otavalo *obraje* passed into the hands of the crown. The *obraje* in Otavalo, as well as a second one the crown established in neighboring Peguche in 1613, were financially lucrative. They formed the basis of a large-scale textile export industry which provided woven goods to royal mines in Peru and Bolivia.³⁸ Seventeenth-century Spanish tribute laws

36. Ramón, *Resistencia andina*, 218.

37. Karen Spalding examines similar cooptation of Indigenous interests in Peru in her book *Huarochirí: An Andean Society Under Inca and Spanish Rule* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1984).

38. Robson Brines Tyrer, *Historia demográfica y económica de la Audiencia de Quito: población indígena e industria textil, 1600-1800*, Biblioteca de historia económica; 1 (Quito: Banco Central del Ecuador, 1988), 100. For a study of the Peguche *obraje*, see Rocío Rueda Novoa, *El Obraje de San Joseph de Peguchi* (Quito, Ecuador: Ediciones ABYA-YALA/TEHIS, 1988).

required the payment of tribute from Indians around Otavalo in woven goods in addition to money and livestock. Working conditions in these *obrajes* were miserable at best.

Although *obrajes* were a major industry around Otavalo, until the eighteenth century there were few textile factories (and no large ones) in Cayambe. This is not to say, however, that Cayambe was removed from the textile industry. *Obrajes* were never as plentiful or economically significant in Cayambe as they were in neighboring Otavalo. Rather, Cayambe was a major wool producing region which supplied the *obrajes* in Otavalo and elsewhere with their necessary raw materials. The scale of this production in the late colonial period indicates the dependent role which Cayambe played in the regional economy. In the mid-eighteenth century, this industry was so prosperous that there were more sheep grazing in Cayambe than at any other instance in history. Furthermore, in relation to a worker's wage, a sheep was worth more money than at any other time up until the present (see Table 11 on page 139). In addition to wool, Cayambe also provided an important source of meat, barley, potatoes, corn, and wheat produced for regional consumption including the feeding of workers in Otavalo.³⁹ All of this production was focused outward instead of strengthening the local economy and providing for local needs.

The size of the aboriginal population of Cayambe during the colonial period is difficult to determine. Geographer Gregory Knapp has placed the pre-Inka population of the Caranqui territory between 75,000 and 170,000 inhabitants.⁴⁰ If certain Spanish chroniclers and some historians are to be believed, thirty thousand Caranquis were killed in battle with the Inkas, and the Inkas subsequently raised an army of 100,000 people from the remaining population. These figures would place the population of the northern Ecuadorian Andes somewhat higher than the current population of the

39. Ramón, *Resistencia andina*, 182-199.

40. Gregory Knapp, *Andean Ecology: Adaptive Dynamics in Ecuador* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), 179-181.

area. A Spanish report from 1582 states that "in other times" (i.e., before the conquest) there was a much larger population of Indians in what is now northern Ecuador. This population estimate was based on the "carrying capacity" or large amount of land which had been worked. According to this report, the Inka and Spanish conquests and the disease which followed caused this drastic population decline during the sixteenth century.⁴¹ Spanish census figures indicate that the population (including women and children) of Cayambe (as opposed to the entire Caranqui territory) gradually rose from 2,108 people in 1582 to 4,657 in 1720. These figures are lower than those of neighboring Otavalo, and historian Galo Ramón presented as possible explanations for the depopulation in Cayambe the war with the Inkas, *mitmaes* who were removed from the area, *forasteros* who fled (often to Oyacachi toward the eastern jungle) to escape the Inkas, and later Spanish exploitation, and disease.⁴²

Perhaps more significantly, however, Ramón's study establishes the almost exclusively Indigenous composition of Cayambe's population during the colonial period. A 1696 census listed thirty-four Spanish landholders and four religious administrators with lands in Cayambe, but the majority of these Spaniards maintained their primary residences in Quito. At the end of the colonial period, these statistics were beginning to change. A 1779 census listed eight religious workers, 695 whites, 6,848 Indians, and 1,282 free people of various colors, for a total of 8,833 people. A 1785 census also listed eleven slaves engaged in domestic labor. The overwhelming majority of Cayambe's population, however, has always been Indian. This characteristic also emerges in other accounts. For example, in their eighteenth-century account

41. Sancho Paz Ponce de León, "Relación y descripción de los pueblos del Partido de Otavalo," in *Relaciones histórico-geográficas de la Audiencia de Quito: s. XVI-XIX*, ed. Pilar Ponce Leiva (Quito: Marka, Ediciones Abya-Yala, 1992), 362.

42. Ramón, *Resistencia andina*, 98-113. It must be kept in mind, however, that during this time there was also in-migration, first from *mitmaes* who the Inkas had brought from the southern part of the empire and later from *forasteros* who came to Cayambe fleeing other areas.

Jorge Juan and Antonio de Ulloa describe Otavalo as "large and populous" with perhaps eighteen to twenty thousand inhabitants including "a considerable number of Spaniards," but in the surrounding area (including the village of Cayambe) the population was almost universally Indian.⁴³

Nineteenth-century political economy

Ecuador gained political independence from Spain on May 24, 1822, after the successful Battle of Pichincha. For eight years Ecuador was part of the Confederation of Gran Colombia, along with Colombia and Venezuela, before becoming an independent country in 1830. Although Indigenous peoples comprised a significant part of the independence army, the movement for independence was largely an affair of elite creoles, and a white minority ruled the resulting independent republic. Graffiti which appeared on walls in Quito stated that independence was the "last day of despotism and the first day of the same."⁴⁴ Despite the large role which Indigenous peoples played in the struggle for independence for Ecuador, their efforts resulted in little change in their economic, social, and political life. In fact, with the removal of the Spanish crown which tempered the expansionistic intents of the creole elite, the position of the Indigenous peoples declined in the nineteenth century. It was not until the end of that century that governments moved toward legislative reform to protect or benefit Indigenous peoples and other marginalized elements of the population. Racial discrimination (including slavery) continued, a small elite maintained control over the country, and women continued to be excluded from political life. Cultural diversity was not recognized, and Indigenous rights to education, land, and culture were repressed. Political leaders forwarded the idea that Ecuador was a unitary state built upon a European culture. Consequently, Indigenous uprisings continued even after independence from Spain.

43. Juan and Ulloa, 301.

44. CEDEP, *Una historia de rebeldía*, 9.

Life for the Indigenous inhabitants of Ecuador was not easy. During the colonial period, they were required to pay tribute to the Spanish crown. For those in Cayambe, tribute payments were often made in the form of cotton textiles (such as ponchos or shirts), agricultural crops (potatoes, corn, etc.), and animals (birds, pigs, etc.). Later as more Indians became workers on haciendas, tribute payments were more commonly in cash, which further added to Indian workers' indebtedness.⁴⁵ In 1825 after the former Audiencia of Quito was incorporated into Gran Colombia, the new republican government abolished tribute payments. Tribute payments, however, represented a significant financial contribution to the State, and three years later Simón Bolívar reestablished the tribute (called "Personal Contribution of Indigenous peoples") to help cover military costs. Indians between eighteen and fifty years old were required to pay three pesos and four reales a year. In 1857 the Ecuadorian government finally abolished the tribute payments which they said "not only violate constitutional concepts but are also barbaric and anti-economical and weigh exclusively on only one class and furthermore the most unhappy one of society."⁴⁶ With this legislation, the government eliminated some of the more abusive aspects of the lingering *encomienda* system, but exploitation of highland Indians continued under the *huasipungo* system until the 1960s.

In the nineteenth century, Indians had few friends in positions of power, but occasionally liberal leaders would champion their causes. The name most associated with the Ecuadorian brand of liberalism is General Eloy Alfaro. Like most liberal leaders in Ecuador, Alfaro was from the coast. He led numerous failed revolts against the conservative government of Gabriel García Moreno before finally realizing victory in 1895. Alfaro was known as the "General of the defeated ones," and a history of the

45. Ramón, *Resistencia andina*, 126, 199.

46. "Supresión del tributo indígena (1857)," in *Nueva Historia del Ecuador*, vol. 15, *Documentos de la historia del Ecuador*, ed. Enrique Ayala Mora (Quito: Corporación Editora Nacional, 1995), 161. Also see "Establecimiento de la contribución personal de indígenas (1828)," *Ibid.*, 112-19.

presidents of Ecuador described him as "always defeated but never definitively conquered."⁴⁷ Conservative abuses led to the rallying of popular forces, including Indigenous peoples, peasants, and workers, under the umbrella of a radical liberal movement. The result was that in 1895 Alfaro and his liberal army led an insurrection which took control of the country and began a thirty-year period of liberal domination in Ecuadorian politics.⁴⁸

Most scholars point to economic changes during the second half of the nineteenth century as leading to the 1895 Liberal Revolution. A growth in the export market (particularly in cacao, coffee, ivory nuts, hides, and wood) increased revenue available to both the national government and the coastal elites who benefitted economically from a strong agricultural export economy. Hernán Ibarra identifies this period as the beginning of capitalist penetration into the Ecuadorian economy.⁴⁹ This boom in the export economy led to a migration of workers from the highlands to the coast to work on these plantations, and the population on the coast soon exceeded that of the highlands. A significant increase in power for the coastal elites resulted from this economic and demographic shift. Nevertheless, conservative highland elites continued to hold power and, as Richard Milk noted, the "coastal elites were in effect subsidizing a government run by their national political rivals."⁵⁰ This situation led to a successful military coup in 1895 which ended decades of conservative political hegemony in Ecuador. It also set the stage for the emergence of Indigenous organizing efforts.

47. "Siempre derrotado pero jamás definitivamente vencido," Simón Espinosa, *Presidentes del Ecuador* (Quito: Vistazo, 1995), 86.

48. The most definitive treatment of the 1895 Liberal Revolution is Enrique Ayala Mora, *Historia de la Revolución Liberal Ecuatoriana*, Colección Temas, Volumen 5 (Quito: Corporación Editora Nacional, 1994).

49. Hernán Ibarra C., *Indios y cholos: Orígenes de la clase trabajadora ecuatoriana*, Colección 4 Suyus (Quito: Editorial El Conejo, 1992), 1.

50. Richard Lee Milk, "Growth and Development of Ecuador's Worker Organizations, 1895-1944" (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 1977), 10.

Alfaro was an internationalist who believed in Simón Bolívar's vision of a united Latin American. He had fled to Panama in 1865 after García Moreno defeated him in one of his many uprisings. Alfaro fought for Cuban independence from Spain and returned from Nicaragua in 1895 to lead the liberal revolt.⁵¹ He promulgated a new constitution in Ecuador which guaranteed separation of church and state and freedom of religion, provided for the secularization of education, instituted civil marriage and divorce, outlawed racial and social discrimination, and created a professional army.⁵² He launched an economic development project which sought to modernize the country. One of his major achievements was the completion of the Guayaquil-to-Quito railroad as well as the construction of roads and ports. He also sought out foreign investment which would benefit the export-oriented economy of the coast, and it was during his time in office that Ecuador capitalized on a cacao boom.

The 1895 Liberal Revolution ushered in a period of classical nineteenth-century liberal ideology in Ecuador which championed freedom of work, commerce, conscience, and education. It brought a period of modernization which led to a further expansion of the export economy. Its anti-clericalism reduced the power of the church and increased secularization of society, including the imposition of civil control over schooling and marriage and birth records. Most importantly, social reforms allowed a flourishing of labor and peasant organizing efforts. The 1895 Liberal Revolution triggered the beginnings of organized peasant and Indigenous protest in Ecuador. According to a history of popular struggles in Ecuador, the Liberal Revolution “was the only movement which identified with the suffering of the people and their aspira-

51. On Alfaro's internationalism, see Emeterio S. Santovenia, *Eloy Alfaro y Cuba* (La Habana: El Siglo XX, 1929).

52. Centro de Estudios y Difusión Social (CEDIS), *De la revolución liberal a la masacre de 1922*, No. 3, *Historia de las luchas populares* (Quito: CEDIS, 1985), 4.

tions for liberty.”⁵³ Thus, the Liberal Revolution had a strong influence on the ideology of rural and popular movements which flourished in the twentieth century.

Ideologically, the Liberal Revolution did represent a wish to better the lives of Indians, peasants, Africans, and the poor, dispossessed people in general. It stood for legal equality of all people and sought to do away with privilege. In spite of the rhetoric which sparked lower-class expectations and led to the emergence of rural organizing efforts, the Liberal Revolution was an elite movement with the ultimate goal of benefitting the export sector of the economy. Much less important were the ideals of fundamental or structural changes for the poor and disenfranchised sectors of the population. Despite the rhetoric to protect the "Indigenous race," Liberal policies were few and lacked the initiative to force profound changes in society. The Liberals did not abolish debt peonage and missed a good opportunity to reform Ecuador's land tenure system and give rural agricultural workers control over the land which they worked. For liberal elites on the coast, attacking the highland land tenure system merely became a way to undermine conservative elites from that region of the country. Fundamentally, this "revolution" must be seen in the context of the history of regionalism in Ecuador. As with the act of political independence from Spain, the Liberal Revolution did not effect significant changes for Ecuador's Indigenous population.

The Liberal Revolution can be divided into two stages. Alfaro and his ideologies of radical liberalism dominated the first period from 1895 to 1912. This ended when government forces imprisoned Alfaro. An angry mob subsequently dragged him from his cell and murdered him in the middle of Quito. After his death, a series of bourgeois liberal presidents controlled Ecuadorian state power until a military coup in 1925 ended this period of liberal hegemony over society. It was during Alfaro's reign that for the first time social reform laws became an important topic of political debate in Ecuador. One of the most significant pieces of legislation was the *Ley de*

53. Centro de Estudios y Difusión Social (CEDIS), *De inicios de la República a la revolución liberal*, No. 2, *Historia de las luchas populares* (Quito: CEDIS, 1985), 26.

Beneficencia (Welfare Law), better known as the law of *manos muertas* (dead hands). This law, which the government promulgated on November 6, 1908, passed control of religious property to the hands of the state. The government used the profits from these lands to pay the salaries of priests and other religious workers as well as for hospitals and other social projects. With the *manos muertas* law, the government confiscated church-owned haciendas but continued to run them in the same abusive and feudalistic manner rather than taking advantage of the situation to benefit the poorer classes of society. As a bourgeois movement, the Liberal Revolution was limited and partial because it did not create structural changes in society, nor did it change land tenure patterns or redistribute land to the peasants.⁵⁴ Indians who supported Alfaro felt betrayed by this lack of commitment to profound structural reforms. This set the stage for the emergence of peasant syndicates in Cayambe in the 1920s and 1930s.

In addition to the secularization of society, the proponents of a liberal state also favored free, secular, and mandatory primary education. Previously, especially in rural areas like Cayambe, what little education there was usually was limited to religious instruction. Hacienda owners rightfully feared that a better educated workforce would more readily rebel. Not only did this educational reform weaken the power of the church, but it also was designed to redefine the ideological orientation of society. Although Alfaro's 1907 *Ley Organica de Instrucción Pública* (Organic Law of Public Education) affected all elements of the Ecuadorian population, it was clearly designed to help integrate the Indigenous population into a unified national state. Within a liberal, secular state, everyone was to be equal as Ecuadorians. Thus, educational reform played into the goal of strengthening and centralizing state power.

Closely related to the issue of education was the goal of substituting Spanish for the Indigenous Quichua language. Learning the Spanish language would integrate

54. *Ibid.*, 30.

Indians into modern Ecuadorian state structures. Elites opposed such a policy for the same reason they opposed universal education. Proficiency in Spanish meant that a worker could be more mobile and able to organize fellow workers. Furthermore, a literate population would be harder to exploit, because the workers could then verify the records which were kept on their indebtedness. Education and language skills were so important that in the 1940s and 1950s peasants in Cayambe established bilingual education schools in order to give themselves the expertise necessary to confront the outside world. The emphasis on bilingual education is significant. It indicates the perception on the part of Indigenous peoples that it was necessary to incorporate new skills into their communities rather than embracing the assimilationist education policies of the dominant culture which would result in the erosion of ethnic identity.

Ecuadorian *indigenistas* (educated elite outsiders who worked on behalf of the Indigenous population) also favored a policy of assimilating the Indigenous population into the Ecuadorian state. Pío Jaramillo Alvarado was the most significant figure in this debate, often referred to as "The Indian Problem." Jaramillo wrote *El indio ecuatoriano* in 1922, and it remains the fundamental and defining work of the Ecuadorian *indigenista* movement. Jaramillo glorified the Indigenous past and passionately defended Indigenous rights in the face of economic, political, and social exploitation. He worked tirelessly to condemn such injustice and oppression. But Jaramillo retained elements of the paternalistic outsider which saw Indians as a "problem." He believed that Ecuador's large rural Indian population was the country's largest problem. The exploitation which Indians faced prevented them from realizing their full economic potential. The solution to this situation, according to Jaramillo, was not a defense and preservation of traditional cultures, values, and economic systems, but rather the introduction and assimilation of Indians into "modern" European-oriented culture. He did not believe that the Indians themselves were capable of making these needed

changes, but rather that it was the responsibility of the dominant white population and the national government to institute them.⁵⁵

This was the cultural, political, and ideological framework out of which Indigenous organizations emerged in the twentieth century. An ethnic identity and cosmology which pre-dates the Inkas and centuries of resistance to elite domination defined the nature of the movement. Legislative and economic changes during the nineteenth century helped delineate specific issues which organizations would press with the government. It is also important to consider the economic context of land tenure patterns and labor relations which also strongly influenced these organizational patterns, an issue to which we will now turn.

55. Pío Jaramillo Alvarado, *El indio ecuatoriano: Contribución al estudio de la sociología indoamericana*, 2 volumes, 6th ed (Quito: Corporación Editora Nacional, 1983). For an examination of a similar situation in Mexico where *indigenista* elites sought to solve "The Indian Problem" by terminating Indigenous ethnic identity, see Alan Knight, "Racism, Revolution, and Indigenismo: Mexico, 1910-1940," in *The Idea of Race in Latin America, 1870-1940*, ed. Richard Graham (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990), 71-113.

Chapter Four

Land Tenure Patterns and Rural Economies in Cayambe

In his classic work on Latin American Marxism *Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality*, José Carlos Mariátegui concludes his discussion of "The Indian Problem" with the observation that the problem of the Indian was rooted in the land tenure system. "The problem of land is obviously too bound up with the Indian problem," Mariátegui continued in a subsequent essay on land, "to be conveniently mitigated or diminished."¹ Without this economic analysis, the struggles which Indigenous peoples faced would never be understood.

Such an economic grounding of a discussion of Indigenous organizational efforts does not conflict with an ethnic analysis, but rather provides it with a necessary complementary component. Without a historical grounding in land tenure and service tenancy relations, the organizational demands of Indigenous movements make no sense. This chapter presents a historical overview of land tenure and labor relations in Ecuador from the Spanish conquest through agrarian reform in the second half of the twentieth century. It analyzes the *encomienda*, debt peonage, and service tenancy relations on haciendas. This economic context strongly influenced the nature and development of Indigenous ethnicity in Cayambe and throughout Ecuador. Furthermore, this history of land tenure and changes in rural economies forms an important basis for understanding and interpreting protest actions. This chapter explains those economic roots in order to elucidate the nature of rural protest in Cayambe. The

1. Mariátegui, "The Problem of the Indian," 28, and "The Problem of Land," 32, both in *Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality*.

following chapter will examine in detail how these trends developed on two different haciendas in two distinct areas of Cayambe.

On the coast, Ecuadorian agricultural production was traditionally oriented toward an export market whereas in the highlands it served a domestic market. In the highlands, large haciendas² (large landed estates dedicated to a variety of agricultural products usually for local or national consumption, also called *latifundios*) functioned side by side with *minifundios* (small land holdings) which Indian peasants operated. *Latifundistas* (the people who owned the land) were notorious for neglecting fertile land on their large estates. On the other hand, neighboring *minifundios* used limited land resources intensively and continuously, often to their eventual degradation. Neither system provided an efficient or sustainable mode of production.

The social relations on these estates are known as "land tenure," which can be defined as

the legal and traditional relations between persons, groups, and classes that regulate the rights to the use of land, transfer thereof, and enjoyment of its products, and the duties that go with those rights. In brief, land tenure can be considered as a reflection of the power relations between persons and groups in the use of land.³

An understanding of the nature and development of land tenure systems in Ecuador is critical to a proper understanding of power relations and therefore of protest and rural organizing strategies.

Traditionally, Cayambe was a rural area dedicated primarily to agricultural crop production including barley (mostly sold to the Pilsener beer brewery in Quito), wheat (for flour mills in Cayambe), potatoes (sold in markets in Quito), and onions

2. In Ecuador, the word "hacienda" can have multiple meanings. It is sometimes used to refer to the economic enterprise of the land's owner or renter, to the administrative center which included the main house where the landholder lived, or to the entire land and resources of the enterprise. In this work, the term is generally used in the broadest sense to mean the extensive land holdings of the estate as well as the associated administrative apparatus.

3. Barraclough, xvii.

(which were sent to Ibarra). Since the colonial period, haciendas in Cayambe have had small dairy herds but it was not until 1919 that *hacendados* first imported high-producing Holstein-Frisian dairy cattle to the region. Over the course of the twentieth century, agricultural production has shifted from crops and vegetables to milk production. By the late 1940s, dairy cattle in the region were producing ten thousand liters of milk a day. Much of this was sold in the form of butter and cheese to markets in Quito and Guayaquil.⁴ Haciendas such as La Remonta (which belonged to the military) began to dedicate themselves primarily or exclusively to milk production. In the process, much of the best agricultural land at the lower altitudes was converted to pasture land for dairy cattle. This, along with a lack of good seed as well as erosion, led to a drop in wheat production from 130,000 *quintales* (one hundred pounds or forty five kilograms) in 1938 to 25,000 in 1953. In 1936, the La Unión mill was built with the intent of grinding 100,000 *quintales* of wheat into flour each year.⁵ With the shift to dairy farming, wheat production declined, and by the 1990s there were no mills operating in the canton.

As was true in the rest of Latin America, Ecuador suffered a marked imbalance in land ownership. Already in the seventeenth century, land in Cayambe was concentrated in the hands of a small elite. This process of the increasing concentration of land, wealth, and resources in the hands of a few continued unabated through the twentieth century. In 1947, Aníbal Buitron described the majority of land in Cayambe as belonging to large haciendas which were dedicated primarily to cattle production. The Indian people lived in "small and miserable" settlements around the expansive

4. David G. Basile and Humberto Paredes, *Algunos factores económicos y geográficos que afectan a la población rural del noreste de la provincia de Pichincha, Ecuador*, Publicación No. 6 (Quito: Instituto de Investigaciones Económicas de la Facultad de Ciencias Económicas de la Universidad Central, 1953), 5. On the question of milk production, also see Osvaldo Barsky and Gustavo Cosse, *Tecnología y cambio social: Las haciendas lecheras del Ecuador* (Quito: FLACSO, 1981).

5. Basile and Paredes, 3.

pasture lands of the hacienda.⁶ Beginning in the 1950s, largely due to pressure from the workers, these large estates began to be divided up into individually owned subsistence plots.

In the 1980s, large greenhouses growing flowers for foreign export began to flourish around the city of Cayambe. This economy took advantage of cheap, unskilled (primarily female) labor, the availability of water for irrigation, and the close proximity of Quito's international airport which permitted rapid exportation. By the mid-1990s, the rapidly expanding flower industry represented Ecuador's third or fourth largest export, and it largely supplanted agricultural production in Cayambe.⁷ This rich agricultural area now imports most of its flour as well as other food stuffs.

Encomiendas and haciendas

The roots of land tenure in Ecuador date to the beginning of Spanish colonization of the Americas. By 1535, a year after the Spanish conquest, the Spanish crown began distributing *encomiendas* (grants of Indian labor and tribute) to Spanish settlers in northern Ecuador. The Spanish crown awarded these *encomiendas* to *conquistadores* as a reward for their efforts in the "conquest" of the Americas. In 1552, the crown awarded the Guayllabamba-Cayambe area to Pedro Martín de Quesada as an *encomienda*. In 1573, this *encomienda* passed into the hands of his son Alonso Martín de Quesada.⁸

Queen Isabella established the *encomienda* system in 1503 which granted the right to Indian labor and tribute to the owners (*encomenderos*). The *encomienda* was to be a reciprocal relationship; the Indians were to work several days a week for the

6. Buitron, 19.

7. For a critical assessment of the environmental, social, and economic impact of flower production on the Cayambe valley, see Cheryl Musch, "Flowers: The Fragrant Aroma of Pesticides," *Q.* (Quito) 14 (December 14, 1995): 4.

8. Ramón, 27, 93. Chapter three ("Encomienda") in Charles Gibson, *Spain in America* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1966), 48-67, presents a good historical introduction to the role of the *encomienda* in colonial society.

encomenderos, and in exchange the *encomenderos* were to protect the Indians and attend to their education and religious conversion to Catholicism. In addition, the *encomenderos* were to provide military troops to defend the crown's interests. Strictly speaking, this was not a land grant (the crown retained title), but in essence the one who controlled the people in Indigenous villages also controlled the land on which they lived. Europeans and their descendants quickly realized that the true wealth in the Americas was not in the land but in the human labor.

This system, designed to assimilate Indians into Spanish civilization, quickly became a disguised form of slavery. Despite protests from critics such as Bartolomé de Las Casas, the *encomienda* was well-entrenched in the emerging colonial society by the time the Spanish entered Ecuador. *Encomiendas* were to be phased out, usually after two generations, but they formed the basis for land tenure systems in Ecuador until the passage of agrarian reform legislation in 1964. Well into the twentieth century, land without Indians was worth little. Royal attempts to eliminate this system led to Spanish settlers revolting against the Crown, most notably in 1544 against the imposition of the New Laws of the Indies. In 1550, the crown formally replaced the *encomienda* with the *repartimiento*. In the Andes, this system came to be known as the *mita*, named after the Inka labor draft called the *mit'a*. For the Indians, however, the effects of this oppressive system were the same.

By the seventeenth century, large, privately owned estates began to replace the *encomienda* and *mita* labor systems. The largest haciendas such as Pesillo and Guachalá in Cayambe were originally the size of *parroquias*, and until they began to break up in the twentieth century, essentially served the same administrative and political functions. This land tenure system led to an even more abusive system of labor in which Indians became permanently attached to and dependent on a creole landholder through a system of service tenancy more generically known as debt peonage. Indians were forced to work on large haciendas in systems of coerced labor called *concertaje* which was a contractual agreement between an Indian and a large

landholder. The Indian (a *concierto*, sometimes called a *peón concierto* and later known in Ecuador as a *huasipunguero*) worked for the landholder (the *hacendado*) in exchange for a salary and a small parcel of land to grow food for his family. The Indians also received rights to water on the hacienda, firewood, and pasture for their animals. This arrangement, however, was often converted into a system of debt peonage with the debt being passed down through generations. When a landlord sold an hacienda, the indebted Indians were included as part of the value of the property; they were listed together with cattle and other items of value in the estate. The Spanish crown attempted to outlaw such practices without much success. In 1852 the Ecuadorian republic eliminated slavery, but, as Carlos Marchán Romero has noted, "*concertaje* represented in reality the prolongation and permanence of that institution."⁹

In *Noticias secretas de America*, Jorge Juan and Antonio de Ulloa reported to the Spanish throne the nature of these labor relations in Ecuador during the eighteenth century. They recounted how an Indian laborer would earn fourteen to eighteen pesos a year on an hacienda in addition to having access to a small plot of land about twenty square meters in size. The Indian was to work three hundred days a year, leaving him only sixty-five days of rest on Sundays, holidays, and sick days. From the salary, the landlord deducted eight pesos for the royal tribute, two pesos and two reales for clothing, and nine pesos for corn which he gave the worker during the course of the year. As a result, the worker would end the year between one peso, two reales and five pesos, two reales in debt to the hacienda. If the worker encountered other expenses such as a death in the family, he could end the year even further in debt to the landlord. As a result, the Indian workers sunk deep in debt with no possibility of

9. Carlos Marchán Romero, "Estudio introductorio," in *Pensamiento agrario ecuatoriano*, ed. Carlos Marchán Romero (Quito: Banco Central del Ecuador, 1986), 41. The most comprehensive work to date on *concertaje* is Andrés Guerrero, *La semántica de la dominación: el concertaje de indios* (Quito: Ediciones Libri Mundi, 1991).

escape from this slavery. This debt was passed on to their children who likewise would have no opportunity to avoid it.¹⁰

Power relations on haciendas broke down almost entirely along class and ethnic lines into a three-tier system of white owners, *mestizo* employees, and Indian workers. *Hacendados* (usually part of the white creole elite) maintained their primary residence in Quito and only occasionally visited their haciendas. Indian workers often referred to the hacienda owner or renter as *amo* or *patrón*, terms which meant master, boss, or lord. These are terms of deference which indicate a great deal of social distance between the two groups.

In their absence, the landholders delegated responsibility for running the hacienda to a group of well-paid employees. The highest official was an administrator who was often a relative of the landlord, sometimes even a brother. This was often a lucrative position, and the administrator could be paid several times more than other employees on the hacienda. Below the administrator was an *escribiente* (scribe) who was responsible for keeping accounts including buying, selling, and paying salaries to the workers. The administrator also had *mayordomos* (managers, foremen, or stewards) who, along with *ayudantes* or helpers, supervised the day-to-day agricultural work on the hacienda. The *mayordomos* (and occasionally the administrator and scribe) were usually *cholos*, a pejorative term which has largely fallen out of use in Ecuador but previously indicated people who were in a process of cultural transition from an Indigenous to a *mestizo* world but did not belong to either group. The *mayordomos*, who often came from Cayambe or another town in the area, might contract the services of an overseer (*mayoral*) from among the Indigenous workers in order to assist in supervising the agricultural work.

10. Jorge Juan and Antonio de Ulloa, *Noticias secretas de América*, 2 vol., Biblioteca Banco Popular ; v. 113-114 (Bogota, Colombia: Banco Popular, 1983), t. 2, 268-70.

Hacendados often effectively used this middle group of employees to exploit their workers who, in Cayambe, were almost exclusively Indigenous. Relations between the employees and workers tended to be conflictive, largely because of the *cholos'* role in implementing the landlords' wishes as well as their desire to raise their class standing which they believed could be achieved through a rigorous implementation of their employers' desires. At the same time, occasionally these *cholo mayordomos* found it in their best economic interest to encourage the landlord to give time off, food and beverages for festivals, or bonuses from a good harvest because they would also benefit from such largess.

The Indigenous workforce remained at the bottom of the social ladder on haciendas in Cayambe. A variety of terms were used to refer to this group of people. *Indio* (Indian) was normally a pejorative term with connotations of ignorance, filthiness, laziness, and backwardness people. Over time Indians began to reclaim this term as one of ethnic pride. *Indígena* (Indigenous) was a more neutral term, and sometimes people would use *runa*, the Quichua word for "people." Indians in Cayambe, however, often utilized social or economic terms such as *campesino* (peasant) or *trabajador agrícola* (agricultural worker).

Landowners were not always private individuals; religious orders became some of the largest hacienda owners. They acquired land through a variety of mechanisms, including donations and outright purchases. The religious orders were no more kind or generous with their land and labor dealings than were private landowners, and were often much more aggressive. The Merced order owned Pesillo, one of the largest haciendas in Cayambe, as well as three smaller ones in the area (Pisambilla, La Tola, and Puruantag). In 1696, the order was by far the largest landholder in Cayambe. The Dominican order also owned the Santo Domingo hacienda in Cayambe to the south of Pesillo, and were often engaged in litigation with the Merced order over property rights. The Jesuits owned the La Compañía hacienda until they were expelled from Spanish America in 1767. The Agustines owned Carrera, as well as Tupigachi in what

is now the neighboring canton of Pedro Moncayo. In 1696, nine large landowners owned ninety percent of the land in Cayambe, and four religious orders owned almost a full half of Cayambe.¹¹ In the aftermath of the 1895 Liberal Revolution, Alfaro sought to turn back the power of the Catholic Church in Ecuador. In 1908, the Liberal president Leonidas Plaza expropriated the Merced order's haciendas in Cayambe as well as the property of other religious orders and placed them under the control of the state.

Thus, the economic relations on haciendas in Cayambe had roots reaching back to the very beginning of the Spanish occupation. The *encomienda* set the stage for labor relations against which workers on haciendas would continue to struggle well into the twentieth century. The next section examines those labor relations in more depth.

Service tenancy and the *huasipungo*

Historically, debts which tied workers to *hacendados* in a feudalistic type of relationship marked power relations on haciendas. An Indian worker's indebtedness to a landowner often started innocently enough. A person may have needed extra money for a parent's funeral or for a child's wedding, and therefore contracted with an hacienda owner to work for a certain amount of time in exchange for a cash loan. Alternatively, a poor Indian might arrange for an advance of necessary products such as food, clothing, or seed for his small agricultural plot in exchange for agreeing to work a set number of days. On occasion, Indians would enter into a contractual agreement with an hacienda to escape from other debts or tribute payments. In 1888, for example, Josefina Ascáubi (who four years later would buy the Guachalá hacienda in Cayambe) signed a contract with twenty-six Indigenous peons who in exchange for fifteen pesos each agreed to work on her hacienda in Cotocollao four days a week for

11. Ramón, *Resistencia andina*, 165.

one year. They would receive half a real for each day of work, but would be penalized two reales (or one week's salary) for each day of work they missed.¹²

This was the beginning of an economic dependence on the *hacendado*. After each day of work to pay off this debt, the hacienda owner or more likely his *mayordomo* (a foreman or overseer of the hacienda, usually a *mestizo* or *cholo* who often gained a reputation for cruelty) would mark a *raya* (a line or hatch mark) in an accounting book by the worker's name. If he missed a day, he might lose credit for the entire week of work. In addition, his wife and children were also expected to work but without any remuneration or credit against the acquired debt. This system revolved around assigned *tareas* (set tasks) which theoretically were one day's work for one person, but which in reality often required the assistance of family members and tools or animals which the hacienda did not provide. The entire system was open to abuse. As most of the workers were illiterate, it proved difficult for the workers to verify that they were receiving credit for their labor. Many owners would take advantage of this situation, which would result in further debt for the workers. After finishing their labor on the hacienda around four or five in the afternoon, the workers were free to work their own small plots. There remained little time before dark, however, for this activity.

Thus began a cycle of eternal debt from which a worker would never emerge. This initial debt was only the beginning. Hacienda owners paid their workers only once every year, and inevitably at some point during the year the workers would need an advance on their wages. These advances generally took two forms: *suplidos* and *socorros*. A *suplido* ("supplement") was a cash advance often for emergencies such as medical expenses and sometimes to purchase animals such as sheep or cows. It might also be used for a ritual expense such as a festival, wedding, or funeral. A *socorro* ("help") was an advance in the form of basic necessities such as clothes or food (often

12. "23 cartas de contratación a peones para trabajar en la hacienda de ls Ra. Josefina de Ascásubi," AH/BC, 2/V/19.

barley and sometimes corn). *Socorros* were often given at harvest time, and a landlord's failure to comply with this tradition could spark a revolt. As with the record of days worked, this system was open to abuse because the workers were usually illiterate and could not independently verify the debt which a landlord listed against them in the hacienda record book.

Workers would thus live their entire lives indebted and forced to work for a landlord. Indians could ask for a settlement of the debt, which they would do if they wished to move to another hacienda where they might be able to contract a larger plot of land or better working conditions. This debt was an investment for the landlords, although they were careful not to let the debt grow too large in case the peon died and they lost their investment. An 1833 law prohibited passing debts on to children upon the death of a worker, but landlords often found ways around this. For example, landlords would induce workers to take out loans in the names of their children. This not only passed debts down through generations, but also retained a large work force for the landlord.¹³

Huasicamía was another system of forced domestic labor which formed part of the system of *concertaje*. The *concerto* and his family were required to provide personal services on a rotating and periodic basis in the master's house on the hacienda or in the city, and occasionally also for the *hacendado's* upper-level employees such as the administrator and *mayordomo*. The laborer (called a *huasicama*, a Quichua word which means "caretaker of the house") was required to move to the master's house with his family for the designated period of service, often one month of each year. Both men and women worked in a variety of tasks which included providing service as cooks, waiters, servants, and guards; taking care of livestock; bringing firewood for

13. Udo Oberem, "Contribución a la historia del trabajador rural de América Latina: 'concertos' y 'huasipungueros' en Ecuador," in *Contribución a la etnohistoria ecuatoriana*, ed. Segundo Moreno Y. and Udo Oberem (Otavalo, Ecuador: Instituto Otavaleño de Antropología, 1981), 315.

the kitchen; cleaning the house; and various other errands and tasks which the owner might demand. The *hacendado* would provide basic subsistence for the *huasicama* and his family, but otherwise would not pay them for their labor.

Occasionally, the *hacendados* required their workers to provide other services. For example, they might have to work as a *cuentayo* or *huagracama* caring for the cattle including milking them and tending to the pasture. In the 1950s, such a person might earn fifty centavos more, but was required to work day and night, seven days a week. Related to this were the *ordeñadoras* (milk maids), who in addition to milking the cows were sometimes required to wash clothes, peel and cook potatoes, sift flour, and perform other domestic tasks for the haciendas. *Ordeñadoras* were often wives or female relatives of hacienda workers, and Indians fought a long and hard battle to force *hacendados* to pay for this labor. Another position on the hacienda was a *chagracama*, a human scarecrow who protected crops in the hacienda's fields from birds and other predators. The people who filled this position could be children or old or injured workers who were no longer capable of the manual labor required in working the hacienda. *Chagracamas* might be paid at the same rate as that which workers received for their manual agricultural labor, but with the added liability that their pay would be deducted for any losses which occurred to the fields under their care. In reality, these deductions could mean that they would work for free for a year. None of these were permanent positions and they usually required intensive labor from one to three months at a time, usually without any days off, from six in the morning to six at night.¹⁴

In a study of Indian labor and state policies in the central highland province of Chimborazo, A. Kim Clark has observed that some Indians would enter into *concertaje* arrangements in order to avoid being subject to public works drafts. Public works drafts would remove Indian workers from their own fields for two weeks,

14. Buitron, 67-68; "Así viven nuestros indios: Bárbara explotación a los trabajadores de La Chimba," *El Pueblo*, July 21, 1956, 4.

whereas working on the local hacienda did not. Clark observed that "especially during peak periods of agricultural activity, the interests of peons and hacendados coincided against cantonal authorities."¹⁵ This example indicates that the Indian laborers were not simply victims, but were capable of manipulating and maneuvering a situation to their own advantage.

A variety of scholars have analyzed the role of debt peonage and service tenancy relations in Latin America. As with Clark's observation, many of these studies have tended toward revisionist analyses which challenge the traditional stereotype of exploitative working conditions on haciendas. For example, in his study of haciendas in Mexico during the colonial era, Charles Gibson observed that Indians sometimes remained on haciendas because they could enjoy a better lifestyle there than they would in *obrajes*, mines, or independently working their own land. Because of the nature of the economic environment, Gibson concluded, "the hacienda, for all its rigors, offered positive advantages to Indian workers."¹⁶

Others have concurred with Gibson that haciendas provided their workers with a certain degree of economic security. Arnold Bauer, in particular, pushed historians to move beyond interpreting labor relations on haciendas as oppressive and counter to the interests of an Indigenous peasantry. Noting that debt and bondage are two independent and separate concepts, Bauer contends that peasants could manipulate credit arrangements to their own benefit. Bauer notes that while it was rare for urban workers to be paid in advance for their labor, peons were often advanced a significant amount of their salary before they began to work. Furthermore, landlords offered their workforce small plots of land in order to tie them to the hacienda and prevent them from migrating out of the region (with the threat of never returning) during the dead

15. A. Kim Clark, "Indians, the State and Law: Public Works and the Struggle to Control Labor in Liberal Ecuador," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 7:1 (March 1994): 59.

16. Charles Gibson, *The Aztecs Under Spanish Rule: A History of the Indians of the Valley of Mexico, 1519-1810* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964), 249.

season. Although workers left haciendas for a variety of reasons (interpersonal conflicts, poor working conditions, or to search for better opportunities elsewhere), they would be hesitant to do so voluntarily because it would mean losing their line of credit with the *hacendado*.¹⁷

One of the earliest written descriptions of life on haciendas in Cayambe is from Friedrich Hassaurek, Abraham Lincoln's minister to Ecuador in the 1860s. During the San Juan festivals of June 1863, Hassaurek visited northern Ecuador including the area of Cayambe. He described the town of Cayambe as "a cold, windy, unfriendly, and dirty place, with narrow streets and mean little houses of earth or adobe." Indians, who Hassaurek never cast in a positive light, were in Cayambe "much more pugnacious and violent than their countrymen in general."¹⁸ He notes that Indians were forced to work on the haciendas from dawn to dusk in exchange for a small plot of land, a suit of coarse thread and a hat, and a salary of half a real per day. In addition, the Indians were required to perform extra tasks (called *faenas*) such as repairing roads or gathering fuel. The wage of half a real a day (which Hassaurek said equaled twenty-three dollars a year) was not enough to meet the needs of the Indian, which led to the situation of debt peonage. Hacienda owners thus bought and sold Indian debts, much as if they were buying and selling slaves. Hassaurek notes that this burdensome situation would eventually lead to revolt, and asks rhetorically whether the landlords "really suppose that it will be possible forever to retain thousands of human beings, on whose hard and unrequited labor the whole country lives, in a state of abject servitude and oppression?"¹⁹

17. Arnold J. Bauer, "Rural Workers in Spanish America: Problems of Peonage and Oppression," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 59:1 (February 1979): 34-63.

18. Friedrich Hassaurek, *Four Years Among the Ecuadorians*, edited and with an Introduction by C. Harvey Gardiner, Latin American Travel (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1967), 161, 160.

19. *Ibid.*, 171.

It was not until 1918 with the publication of the "Reformas de la Ley de Jornaleros" (Reform of the Day Laborer Law) that the system of *concertaje* was, at least legally, ended. Nineteen years earlier, Eloy Alfaro promulgated a law which required land owners to pay their workers a minimum daily salary of ten centavos (raised from five centavos before the 1895 Liberal Revolution) and provide for the education of the workers' children. Citing the Indians' service in the liberal army, Alfaro stated that he felt a moral obligation "to protect the descendants of the first inhabitants of the Ecuadorian territory."²⁰ He was unwilling, however, to terminate this system of labor relations. Nevertheless, the 1918 law took additional steps to end *concertaje* including the institution of an eight-hour work day and outlawing imprisonment for debts. Reformers believed that abolishing *concertaje*, freeing Indians from the feudal economic relations on haciendas, and forcing them into a free wage labor system would help modernize the Ecuadorian economy. Some agricultural workers in the sierra took advantage of the situation to look for work elsewhere, sometimes on plantations on the coast. Nevertheless, systems similar to *concertaje* continued which forced non-landholding agricultural laborers to work, thus ensuring the hacienda owners a large labor supply while holding wages down. As Anibál Buitron observed rhetorically in the 1940s, "let the reader decide whether or not *concertaje* has actually been abolished" in Ecuador.²¹ In reality, *concertaje* did not end until the 1964 agrarian reform.

Although the *encomienda* and *concertaje* systems were abolished, these land tenure and service tenancy patterns survived well into the twentieth century with their name simply changed to *huasipungo*, the system of sharecropping to which highland

20. Alfredo Rubio Orbe, ed., *Legislación indigenista del Ecuador*, Ediciones especiales del Instituto Indigenista Interamericano, no. 17 (México: Instituto Indigenista Interamericano, 1954), 63.

21. Buitron, 70. For a variety of contemporary perspectives on the promulgation of the law abolishing *concertaje*, see the works excerpted in Marchán Romero's editing volume *Pensamiento agrario ecuatoriano*, 199-334.

peasants were subjected.²² In a land-labor exchange, the peasants or tenant farmers (called *huasipungueros*) worked on hacienda land three to six days a week in exchange for small subsistence plots (called *huasipungos*) usually one to four hectares in size, access to pasture land for a small number of (often three) animals, and a meager cash wage. The amount of this wage varied from hacienda to hacienda, but it generally rose from an average of five centavos in 1895 to three sucres by the time of agrarian reform in 1964. During this time the value of the sucre experienced a steady decline, so that the actual increase in salary was much smaller. In fact, during a forty-year period in the first half of the twentieth century, the daily wage for *huasipungueros* rose five times while the value of the sucre in relation in the United States dollar dropped seven-and-a-half times. In other words, the real value of wages fell by a third. This was part of a general long-term decline in the wages of rural workers. As Figure 1 demonstrates, wages only rose in direct response to political pressure. The 1895 Liberal Revolution initially triggered a dramatic rise of *huasipunguero* wages, and they again rose slightly and briefly as a result of a 1931 strike in Cayambe. It was not, however, until the politically tumultuous decade before the 1964 agrarian reform law in the context of extreme political agitation that the relative worth of wages actually rose significantly. Throughout this entire time, however, an increase in wages remained the most continual and repeated demand of the rural work force. Not only did they reap concrete gains as a result of their continual agitation, but the predominance of salary over land demands challenges the notion that this rural population had a peasant consciousness. The following chapters will explore in detail the explicit

22. *Huasipungo* (sometimes spelled "guasipungo" in the historical literature) is a Quichua term comprised of *huasi* (house) and *pungo* (door), but the roots of this term have been lost. The usage of the term is unique to Ecuador, although the system it represents is not. In other countries, similar rural workers engaged in debt-peonage (or perhaps more accurately share-tenancy) forms of labor relations are called *terrazueros* (Colombia), *inquilinos* (Chile), *yanacunas* (Peru), *colonos* (Bolivia), etc. See Udo Oberem, "Contribución a la historia del trabajador rural," 301.

nature of the semi-proletarian and ethnic consciousness which these demands represent.

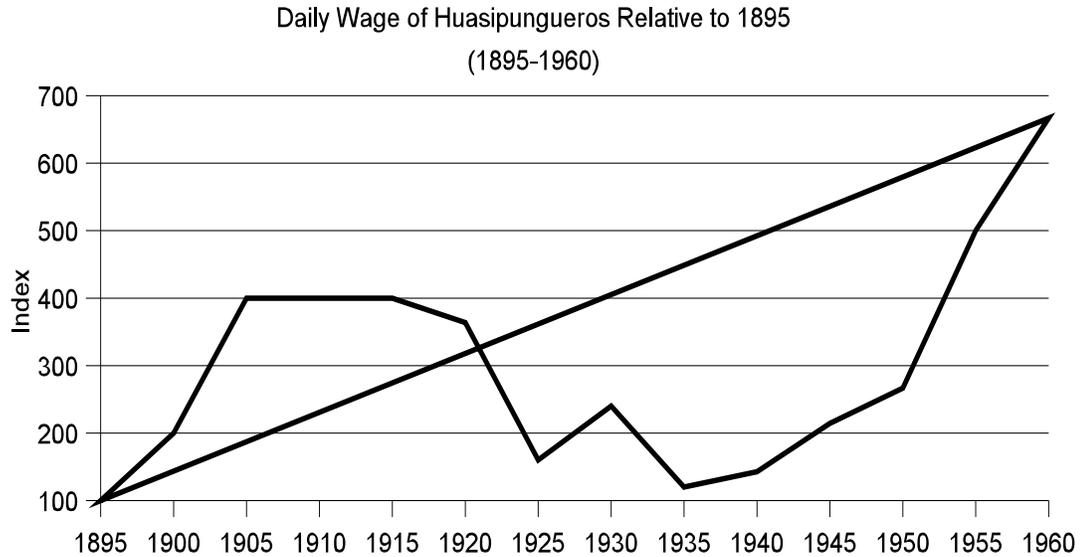


Figure 1

The length of the work day and working conditions for *huasipungueros* varied from hacienda to hacienda, and workers would occasionally leave a hacienda in search of better working conditions elsewhere. In many areas, the workers had successfully petitioned owners for a shorter work week. In Cayambe in the 1940s, however, it was still common for *huasipungueros* to work from Monday to Saturday from seven o'clock in the morning to four or five in the afternoon. The average wage in Cayambe during this time was seventy-five centavos a day, which was the lowest in Pichincha. Wages in the province varied from eighty-four centavos in the neighboring canton of Pedro Moncayo to 1.56 sucres further south in the canton of Mejía. Buitron noted, however, that hacienda owners often did not pay even this small wage, an omission which occasionally would lead to protest actions. In addition, each worker had access to a plot of land which averaged about 2.75 hectares in size as well as rights to pasture land in the high *páramo*, firewood, and water. Most of these *huasipungueros* were

Indigenous and lived on small plots at altitudes of over three thousand meters where the land did not produce well.²³

Due to intense organizational pressure, *huasipungo* salaries in Cayambe were raised to one sucre in the 1950s, although landlords repeatedly sought to roll back this advance. Workers also fought hard for shorter work days and work weeks, often demanding nothing more than to bring the length of a work week into compliance with the national labor code then in effect. In 1954, 19,665 *huasipungueros* and their families comprised twenty-two percent of Ecuador's rural population. The majority of these (12,795) lived in only three provinces: Chimborazo, Cotopaxi, and Pichincha.²⁴ In the early 1960s there were about 19,700 *huasipunguero* families in the highlands, with the largest percentage (32.7) in the province of Pichincha. More than a fourth of the highland peasants were bound through some economic agreement to an hacienda.²⁵ As Fernando Velasco observed, this situation led to "the haciendas exercising a very high level of control over natural resources in the region, and as a consequence a chronic deficit of control for the rest of the rural population."²⁶ Thus, it becomes obvious that despite attempts such as the 1918 reform of the *concertaje* system, land-labor relations remained very similar to those of the colonial period. Rather than improving, they had in fact deteriorated.

Huasipungueros were often illiterate and removed from Ecuadorian politics, society, and culture. They were treated like peons and were often abused and exploited. Usually these peasants received the least productive land on an hacienda and often could not produce sufficient foodstuffs to feed themselves, much less produce a surplus to sell. In addition, the *huasipungueros* did not actually own their plots of land; the plots were part of the hacienda and on loan to the workers. As Jorge Icaza

23. Buitron, 77, 75. Also see Ramón, "Indios, tierra y modernización," 190.

24. Oberem, "Contribución a la historia del trabajador rural," 325, citing Primer Censo Agropecuario Nacional de 1954.

25. Zamosc, *Peasant Struggles and Agrarian Reform*, 6; Barsky, 73.

26. Velasco, *Reforma agraria*, 34.

vividly portrayed in his novel *Huasipungo*, however, these workers became very attached to their plots and treated them as their own, and were willing to revolt if the landowners attempted to take these plots away.²⁷

Huasipungos were usually passed down through male members of a family. Upon the death of a *huasipunguero*, the oldest son would take over the plot. Of course, along with the plots often came the father's accumulated debt. If due to death or illness no male relative was left who could work on the hacienda, the small plot of land would be forfeited. The plots never passed to the wife or a daughter of a worker, and thus women were required to maintain some type of relationship to a male in order to have access to land. This system ensured that women would remain reliant on a male, whether it was a father, husband, brother, or other male relative.

In addition to *huasipunguero* workers, hacienda owners could also exploit two other groups of workers. One group was called *yanaperos* or *apegados* who were given marginal land along roadsides to build houses and in exchange worked two or three days for free on the hacienda. These people almost always were poor *mestizos*. Another group of workers were free workers (*peones libres* or *indios sueltos*) who were ethnically and culturally Indigenous. Both of these groups were seasonal laborers who worked only during periods of high demand (planting and harvest seasons), were paid more than *huasipungueros* (for example, fifty centavos a day during the 1930s instead of twenty centavos, or 3.5 sures in the 1950s compared to one sucre for *huasipungueros*), and usually also had access to firewood and pasture land. They did not, however, receive *huasipungo* plots, and often (in the case of the *peones libres*) they were children or relatives of *huasipungueros* who had not managed to arrange a contractual agreement with the landlord. Earlier *huasipungos* had been fairly freely available and easy to acquire, but by the 1950s they were much more difficult to secure, and this situation helped create this new class of workers.

27. Jorge Icaza, *Huasipungo*, Colección Ariel Universal No. 3 (Guayaquil: Cromograf S.A., 1973).

Some people have argued that *hacendados* turned to free peon wage labor because it was cheaper for them. Free laborers earned several times more than did the *huasipungueros*, but the hacienda did not need to supply them with a plot to cultivate. Furthermore, the hacienda could hire them only during times of high demand such as during the planting or harvesting season, unlike the *huasipungueros* who worked on the hacienda year-round. Thus, some of the same economic factors which may have pushed plantation owners in the Americas to phase out African slavery in favor of free labor also led hacienda owners in the Ecuadorian highlands to adopt a similar system of seasonally based wage labor. Nevertheless, Buitron calculated that including the value of the house, pasture land, the token salary, and other amenities, a *huasipunguero* earned the equivalent of 966.25 sucres in a year. On the other hand, a peon working for a daily wage of six sucres could earn 1,728 sucres in a year, or eighty percent more than a *huasipunguero*.²⁸

The logical question, of course, then, is why did Indians prize their *huasipungos* so highly if they could earn so much more as free laborers? Despite their reputation as being part of an abusive labor system, *huasipungos* were highly desired. Many Indians were willing to work for lower wages in order to have their own plot of land.²⁹ According to Buitron, it was because of a great love for the land which flowed in their blood. It was a central part of their Indigenous culture and ethnic heritage. They would rather have the small plot of land and only earn seventy-five centavos a

28. Buitron, 79. This data conflicts directly with Arnold Bauer's assertion that in "highland Ecuador, tenants had higher incomes and a more secure life than did day laborers." Bauer, 41.

29. Sáenz, 54-56, as well as chapter three ("El problema del Indio," 101-162) in which he discusses questions of land and labor in the highlands. Also see Mercedes Prieto, "Haciendas estatales: un caso de ofensiva campesina: 1926-1948," in *Ecuador: cambios en el agro serrano*, ed. Miguel Murmis and others (Quito: Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO) - Centro de Planificación y Estudios Sociales (CEPLAES), 1980), 106; and Muriel Crespi, "The Patrons and Peons of Pesillo: A Traditional Hacienda System in Highland Ecuador" (Ph.D. diss., Department of Anthropology, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1968), 68.

day than be without the plot (and the attachment to their cultural heritage) and earn the six sueres of a free peon.³⁰ In addition, most workers preferred the security and independence of having a plot with subsistence crops which could sustain them through difficult times, rather than relying exclusively on the contingent nature of temporary employment as day laborers on the haciendas. Bauer notes that "the ultimate threat against unsatisfactory tenants was often dismissal from the hacienda."³¹ The *huasipungo* plots were thus highly treasured for both cultural and economic reasons, and workers would fight to retain them.

Demographics and agricultural censuses

There is a lack of good census data for Ecuador from the first part of the twentieth century. In a demographic study from the late 1940s, about fifty-seven percent of the total population of the canton of Cayambe lived in rural areas. According to those figures, the gap between the rural and urban populations was slowly closing as the urban population was growing at a faster rate (1.7%) than the rural population (1.4%).³² Another study showed that the highest percentages of the rural population of the province of Pichincha dedicated to agricultural work lived in the northern cantons of Pedro Moncayo (fifty percent) and Cayambe (forty-four percent). Eighty percent of this rural work force in Cayambe was engaged in wage labor.³³ In the rest of the province of Pichincha, the majority of rural dwellers owned their own houses. In Cayambe, the proportion of heads of household owning their homes was less than half. Technically, the huts on *huasipungo* plots were not the property of the *huasipunguero*, but of the hacienda, even though the Indians built the huts with their

30. Buitron, 38. An alternative explanation, of course, for the workers' preference for the *huasipungo* system is that due to the seasonal nature of wage labor peons might actually earn much less than a *huasipunguero* plus not have the built-in safety net of the subsistence agricultural production of the *huasipungo* plot.

31. Bauer, 41-42.

32. Cisneros, 127, 129.

33. Buitron, 23, 25.

own materials and treated them as their own. This data demonstrates not only the dependence of people on the large haciendas, but also the impoverished nature of the canton.³⁴

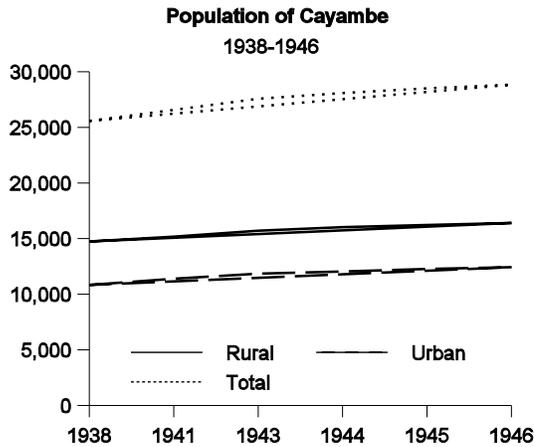


Figure 2: Source: Cisneros.

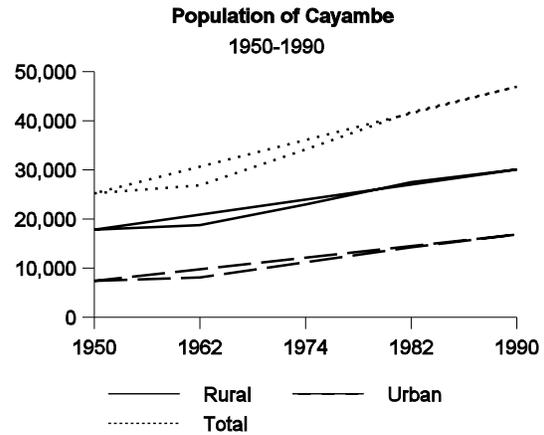


Figure 3: Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos (INEC).

Ecuador conducted its first modern census in 1950, and this census demonstrated a continuation of the trend from the first part of the twentieth century. According to this and four subsequent censuses, about two-thirds of Cayambe's population lived in rural areas, although the urban population continued to grow at a faster rate (2.4%) than the rural population (1.5%). A number of factors influenced this shift in population growth toward urban areas, including an emigration of people from rural areas to urban areas (including the capital of Quito) in search of work and a later immigration to the canton of workers on the flower plantations. Nevertheless, when compared to national figures (see Table 1 on page 36) this population shift to urban areas was much less pronounced in Cayambe than in Ecuador as a whole.

34. Ibid., 30.

Table 4: Population of Cayambe (1938-1990)

	1938	1941	1943	1944	1945	1946	
Rural	14,747	15,178	15,714	16,035	16,230	16,404	
Urban	10,837	11,389	11,855	12,048	12,274	12,434	
Total	25,584	26,567	27,569	28,083	28,504	28,838	Yearly
Rural %	57.64%	57.13%	57.00%	57.10%	56.94%	56.88%	Average
Rural pop growth		0.97%	1.77%	2.04%	1.22%	1.07%	1.41%
Urban pop growth		1.70%	2.05%	1.63%	1.88%	1.30%	1.71%

	1950	1962	1974	1982	1990	
Rural	17,835	18,744	22,963	27,491	30,089	
Urban	7,409	8,101	11,199	14,249	16,849	
Total	25,244	26,845	34,162	41,740	46,938	Yearly
Rural %	70.65%	69.82%	67.22%	65.86%	64.10%	Average
Rural pop growth		0.42%	1.88%	2.46%	1.18%	1.49%
Urban pop growth		0.78%	3.19%	3.40%	2.28%	2.41%

Source: Cisneros; INEC. See Appendix I for Cayambe's population figures broken down by *parroquia*.

A study from the 1940s showed that the largest and most extensive estates in Ecuador were located in the provinces of Pichincha, Imbabura, and Chimborazo. As throughout Latin America, Ecuador experienced a severe imbalance of wealth and access to land. In Cayambe, as Figure 4 demonstrates, this imbalance was much more pronounced than in the rest of the country. Almost sixty percent of the land value in Cayambe was concentrated in the hands of only fourteen estates which were in the hands of whites. At the same time, three-fourths of the population lived on only five percent of the land. Almost all of these smallest estates (those valued at less than ten thousand sucres) were in the hands of Indians and *mestizos*.³⁵ In comparison to Ecuador as a whole, the bottom eighty percent of the population held thirty-one

35. Cisneros, 129.

percent of land resources, whereas the top category of the largest estates (those valued over 500,000 sucres) comprised only fifteen percent of the land value. Land and wealth was much more concentrated in Cayambe than in Ecuador in general, a situation which contributed to the formation of rural organizations and a pronounced class consciousness.

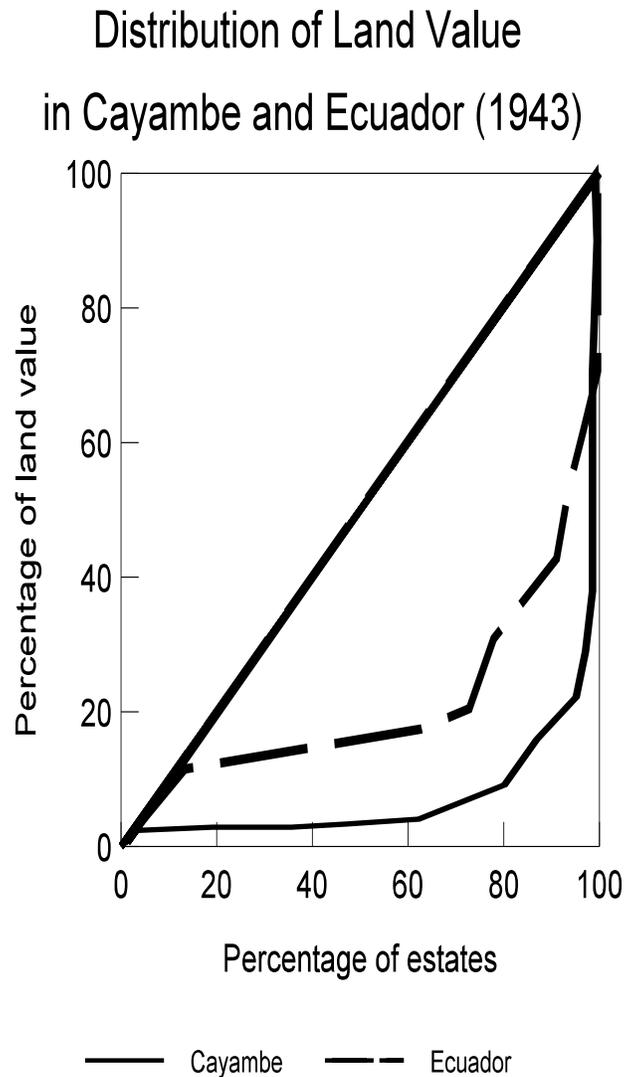


Figure 4: Source: Cisneros, 128.

In 1948, eighty-four percent of the land in the northeast section of the province of Pichincha (which includes the cantons of Cayambe, Pedro Moncayo, and part of Quito) was concentrated in the hands of a few people who owned large estates. Because of the beginnings of the breakup of private haciendas, this concentration of land had actually been greater ten years earlier. What remained constant, however, was that most Indians in Cayambe owned little land, and the land that they had was often at high altitudes on the agricultural frontier where it did not produce well. The amount of land a family needed to support itself varied by region and by the type of agricultural practices in that area, but generally averaged about five hectares in Cayambe. The average peasant family, however, cultivated just over one hectare, not nearly enough to meet basic survival needs.³⁶

Agricultural production in Cayambe has faced a continual decline throughout the twentieth century. Several factors caused this decline. Erosion (both from the forces of wind and water) was a persistent problem which lessened the value of the land and its ability to produce. Related to this were climatic changes, in particular droughts which the lack of an adequate irrigation system exacerbated. Farmers faced a continual struggle for water. In addition, during this time the soil lost critical nutrients (in particular nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium). These were major problems, and plagued large and small producers, rich and poor, *hacendados* and *huasipungueros* alike. Resources (such as technical advice or investment capital and loans) which could have corrected these problems were sorely lacking. Basile and Paredes offered a series of suggestions which could have helped correct this situation, including the redistribution of lands, colonization of land in the Amazon, providing technical advice, and extending credit for improvements to the land. They lamented, however, that the Ecuadorian government in its attempts at economic development

36. Basile and Paredes, 26-28.

continually overlooked the two most important factors: the land and the agricultural worker.³⁷

In 1954 Ecuador conducted its first comprehensive agricultural census. According to this census, elites owned about seven hundred estates larger than five hundred hectares which comprised about half of Ecuador's agricultural land. Just over one percent of the population possessed estates larger than one hundred hectares which totaled almost two-thirds of the tillable land in the Sierra. Meanwhile, 2,500 peasants farmed plots smaller than fifty hectares which comprised less than one-third of Ecuador's tillable land.³⁸ Eighty-two percent of the agricultural production units had access to only 14.4 percent of the tillable land, whereas 0.66 percent of property estates controlled 54.4 percent of the land. Only fifteen percent of this land on large estates was under permanent cultivation, whereas on the small estates this number could reach as high as ninety percent.³⁹ These conditions which were generalized across the Ecuadorian highlands were also true in the canton of Cayambe. By the 1950s, there were fifty-three haciendas in Cayambe which were larger than fifty hectares.

In the 1962 census, the overwhelming majority of economically active people in Cayambe reported working in the agricultural sector. Of 7,649 working men, 5,302 (or almost seventy percent) worked in agriculture. The next largest category was artisans, with 1,386 people or eighteen percent. Agricultural workers also constituted the single largest group of women (549 out of 1,500, or thirty-seven percent) with artisans also comprising a sizable group (410 or twenty-seven percent). Taking men

37. *Ibid.*, 20-25, 48.

38. Zamosc, *Peasant Struggles and Agrarian Reform*, 5; Velasco, *Reforma agraria*, 34.

39. Lilo Linke, *Ecuador: Country of Contrasts*, 3d ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), 133, citing economist José C. Cárdenas, "Reforma agraria y desarrollo económico en el Ecuador," *Boletín Trimestral de Información Económica* XI, nos. 36-37.

and women together, sixty-four percent (5,851 out of 9,149) of Cayambe's population was economically involved in the agricultural sector. Although it should be cautioned that the term "agricultural" is not synonymous with "rural," this figure almost equals the seventy percent of the canton's population which lived in rural areas. Without question, agriculture was and continues to be a primary characteristic of life in Cayambe.

The 1962 census also demonstrates that land, for the most part, was not in the hands of the agricultural workers. Two years before the Ecuadorian government enacted agrarian reform legislation, sixty-three percent (3,671 out of 5,851) of people in the agricultural sector worked for pay and less than thirty percent (1,718 people) were self-employed. (Of the other seven percent in the agricultural sector, five percent worked without pay and two percent were *patronos* or owners.) Although the population census does not contain data on land ownership, and government attempts to record such data were highly flawed due to an understandable historic mistrust of census takers and government officials, these statistics demonstrate empirically what is known through anecdotal evidence and oral traditions. A small elite owned the means of production, and the masses were economically engaged as a rural proletariat. If anything, the 1962 census understates the imbalance of the situation. By the 1960s, due to peasant pressure, imminent agrarian reform legislation, as well as wishing to modernize production, several landholders had already distributed land to their workers. Earlier in the twentieth century, the number of landless agricultural workers almost certainly comprised a larger percentage of the population engaged in the agricultural sector.

Table 5: Land Distribution in Cayambe (1974)

Size in hectares	Total hectares	% of land	% of pop	land use
< 3	2,634	4.2	67.2	Subsistence agriculture, Indigenous
3-20	6,127	9.8	29.4	Cash crops, <i>Mestizos</i>
20-200	4,850	7.7	2.1	Milk production, <i>hacendados</i>
> 200	49,213	78.3	1.3	Milk production, agro-industry
Total:	62,824	100	100	

Source: Division de Estadística y Censos and Ecuador, II censo agropecuario 1974: Resultados definitivos, Pichincha (Quito: Republica del Ecuador, Junta Nacional de Planificación y Coordinación, Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos, 1977), 163; Galo Ramón, "Cayambe: El problema regional y la participación política," *Debate* (Quito) 3 (August 1983): 168.

Attempts to reform imbalances and injustices inherent in these land and labor systems had little effect. Ecuador has twice engaged in agrarian reform (in 1964 and 1973), but both times the focus was on modernization and making agricultural production more efficient rather than improving the lives of the large impoverished rural population. Neither attempt met with much success nor significant land redistribution. As Table 5 demonstrates, this extreme imbalance in land ownership in Cayambe continued despite efforts to reform it.

This chapter has outlined the general land tenure and service tenancy relations which confronted peasant and Indigenous organizations in Ecuador. It has demonstrated the imbalances of wealth against which rural workers struggled. Although economic and working conditions were similar on most haciendas, there were significant differences in the administration of public and private haciendas in Cayambe that influenced the nature of rural organizational efforts. The next chapter will explore these distinctions through an analysis of two different haciendas in Cayambe.

Chapter Five

Public Space, Private Space: A Tale of Two Haciendas

Land tenure systems developed independently from one another in the northern and southern parts of the canton of Cayambe. Rural protest against abusive labor and land practices also developed in distinctive ways in northern and southern Cayambe. After the Church's haciendas in northern Cayambe were expropriated and became government property, protest in that area was played out largely in the public arena. Much of the protest in southern Cayambe, however, took place in the private sphere. This meant that actions in northern Cayambe were a common subject in newspapers during this period and created the impression that protest was more common and important in the north. Perhaps *huasipungo* organizations were more significant in the north and organizations such as the Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios (FEI) had a stronger foothold in that area, but organizations also existed in the south.

This chapter builds on the broader discussion of land tenure patterns presented in the previous chapter and applies these themes to the specific case studies of the Pesillo and Guachalá haciendas in Cayambe. The Pesillo hacienda in northern Cayambe had a history of institutional administration, whereas the Guachalá hacienda in the southern sector of the area was privately owned. A comparison of these two estates creates a concrete historical context necessary for understanding and interpreting the formation of protest actions which will be examined in more detail in Part Two.

Pesillo hacienda

San Miguel de Pesillo is located twenty kilometers north of the city of Cayambe and thirty kilometers south of Ibarra, the capital of the neighboring province of Imbabura. It is a high, cold, and windy region (between 3,000 and 3,600 meters)

inhabited primarily by Indigenous peasants. It is a relatively poor area, and illiteracy hovers around the thirty-percent mark. Because of a lack of land for the Indigenous inhabitants, there is a large amount of out-migration from the area. As in most of the Andes, it is formally a Catholic area although the people preserve many pre-hispanic religious traditions including festivals surrounding the summer solstice in June.¹

Since the sixteenth century, the Catholic Church maintained almost exclusive control over Pesillo in the northern zone of Cayambe. The Pesillo hacienda began in 1560 with a small land grant from the Spanish crown to the Merced order. Over time, the Mercedarians expanded the size of the hacienda and came to control a wide and ecologically diverse area of northern Cayambe. Pesillo developed into the largest hacienda in Cayambe, and in 1945 it encompassed 20,668 hectares of land or almost fifteen percent of the canton.² This type of hacienda was relatively inaccessible and distant from any large towns. Anthropologist Muriel Crespi who studied Pesillo in the mid-1960s noted that traditional haciendas like Pesillo were "often so vast that their complete extensions are neither fully utilized or even known with certainty."³ In fact, a rental contract in 1913 defined the northern, southern, and western boundaries of Pesillo, but stated that to the east its boundaries were "unknown."⁴ Fifteen years later,

1. Segundo Obando A., *Tradiciones de Pesillo*, Colección Ñucanchic Unancha (Quito: Abya-Yala, 1985), 19, 32.

2. Ramón, "Indios, tierra y modernización," 152. For summaries of the history of Pesillo as well as land tenure patterns and labor relations in northern Cayambe, see Mercedes Prieto's thesis "Condicionamientos de la movilización campesina," her essay "Haciendas estatales," and Muriel Crespi's essays, "Changing Power Relations: The Rise of Peasant Unions on Traditional Ecuadorian Haciendas," *Anthropological Quarterly* 44:4 (October 1971): 223-40; and "St. John the Baptist: The Ritual Looking Glass of Hacienda Indian Ethnic and Power Relations," in *Cultural Transformations and Ethnicity in Modern Ecuador*, ed. Norman E. Whitten, Jr. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981), 477-505.

3. Crespi, "The Patrons and Peons of Pesillo," 13.

4. Contrato de arriendo de la Junta de Beneficencia a Aquiles Jarrín, February 28, 1913, ANH, EP/P3a, vol. 161, 226.

the government was still attempting to establish the eastern boundary where people were squatting.

Although owned by a Catholic order, land tenure patterns and labor relations at Pesillo were similar to privately owned haciendas. The Merced monastery in Quito controlled the hacienda and functioned as an absentee landlord. It delegated responsibility for the running of the hacienda to priest-managers who lived on the hacienda and functioned as patrons. The hacienda lacked modern or mechanized farming techniques and relied instead on unskilled Indigenous labor as it produced potatoes and grain for domestic consumption. Similar to other haciendas, the Mercedarians drew the Indians into a system of debt peonage (*concertaje*) which resulted in debts which were passed down through generations and occasionally ended with a worker in debtor's prison. In exchange, as on other estates, the religious order provided the Indian laborers with small *huasipungo* plots on which they grew barley, wheat, and potatoes, as well as granting the workers access to pasture and water rights. The religious owners were as fierce as any land owners in imposing discipline and physical abuse, and would charge *diezmos* (tithes in which peasants were to pay a tenth of their crops, animals, and other products to the church, which the Catholic fathers would charge as taxes) which sometimes outstripped a worker's earnings. They were remembered as "terrible *patrones*" who at the smallest provocation would imprison their poor Indian workers.⁵

5. Raquel Rodas, *Tránsito Amaguaña: su testimonio*, Colección Difusión Cultural, No. 3 (Quito: Centro de Documentación e Información de los Movimientos Sociales del Ecuador [CEDIME], 1987), 8. Andrés Guerrero has noted that this negative view of the Merced administration of the haciendas was an "official" line, but informally many people would comment that their administration was a golden era for Pesillo. Andrés Guerrero, personal communication, April 28, 1996. In a similar situation in the central province of Chimborazo, however, an anthropologist noted that the narrative of abuse was so deeply embedded in the population that no one "ever talks about the hacienda today for more than a minute without some mention of harshness, cruelty, or miserliness." Barry Jay Lyons, "In Search of 'Respect': Culture, Authority, and Coercion on an Ecuadorian Hacienda" (Ph.D. diss., The University of Michigan, 1994), 219.

Before the twentieth century, organized protest actions among the Indians on the Pesillo hacienda against the oppressive working conditions were rare. Overt protests such as a 1777 revolt which began in Otavalo and spread to Cayambe were exceptions rather than the rule. As anthropologist Muriel Crespi described, however, "covert efforts to circumvent hacienda rules are daily occurrences."⁶ But if a worker pushed these "everyday forms of resistance" too far, the retaliation was quick and brutal.

Asistencia Pública

By the first decade of the twentieth century, however, the Pesillo hacienda was no longer in the hands of the Catholic Church. The 1895 Liberal Revolution began a large-scale attack on the Church's wealth, power, and influence in Ecuadorian society in order to subject the Church to secular control. As part of this attack, in 1902 the Leonidas Plaza government promulgated the *Ley de Matrimonio Civil* (Law of Civil Marriage) which gave the secular government control over marriage and legalized divorce. The 1904 *Ley de Cultos* (Law of Worship) provided for freedom of religion and at the same time greatly restricted the power of the Catholic Church.⁷ The *Ley de Cultos* began to impose restrictions on the Church's administration of its property, but the 1908 *Ley de Beneficencia* (Law of Charity) went much further in this regard. This law, also called the law of "*manos muertas*" ("dead hands"), declared in its first article that all of the property of religious communities belonged to the state. With this act, the government expropriated the Pesillo hacienda as well as others which belonged to religious orders. Thus began direct governmental administration of haciendas in Ecuador.⁸

6. Crespi, "St. John the Baptist," 501.

7. The text of these two laws are reprinted in *Nueva Historia del Ecuador*, vol. 15, 215-26.

8. "Ley de Beneficencia (1908)," in *Nueva Historia del Ecuador*, vol. 15, 232. Crespi notes that governmental records place the expropriation in 1904 and an archivist at La Merced Monastery in Quito placed it in 1906, although the law

Table 6: State of Asistencia Pública Haciendas, December 31, 1929

Hacienda	Renter	Contract Dates	Rent (in Sucres)		Value of deposit	Value of hacienda	Required improvements
			1920-1928	1929-1937			
Carrera	Ignacio Fernández Salvador	January 21, 1929- January 21, 1937	6,510	9,300	16,550	80,000	2,500
La Chimba	José Rafael Delgado	May 13, 1922- May 13, 1930	31,500	35,000	200,000	400,000	5,000
Moyurco and San Pablourco	Julio Miguel Páez	April 10, 1929- April 10, 1937	34,000	61,000	160,000	450,000	9,500
Pesillo and Pucará	José Rafael Delgado	June 8, 1929- June 8, 1937	39,000	54,000	150,000	450,000	17,000
Pisambilla	Ignacio Fernández Salvador	March 5, 1929- March 5, 1937	5,000	8,000	40,000	120,000	7,500
Santo Domingo de Cayambe	Rafael Hidalgo	March 24, 1924- March 24, 1932	35,000	60,000	200,000	1,000,000	13,000

Source: *Informe de la Dirección de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública (1928-1929)* (Quito: Tipografía de la Escuela de Artes y Oficios, 1930), Table I.

The Merced order initially resisted the government's attempt to confiscate the hacienda, and forced their workers to arm themselves with sticks, rocks, and axes to

authorizing such expropriations was not promulgated until 1908. Crespi, "St. John the Baptist," 501.

defend the hacienda. Military troops under the command of Francisco Portilla surrounded the hacienda and forced the religious order to surrender the land. Five or six peasants were killed in the resulting conflict. When the government evicted the religious orders from the haciendas, the workers expected that the government would give them their small *huasipungo* plots, and they would finally be free from the brutal oppression of landlords. The Liberal government in Quito, however, did not take advantage of this situation to terminate historically abusive land tenure patterns or alter them to the benefit of the Indigenous workers. Rather, they rented the haciendas to private individuals who the workers at first did not want to obey. The government then sent in troops to restore "order," and the same oppressive conditions continued under the control of private individuals. Although control passed to secular authorities, and the government closed the hacienda's chapel, traditional festivals which were a syncretic mixture of traditional culture and Christianity continued without losing their intensity or significance.⁹

The intent of the 1908 law was to utilize the property of the Catholic Church to the benefit of the general society, instead of only for the enrichment of the Church. This legislation created administrative boards (called *Juntas de Beneficencia*) to administer this property in Quito, Cuenca, and Guayaquil, as well as local boards in provincial capitals. In 1927, the name of this program was changed to *Asistencia Pública* (Public Assistance) and again in 1948 to *Asistencia Social* (Social Welfare).

The government owned haciendas in seven highland provinces (Carchi, Imbabura, Pichincha, León [later renamed Cotopaxi], Tungurahua, Chimborazo, and Bolívar) which the *Junta Central de Asistencia Pública* in Quito administered. The exact number of haciendas varied during the duration of the existence of the program. A report from 1929 listed fifty-nine properties, although several were grouped together to be rented and administered as one unit. Thirty of the resulting forty-three

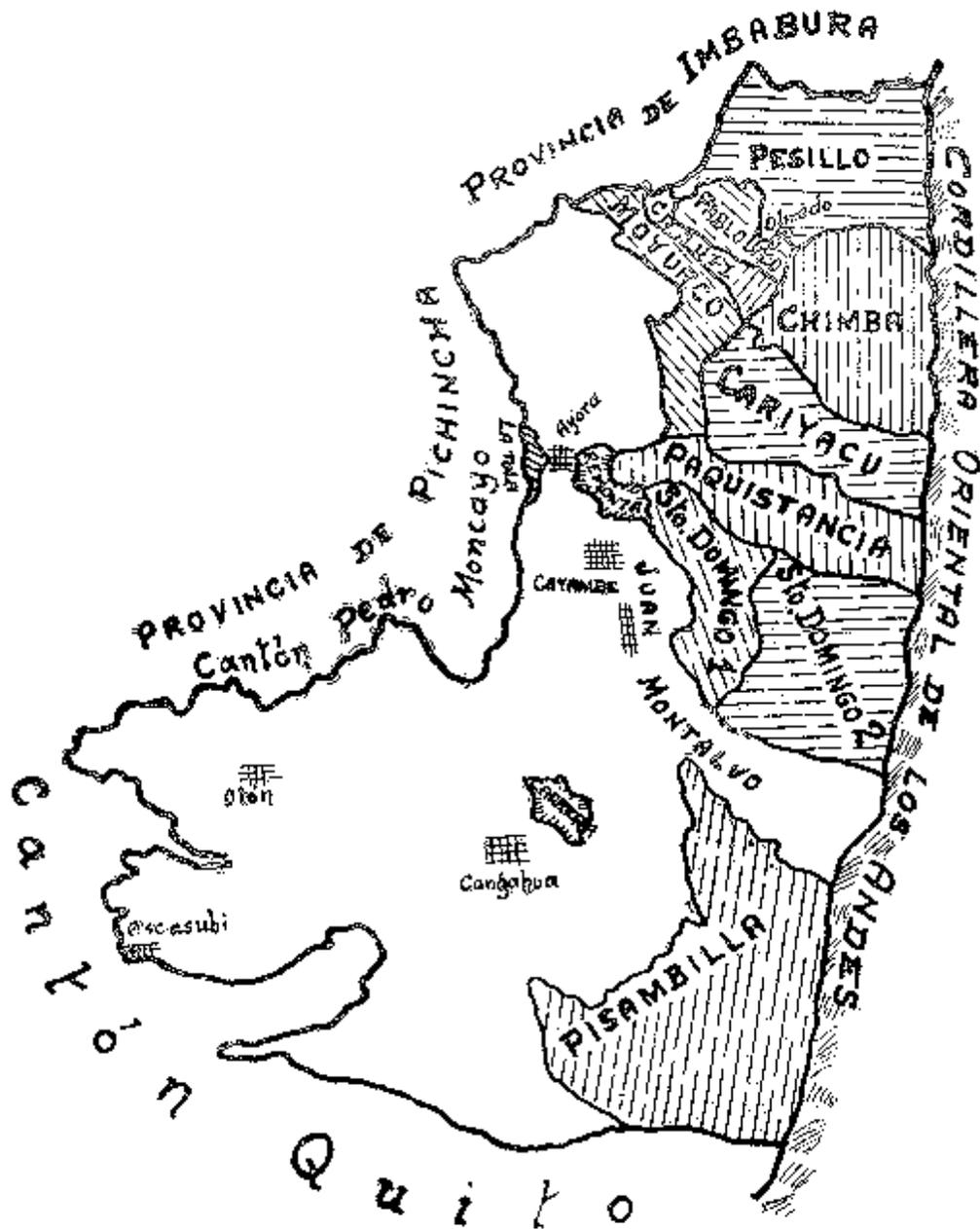
9. Obando, 9; Prieto, "Condicinamientos de la movilización campesina," 23-24.

administrative units were in Pichincha, with four each in León and Chimborazo, three in Imbabura, and one each in Carchi and Bolívar.¹⁰ By the time of agrarian reform in the 1960s, the total number of haciendas in this program had risen to seventy-seven, with thirty-five in Pichincha covering 40,354 hectares.¹¹

10. *Informe de la Dirección de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública (1928-1929)* (Quito: Tipografía de la Escuela de Artes y Oficios, 1930), Table I. This *Informe* as well as most of the information in this section on the *Asistencia Pública* program is from the Archivo Nacional de Medicina del Museo Nacional de Medicina "Dr. Eduardo Estrella," Fondo Junta Central de Asistencia Pública in Quito, Ecuador (hereafter JCAP). The author is deeply indebted to this archive's former director Dr. Eduardo Estrella and current director Dr. Antonio Crespi for their kindness and support of this investigation.

11. Comité Interamericano de Desarrollo Agrícola (CIDA), *Tenencia de la tierra y desarrollo socio-económico del sector agrícola: Ecuador* (Washington: Unión Panamericana, 1965), 112.

Map 6: Asistencia Pública Haciendas in Cayambe



Source: Patricio Chiriboga León, "El concejo municipal de Cayambe: Su gestión administrativa en los años 1967-1970," *Cayambe 70* (Cayambe, 1970), 40.

Several haciendas in Cayambe were part of this program. Although most of

this land was located in the northern *parroquia* of Olmedo, three haciendas (Santo Domingo de Cayambe, Cariacu, and Paquistancia, which originally were administered as one unit) were located in the neighboring *parroquia* of Ayora and three (Carrera, Pisambilla, and Porotog, which was added later) were in the southern *parroquia* of Cangahua. For example, Carrera, was located east of Cangahua (where the large Guachalá hacienda was located). It was a smaller hacienda (only 597 hectares in size) and also very old (founded in 1680). Its main products were wheat and barley.¹² By the end of the 1940s, fifty-two percent of the land in Cayambe was in the hands of various state agencies as well as twelve percent in the neighboring canton of Pedro Moncayo.¹³ In 1958, fifty-four thousand hectares or about forty percent of the entire land surface of Cayambe were part of government-owned haciendas in the *Asistencia Pública* program.¹⁴ Almost two-thirds (62.5 percent) of the canton's arable land belonged to this program.¹⁵ In 1970, there were fifty-two large haciendas in Cayambe, forty of these were privately owned and twelve belonged to the government (eleven as part of the *Asistencia Social* program and one belonged to the Ministry of Defense).¹⁶

There were two sides to the *Asistencia Pública* program. One side was the administration of haciendas, such as those in Cayambe. This was not an end in itself, but a way to fund the other part of the *Asistencia Pública* program. The government used money from the haciendas to support public hospitals, clinics, and orphanages. The haciendas within this program, however, never generated a large enough income to meet the expenses of running public health facilities. Throughout its history (which lasted until the promulgation of the agrarian reform law in the 1960s), *Asistencia*

12. Basile, 244.

13. Basile and Paredes, 26.

14. Patricio Chiriboga León, "El concejo municipal de Cayambe: Su gestión administrativa en los años 1967-1970," *Cayambe 70* (Cayambe, 1970), 40. See also Map 6 on page 122 for the location of these haciendas.

15. Crespi, "The Patrons and Peons of Pesillo," 90.

16. Alfredo Castro Alvear and Hugo Latorre Aguilar, "Resumen general del estudio socio-económico de Cayambe," *Cayambe 70*, 67.

Pública faced a chronic financial crisis. In 1920, the director presented several suggestions for increasing the income of the program, including sponsoring a lottery and a pharmacy. In 1929, the government had to give an additional 300,000 sucres from the national treasury to the program in order for it to meet its operating expenses.¹⁷ In its 1962 report, the *Junta* (board) which governed this program noted that despite the difficult economic situation which it had experienced for "many years," it still struggled to achieve its mandate to meet the social and human needs of the country.¹⁸ One analyst suggested that the *Asistencia Pública* program simply sell off its extensive estates and use these funds to support directly the running of the hospitals and other institutions.¹⁹

Most of the public health facilities which the *Asistencia Pública* funded were in urban areas. In 1913, however, the governing *Junta* voted to spend ten thousand sucres to build a hospital in Cayambe. This hospital was to benefit people in the northern sierra so that they would not have to travel to Quito to receive treatment. This hospital was inaugurated on September 1, 1913, but in a building which the municipal government of Cayambe had lent for this purpose until the hospital could be built. The building which was eventually erected to house this hospital, however, was poorly constructed and could not be occupied for this purpose. A report from 1930 noted that the hospital was still in the old building, and that it had twenty-four patients. The entire project had been plagued with poor planning, a lack of administrative

17. *Informe a la Nación de la Junta Central de Beneficencia de Quito, 1920* (Quito: Imprenta y Encuadernación de Julio Sáenz R., 1920), 96; *Informe de la Dirección de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública (1928-1929)* (Quito: Tipografía de la Escuela de Artes y Oficios, 1930). The program later did establish a pharmacy in Quito with the stated goal of providing humanitarian aid rather than financial gain. See *Boletín de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública de Quito* 1:3 (September 15, 1948): 2.

18. Ecuador. Ministerio de Previsión Social, *Informe a la nación (1961-1962)* (Quito: Imprenta de la Empresa de Suministros, 1962), 118.

19. Basile and Paredes, 47.

foresight, and a lack of proper funding to run the hospital. Problems also included a lack of potable water in Cayambe. To install a water system and repair the building would cost almost forty thousand sucres, a figure the director apparently considered too high. The *Asistencia Pública* director suggested that with good road and train connections, many of these patients could be brought to Quito for treatment. He considered "the modern tendency in hospital service is to centralize clinics in large cities, leaving only emergency services in small cities."²⁰

20. *Informe que el presidente de la Junta Nacional de Beneficencia de Quito presente al Ministerio de lo Interior, Cultos, Beneficencia, &* (Quito: Imprenta de la Universidad Central, 1913), 8; *Informe de la Junta Nacional de Beneficencia de Quito* (Quito: Casa Editorial de Ernesto Monge, 1915), 5; *Informe de la Dirección de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública (1930)* (Quito: Imprenta Nacional, 1931), 17; *Informe de la Dirección de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública (1928-1929)* (Quito: Tipografía de la Escuela de Artes y Oficios, 1930), 20.

Table 7: Asistencia Pública Haciendas in Cayambe

Hacienda	Religious Order	Parroquia	Size in hectares (1950)	Value in sucres (1950)	Renter		
					1913-1921	1921-1929	1929-1937
Carrera	Agustín	Cangahua	615	711,091	Heliodoro de la Torre (1912)	Ignacio Fernández Salvador	
La Chimba	Merced	Olmedo	1265	5,815,065	Nicolás Espinosa Acevedo (1912)	José Rafael Delgado (1914)	
Moyurco San Pablo-urco	Merced	Olmedo	3064	9,897,029	José Alberto Páez	Julio Miguel Páez	
Pesillo Pucará	Merced	Olmedo	1588	8,058,609	Aquiles Jarrín Espinosa	José Rafael Delgado	
Pisambilla	Merced	Cangahua	1525	3,206,640	Ernesto Fierro	Enrique Gallegos	Ignacio Fernández Salvador
Santo Domingo de Cayambe	Santo Domingo	Ayora	2496	2,343,925	Honorario Jaramillo (1915) Carlos Fernández (1917)	Rafael Hidalgo (1924)	

Source: Rental agreements from ANH and JCAP; *Boletín Informativo de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública de Quito* (Quito: Imprenta del Ministerio de Tesoro, January-September 1950), 66.

Although the entire *Asistencia Pública* program was built on the backs of the workers on the state-owned haciendas, there was a good deal of resistance to extending the health services which this program provided to these same workers. In his annual report in 1931 after uprisings on the Pesillo hacienda, the director Augusto

Egas claimed that the Indian workers were attacking an institution which was working for communal interests and their actions threatened the program's work with the "truly needy" who were in hospitals and orphanages in the cities.²¹ Even the hospital in Cayambe was not designed to provide health services to Indians and peasants in the area, but rather to "whites" in the city of Cayambe as well as in the neighboring canton of Pedro Moncayo and the province of Imbabura. It was, therefore, a major policy shift when in 1950, forty-two years after the founding of the *Asistencia Pública* program, a rural medicine program was established in northern Cayambe. Just over four-thousand sucres (as compared to almost 100,000 sucres for the hospital in Cayambe) was budgeted for a rural clinic in Pesillo. Medicine dispensaries were also to be established in Pesillo, Moyurco, and Santo Domingo. Cayambe was the first area to benefit from this rural medicine program.²² A subsequent report noted that the clinic in Pesillo had attended 4,131 sick people and had visited 467 homes.²³

Upon expropriating Pesillo from La Merced order, the Ecuadorian government attempted to run the hacienda itself for a number of years. The government, however, proved to be inept at the task, and by 1913 in the face of pressures from landlords, agreed to rent the hacienda to private individuals. The people who rented the Pesillo hacienda (as well as other state-owned haciendas in the *Asistencia Pública* program) came from the same agrarian bourgeois class (and often were the very same *people*) who owned neighboring private haciendas. Thus, for the next fifty years, renters signed eight-year leases for rights to the hacienda. In 1913, the government rented Pesillo to Aquiles Jarrín Espinosa, one of Cayambe's "city fathers" who often played a central role in municipal policy decisions which might affect the administration of

21. *Informe de la Dirección de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública (1930)* (Quito: Imprenta Nacional, 1931), 52.

22. *Boletín Informativo de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública de Quito* (Quito: Imprenta del Ministerio de Tesoro, January-September 1950), 43.

23. *Boletín Informativo de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública de Quito* (Quito: Imprenta del Ministerio de Tesoro, October-December 1950), 47.

haciendas. He was a relative of Alfredo Jarrín who served as president of the municipality of Cayambe. These apparent conflicts of interest did not appear to bother the administrators of the *Asistencia Pública* program.

Because of its unwieldy size, the state encountered difficulties in finding renters for the entire Pesillo hacienda. The government, therefore, eventually divided Pesillo into five separate haciendas or "departments" named La Chimba, Pesillo, Pucará, Moyurco (sometimes spelled Muyurco), and San Pablourco (sometimes spelled San Pablo-urco or San Pablo Urco). It leased each one to private owners usually for a period of eight years. Without the Indigenous work force, the hacienda would be virtually worthless, and thus the workers were included in the lease as if they were part of the property. Inventories from 1913 before the haciendas were given to their respective renters listed a total of 205 peons in all of the departments of Pesillo. The total debt of all the peons to the hacienda was 11,486.23 sucres.²⁴ As during the Merced occupation, these new bosses were absentee landlords who relied on local administrators to manage the haciendas' affairs. These new landlords did not express any more interest in modernizing or mechanizing production than the previous owners. Even under state control, the abusive landholding patterns and the exploitation which the Indigenous workers faced remained the same.

In 1913, Jarrín paid twenty thousand sucres (about ten thousand dollars) a year in rent for Pesillo and Pucará. The payments were to be made quarterly, and if he missed two consecutive rent payments he could forfeit rights to the hacienda. Renters were also required to either deposit money with *Asistencia Pública* or put up property as a guarantee on the rented hacienda. Jarrín, following a common practice, used another one of his haciendas (La Compañía) as the deposit. Other renters frequently used houses, land, or cash for the deposit. The rent and deposit requirements assured that only the wealthy elite could afford to rent the haciendas. For those who had the

24. Inventarios de Haciendas, 1913, JCAP.

disposable capital, renting these haciendas from the state proved to be a very lucrative business.

In 1921, the government rented the Pesillo hacienda to José Rafael Delgado, who renewed his lease three times for a total of twenty-four years. It was under Delgado's charge that peasant organizations first emerged at Pesillo. As will be demonstrated in the next chapter, Delgado gained a justly deserved reputation as a heavy handed and abusive master. In 1945, the entire Pesillo hacienda produced thirty-six percent of Cayambe's cereal crops, eleven percent of the canton's potatoes, twenty-eight percent of its cattle, twenty-five percent of its wool, and thirteen percent of its milk.²⁵

Huasipungueros at Pesillo and other *Asistencia Pública* haciendas in the 1920s faced a situation similar to that on other privately owned properties. They normally received in exchange for their work on the hacienda a small plot of land between three and six hectares in size, rights to collect firewood, pasture land for animals, and a salary of twenty centavos a day. They worked six days a week (Monday through Saturday), often from six in the morning to six at night, though during periods of planting and harvesting the workday could be longer. In addition, family members (including the wife and children) were also expected to work for free and provide personal service (*huasicama*) to the hacienda owner. As Mercedes Prieto has noted, to fulfill the contract with the *hacendado*, "the *huasipunguero* had to mobilize all of his family's resources."²⁶

The contracts which renters signed with the government compelled them to effect certain improvements on the property. For example, José Alberto Páez who rented Moyurco and San Pablourco in 1913 was required within the first three years of his eight-year contract to build a five-room house with wood from Pesillo.²⁷ The

25. Prieto, "Haciendas estatales," 105.

26. *Ibid.*, 106.

27. Contrato de arrendamiento a José Alberto Páez, Quito, March 4, 1913, ANH,

renters would be paid for these and other required improvements. The contracts also often stipulated that at the termination of the agreement, the renters were to leave the land planted with crops. For example, a contract which Aquiles Jarrín Espinosa signed in 1914 to rent the Pesillo and Pucará haciendas required him to plant 150 *fanegas* (about ninety-five hectares) of wheat "sown of good seed and in good ground" as well as one hundred *fanegas* (about sixty-five hectares) of barley and potatoes.²⁸ It was left to Jarrín's discretion, however, what entailed good land and seed. In addition, renters were never required to utilize ecologically sound or sustainable forms of production, or to plant ground cover crops in order to prevent erosion. Required hacienda inventories were also very vague. A renter might be presented with two hundred milk cows and required to return the hacienda with the same number of cows. But the cows were not specifically or properly identified, and a renter might return the hacienda to the government with cows of lesser quality.²⁹

More importantly, the renters were never instructed on how to handle the most important commodity on the haciendas: the human capital, the peons. A contract which José Rafael Delgado signed in 1928 stipulated that he must return the hacienda with the same number of peons, and that he could not take the peons to other haciendas or property. Jarrín's rental agreement further stated that he would receive forty sucres for each additional peon he brought to the hacienda.³⁰ The contracts, however, did not instruct the renters on what salary they were to pay the workers, the length of a work week, or the conditions under which they were to toil. The irony of having a public welfare program designed to benefit the people paying its workers the lowest

EP/P3a, vol. 161, t. 1, 265.

28. Contrato adicional de arrendamiento a Aquiles Jarrín Espinosa, Quito, May 27, 1914, ANH, EP/P3a, vol. 164, t. 1, 1388.

29. *Informe presentado por el Director de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública de Quito al Ministerio del Ramo* (Quito: Talleres Graficos Nacional, 1948), 73.

30. Contrato de arrendamiento a José Rafael Delgado, Quito, November 14, 1928, ANH, EP/P3a, vol. 196, 564; Contrato de arrendamiento a Aquiles Jarrín Espinosa, Quito, February 28, 1913, ANH, EP/P3a, vol. 161, t. 1, 228.

wages in the country and under the worst working conditions was not lost on everyone.³¹ Even the director of the *Asistencia Pública* program eventually criticized the renters for using the Indians "as a form of replaceable animal traction" instead of educating them.³²

An indication of the complete disregard which the renters had for their workers is reflected in Delgado's refusal to build houses for his workers. Delgado's final contract for renting La Chimba required him to build three houses every year of the eight-year contract for the *huasipungueros* on the hacienda. The houses, which were to be worth 1,500 sucres each, were to be built above three thousand meters with straw roofs and according to plans which the *Junta* would provide. Delgado did not build the houses, and when the *Junta* attempted to charge him the 36,000 sucres for the twenty-four houses plus a fifty-percent fine he claimed that he had never received instructions for building them and therefore should not have to pay. In any case, the liquidation of his account for the hacienda credited him with tools and oxen he had purchased for the hacienda, and in the end he did not owe the *Asistencia Pública* program anything.³³

Although the *Asistencia Pública* program never set wage guidelines for the workers on the haciendas, part of the income from renting the haciendas paid salaries for religious workers (priests and nuns) who had lost their base of financial support when the state expropriated religious properties. The monthly salary varied from order to order, and it steadily rose over time. In 1929, 207 religious workers received

31. Basile and Paredes, 30.

32. *Informe presentado por el Director de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública de Quito al Ministerio del Ramo* (Quito: Talleres Graficos Nacional, 1948), 72.

33. Letter from Pedro Donoso Lasso, Perito de la Junta, to Manuel H. Villacis, Vocal de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública, December 9, 1946, 990-91; Final report on La Chimba to the Director de Asistencia Pública, September 27, 1946, 1570-77; Letter from J.A. Troya Cevallos, Personera Auxiliar to the Director de Asistencia Pública, August 20, 1946 (informe no. 94-PJ), 1547; all in Correspondencia Recibida, Segunda Semestre, Primera Parte 1946, JCAP.

salaries which varied from twenty-six to forty sucres; *Asistencia Pública* paid out a total of 72,875.28 sucres that year for these salaries.³⁴ In comparison, a peon on one of the haciendas might earn (before debts were subtracted) four or five sucres a month with which he needed to support his entire family.

Reforms of the *Asistencia Pública* Program

Many analysts have considered the *Asistencia Pública* program a resounding failure. A study from the 1940s noted that before the government confiscated the haciendas, they contained some of the best land in the country and were noted for their high levels of production. The system of short-term leases predictably discouraged investments or improvements on the haciendas. Eight years was not long enough to realize a return on investments designed to modernize or improve agricultural production. The private renters thus lacked incentive to improve the land but rather exploited it to its fullest extent for short-term gain. This lack of investment meant declining production for the haciendas and increased environmental degradation including the erosion of land and a failure to replenish the soil. By the mid-twentieth century, the level of production on these public lands had fallen well below that of surrounding land. It was not only the abuse and exploitation of the land which lowered the value of the government-owned haciendas, but also the abuse and exploitation of the workers.³⁵

Modern technology was almost completely absent from the government's haciendas. Cultivation was done by hand or with animal traction (such as oxen). Despite the fact that Pesillo was an agriculturally rich area, the quality and level of production fell year after year and was low compared to land in other countries. From the time of expropriation to the 1940s, potato production fell seventy-five percent and wheat production fell by fifty percent. Whereas daily milk production of a cow on the Pesillo hacienda averaged 2.7 liters and two liters at Pisambilla, other haciendas

34. *Informe de la Dirección de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública (1928-1929)* (Quito: Tipografía de la Escuela de Artes y Oficios, 1930), Censo de Religiosos.

35. Basile and Paredes, 29.

averaged ten liters of milk per cow per day.³⁶ A lack of sufficient investment capital to bring production up to modern standards plagued the haciendas.

Table 8: Profit Increase in Sucre With Direct Administration (1946)

Hacienda	January-May	June-December	Total	Previous annual rent	Profit increase
Carrera	--	37,977.07	37,977.07	9,500	28,644.09
La Chimba	--	118,487.87	118,487.87	17,500	100,987.87
Moyurco	191,228.57	239,118.15	430,346.72	80,000	350,346.72
Pesillo	83,098.20	466,443.23	549,541.43	80,000	469,541.43

Source: *Informe presentado por el Director de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública de Quito al Ministerio del Ramo* (Quito: Talleres Graficos Nacional, 1948), 75.

After years of renting out its haciendas, the Ecuadorian government finally realized that the renters were only benefiting themselves and not the public interest. The director of the *Asistencia Pública* program accused the renters of abusing the lands mercilessly and of not employing rational cultivation methods. They used antiquated production techniques and exploited the workers, the land, and the animals to the maximum with the goal of enriching only themselves. They would shun proper upkeep on buildings because they would just have to abandon them at the end of their contract. The destruction was total, the director concluded. The state's haciendas now only had "ruined buildings, clear-cut forests, old iron for tools, exhausted cattle, eroded land, and worn-out pastures."³⁷ After renting La Chimba for years, Delgado left the hacienda in very bad shape with pastures that had been "transformed into

36. *Ibid.*, 15, 29.

37. *Informe presentado por el Director de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública de Quito al Ministerio del Ramo* (Quito: Talleres Graficos Nacional, 1948), 72, 73, 77, 79.

sterile sites, without grass and with thorny plants."³⁸ In addition, there was the problem of renters paying the rents on time. Faced with this abusive situation, the government decided to administer some of the haciendas directly.

Almost all of the state-owned haciendas in Cayambe (with the exception of Pisambilla in Cangahua) thus passed into direct governmental administration. The government's initial figures demonstrated a large increase in the profitability of the haciendas under direct administration (see Table 8). The first eleven haciendas brought under direct control included four in Cayambe. Together, in 1946 alone they allegedly earned the *Asistencia Pública* program a net gain of about two and a half million sucres over what they otherwise would have produced in rents. In his annual report from 1950, director Luis Coloma Silva noted that twenty nine of the haciendas were rented and fifteen were now administered directly. He also announced a decision to concentrate capital investments and mechanical equipment on four haciendas, including Pesillo and La Chimba. Already in 1947, with the goal of mechanizing and modernizing the haciendas, Moyurco had been provided with a Caterpillar tractor as well as a planter and a reaper. Pesillo and Paquiestancia received Allis Chalmers tractors, and La Chimba received an International tractor.

The end result of direct administration, however, was hardly better than the situation with the previous renters. There were constant problems with the machines, including using the wrong type of fuel which resulted in engine problems. In June of 1946, the administrator at Pesillo reported in a letter stamped "urgent" to the Director of *Asistencia Pública* that in order to avoid imminent losses, the hacienda needed two tires for the reaper and repairs to the motors of the planters.³⁹ In addition, the

38. Letter from Pablo Páez, Encargado Jefetura Departamento de Haciendas, to the Director de Asistencia Pública, June 8, 1946 (oficio no. 530-DHC), Correspondencia Recibida, Segunda Semestre, Primera Parte 1946, 610, JCAP.

39. Letter from Pablo Páez, Encargado Jefetura Departamento de Haciendas, to the Director de Asistencia Pública, June 8, 1946 (oficio no. 530-DHC), Correspondencia Recibida, Segunda Semestre, Primera Parte 1946, 609, JCAP.

haciendas largely did not meet their production goals, and the administrators of the haciendas failed to do the proper reporting required of them.⁴⁰

David Basile, who conducted field research for his dissertation in the 1940s, commented that "neither the former renters, who exploited the haciendas ruthlessly, nor the present administrators, who generally are untrained, have utilized these haciendas effectively." The result, Basile noted, was that the haciendas were "generally characterized by their run-down appearance, eroded and exhausted soils, equipment which is inadequate in terms of amounts and state of repair, and by agricultural and social practices which suggest the feudal age."⁴¹ Even with its intent to mechanize the haciendas, the state did not have the capital, equipment, or technical knowledge to properly develop the haciendas. It would have been better to divest itself of the vast unused tracts of land and focus its efforts instead on a manageable area. "A smaller number of properties, but effectively administered," Basile had previously advised, "would produce more income for the *Asistencia Pública* program than what its poorly administered vast tracts currently produce."⁴²

By the 1950s, the *Asistencia Pública* program faced increased agitation to break up its land holdings in order to utilize them for other purposes. Pedro Saad, a communist leader and senator, publicly proclaimed that the land should be sold and the proceeds used to attend to peasant needs, first for the *huasipungueros* and other workers on the haciendas, second for municipal governments to redistribute to people

40. *Informe presentado por el Director de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública de Quito al Ministerio del Ramo* (Quito: Talleres Graficos Nacional, 1948), 75, 79; *Boletín Informativo de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública de Quito* (Quito: Imprenta del Ministerio de Tesoro, January-September 1950), 25, 26; *Boletín Informativo de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública de Quito* (Quito: Imprenta del Ministerio de Tesoro, October-December 1950), 119-20; *Boletín Informativo de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública de Quito* (Quito: Imprenta del Ministerio de Tesoro, January-March 1951), 83-85.

41. David Giovanni Basile, "The Quito Basin: A Case Study Illustrating Rural Land Use in the Ecuadorean Highlands" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1964), 247.

42. Basile and Paredes, 47.

who did not have any land to cultivate, and finally to peasants and cooperatives.⁴³ As Saad's comments indicate, there were many calls for agrarian reform based on the wealth of the government's hacienda lands. There was no uniform consensus, however, of precisely how such programs would be best instituted.

A study which the Organization of American States sponsored in the 1960s also pointed to the overwhelming failure of the 1908 *Ley de Manos Muertas* and the *Asistencia Pública* program which it spawned. Not even half of the project's stated objectives had been met, and the poor administration of the haciendas only increased poverty in the country.⁴⁴ It was in the context of these failures of this governmental program that Ecuador's modern Indian movement had its birth.

Guachalá hacienda

Guachalá in the *parroquia* of Cangahua was one of the largest, oldest, and best-known haciendas in Cayambe, and comprised most of the *parroquia*'s 950 square kilometers. Guachalá's history is typical of private land holding patterns in the southern part of the canton. As in Pesillo, the hacienda performed many of the functions which the secular parish government would later assume. Cangahua historically had been an impoverished and marginalized area with minimal access to basic services such as health and education. Almost the entire population was Indigenous and engaged in rural agricultural labor. Over ninety percent of the people lived outside of the parish seat (also called Cangahua) and in one of forty-three rural communities. As Table 9 demonstrates, this Indigenous population lived on little or no land, while only eighteen estates controlled almost eighty percent of the land. This extreme imbalance in land ownership resulted in an impoverished situation and a history of Indigenous revolts and organized attempts to alter the land tenure pattern.

43. "Tierras de la Asistencia Pública deben ser parceladas," *El Pueblo*, August 23, 1952, 1.

44. CIDA, 118.

The Guachalá hacienda played a leading role in this history of challenges to the land tenure system in the twentieth century. This was partly due to the fact that the hacienda held most of the land in the region which made it a focus of protest in the region. Guachalá was also a modernizing influence which affected the nature of agrarian reform policies in Ecuador. It provides a good counter example to the history of institutional administration at Pesillo. Because of the private ownership of Guachalá, protest there was not as pronounced or as public as at Pesillo. Nevertheless, Guachalá does have a history of protest which is worthy of consideration, although organizing efforts often took place in the private arena with the hacienda owners attempting to resolve issues without outside intervention.

Table 9: Land Distribution in the Parroquia of Cangahua (1984)

Size (in hectares)	Number of house- holds	Percentage of total households	Extent in hectares	Percentage of land	Average size / unit
no land	255	37.6	--	--	--
0.04 - 5	319	46.9	366	3.7	1.2
5 - 10	65	9.6	330	3.4	5.1
10 - 50	5	0.7	150	1.5	30.0
50 - 90	17	2.5	1123	11.5	66.1
90+	18	2.7	7839	79.9	435.5
Total	679	100	9808	100	

Source: Iván Cisneros, 169.

The origin of the Guachalá hacienda lies in the Spanish Crown's action of naming Pedro Martín as the *encomendero* of Cayambe in 1552. Although the *encomienda* system was intended only to give the holder rights to Indian labor, in 1647 the *encomendero* Francisco de Villacis gained legal title from the Spanish crown to the land which comprised the hacienda of Guachalá. During the seventeenth and

eighteenth centuries, the size of the hacienda grew. The owners established a textile workshop (*obraje*) and turned the hacienda into an important exporter of textiles. In addition to wool and textile production, it also produced agricultural products including barley, corn, wheat, potatoes, peas, lentils, cheese, milk, and cattle. The hacienda passed through a series of different owners' hands, including the Jesuits who utilized it to produce one thousand *arrobos* (about 11,250 kilograms) of wool before being expelled from South America in 1767. At the height of its operation which lasted from about 1700 to 1947, the hacienda was comprised of over twelve thousand hectares or almost nine percent of the current land mass of the canton of Cayambe.⁴⁵

The land on the Guachalá hacienda was divided into three ecological zones. Almost a third of the hacienda's land mass lay at the lowest level between 2600 and 3200 meters, and was dedicated to the *obraje*, milk and cheese production, and the cultivation of corn, wheat, and potatoes. Above that, from 3200 to 3400 meters, was a relatively small amount of land that grew potatoes, barley, peas, and lentils, and contained the *huasipungo* plots of the workers. Two-thirds of the land was *páramo* grassland which lay between 3400 and 4100 meters, and provided pasture for sheep, cattle, mules, and other animals.⁴⁶

Toward the end of the eighteenth century, the Spanish crown attempted to bring the high *páramo* into intensive cultivation, particularly with tubers (including

45. Ramón, *Resistencia andina*, 239; Emilio Bonifaz, "Origen y evolución de una hacienda histórica: 'Guachalá' II," *Boletín de la Academia Nacional de Historia (BANH)* (Quito) 53:116 (July-December 1970): 342. For a survey of the history of Guachalá, see Emilio Bonifaz's two-part essay "Origen y evolución de una hacienda histórica," as well as Diego Bonifaz Andrade, *Guachalá: Historia de una hacienda de Cayambe* (Quito: Ediciones Abya-Yala, 1995) and Ramón's *Resistencia andina*. The original documents outlining the history of the Guachalá hacienda are in the Archivo Histórico del Banco Central del Ecuador (AH/BC), Fondo Neptalí Bonifaz, Quinta Serie: Documentos sobre la hacienda Guachalá y anexas. Some of the materials from after the division of the hacienda in 1947 are located in the Biblioteca de la Hacienda de Guachalá, which is located on the hacienda in Cayambe.

46. Ramón, *Resistencia andina*, 242.

potatoes), barley, and beans. This attempt failed, but through the implementation of different types of agricultural practices, free Indians (*indios libres*) managed to scratch a subsistence living from this soil. Expanding haciendas which were slowly taking over all of the cultivable land in the area had pushed these Indians off their land. Over time, the situation of land tenureship did not improve but continued to worsen. From the beginning of the nineteenth century to the start of land reform in the 1960s, the population of free Indians who were not attached to an hacienda quadrupled, but the amount of land available to them to cultivate remained the same.⁴⁷ As land became increasingly concentrated in the hands of a small group of wealthy landowners, more and more of these Indians became dependent on the haciendas for seasonal labor and access to natural resources such as water, firewood, and pasture land.

Haciendas used a variety of tactics to dispossess Indians of their land. According to Emilio Bonifaz, one of the hacienda's final owners, Cayambe regularly experienced droughts which especially during the colonial era resulted in periods of hunger. During the eighteenth century, the overgrazing of sheep (used to produce wool for use in the *obraje*) resulted in erosion which destroyed pasture land in the higher zones of the hacienda. In addition, wind, cold, and even volcanic eruptions destroyed parts of the hacienda, including plants and animals. Bonifaz stated that all of these factors plus

the epidemics, mitas, plagues, and hunger must have helped the owners of Guachalá extend the size of the pasture land toward the zones which the Indigenous people occupied; every time that a piece of land was unoccupied because the family who occupied it was extinguished, the hacienda would take it for itself.⁴⁸

47. Iván Cisneros, "Guanguilqui: El agua para los runas," *Ecuador Debate* (Quito) 14 (November 1987): 164-65, 166-67.

48. Bonifaz, "Origen y evolución de una hacienda histórica," pt. II, 342-43.

Table 10: Number of Workers on Guachalá Hacienda (1763-1892)

Year	Workers out of debt	Workers in debt to the hacienda	Total number of workers
1763	114 (66%)	60 (34%)	174
1783	145 (61%)	94 (39%)	239
1819	78 (39%)	124 (61%)	202
1892	21 (5%)	397 (93%)	428

Note: Ramón 1987: 249-50 lists quite different figures, and includes 1772 but omits 1892. The percentages for 1892 do not add up to 100% because ten people (or 2%) broke even that year.

Source: AH/BC; Bonifaz, pt. II, 349.

The Guachalá hacienda, as did others in the sierra, relied on indebted Indian labor caught in the *concierto* system. As Table 10 demonstrates, over time the number of workers on the hacienda and the percentage of those workers in debt increased. Over a one hundred year period from the late eighteenth century to the late nineteenth century, the number of workers rose two-and-a-half fold and at the same time the number of workers in debt rose from about one third to ninety-three percent. During the same time, as Table 11 shows, the purchasing power of a worker's salary steadily decreased resulting in the increased impoverishment of the Indigenous work force. During the twentieth century, cows and sheep became more expensive but horses (perhaps due to technological changes which shifted transportation and production from animal traction to mechanical means), corn, and potatoes became cheaper. Although this data does not present conclusive evidence, it does raise the possibility that the formation of protest movements in the twentieth century occurred in the context of rising social and economic expectations. It was not only the grinding oppression but the hope for a better life which led workers to organize.

Table 11: Peasant Cost of Living Index, 1771-1995
(Number of workdays required to purchase product)

Year	Cow	Sheep	Horse	Corn (100 lbs.)	Potatoes (100 lbs.)
1771	20	10	32	2	3
1783	24	2.5	18	*	*
1819	28	10	*	18	*
1891	60	3	300	10	15
1970	133	7	133	4	3
1995	150	40	60	3.4	3

*Information not available

Source: AH/BC; Bonifaz, Pt. II, 346; D. Bonifaz, 38-39.

The history of Guachalá is closely tied to that of Ecuador's political elites. Although the workers on the hacienda were marginalized and disenfranchised, its owners were some of Ecuador's most important movers and shakers. In 1868, Ecuadorian president Gabriel García Moreno, who owned the neighboring hacienda Changalá, rented Guachalá for a period of five years. García Moreno dominated Ecuadorian politics from 1859 to 1875. He was born in Guayaquil, but studied law and theology in Quito. He represented the landholding elite in the highlands and was a religious fanatic who intended to impose Catholic doctrine on the entire population. His 1861 constitution sought to shape Ecuador as a theocratic state, and it defined Catholicism as the country's exclusive religion. A subsequent 1869 constitution limited citizenship to practicing Catholics and denied civil rights to all others. This culminated in 1873 when he dedicated Ecuador to "The Sacred Heart of Jesus." His government sharply limited freedoms of speech and of the press and imposed economic reforms which benefitted foreign investors and large landholders before his foes assassinated him in the center of Quito in 1875.

In 1892, Josefina Ascásubi Salinas de Bonifaz bought the Guachalá hacienda. She was a daughter of García Moreno's brother-in-law Manuel Ascásubi, who had briefly served as president in 1869 under García Moreno's control. Josefina Ascásubi had married a Peruvian diplomat named Neptalí Bonifaz. Because of the long-standing tensions between the two neighboring countries, her family disinherited her for marrying a Peruvian. When her father died, however, her mother decided to give her the inheritance. Thus, it was with this money that Josefina Ascásubi Salinas de Bonifaz bought the Guachalá hacienda in 1892. Hers was an aristocratic family which, rather than living on the hacienda, maintained a large, three-story house in Quito on the main square known as the *Plaza de Independencia*. When Ascásubi died, in order to settle the inheritance it took weeks to tally up the estate which included the house and several haciendas.⁴⁹ Since she purchased the hacienda, the history of the Bonifaz family has been tightly tied to that of the Guachalá hacienda.

When Ascásubi died in 1924, she left the hacienda to her son Neptalí Bonifaz Ascásubi. This son defined the modern nature of the Guachalá hacienda. Although in many ways the Bonifaz family represented traditional attitudes characteristic of large landholders in the Ecuadorian sierra, they also sought to improve Guachalá and therefore symbolized a modernizing force in the northern highlands. Representative of this influence was that the family brought one of the first cars to the country. As was common for elites during that time, Bonifaz maintained close ties with Europe. The family was among the first in Ecuador to enjoy a variety of new technologies (such as color photographs) in Ecuador. This modernizing influence predates the Bonifaz family, as it was García Moreno who first introduced eucalyptus trees to the hacienda, establishing one of the first groves in Ecuador. It was not until the 1950s, however, that *hacendados* introduced modern farming techniques on a broader scale including machinery, fertilizers, irrigation, and better seed and cattle in the highlands.

49. Copia simple de la mortuoria de Josefina Ascásubi de Bonifaz, AH/BC, 17/B/3.

Neptalí Bonifaz Ascásubi was born in Quito in 1870. After studying at a Jesuit high school in Quito, he studied economics and politics in Europe for ten years. In 1898, he married Antonia Jijón Ascásubi (his first cousin) in Ecuador, and in 1908 he moved his entire family to Europe where they lived until 1926. He sought to provide his children with a European education, and he prospered economically marketing cacao from Ecuador. Upon his return to Ecuador in 1926, Bonifaz settled on the hacienda and dedicated himself to agriculture, searching for new techniques which would improve production on the hacienda. Bonifaz was also politically active in the affairs of the country and was named the first president of the newly formed Banco Central. In the 1931 elections, he ran as the presidential candidate for the Compactación Obrera Nacional which grouped workers, artisans, and peasants who had immigrated to the city. Despite its name, the Compactación was a center-right coalition with its main base of support in the highlands. He won the elections, but the congress disqualified his victory because of questions concerning his citizenship. He had traveled to Europe with a Peruvian passport, and it was not until 1914, when he was forty-four years old, that he requested Ecuadorian citizenship.⁵⁰ This decision resulted in a four-day civil war in August of 1932 known as the *Guerra de los cuatro días* in which liberal forces rallied the military and defeated the conservative forces allied with Bonifaz, killing thousands of people in the process. Bonifaz retreated to the Guachalá hacienda, apparently disenchanted with politics, but in 1939 he served again as president of the Banco Central and was also a member of the Sociedad Nacional de Agricultura (National Agriculture Society), an elite group of *hacendados* who helped determine the agricultural policies of the country.

50. In 1996, another presidential candidate, Freddy Ehlers, also was caught in a controversy over the question of citizenship in the country to the south, but this time it was his wife who was the Peruvian. In discussing the situation, an editorial writer in the Quito daily paper *El Comercio* referred to Bonifaz's case in the early 1930s. See Jorge Ribadeneira, "De don Neptalí al 96," *El Comercio*, February 15, 1996, 4A.

As representative of their ideological orientation, in 1929 the Sociedad Nacional de Agricultura released a statement which affirmed the rights of private property in the face of leftist threats. The statement, which Bonifaz along with many other Ecuadorian landed elites signed, claimed that the problem which they faced was not the lack of land and overpopulation, but rather the opposite. There was unused land, including land close to population centers which only awaited for people to cultivate it. "We have enough land," the statement said, "for everyone in Ecuador and for many, many people who will hopefully come from outside the country to work."⁵¹ The question remains, however, land for whom and for what purpose? Moisés Sáenz, one of the few *indigenistas* from the 1930s who actually had extensive first-hand experience in the rural areas of the Ecuadorian highlands, noted that although haciendas did not utilize all of the land at their disposal, Indians were forced to cultivate marginal areas with steep slopes and rocky soil. The question was not one of overpopulation. Sáenz estimated Ecuador's total population at two-and-a-half million people, but noted that the country could easily accommodate five times more.⁵² The land tenure question, therefore, does not become one of available land, but a question of distribution and the concentration of land in the hands of a conservative, elite, wealthy class. Furthermore, this concentration of property forced peasants out of subsistence agriculture and into proletarian-type relations on haciendas. Thus, land tenure also impacted labor relations in rural Cayambe.

51. Sociedad Nacional de Agricultura, "La Sociedad Nacional de Agricultura a la nación," *Sociedad Nacional de Agricultura Revista* (Quito) 9:83 (March 1929): 5.

52. Sáenz, 115, 186. The 1990 Ecuadorian census placed the country's total population at 9,648,189, which still falls comfortably within Sáenz' estimated carrying capacity of 12,500,000 people.

Table 12: Guachalá Hacienda Production (1930-1933) in Sucre

Year	Gross Income	Expenses	Net Income
1930	127,125.71	108,104.65	19,021.06
1931	99,231.71	45,369.00	53,862.71
1932	52,524.11	24,714.55	27,809.56
1933	69,985.68	13,731.85	56,253.83
Total	348,867.21	191,920.05	156,947.16
Average	87,216.80	47,980.01	39,236.79

Source: Detalle de la producción de Guachalá, AH/BC, 17/A/5.

Upon taking over the hacienda, Bonifaz ordered a census of workers who had died during the previous administration of Juan Manuel Lasso and of new *concierto* workers who had joined the hacienda. The census gives an idea of the size of the work force on the hacienda. In total, twenty-eight people had died, and fifty-five new workers had entered into a contractual work agreement with the hacienda. A total of 311 workers were present in the three "departments" of the hacienda, two hundred and twenty two on Guachalá, seventy nine on Pambamarca, and ten at Urapamba.⁵³ Bonifaz's attempts to increase efficiency of the hacienda are also evident in his records. Table 12 demonstrates how by minimizing expenses between 1930 and 1933, Bonifaz managed to increase the profitability of Guachalá by almost three hundred percent.

Well into the twentieth century, the hacienda house remained much as it was for centuries before. The walls were made out of brick, there was no running water, electricity, or indoor facilities, and many of the rooms did not have windows.⁵⁴ Wages and working conditions also remained at a miserable level. Agricultural laborers were expected to work from seven o'clock in the morning to four or five o'clock in the

53. "Lista de peones fallecidos durante el período de arrendamiento de Guachalá al coronel Juan Manuel Lasso," AH/BC, 17/A/1.

54. Bonifaz, "Origen y evolución de una hacienda histórica," pt. II, 345.

afternoon for a daily wage of forty centavos. Only later with the pressures of labor laws were salaries raised to six sucres a day.⁵⁵

In 1947, five years before he died, Neptalí Bonifaz divided the hacienda between his four children. This was the beginning of the end of the expansive Guachalá hacienda. His eldest son, Emilio Bonifaz, received a part of the land which became known as the Porotog hacienda. His daughter Maria received a part called Pitaná as well as part of the hacienda house. Two other sons, Luis de Ascázubi and Cristóbal Bonifaz, received parts known as La Josefina and Pambamarca. These children, understanding that agrarian reform laws would be passed imminently, subsequently gave and sold land to their workers. This hastened the breakup of the lands into smaller private haciendas, and later into cooperatives, and finally into the hands of individual Indians who lived in rural communities spread through the *parroquia* of Cangahua.

Emilio Bonifaz was an author and self-styled sociologist whose writings had a strong social-darwinian bend. Although the Bonifaz family had a reputation as a progressive force, Emilio's writings betray the lingering racist mentality of the hacienda owners in Ecuador. He described the psychology of the Indians as "sad, reclusive, introverted, monstrously territorial, and conservative."⁵⁶ This was a continuation of Spanish colonial attitudes toward the Indian workers, which depicted them as vagrants, cowards, drunkards, liars, and ignorant; in short, Galo Ramón has observed, "all of the negative qualities which belonged to the Spanish and creoles they assigned to the other, to the Indians, in order to justify the colonial violence, the *mitas*, the tribute payments, and the taking of their belongings."⁵⁷

55. Salamea, 59.

56. Bonifaz, "Origen y evolución de una hacienda histórica," pt. I, 119. For more information on his sociological ideas, see Emilio Bonifaz, *Los indígenas de altura del Ecuador*, 2d ed., updated with new notes (Quito: Politecnica, 1976).

57. Ramón, *Resistencia andina*, 254.

On the parts of the hacienda which Cristóbal Bonifaz began to administer in 1947, there were forty-one *huasipungueros* at Pambamarca, seventeen at Bellavista, and twelve milk maids (*ordeñadoras*). He paid each peon seventy-five centavos for the first 208 days of work and 1.05 sucres for each additional day of work. The number of days each peon worked at Pambamarca varied from a low of 205 to a high of 364, with an average of 284 days. The person who worked 205 days apparently died in the middle of the year and did not receive any payment for his work. Of the other forty workers, only two ended the year in debt. After subtracting debts, the wages which each worker received varied from 375 sucres to a debt of 96.80 sucres, with an average of 133.40 sucres or forty-seven centavos for each day worked. Excluding five workers who began part way through the year, the peons at Bellavista worked an average of more days (311) and netted a slightly higher wage for the year (146 sucres). The milk maids, however, were worse off. Excluding three people who worked only part of the year, these women worked on an average more days (323), more often ended up in debt (three of nine), and after settling debts walked away with a smaller average wage (90.80 sucres) for the year's work, or twenty-eight centavos a day.⁵⁸

The seven employees who worked for Cristóbal Bonifaz administering his property fared much better than the peons who toiled in the fields. Leonidas Villalba, the administrator, earned a monthly salary of eight hundred sucres plus a *quintal* (one hundred pounds or about forty-five kilograms) of potatoes and barley and two *arrobos* (fifty pounds or about twenty-two kilograms) of corn a month, six liters of milk a day, and the right to maintain sixteen animals on the hacienda. The *escribiente* (scribe) earned a monthly salary of 200 sucres plus a *quintal* of potatoes and barley each month, three liters of milk a day, and space for nine animals. The *mayordomo* (manager or foreman) for Bellavista earned a monthly salary of 150 sucres plus two

58. *Libro de rayas de los peones de Bellavista I Pambamarca (1947)*, Biblioteca de la Hacienda de Guachalá.

arrobas of potatoes and barley and one of corn a month, three liters of milk a day, and space for eight animals. The other four employees earned only cash wages: 180 sucres a month for the *mayordomo* at Pambamarca, 110 sucres for his *ayudante* (helper), sixty sucres for another helper, fifty sucres for a gardener, and a carpenter who was paid by the job.⁵⁹ The extreme imbalance between the wages of the employees who worked in the hacienda house and of the Indian workers in the fields is immediately obvious. The lowest-paid employee (the gardener) earned three times more than a peon, and the cash wage of the administrator (not taking into account the extra benefits he received) was some fifty times higher than that of an Indian worker.

Finally, the 1964 Agrarian Reform law required the landholders to give land to the workers (*huasipungueros*). By the 1970s, most of the former hacienda land was in the hands of Indigenous workers and part of it was sold to businesses who used it for the agricultural production of milk, flowers, and wood. In 1993, like many other former haciendas in Ecuador, the hacienda house was converted into a hotel under the care of Diego Bonifaz, a son of Cristóbal and nephew of Emilio Bonifaz.

Important structural and historical differences existed between the northern and southern regions in Cayambe. Whereas in the north on the Pesillo hacienda labor systems were based largely on the *huasipungo* system, the Guachalá hacienda in the south made much more extensive use of *yanaperos* and other peons without permanent ties to the hacienda. Galo Ramón has also compared the type of production on haciendas in the two regions. At the end of the nineteenth century, production at Guachalá was focused on the *obraje* and agricultural crops were subordinate to that activity. In contrast, the northern haciendas were dedicated to crop and cattle production.⁶⁰ In addition, whereas Guachalá was a privately owned hacienda with a long history in the Ascásubi and Bonifaz family, during the twentieth century the

59. 1947 *Libro de suplios*, Biblioteca de la Hacienda de Guachalá.

60. Galo Ramón, "Cayambe: El problema regional y la participación política," Debate (Quito) 3 (August 1983): 163.

haciendas in northern Cayambe were in the hands of renters. According to Andrés Guerrero, it was easier for the workers to revolt against renters who would soon be gone and did not have a long-term interest in the estate than against the formal owners of an hacienda. This created a peculiar situation in which renters and workers fought over land which neither of them owned.⁶¹

Because of these differences, it took protest longer in Guachalá to surface in the public arena. Although land tenure and labor relations on the Guachalá hacienda emerged in a manner distinct from that on the Pesillo hacienda in northern Cayambe, workers on both haciendas eventually organized themselves into movements to defend their rights. Economic relations on the hacienda had a clear impact on this organizational trajectory, but ethnicity also played an important role.

Although lengthy, this cultural and economic history forms a necessary basis for analyzing protest actions. It also indicates the historical depth of these events and the basis which they provided in the formation of Ecuador's modern Indian movement. These land tenure patterns and labor relations formed the basis for rural organizing efforts in northern Cayambe until the 1960s when agrarian reform legislation and the rise of ethnic federations altered the socio-economic conditions and created a new historical situation. It is to that history of organization and protest in Cayambe which we now turn.

61. Andrés Guerrero, Personal Communication, April 28, 1996.

Part Two

Organization and Protest

Chapter Six

Una Revolución Comunista Indígena: Rural Protest Movements in Cayambe

Although the roots of the modern Indian movement in Ecuador lay in rural peasant actions on haciendas in Cayambe in the northern highlands, one of its first important actions took place in the urban capital of Quito. On May 16, 1926, at the inaugural session of a national assembly gathered in the municipal building which would establish the country's first formally organized socialist party, an Indian leader from Cayambe took the floor. Jesús Gualavisí, a delegate who represented the Sindicato de Trabajadores Campesinos de Juan Montalvo (Peasant Workers Syndicate of Juan Montalvo), proposed that this founding congress salute "all peasants [*campesinos*] in the Republic, indicating to them that the Party would work intensely" on their behalf. His proposal passed unanimously.¹

This congress in Quito was not the first attempt to organize a leftist movement in Ecuador, nor the first time that leftists addressed peasant and Indigenous issues, but it was the first time that an essentially urban movement confronted rural issues in a significant and systematic manner. More importantly, this event illustrates the relationship which urban leftists and rural workers enjoyed in Ecuador. The paternalism which the left is often accused of displaying toward Indigenous groups in Latin America was absent at this event. Neither does this encounter betray a dependency of rural Indians upon urban intellectuals. Rather, it represents a peer relationship in which the two groups struggled together to achieve common goals.

1. Partido Socialista Ecuatoriano (PSE), *Labores de la Asamblea Nacional Socialista y Manifiesto del Consejo Central del Partido (16-23-Mayo), Quito, 1926* (Guayaquil: Imp. "El Tiempo", 1926), 33.

This event also elucidates attitudes toward class consciousness and ethnic identity among Indigenous groups in Ecuador. Indigenous participation in the founding of Ecuador's Socialist Party represents the beginning of a profound structural analysis of Ecuadorian society. Gualavisí and other Indigenous leaders from Cayambe understood that in order to end the oppression and discrimination which they faced, they would need to effect radical changes in society. They needed allies to achieve this goal, and they found such allies among the members of the Socialist Party.

These Indian leaders did not embrace a class analysis of society to the exclusion of their ethnic identity as Indigenous peoples. Rather, Gualavisí and others emerged out of and continued to work with local grassroots Indigenous organizations. Furthermore, their actions demonstrate a significant change in the nature of Indigenous organizing efforts in Ecuador. Beginning with Gualavisí's involvement in leftist politics, Indigenous peasants turned away from looking for local solutions to what were essentially global structural problems. Economic and social relations on the haciendas were integrally tied to the broader capitalistic world system. An analysis of Indigenous organizing strategies and demands reveals a deep understanding of the political nature of the Ecuadorian state and the changes which would be necessary in order to improve their situation in society. This turn in organizational actions in Cayambe in the 1920s and 1930s from a local to a global analysis represents the birth of Ecuador's modern Indian movement.

A brief history of the Ecuadorian Left

The origins of leftist organizing efforts in Ecuador are similar to those in other Latin American countries. The history of Marxist struggles in Ecuador, as a political scientist observed, "has been a checkered tale of organizational competition, ideological conflicts, strategic and tactical disagreement, and a general fragmentation which has diminished its potential impact on public affairs."² As in the rest of Latin America,

2. John D. Martz, "Marxism in Ecuador," *Inter-American Economic Affairs* 33:1

leftist organizations in Ecuador emerged largely due to the efforts of urban professionals and intellectuals. Rather than Marxist parties rising out of working-class movements as they did in Europe, urban intellectuals were often at the forefront of organizing labor unions and peasant organizations in Ecuador and throughout Latin America.

The endeavors of Ecuadorian leftists have received little academic notice. Basic works on Latin American Marxism such as Luis Aguilar's *Marxism in Latin America* and Sheldon Liss' *Marxist Thought in Latin America* cite Ecuador only in passing as part of a broader movement.³ Neither author discusses the country in any detail or presents specific information on the movements which emerged there. Robert Alexander has noted that although small in numbers, the Ecuadorian Communist Party was, along with the Chilean Communist Party, "one of the two best manipulators of fellow-travelers in the whole continent."⁴ Even in Ecuador this leftist history has received minimal attention.⁵

Part of this disregard for Ecuador may be because it lacked the presence of Marxist intellectuals of the stature of José Carlos Mariátegui in Peru or Luis Emilio Recabarren in Chile. Ecuador did not experience any Communist-led large-scale revolts like that which Agustín Farabundo Martí organized in El Salvador in 1932. Nevertheless, leftist organizational efforts in Ecuador followed trajectories similar to those in other Latin American countries. Fifty-four delegates (mostly intellectuals,

(Summer 1979), 11.

3. Luis E. Aguilar, ed., *Marxism in Latin America*, revised edition, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1978), 17; Sheldon B. Liss, *Marxist Thought in Latin America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 35.

4. Robert Jackson Alexander, *Communism in Latin America* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1957), 235.

5. Two notable exceptions are Manuel Agustín Aguirre's essay "El marxismo, la revolución y los partidos socialista y comunista del Ecuador" in his book *Marx ante América Latina: Homenaje a Carlos Marx por el centenario de su muerte* (Quito: Instituto de Investigaciones Economicas, Universidad Central, 1985) and the essays collected in Domingo Paredes's edited volume *Los comunistas en la historia nacional* (Guayaquil: Editorial Claridad, S.A., 1987).

doctors, lawyers, and writers, in addition to a few workers and peasants) gathered for the Primera Asamblea Nacional Socialista (First National Socialist Assembly) at the Universidad Central del Ecuador in Quito on May 23-26, 1926, to found the Partido Socialista Ecuatoriano (PSE, Ecuadorian Socialist Party). This party grew from the efforts of Ricardo Paredes, Luis F. Maldonado Estrada, Jorge Carrera Andrade, and others who had been publishing the biweekly periodical *La Antorcha* (The Torch) in Quito.⁶ Although they published this newspaper for only six months during 1924 and 1925, it provided the means of public expression to several of the people who were to become key actors in the emergence of Ecuador's nascent leftist movement. The PSE was the first Marxist political organization in Ecuador, although not the first expression of Ecuador's popular movement. As with many leftist parties, it was rooted in the struggles of urban workers, and its political orientation came to dominate labor unions. Its concerns, therefore, were largely focused on issues of class struggle. Its organizational strategies grew out of a history of labor struggles.

The immediate context of the formation of the PSE was a military coup on July 9, 1925, which ended Liberal hegemony over Ecuador's government. It was the first time in Ecuadorian history that the military functioned as an institution rather than as individual *caudillos* acting in their own personal interest.⁷ This coup and subsequent military governments were not as reactionary as one might assume. Idealistic young officers who were more concerned with national interests than their own personal gain often led these coups. The failure of Eloy Alfaro's liberal reforms, especially the failure to limit the power of the elites, triggered this coup. The 1925 coup launched a period of social reforms which sought to modernize Ecuador and improve the situation

6. Robert J. Alexander, *Organized Labor in Latin America* (New York: The Free Press, 1965), 125; Martz, "Marxism in Ecuador," 4-5.

7. David Schodt, *Ecuador: An Andean Enigma*, Westview Profiles: Nations of Contemporary Latin America (Boulder: Westview Press, 1987), 50; Anita Isaacs, *Military Rule and Transition in Ecuador, 1972-92*, Pitt Latin American Series (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1993), 1.

of the country's disadvantaged masses. The coup leaders sought to break the coastal elites' control over national economic policy and also endeavored to foster industrialization of the economy. To this end, they invited Edwin W. Kemmerer to head a group of economic advisors from the United States. The Kemmerer Commission, which arrived in Quito in October of 1926, advised the formation of a national bank (the Banco Central) and provided other recommendations to modernize public finances. Other reforms included the establishment of a Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare in 1926, and labor legislation in 1929. Labor reforms included the establishment of a minimum wage, an eight-hour day, one day of rest a week, a federal retirement fund, and other reforms which laid the basis for a social security system. This was the beginning of progressive social legislation in Ecuador. Many of these advances were consolidated in the 1929 constitution which also gave women the right to vote.⁸

Although this "revolution" failed to make significant changes in power relations, socialist ideas influenced its leaders, and they spoke of "equality for all and the protection of the proletariat."⁹ Rhetoric in favor of workers' rights led to an opening for labor organizations to play a larger role in national politics. This climate fostered growth and maturation for working-class organizational efforts. It also created an environment for increased agitation among socialist activists, which led to the formation of the Socialist Party in 1926.

8. Ramiro Borja y Borja, *Las constituciones del Ecuador*, Las Constituciones Hispanoamericanas; 1 (Madrid: Ediciones Cultura Hispanica, 1951), 550; Milk, 99; Schodt, 69. On the Kemmerer mission and related changes in economic policy, see Paul W. Drake, *The Money Doctor in the Andes: The Kemmerer Missions, 1923-1933* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1989); and Rodríguez, *The Search for Public Policy*. During his time in Ecuador, Kemmerer visited Cayambe and was impressed by the richness of the zone. See "De Cayambe vinieron los miembros de la misión Kemmerer," *El Comercio*, January 5, 1927, 6.

9. Corkill and Cubitt, 12.

Of all the political forces in Ecuador, the PSE was the most aggressive in their efforts to incorporate Indigenous demands into their political platforms and party positions. Notably, the PSE was the first party in Ecuador to attempt to organize the Indian masses as a political force. Its founding statutes decreed that two of the forty-eight members of its party congress should represent Indigenous concerns or communities.¹⁰ These were "functional representatives," which meant that the delegates themselves did not need to be Indians, but only were required to represent those concerns. This was a radical departure, however, from the actions of other political parties. Traditionally, electoral politics were the domain of white, literate, landed male elites, thereby excluding the vast majority of Ecuador's population. This action drew in many urban *indigenistas* intellectuals who were interested in improving the Indigenous population's situation in the country.¹¹ The result has been a traditional association of *indigenismo* with leftist political parties in Ecuador.

Robert Alexander believed that the Ecuadorian Socialist Party's position in favor of Indigenous demands was "due more to the personal interest of the Party's founder, Dr. Ricardo Paredes, than to any conscious policy of the Party."¹² Paredes had good relations with highland Indians, and he played a large role in organizing the Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios (FEI, Ecuadorian Federation of Indians) almost twenty years later. Paredes was one of the main actors who determined the direction of leftist political parties in Ecuador. He was one of the founders of the newspaper *La Antorcha* and served as the secretary-general of the Socialist Party. In this capacity,

10. Víctor Alba, *Politics and the Labor Movement in Latin America*, trans. Carol de Zapata (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1968), 105. Others, of course, have placed a more negative spin on the history of the relationship between socialists and Indians. For example, journalist Lilo Linke noted in the 1950s that although "the P.S.E. has made many declarations in their favour" and proposed various programs including nationalization of estates and formation of cooperatives, "in practice, nothing has ever been done to achieve these aims." Linke, 43.

11. Blanksten, 68.

12. Alexander, *Communism in Latin America*, 234.

along with representatives from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Mexico, Uruguay, as well as another delegate from Ecuador, Paredes attended the Sixth Congress of the Communist International (or Comintern) in Moscow in 1928 which "discovered" Latin America.¹³ The previous year he had also been in Moscow for the tenth anniversary of the Russian Revolution where he probably met with leaders of other Latin American communist parties. Paredes founded an Anti-Imperialist League, as other Latin American communist parties were doing, and in 1929 began publishing a newspaper called *La Hoz* (The Sickle). He arranged for the PSE to become a fraternal member of the Communist International and generally brought the PSE more in line with the Communist International. He advocated the formal affiliation of the PSE with the Communist International, a transformation which was completed when the PSE changed its name to the Partido Comunista del Ecuador (PCE, Ecuadorian Communist Party) in 1931.¹⁴ Paredes is therefore considered to be the founder of Ecuador's Communist Party.

Many of Paredes' contemporaries voiced high praise for his abilities. Paredes was a "pure, honest, unavoidable revolutionary."¹⁵ In his book on the Comintern, Manuel Caballero calls Paredes a "brilliant leader" who was a star of the Sixth Congress of the Comintern. In his speeches to the Comintern, he introduced the idea that Latin American countries were dependent societies.¹⁶ Caballero contends that Paredes disagreed with the Comintern in its assessment of the nature of class struggle in Latin America. The Comintern saw this area as a rural countryside which should rely on the concept of an agrarian revolution. Caballero notes the lack of success of

13. Aguilar, 17. Ecuador held a total of two of the twenty-five votes assigned to Latin America at this Congress.

14. Alexander, *Communism in Latin America*, 237.

15. Raquel Rodas, *Nosotras que del amor hicimos...* (Quito: Raquel Rodas, 1992), 49.

16. Manuel Caballero, *Latin America and the Comintern, 1919-1943*, Cambridge Latin American Studies, No. 60 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 50-51.

agrarian revolts in Latin America and commented that Paredes understood that this position "underestimated the [urban] proletariat and overestimated the peasant forces."¹⁷ Caballero's comments imply that Paredes favored a European-style urban-based working-class revolution. This position, however, ignores the efforts which Paredes put into organizing Ecuador's highland Indian population. In fact, Caballero does not discuss this element of Paredes' work. A more compelling interpretation of Paredes' thought based on his contact with hacienda workers in the Sierra is that he saw the Indian population as a rural proletariat rather than a peasant population. Thus, he would not see the potential for a peasant revolt but rather that of a proletarian revolution, albeit one which would be based in both the urban and rural sectors of society.

After Paredes transformed the PSE into a communist party in October 1931, socialists regrouped to reform a new Partido Socialista Ecuatoriano in 1933. Although Paredes had a personal interest in Ecuador's Indigenous peoples and carried this ideology into the Communist Party, the newly-formed Socialist Party also stated its defense of Indigenous peoples and proposed an agrarian reform program which would place land and water in the hands of their ancestral owners.¹⁸ The Socialist Party grew in strength, and, together with the Partido Conservador Ecuatoriano (PCE, Ecuadorian Conservative Party) and the Partido Liberal Radical Ecuatoriano (PLR, Ecuadorian Radical Liberal Party), became one of the three main "traditional" and largest parties in Ecuador. As Enrique Ayala Mora, a historian and later a member of the Socialist Party, has noted, "since the 1920s socialism has constituted one of the most dynamic ideological influences in Ecuador."¹⁹ In many ways, the socialist left continued the reformist tradition of nineteenth-century liberal radicalism including

17. Ibid., 94; see also p. 73.

18. Osvaldo Hurtado, *Political Power in Ecuador*, trans. Nick D. Mills, Jr. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1980), 216-17.

19. Enrique Ayala Mora, *Resumen de historia del Ecuador*, Biblioteca General de Cultura, Vol. 1 (Quito: Corporación Editora Nacional, 1993), 94.

struggles for secularism and educational reform. Particularly in the 1930s, the socialists were an important force in electoral politics. In 1938 they gained one-third of the seats in the constitutional assembly and were a serious contender for the presidency. During the 1930s and 1940s, several socialist and communist party members made tactical alliances with the Liberals and Velasco Ibarra, and served in presidential administrations.²⁰

In addition to his efforts organizing the rural masses, Paredes was also involved in electoral politics. Voting, however, for the most part excluded the Indigenous masses. The constitution distinguished between Ecuadorian nationals and citizens. In order to be a citizen a person needed to be twenty-one years old (lowered to eighteen in 1945), and able to read and write. This requirement excluded the vast majority of Indians from the category of "citizenship" and hence from voting. Although the Ecuadorian constitution did not provide the Indigenous peoples with equality, it did grant them a certain level of protection. The national Senate was to include fifteen "functional senators" which represented different groups (education, journalism, agriculture, commerce, industry, labor, and the military) including two, one for the sierra and the other for the coast, to represent peasant interests. An additional senator was charged with "guiding and defending the Indian race."²¹ The appointed "functional senators," as with the other elected positions, were required to be citizens, which excluded most Indians and peasants from holding this position. Although Indigenous groups sought to bring this position under their control, they never managed to achieve this goal. Rather, this functional senator played a paternalistic role; was not accountable to Indigenous organizations, groups, or interests; and more often than not betrayed the very interests he was appointed to defend.

20. Hurtado summarizes the Socialist Party's political participation in governments in *Political Power in Ecuador*, 344-46.

21. Borja y Borja, 510.

Even though much of their base of support was legally excluded from voting, both the Socialist and Communist parties commonly fielded candidates for political office. For example, in the November 1934 elections which José María Velasco Ibarra won with 51,848 votes (his first of five times as president), Carlos Zambrano Orejuela, the Socialist candidate, came in second place with 11,028 votes, and Paredes (the Communist Party candidate) was a distant fourth with only 696 votes.²² The total number of votes cast in that election, however, represents only 2.5 percent of the population of Ecuador which was about 2.5 million people.

Despite this situation, Paredes presented himself as the "candidate of the workers, peasants, Indians, and soldiers." He promised bread, work, land, and liberty for the people. The Communist Party platform included promises to:

1. Give land to poor peasants free of charge, taking it from large landholders without compensation
2. Return all lands to Indigenous communities which large landholders had stolen from them
3. Suppress all debts and taxes which weighed on peasants
4. Expel the imperialists from the country, confiscating their businesses
5. Grant freedom for Indians and Blacks to organize their Worker and Peasant Republics and to form their own armies to defend their lands
6. Raise workers salaries, providing them with a seven-hour work day, one month of paid vacations each year, equal salary for men, women, and children, health insurance, etc.
7. Implement unemployment insurance paid by the bosses and the State
8. Lower prices immediately for medicine and other basic necessities.²³

Significantly, agrarian reform headed the list of demands and was to continue to be the principal goal of Indigenous organizations for the remainder of the twentieth century. It must be kept in mind that this was an electoral platform, an activity which excluded Indigenous peoples and others who would benefit from its implementation. Nevertheless, there was a good deal of confluence between the Communist Party platform and

22. Espinosa, *Presidents del Ecuador*, 136.

23. Elías Muñoz Vicuña, *Masas, luchas, solidaridad*, Colección Movimiento Obrero Ecuatoriano; No. 8 (Guayaquil: Universidad de Guayaquil, 1985), 49.

demands which Indigenous organizations presented. The two forces were to become natural allies in a unified struggle against the Ecuadorian oligarchy.

Early peasant organizations in Cayambe

Ecuador's Indigenous population has long been regarded as a passive and submissive group unlikely to rise up in revolt against their oppressed and impoverished condition. The 1966 *Area Handbook for Ecuador* stated that "If an effective [leftist] leader would arise to shake the Indians from their traditional fatalism, he might provoke revolution, but such a possibility appeared remote in 1965."²⁴ Gary Wynia noted that "Latin American peasants have not always accepted their subjugation by local elites passively," but then proceeded to characterize peasants engaged in debt peonage as isolated from national politics, hard to organize politically, subject to the interests of local elites, and virtually unable to form movements without the support and protection of outsiders and political party leaders.²⁵ Ecuador's rural population traditionally has been seen as pre-political and passive in the face of oppression, repression, and discrimination.

Since the 1920s, various leftist leaders and organizations attempted to provide an organizational structure which would motivate Ecuador's large rural population to engage in social revolutionary actions. The earliest peasant movements emerged with the support of the Socialist (and later Communist) Party. Many of these peasant *sindicatos* (syndicates, or peasant unions) organized in rural communities where the majority of the population was Indigenous, and many of these efforts were based in the canton of Cayambe. Although the support of sympathetic outsiders was critical to Indigenous success, the leaders and issues were authentic and home grown. The demands of these organizations often revolved around issues of better salaries and working conditions (which included having the hacienda owner provide tools and

24. Edwin E. Erickson, Helen A. Barth, Frederic H. Chaffee et al., *Area Handbook for Ecuador* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1966), 492.

25. Wynia, 63-64.

work clothes), housing, an end to abusive treatment from hacienda overlords, and respect for their organizing efforts.

These early Indigenous organizations did not occur in isolation from other efforts (both national and international) at leftist and working-class popular mobilization. For example, Felix Carrasco, Jorge Ramos, and Alberto Araujo representing the Sindicato de Campesinos Indígenas y de Oficios Varios del Cantón Cayambe (Peasant-Indigenous Syndicate and Various Offices of the Canton of Cayambe) joined delegates of other communist or pro-communist trade union groups from fourteen other countries at the Confederación Sindical Latino Americana (CSLA, Latin American Labor Confederation) in Montevideo, Uruguay, in May of 1929.²⁶ Far removed the stereotype of peasants as isolated and conservative, from the 1920s onward Indigenous organizations emerged in Cayambe which were aware and maintained contacts with broader social issues. This contact with the left became a defining characteristic of Indigenous organizations in Cayambe.

Juan Montalvo

The first rural organization in Cayambe (and, indeed, in all of Ecuador) emerged in 1926 in the parroquia of Juan Montalvo just south of the city of Cayambe. The organization was called the Sindicato de Trabajadores Campesinos de Juan Montalvo (Peasant Workers Syndicate of Juan Montalvo). This organization sought to defend peasant lands, protect *huasipungo* plots, raise salaries, lower the number of tasks and the number of work hours, end non-paid work demands (such as *huasicamía*, *chagracamía*, milk maids, *pongas* [the rights of priests and clergy to require Indians to work for them on a rotational basis], etc.), demand better treatment

26. Alexander, *Communism in Latin America*, 52. These three delegates also represented the Confederación Obrera y Campesina de Guayaquil, Unión de Chauffeurs and Sociedad Tipográfica de Pichincha, and Consejo Central de los Sindicatos Agrarios de la Provincia de Guayas. Alexander does not state which delegate represented which organization, or if they represented all four as a unified group.

and the suppression of abuses from hacienda owners and their overlords.²⁷ Jesús Gualavisí, who was born in 1867 on the Changalá hacienda in this *parroquia*, was the primary leader of these early efforts. He served as the secretary-general of this syndicate from its founding until his death in 1962. He was also instrumental in the subsequent formation of peasant syndicates on haciendas in the northern *parroquia* of Olmedo in the late 1920s and 1930s. Because of his actions in this struggle, he became known as a *caudillo* (leader) of the Indigenous peoples of Cayambe.²⁸

The immediate context of the formation of this organization was conflicts over land on the Changalá hacienda. Changalá (which Gabriel García Alcázar, son of the nineteenth-century conservative leader Gabriel García Moreno, owned) had a history similar to that of Guachalá, including abuses of its Indigenous workforce. The Indigenous peoples and other inhabitants of Cayambe presented legal claims that the hacienda had taken over lands for which they had historic title. When García Alcázar ignored these petitions, Gualavisí led an occupation of the disputed land. García Alcázar called on the government to protect what he claimed as his property from communist and bolshevik attacks.²⁹ The military junta which had come to power the previous July complied with his request, and this struggle exploded into a violent conflict in February of 1926 when the Pichincha and Carchi battalions from Quito and Ibarra arrived to repress these land demands. The sight of seventy soldiers with machine guns facing a large group of unarmed peasants led one editorialist to caution against the threat of bloodshed comparable to the November 15, 1922, massacre of

27. Salamea, 52. Elías Muñoz Vicuña placed the founding of this organization in the month of January of 1926. See Elías Muñoz Vicuña and Leonardo Vicuña Izquierdo, *Historia del movimiento obrero del Ecuador (resúmen)* ([Guayaquil]: Dept. de Publicaciones de la Facultad de Ciencias Economicas, 1978), 25.

28. For a basic biographical treatment of Gualavisí's life, see Oswaldo Albornoz Peralta, "Jesús Gualavisí y las luchas indígenas en el Ecuador," in Paredes, ed., *Los comunistas en la historia nacional*, 155-88.

29. "El dueño de Changalá acude a la junta de gobierno," *El Comercio*, February 25, 1926, 1.

workers in Guayaquil.³⁰ The repression did not end the struggle, and the following November the newspaper reported that a group attacked the police at Chungalá shouting "long live socialism."³¹

In addition to being the first organized land protest action in Ecuador, this event was also significant for the support which it received from urban leftists. Ricardo Paredes, Luis F. Chávez, and other socialists from Quito came to the defense of the Indigenous struggle against the hacienda owners in Cayambe, and helped present Indigenous demands to the national government. In a front-page editorial in the socialist newspaper *Germinal*, Paredes, the secretary of the Núcleo Central Socialista (Central Socialist Nucleus) in Quito, called for the nationalization of the lands in question so that they could be returned to their rightful owners. For his vocal opposition to governmental policies, the military junta warned him to stay off the Chungalá hacienda.³²

Despite leftist support for the land struggle in Cayambe, local organizations were not a direct outgrowth of the Socialist or Communist party. The peasant syndicate in Juan Montalvo predated the formation of the Socialist Party in May of 1926 by several months. Rather than emerging out of urban Marxist parties, Indigenous organizations developed simultaneously and out of the same economic situation as the political parties. In an article published in the party newspaper twenty-five years later, the Communist Party appears fully cognizant that Indian organizing efforts in Cayambe predated the founding of the PSE. In fact, these Indian uprisings in Cayambe may have given birth to the PSE.³³ This helped set the stage for what would

30. "La razón y la fuerza," *El Comercio*, March 8, 1926, 1.

31. "Se atacó a la policía de Cayambe," *El Comercio*, November 6, 1926, 1. On the 1926 uprisings at Chungalá, see "El pueblo de Cayambe ataca Chungalá," *El Comercio*, February 24, 1926, 3; Albornoz, "Jesús Gualavisí," 160-67; and Maldonado, *El Cantón Cayambe*, 103-105.

32. Ricardo A. Paredes, "El pueblo de Cayambe," *Germinal* (Quito), February 26, 1926, 1; "El asunto de Chungalá," *El Comercio*, March 6, 1926, 6.

33. "El partido comunista organizador y defensor de los indios," *El Pueblo*, June 2,

be a long and congenial struggle of urban leftists and rural Indians united for common goals.

Jesús Gualavisí played an important role in this process. In addition to being one of the earliest and most important Indigenous leaders in Ecuador, Gualavisí was also an important communist leader and organizer. He, together with Manuel Chicaiza, was present at the Ecuadorian Socialist Party's founding congress in 1926 as a representative of the peasant workers of Juan Montalvo. He was probably the first Indian to participate in a political party's congress. Gualavisí, however, was more than a token member of the congress. Gualavisí had his political grounding as a Communist and was the first Ecuadorian Indian to become militantly involved in a Marxist party. He actively participated in discussions, particularly when they related to issues of land or the Indigenous population. For example, during the morning session of the congress on May 21, Gualavisí along with others proposed that the party create an office to defend the interests of peasants and workers. The delegates voted on and accepted the proposal.³⁴ According to Oswaldo Albornoz, Gualavisí understood the exploitation of Indigenous masses because of his communist orientation, which he saw as a way to combat those injustices.

Gualavisí was deeply involved in the Communist Party, but he never lost his ethnic identity. He dedicated his entire life to the struggle for Indigenous rights in Cayambe and throughout Ecuador. He also understood that it was the communists who could give organizational expression on a national level to the Indigenous peoples' demands. Albornoz claimed that "this new form of organization, until then unknown by the Indians, gave strength and cohesion to their struggles." In addition, it introduced "the strike as a powerful battle arm which will never be abandoned and from the beginning demonstrated its great effectiveness." In combining "the peasant movement with the working class, it forged their alliance and gave a greater guarantee

1951, 6.

34. PSE, *Labores de la Asamblea Nacional Socialista*, 52.

of victory." Albornoz contended that it was the Marxists in Ecuador who first recognized the need "to organize our Indians so that they could obtain their legitimate aspirations." These Communists were "the first to raise their consciousness and show them the path which they could take to victory."³⁵

Despite his support for their cause, Albornoz betrays a paternalistic and condescending attitude ("our Indians") which was all too common among many leftist leaders and intellectuals. The Indigenous peoples should not be seen as passive subjects who needed the help of outsiders to organize. The relationship which Albornoz describes, however, is otherwise essentially accurate. The Communists had a strong intellectual impact on the ideology and organizational strategies of the Indigenous peoples in Cayambe. It was not a manipulative situation. The Indians had a high level of identification with the Communist Party and its related issues. For example, a large mass of Indians and peasants gathered at the base of the snow-capped Cayambe volcano to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Soviet Union.³⁶

Pesillo

Despite the fact that the first Indigenous organization surfaced in southern Cayambe, the strongest and best-organized movements first emerged in the northern reaches of the canton. Hiding in caves, creek beds, and under cover of night, Indian workers formed some of the first peasant unions in Cayambe: El Inca (The Inka) in Pesillo, followed in the next several years by Tierra Libre (Free Land) in Moyurco, and Pan y Tierra (Bread and Land) in La Chimba. The primary issues which these organizations addressed were land rights, access to water and pasture, salaries, education, and the ending of abuses.³⁷

35. Albornoz, "Jesús Gualavisí," 166, 167, 182.

36. Muñoz Vicuña, 189.

37. CONAIE, 30.

Other than their names and the approximate dates when they were founded, little is known about these early organizations. Mercedes Prieto determined that all three organizations were founded between 1927 and 1931, although she does not document these events.³⁸ By all appearances, El Inca and Tierra Libre were formed prior to a massive strike at Pesillo and Moyurco in December 1930 and January 1931, and Pan y Tierra was formed at La Chimba after the strike. A letter in the midst of this strike from José Rafael Delgado, the renter of the Pesillo hacienda, claimed that he had always kept the Junta de Asistencia Pública in Quito informed of socialist agitation on the hacienda, including the formation of the El Inca and Tierra Libre syndicates.³⁹ Nevertheless, the only letter from Delgado which has been preserved in the Junta Central de Asistencia Pública's (JCAP) archives about these early organizational efforts is a report only four months before the strike concerning the formation of the syndicate "El Inca." According to a report which Delgado forwarded to the JCAP, "agrarian workers on the Pesillo hacienda" formed this organization at a meeting which took place on August 16, 1930 at 5 p.m.⁴⁰ As these syndicates were largely the creation of illiterate peasants, there appear to be no organizational records which could be used to trace their history. Neptalí Ulcuango lists the leaders of the "Sindicato Agrícola El Inca" as Juan Albamocho, Florencio Catucuamba, Venancio Amaguaña, Neptalí Ulcuango (his father), Rosa Alba (his grandmother), Ignacio María Alba, Mercedes Cachipuendo, Segundo Lechón, Víctor Calcán, "and others."⁴¹

Beginning in May of 1930, Socialists began meeting furtively with Indians in their huts at Pesillo. The workers on the haciendas turned to the Socialist Party and its

38. Prieto, "Haciendas estatales," 113.

39. Letter from José Rafael Delgado to the Junta de Asistencia Pública, January 24, 1931, in *Comunicaciones Recibidas, Enero-Junio 1931*, 890, JCAP.

40. Letter from Carlos Torres L. and Gustavo Araujo Z. to José Rafael Delgado, August 17, 1930, in *Comunicaciones Recibidas, Julio-Diciembre 1930*, 732, JCAP.

41. Neptalí Ulcuango, *Historia de la organización indígena en Pichincha: Federación Indígena Pichincha Runacunapac Riccharimui* (Quito: Ediciones Abya-Yala, 1993), 7.

leaders including Ricardo Paredes, Rubén Rodríguez, and Luis F. Chávez in order to help them organize and present their demands. According to Augusto Egas, the director of JCAP, the goal of this organizational effort was to establish a passive and sometimes active resistance to the administration of the hacienda. That August, Carlos Torres and Gustavo Araujo, two Socialist activists, were on the Pesillo and La Chimba haciendas helping organize agricultural syndicates. They were stirring up trouble, Egas claimed, with the seditious intent of organizing a revolt and generally sowing rebellion. Various Indians were preparing a general strike at La Chimba for September 1, and the insurrection threatened to spread to Pesillo by September 4. The strike was a response to the imprisonment of two members of the peasant syndicate who had been detained because of their organizing activities. It was harvest time, and Egas asked the police to send in troops from Ibarra and the *Jefe Político* of Cayambe to intervene to protect the interests of the haciendas' renters. Throughout the second half of 1930, reports from Cayambe indicate an increased pace of rural organization on the haciendas. Egas felt threatened by these organizational efforts, which he considered a Bolshevick attempt to disrupt the social order of the country. Although he was aware that the workers and peasants had a constitutional right to form syndicates, he resolved not to allow them to utilize this organizational form as a basis for a social revolution.⁴²

42. Letter from Augusto Egas to Sr. Ministro de lo Interior y Policía, September 2, 1930, in *Libro de Oficios que dirige la Junta de Asistencia Pública*, 1930, 353, JCAP; letter from Augusto Egas to the Jefe Político of Cayambe, September 2, 1930, in *Libro de Oficios que dirige la Junta de Asistencia Pública*, 1930, 353, JCAP; letter from Augusto Egas to the Ministro de Previsión Social y Asistencia Pública, September 3, 1930, in *Libro de Oficios que dirige la Junta de Asistencia Pública*, 1930, 354, JCAP; letter from Augusto Egas to the Ministro de Previsión Social, September 24, 1930, in *Libro de Oficios que dirige la Junta de Asistencia Pública*, 1930, 379-80, JCAP; "Formación del socorro Obrero y Campesino," *La Hoz* (Quito) 1:2 (September 11, 1930): 6. Also see a letter from the Ministro de Previsión Social y Trabajo to the Jefe Político of Cayambe, October 16, 1930, in *Comunicaciones Recibidas*, Julio-Diciembre 1930, 559, JCAP.

Socialist activists played an important role in support of these early organizational efforts. The Socialist Party announced on August 21 the formation in Quito of an organization called the Socorro Obrero y Campesino (Worker and Peasant Help) which was designed "to help with the demands of workers and peasants in their conflicts with capitalists, landlords, and authorities."⁴³ The first action in which this organization engaged was to free the imprisoned members of the agrarian workers' syndicate El Inca at Pesillo, as well as members of the Juventud Comunista (Communist Youth) who had gone to help them with organizational efforts. In addition, the socialist senator Luis Maldonado spoke in the National Congress on behalf of the workers in Cayambe, and the Socialist Party collected money for the imprisoned workers which it sent to Cayambe along with a *compañero* to help out with the situation. The Socialist Party newspaper *La Hoz* claimed success for its new support organization, as the rapid and efficient mobilization of resources led to the release of the imprisoned activists.⁴⁴

Later the Communist Party would proudly proclaim that they had been the only ones to come to the defense of the Indians. They supported the demands of workers on haciendas, members of *comunas* and Indian tribes. Communists defended Indigenous interests in the national press, accompanied Indians when they presented accusations to the authorities, helped Indians with their organizations, defended workers against the abuses of landlords and their employees, and assisted in the formation of schools and literacy campaigns.⁴⁵ These claims were not entirely overstated; during a period in which many elites maintained deeply held racist sentiments toward Indigenous peoples, communists comprised a rare group willing to defend their interests.

43. "El terror de los campos," *La Hoz* (Quito) 1:2 (September 11, 1930): 6.

44. "Formación del socorro Obrero y Campesino," *La Hoz* (Quito) 1:2 (September 11, 1930): 6.

45. "El partido comunista organizador y defensor de los indios," *El Pueblo*, June 2, 1951, 6.

This supportive role was to become critical in defining the nature of Indigenous organizations in Cayambe and throughout Ecuador.

Egas consistently placed the socialist activities in the most negative light; they were deceiving and misleading the Indians, taking advantage of their ignorance and simplicity. He informed Delgado that the landlords should not permit anyone to enter the hacienda without written permission from Egas. The threat, according to Egas, was from those who sought to subvert order on the hacienda. If the Indians had a complaint to make, they should do it directly to the *Asistencia Pública* program without lawyers or other mediators. Not only did Egas want the socialist agitators expelled from the hacienda, he wanted them arrested and imprisoned on charges of inciting rebellion.⁴⁶ In a September 1930 report written several weeks after he recounted the formation of "El Inca," Delgado noted that "the same socialists" (three in total) were once again on the hacienda. He had the *Teniente Político* tell them to leave the property, but the socialists claimed that they had twenty-four hours to do so. Delgado wanted to remove them by force, but without a strong military presence, it was impossible because the socialists were "well protected by the Indians (*indios*) who are armed in their entirety with sticks and knives." Fortunately, the harvest had been completed ("the Indians [*indios*] are working, because this is the order of those socialists"), and he reported rumors of night-time meetings of all the people at Moyurco, San Pablourco, Pesillo, and La Chimba "to sign I do not know what

46. Letter from Augusto Egas to José Rafael Delgado, September 2, 1930, in *Libro de Oficios que dirige la Junta de Asistencia Pública*, 1930, 352, JCAP; letter from Augusto Egas to the Ministro de Previsión Social y Asistencia Pública, September 3, 1930, in *Libro de Oficios que dirige la Junta de Asistencia Pública*, 1930, 354, JCAP; letter from Augusto Egas to the Jefe Político of Cayambe, September 3, 1930, in *Libro de Oficios que dirige la Junta de Asistencia Pública*, 1930, 355, JCAP. In addition to the names of Torres and Araujo, Egas also mentions the names of Villalba and Montúfar.

document."⁴⁷ These organizational efforts were beginning to pose a serious threat to the hacienda, *Asistencia Pública*, and the power structure in general.

Hacendado reports indicate that although the socialist activists were "outside agitators," they did not remain in Quito removed from the local struggles manipulating events at a distance. Rather, they worked hand-in-hand with workers on the haciendas to develop organizational structures and often suffered the same threats of police action and imprisonment as the Indigenous activists. It appears, furthermore, that the hacienda workers appreciated the support which the socialists lent to their local struggles. The workers called them *compañeros*, a term which roughly translates "companions" and has connotations of being joined together in a common political struggle. Far from the stereotype of socialists being *indigenistas* who were elite, urban *mestizo* intellectuals with little understanding of the Indigenous reality, the leftists who became involved in Indigenous struggles in Cayambe in the 1920s and 1930s treated the Indians as equals as they fought for a common goal.

These early organizational efforts were not easy. Similar to the earlier Merced owners, the new civilian owners did not like their authority to be challenged. Thus, military troops were brought in to quell uprisings, leaders were persecuted and sometimes tortured, their houses were burned or destroyed, and they often lost their *huasipungo* plots. These experiences, however, opened political space for later organizing efforts and taught the Indians important leadership skills which they would utilize in subsequent organizing efforts.

47. Letter from José Rafael Delgado to the Director de la Asistencia Pública, September 9, 1930, in *Comunicaciones Recibidas*, Julio-Diciembre 1930, 733, JCAP. It is important to recognize that although in public pronouncements elite figures usually employed the polite term *indígena* (Indigenous), in private communications such as this one Delgado and others used the term *indio* (Indian) which was considered to be much more derogatory.

Muriel Crespi calls the leftists' decision to organize among the rural populations in Cayambe in the 1920s "a felicitous choice."⁴⁸ Especially in northern Cayambe where the Merced order had owned the Pesillo hacienda, the Catholic Church had dominated society. The removal of this religious force in the aftermath of the expropriation of the haciendas disrupted society and created a situation in which new social forces could enter. The Socialist Party, and later the Communist Party, took advantage of this opening to introduce unions and new forms of struggle.

Crespi noted that although "in some respects expropriation implied little more than the transfer from one managerial patron to another . . . the disruptions it precipitated made expropriation a springboard to unionization."⁴⁹ This situation led in the 1920s to the formation of Ecuador's first peasant organizations under the leadership of Dolores Cacuango, Jesús Gualavisí, and other Indigenous leaders. During the late 1920s and 1930s, many other Indigenous and peasant organizations were formed in Cayambe. The first true challenge of their organizational strength came with a strike which began in December of 1930. It was the first time that Indigenous organizations mounted a direct challenge to state power. The ramifications of this strike were felt across the country. The strike indicates the sophisticated political nature of the Indigenous demands. It highlights the nature of strategic alliances with urban leftists.

1930-1931 strike

On December 30, 1930, the *Jefe Político* of Cayambe sent a telegram to the Minister of Government in Quito reporting that the Indians of Pesillo had revolted. No one was working, and some of the Indians had fled to the *páramo* and others had gone to Quito. A similar situation existed in the neighboring hacienda of Moyurco. The *Jefe Político* noted that the leaders had not been found or detained, but he urged the government to take immediate action to contain the situation. Augusto Egas, the director of the *Asistencia Pública* program, denounced the presence of propagandists

48. Crespi, "Changing Power Relations," 229.

49. *Ibid.*, 224.

and Bolshevik instigators who he believed were imposing communist and other foreign ideologies and manipulating the Indians into attacking the haciendas. *Asistencia Pública* reports indicate that the revolt started on the Moyurco hacienda and spread from there to Pesillo. The Indians attacked the main hacienda house, and the hacienda's employees had to flee, and, according to Egas, even the *Teniente Político* had to hide. Responding to requests from Egas, the haciendas' renters, and the local officials, the government sent in 150 soldiers (fifty each for the Moyurco, Pesillo, and La Chimba haciendas) with bloodhounds to arrest and torture the leaders, destroy their houses, and protect the interests of the landlords. Five leaders were captured and put on the train to Quito where they would be under investigation for rebellion.⁵⁰

According to a newspaper article in the Quito daily paper *El Día*, the immediate cause for the uprising was the presence of the army squadron Yaguachi in the area. There were, however, much deeper underlying causes for the work stoppage. The workers who had gone on strike presented a list of seventeen demands which included that:

1. Owners (*patrones*) must fire any *mayordomo* (manager), employee, or servant who mistreats the workers, absolutely abolishing the use of garrotes and other punishments;
2. The custom of giving unpaid Indigenous services to servants on the hacienda be abolished; the hacienda can count on two services each month on a rotating basis, provided that the Syndicate creates the rotation list;
3. Each service will be paid three sures a month;
4. Milkmaids who work from early in the morning will earn twenty centavos every day, and after finishing their milking and cheese-making chores will be free, without obligation to do other jobs;

50. Letter from Augusto Egas to Sr. Intendente General de Policía, December 26, 1930, in Libro de Oficios que dirige la Junta de Asistencia Pública, 1930, 471, JCAP; letter from Augusto Egas to Sr. Ministro de Gobierno, January 7, 1931, in Libro de Comunicaciones Oficiales de la Dirección de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública, 1931, 6, JCAP; "La sublevación de los indígenas de una hacienda," *El Comercio*, December 31, 1930, 1; "Los indígenas de Pesillo y Moyurco se han sublevado," *El Día*, December 31, 1930, 1.

5. All peons on the hacienda who have a *huasipungo* plot will work five days a week; those who do not have a *huasipungo* plot will work for wages, and only when they choose;
6. *Huasipungo* plots will be returned to the peons from whom they were taken;
7. The daily wage for the peons will be forty centavos with the following guarantees: use of their *huasipungo* plots, abolishment of charging tithes (*diezmos*), free access to pasture land for animals in the *páramo*, not being subject to both the *faena* and *tarea* systems of labor on the same day--the day on which they give the *tarea* they will not be obliged to *faena* work and vice versa;
8. Whatever the form of work, the work day will not be longer than eight hours; in the situation in which the hacienda needs the work of the peons for longer than eight hours and they are obliged to work longer, for every hour over eight hours the peons will be paid ten centavos per hour;
9. The *boyeros* and *cuentayos* or caretakers of the animals will not be responsible for the death of the animals of which they are in charge, except in the case of malicious acts or if the peon abandons them; the custom of charging peons for animals which abort shall also be abolished;
10. The so-called *reposición* (replacement) by which peons are given the meat of dead animals so that they return a live animal shall be abolished;
11. The owners shall fix the places for storing the harvests, and until such time it shall be abolished the custom of giving the crops to the workers and latter make them responsible for the difference in weight, differences which generally are the result of the crops drying which result in a continued debt for the worker;
12. Those in charge of taking care of the animals shall not be employed in other labors, otherwise they shall be paid fifty centavos a day only for taking care of the animals;
13. Women employed in labors less difficult than the men shall earn thirty centavos a day;
14. Every year the accounts shall be settled, with the owner advising the Secretary of the Syndicate of this affair ten days in advance so that the Secretary or a representative or lawyer is personally present;
15. A school shall be established at the place called Pucará (in Pesillo);
16. Workers shall be paid bi-weekly;

17. Free medical care shall be granted to peons who become sick.⁵¹

In general, the demands revolved around issues of raising salaries, a forty-hour work week, returning the *huasipungo* plots to those workers from which they had been taken, ending the Church's abusive practice of charging *diezmos* (tithes, or a tenth of the production of the *huasipungo*) and *primicias* (first fruits), paying women for their labor, and ending the *huasicama* practice of demanding personal service in the landlord's house. All of these issues concerned economic conditions and the Indian workers' relation to social structures on the haciendas. It is also interesting to note what was not included in this laundry list of demands. There was no call for agrarian reform; other than the sixth demand which calls for a return of *huasipungo* plots from whom they were taken, none of the points even touches on the issue of land. According to Egas, in organizing the peasant syndicates the previous year, the Socialists had been offering land titles to the Indians and filling their heads with the idea that the land was rightfully their property.⁵² Apparently it was outside the realm of possibility for the workers to conceive of the idea that they could own the means of production on the haciendas. It was only later through the influence of the Communist Party that this issue was even raised and became a common demand. It speaks volumes to the nature of their identity that they had so internalized a proletarian-type of identity that land was not a major issue. When land later became an issue, the desire was not to have individualized plots but rather to administer the hacienda as a cooperative or in some other type of communal arrangement.

51. "Pliego de peticiones que los sindicatos 'El Inca' y 'Tierra Libre' situados en la parroquia Olmedo, presentan a los arrendatarios de las haciendas donde trabajan," *El Día*, January 6, 1931, 1.

52. Letter from Augusto Egas to José Rafael Delgado, September 2, 1930, in *Libro de Oficios que dirige la Junta de Asistencia Pública*, 1930, 352, JCAP; letter from Augusto Egas to Sr. Ministro de Gobierno, January 7, 1931, in *Libro de Comunicaciones Oficiales de la Dirección de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública*, 1931, 6, JCAP.

It is also interesting to note that none of these seventeen demands explicitly addressed ethnic issues. There is no call for an end to racial discrimination, and no demand to have Ecuador's ethnic diversity affirmed or to extend the franchise to Indigenous peoples. Nevertheless, although it is not explicitly spelled out, an ethnic ideology underlies the entire list. Through concrete demands, Indigenous peoples sought to define a space for themselves in Ecuadorian society. In essence, they were claiming citizenship rights. In addition, beginning with the first demand, this list of demands indicates the racialized nature of the class structure on the haciendas. The *patrones* were white, absentee landlords who lived in Quito. The laborers who did all of the work on the hacienda were Indigenous. Between these two groups, there was a group of mid-level managers who implemented the landlords' instructions on the hacienda. These "employees" or "servants" were usually *mestizos* or *cholos* who were in a process of moving from the Indigenous world to a white one. Indian workers particularly despised them, and they had a reputation for being heavy handed in their dealings with the hacienda workers. Indigenous demands often included protests of the abuse that they received at the hands of these employees. At the same time, hacienda owners looked down on these employees as being below them in class standing, but also relied on them to implement and represent their interests on the hacienda.

Throughout this entire process, the Indians in Cayambe enjoyed significant support from urban leftists. A lawyer named Dr. Juan Genaro Jaramillo accompanied a group of Indians from Moyurco who came to the *Asistencia Pública* offices on December 31, 1930, to protest the arrest of their companions at the beginning of the uprising. The following day, Jaramillo returned with Indians from Pesillo, who also presented demands for higher salaries and better work conditions. Urban leftists also helped the Indians present the list of demands which was published in the January 6,

1931, edition of the *El Día* newspaper. Later, Ricardo Paredes was present during negotiations with the landlords to settle the strike.⁵³

On January 7, José Delgado and Julio Miguel Páez, the renters of the Pesillo and Moyurco haciendas, reached a settlement with their workers. The Ministry of Government together with Alberto Batallas, the Labor Commissioner, arranged an agreement in which Delgado and Páez would respect an eight-hour work day, give the workers one day of rest a week, pay for the work which the wives and children of the *huasipungueros* did on the hacienda, abolish the custom of forcing the Indians to provide personal services for the haciendas' employees, and not fire workers on the haciendas except for reasons of bad conduct or insubordination. After signing the agreement, the workers on the Pesillo and Moyurco haciendas as well as on the neighboring La Chimba hacienda returned from Quito and elsewhere and went back to work.⁵⁴

Shortly thereafter, however, the Indians stopped working once again, and it appeared that another strike was imminent. Cayambe was on the verge of another uprising. A telegram from the *Jefe Político* noted that other than the milkmaids, again no one was working on the Pesillo and Moyurco haciendas. The Indians were threatening to march on Quito. According to Delgado, four hundred Indians from the Pesillo, Moyurco, and La Chimba haciendas were idly roaming the streets instead of working. He feared that they were up to no good and was losing money because the

53. Letter from Augusto Egas to Sr. Ministro de Gobierno, January 7, 1931, in Libro de Comunicaciones Oficiales de la Dirección de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública, 1931, 7, JCAP.

54. "Se soluciona el problema creado por los indígenas sublevados en las haciendas Pesillo y Moyurco," *El Comercio*, January 8, 1931, 1. In a letter to JCAP, Delgado noted that he had raised salaries, including that of milkmaids from fifteen to twenty centavos, and was now paying day laborers forty cents for an eight-hour day. Letter from José Rafael Delgado to the Junta de Asistencia Pública, January 24, 1931, in Comunicaciones Recibidas, Enero-Junio 1931, 891, JCAP. The agreement is also discussed in a letter from the Secretaria de Policía to the Jefe Político, January 7, 1931, in Comunicaciones Recibidas, Enero-Junio 1931, 894, JCAP.

fields were not planted. He asked the government for help, and contended that the only way to solve the situation was to remove and punish the leaders and others who refused to work. He asked for an army squad to protect the hacienda, landlords, and hacienda employees from the fury of the Indians. The renters had thrown five leaders of the "El Inca" syndicate (Juan Albamocho, Ascencio Lechón, Florencio Catucuamba, Vicente Amaguaña, and Pascual Albahocho, the first three *huasipungueros* and the final two day laborers) off the hacienda and out of their *huasipungos*. The *Jefe Político* asked the Ministry of Government for advice on handling the situation; the Ministry responded that they did not think it was a good idea to expel the leaders because they were trying to calm things down on the hacienda. The Ministry ominously stated that if the leaders were removed from the hacienda, they would not take responsibility for the consequences.⁵⁵

The two sides blamed each other for the renewed conflict. The director of the *Asistencia Pública* program claimed that it was impossible to reason with the Indians, and that this unrest was due to communist infiltrators who continued to stir up trouble. Nevertheless, it appears that Delgado and Páez resisted implementing their prior agreement, especially the provision for one day off of work a week. Despite a continuing tense situation with ongoing threats of new uprisings, on January 16, the War Ministry declared the presence of the military troops which formed the "Yaguachi" squad unnecessary and announced plans to withdraw the squad. Perhaps

55. Telegram from Jefe Político to the Junta de Asistencia Pública, January 20, 1931, in *Comunicaciones Recibidas, Enero-Junio 1931*, 763, JCAP; telegram from Jefe Político to the Junta de Asistencia Pública, January 23, 1931, in *Comunicaciones Recibidas, Enero-Junio 1931*, 764, JCAP; letter from José Rafael Delgado to the Junta de Asistencia Pública, January 24, 1931, in *Comunicaciones Recibidas, Enero-Junio 1931*, 890, JCAP; letter from Ministerio del Gobierno to the Junta de Asistencia Pública, January 24, 1931, in *Comunicaciones Recibidas, Enero-Junio 1931*, 765, JCAP; Letter from Augusto Egas to Sr. Ministro de Gobierno y Asistencia Pública, January 23, 1931, in *Libro de Comunicaciones Oficiales de la Dirección de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública, 1931*, 33, JCAP.

this was due to almost universal agreement that the presence of these undisciplined troops were not helping to bring the situation under control. Furthermore, the soldiers were needlessly complicating an already tense situation. Throughout this entire process, Egas, the head of *Asistencia Pública*, maintained a hard-line attitude and sought to punish the leaders of the insurrection.⁵⁶

This strike had significant repercussions in elite circles in Quito. "Labriolle," a popular editorialist who wrote a regular column in *El Comercio*, noted that agrarian property owners needed to respond to the social situation of unhappiness and illiteracy which their workers faced, but he also feared a "Bolshevik" and socialist threat from the Indigenous uprising.⁵⁷ In fact, this was a common attitude toward the uprising among conservative and elite sectors of Ecuadorian society. They criticized the spirit of rebellion of the Indigenous workers in Cayambe, but did not fully understand the situation of economic exploitation and racial oppression which led to the revolts. They feared a social realignment which would threaten their privileged position in society. Since, in their view, Indians were passive and ignorant people bordering on savages and barely above the level of animals, the Indians were incapable of raising organized protest actions on their own. Thus, the elites looked to outside actors to explain the revolts and found such an explanation in the actions of socialist activists. *El Comercio* editorialized that it was the socialists who "hoodwinked" and pushed the Indians into revolting. The socialists had been spreading their harmful propaganda among Indigenous communities in areas such as Cayambe and Milagro on the coast. There the socialists had found their "raw material almost barbarically predisposed to

56. "El conflicto de Cayambe," *El Comercio*, January 9, 1931, 8; "Regresaron los indios de Pesillo," *El Día*, January 11, 1931, 4; "Peligro de una nueva sublevación en Pesillo," *El Día*, January 15, 1931, 5; "Resistencias a un acuerdo," *El Día*, January 16, 1931, 2; "Regresa de Cayambe del Piquete del 'Yaguachi,'" *El Día*, January 16, 1931, 4; letter from Augusto Egas to the Ministro de Gobierno y Asistencia Pública, March 10, 1931, in *Libro de Comunicaciones Oficiales de la Dirección de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública*, 1931, 79, JCAP.

57. Labriolle, "Acotaciones: peligro comunista," *El Comercio*, January 10, 1931, 3.

everything bad just like the semi-savage multitudes of the lower class and the peasants in Russia."⁵⁸ Similarly, *El Día* noted whereas the Indians' demands were just, they lacked the basic moral structures or work habits which would be necessary to make implementation of these demands a success.⁵⁹

In spite of where the elites might choose to place the blame for the uprising, the landlords who rented the haciendas in northern Cayambe where the action had taken place obviously felt threatened by the situation. At the end of January, they gathered at the house of Julio Miguel Páez, the renter of the Moyurco hacienda, to decide on a course of action. In view of the economic situation (they believed foreign merchants were undercutting their production of flour, butter, and other products for the domestic market; prices for these products were half of what they had been six months earlier) and the rebellions on the haciendas, they asked the government to shield national industry from foreign penetration and to protect them from further Indigenous uprisings. If the government could not legally sanction the workers' actions, their leaders should be expelled from the hacienda. If the landlords did not receive a favorable response from the government, they resolved to withhold the quarterly rent payments which they owed the government for the rented hacienda lands. This situation worried Egas, who feared that this crisis would negatively affect the work of the *Asistencia Pública* program. Not once did he indicate a concern for the social welfare of the workers on the state's haciendas.⁶⁰

Primer Congreso de Organizaciones Campesinas (1931)

58. "Las comunidades indígenas revoltosas," *El Comercio*, January 30, 1931, 3.

59. "Normas para el trabajo rural," *El Día*, January 6, 1931, 3; "Varios millares de indígenas se han concentrado en Cayambe para asistir al primer congreso de campesinos del Ecuador," *El Día*, January 30, 1931, 1.

60. Letter from Augusto Egas to Sr. Ministro de Gobierno y Provision Social, January 27, 1931, in Libro de Comunicaciones Oficiales de la Dirección de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública, 1931, 38, JCAP; "Arrendatarios de la Asistencia Pública," *El Comercio*, January 30, 1931, 2.

Immediately on the heels of the strike at Pesillo and before all the issues in this conflict could be settled, Indigenous leaders organized the Primer Congreso de Organizaciones Campesinas (First Congress of Peasant Organizations) in Cayambe. The congress was planned to be held for three and a half days at the beginning of February 1931 in the *parroquia* of Juan Montalvo, just south of the city of Cayambe. Despite the timing, the conference was not an immediate outgrowth of the strike at Pesillo. An article in the Socialist Party newspaper *La Hoz* in December of the previous year before the strike began noted the plans in progress for this conference. It is significant, however, that the congress was planned to be held in Cayambe. Organizations in Cayambe were providing a vanguard leadership and example for the nascent rural protest movement in Ecuador. Peasant organizations in Cayambe including one in Juan Montalvo and El Inca and Tierra Libre in Olmedo as well as six *comunas* in Otavalo were in charge of organizing the conference. Every syndicate, *comuna*, peasant league, land rights committee, and water committee had the right to send one delegate for every fifty members. Each respective organization was to pay the travel costs of its delegates, and the participating organizations planned to divide among themselves the expenses of the conference. The *La Hoz* article noted that "it appears that the Congress will have a good number of delegates from a variety of provinces."⁶¹

The congress was to begin with an enormous procession of thousands of Indians and *montuvio* peasants parading on foot and on horseback with banners from their syndicate and communal organizations, and end with an Indigenous festival. The organizing committee of this congress released to the press the agenda which they planned to discuss during the course of the congress. The program included:

61. "El Congreso de Obreros Agrícolas y Campesinos," *La Hoz* 8 (December 20, 1930), 4.

- ! Discussion of the Statutes of the *Confederación de Obreros Agrarios y Campesinos* (Confederation of Agrarian Workers and Peasants) and bases for formation of that organization;
- ! Approval of the Constitution of the Federation;
- ! Planning a program of vindications for the agrarian workers and peasants;
- ! Struggling against the inability to work the land and over the problem of unemployed peasants;
- ! Developing tactics to address the previous point;
- ! Other issues; and
- ! Election of the executive director of the Federation.⁶²

As is true of the formation of most organizations, much of the time at the congress was to be dedicated to discussion of the structure of the organization, including the writing of by-laws and election of officers. But the formation of the organization would not overshadow its main political purpose. The agenda listed two main issues to be addressed. First, it stated an intent to draw up a list of complaints and demands, a list which in all likelihood would be similar to that which the strikers at Pesillo presented a month earlier. Unlike the Pesillo declaration, this agenda also stated an intent to work on the issue of land reform. Although not mentioned in the Pesillo document, it was a demand consistent with the Socialist Party platform. Furthermore, this was to be a national organization, including peasants in economic and social situations distinct from that of the Indigenous agrarian workers in northern Cayambe.

Before the conference was to begin on February 8, the daily papers in Quito carried descriptions of people flooding to Cayambe from all over the country. Already a week in advance Indians from the communities of Valenzuela, San Pablo, Abatag, and Monte Olivo had come to Cayambe to begin planning the conference. In addition, there was news that members of agrarian syndicates from Yaguachi, Milagro, Naranjito, Jesús María, Marcelino Maridueñas, Guale, Sibambe, and Tigua were

62. "Siguen llegando a Cayambe gentes de diversas procedencias para la celebración del Primer Congreso de Campesinos del Ecuador," *El Día*, January 31, 1931, 1; "Puntos que serán discutidos en el primer congreso de campesinos q' se realizarán en el Cantón Cayambe," *El Comercio*, February 1, 1931, 1.

mobilizing to come to the conference. As the news of the gathering spread, even more people planned to attend. In short, people were coming from throughout the sierra and coast including the provinces of León, Chimborazo, Loja, Azuay, Cañar, Tungurahua, Los Ríos, Manabí, and others to attend the congress.⁶³ Many people traveled on foot or on horseback for days or weeks to attend. According to Mercedes Prieto, two thousand leaders representing about 100,000 peasants and Indians planned to participate.⁶⁴ The local sponsoring committee was arranging housing for everyone, including the construction of numerous straw huts. Even though there were many delegates arriving for the conference, *El Día* noted that they were behaving themselves and abstaining from all alcoholic drinks.⁶⁵

Although the *Jefe Político* from Cayambe visited Juan Montalvo where the congress was to take place and reported to the government that nothing was happening and that the arriving participants were not causing any problems, this massive mobilization made the government very nervous. They feared that the amassed Indians planned to attack haciendas in the area and accused communists from Quito of instigating a revolution in Cayambe. President Isidro Ayora sent in one hundred troops from the Pichincha Battalion based in Ibarra in order to control the situation. On January 31, the government took various measures to prevent the planned meeting from taking place. Both the Ministries of Government and of War were brought in to prohibit the delegates already assembled from taking any action, they closed roads to prevent more delegates from arriving and generally to bring the situation under control. The government arrested and imprisoned several socialists who had traveled

63. "Varios millares de indígenas se han concentrado en Cayambe para asistir al primer congreso de campesinos del Ecuador," *El Día*, January 30, 1931, 1.

64. Prieto, "Condicionamientos de la movilización campesina," 55. An article in *El Día* mentioned a figure of ten thousand delegates, a number which is obviously inflated. See "Crónicas de Cayambe," *El Día*, February 6, 1931, 2.

65. "Varios millares de indígenas se han concentrado en Cayambe para asistir al primer congreso de campesinos del Ecuador," *El Día*, January 30, 1931, 1.

from Quito to help with the meeting, including Luis Chávez, Alejandro J. Torres, Manuel Viteri (the Secretary General of the party), Ricardo Paredes, Cerveleón Gómez Jurada, Juan Bustamante, Gustavo Araujo, and Leonardo Muñoz. Those arrested faced criminal charges for disturbing the public order and committing acts of violence.⁶⁶ Because of repression from the national government this congress never took place.

The next day, the government announced that the situation was under control. The socialist leaders captured the previous day were sent to prison until they signed a statement that they would not meddle in affairs which attacked the public order. Angel M. Paredes, a *consejero del estado* (state councilperson), petitioned the government and the *Intendente de policia* (police chief) for their constitutional rights be respected and he questioned the legality of their imprisonment. In fact, in the following days leftists repeatedly raised issues of constitutional rights, the right of free assembly, of free association, freedom of movement, and imprisonment without the filing of formal charges. Telegrams of support arrived from various other organizations, including the Consejo Central Sindicatos Agrarios (Central Council of Agrarian Unions) in Milagro which demanded respect for constitutional guarantees and that the congress be allowed to proceed as planned. Rather than demanding action, Pedro Leopoldo Núñez, the functional senator for the Indigenous Race, called for the situation to be "studied." The government, for its part, defended its actions stating that it needed to maintain the public order and defend Ecuador from a communist threat. On February 3, all but two of the detained socialists signed the statement and were released from their detention in Quito. The two exceptions were Ricardo Paredes, who took a more principled stance and refused to agree to the government's conditions, and Luis Chávez who was considered a key player in the uprising and was

66. "Various personas fueron capturados por hallarse comprometidas en el movimiento comunista de Cayambe," *El Comercio*, February 2, 1931, 1.

being held at the army base in Cayambe. Juan Bustamante, a Chilean, was deported from the country for his actions.⁶⁷

Several weeks later, Luis Fernando Chávez Molineros presented his statement on his involvement in these affairs. He was a twenty-two year-old mechanic from Quito. Three or four months, before he had met with a group of friends (including Paredes) in Quito to discuss the peasant congress. This group sent him to Cayambe to prepare the congress, and he was identified as the secretary general of the organizing committee of the Congress of Agricultural Workers and Peasants. The committee sent circulars and invitations to peasants throughout the country. The beginning of February, Robalino's troops arrested him and held him at the army base in Cayambe. Chávez declared that he was a communist and subscribed to the doctrine of the Communist International, but claimed that such an affiliation was his right under the country's constitution. After giving this declaration, Chávez was unconditionally released on February 19. Paredes also was freed from prison under the personal guarantee of Dr. Alfredo Pérez Guerrero.⁶⁸

Chávez' declaration indicates the critical role which socialists played in organizing this meeting. Without this logistical support, many people would not have heard of the meeting or planned to attend. The press in all likelihood would not have

67. "Los concurrentes al congreso de campesinos que iba a reunirse en Cayambe desisten de sus propositos," *El Comercio*, February 3, 1931, 1; "Se han descubierto documentos de propaganda comunista que se ligan directamente con la fracasada reunión del congreso de campesinos," *El Comercio*, February 4, 1931, 1, 4. The following day *El Comercio* printed the text of an extensive debate in the *consejo de estado* in which Angel M. Paredes raised these issues in front of the government. See "El Dr. Angel M. Paredes denuncia ante el consejo de estado la violación de garantías constitucionales con motivo del congreso de campesino," *El Comercio*, February 5, 1931, 1, 4. Rather ironically, less than half a year earlier the JCAP had contracted the services of Ricardo Paredes, a medical doctor, to work with sick children. See letter from Augusto Egas to Sr. Tesorero de JCAP, August 5, 1930, in *Libro de Oficios que dirige la Junta de Asistencia Pública*, 1930, 315, JCAP.

68. "La declaración rendida por el Sr. Luis F. Chávez," *El Día*, February 20, 1931, 2; "Fue puesto en libertad el doctor Ricardo Paredes," *El Día*, February 20, 1931, 4.

received notice of the planned agenda. There is nothing to indicate, however, that the socialists manipulated Indigenous interests in this affair, or that they organized the conference separate from the Indians who would benefit from it. Indians would not have flooded to Cayambe for a meeting which was foreign to their own interests. Rather, all indications are that the Indians and urban socialists worked together for a successful meeting.

Two other important issues also emerged in press reports. The government claimed to have confiscated documents which proved that the planned meeting would not be of a peaceful nature. They even made the unlikely claim that they had found documents in Cuenca related to the meeting. They never released these alleged documents nor gave specifics as to their nature, however, so it is fair to assume that this was simply part of a campaign to discredit Indigenous attempts at organization.

The second issue is perhaps more striking. February 3 stories in *El Comercio* and *El Día* for the first time mentioned by name Indigenous people who had been captured. Virgilio Lechón, Marcelo Tarabata, Juan de Dios Quishpe, and Benjamin Campos, all "peons" from the Moyurco hacienda, were to be sent by train to Quito where they were to be imprisoned until a judge decided what to do with them. During the strike at Pesillo a month earlier, Indigenous leaders were also captured and sent to Quito by train, but their names were never mentioned and the newspapers barely noted the event in passing. The government justified their action because the Indians continued to gather even though the government had prohibited such meetings. A large group of Indians congregated at the military barracks in Cayambe to demand the release of their companions and threatened a general strike if they were not released. The following day the police freed Virgilio Lechón, who the government had previously identified in private correspondence as a principal trouble maker in the region and "the leader of the Indigenous people of Moyurco," but they were still looking for "Gualambisí" who was in hiding. Leaders such as Lechón and Ignacio Alba were continual thorns in Egas' flesh. Egas complained that they did not even work on the

hacienda but remained on it taking advantage of the benefits of friends' and family's *huasipungos*. They did not work and were engaged in no activity other than leading the Indigenous uprising.⁶⁹

It is not at all surprising that Indigenous leaders were captured; testimonies from these leaders make it clear that such repression was an all too common occurrence in Cayambe. In press reports, however, the Indian workers had always been ignorant, faceless subjects who outside agitators had succeeded in manipulating. This was the first indication in the mainstream press that the Indians had been actors and that the government considered them a threat to its hegemonic control over society. It is also surprising that no mention had been made earlier of Jesús Gualavisí who had a leading role in the organization of the congress, and when *El Comercio* finally mentioned his name, unlike the others, they omitted his first name and misspelled his last name. Racial stereotypes led the press to stress the actions of leftists, while making the actions of the Indigenous peoples invisible. Obviously, this was not necessarily an accurate reflection of the nature of the encounters between the two groups.

Editorials in *El Comercio* are perhaps representative of elite attitudes toward the Indigenous efforts at organization and indicate the level of racism which the Indigenous population faced in Ecuador. On the day the congress was to start, the

69. "Los concurrentes al congreso de campesinos que iba a reunirse en Cayambe desisten de sus propositos," *El Comercio*, February 3, 1931, 1; "Diversas actividades gubernativas y medidas tomadas ayer en relación con el proyecto de primer Congreso de Campesinos en Cayambe," *El Día*, February 3, 1931, 1; "Se han descubierto documentos de propaganda comunista que se ligan directamente con la fracasada reunión del congreso de campesinos," *El Comercio*, February 4, 1931, 1, 4. A similar report in *El Día* spelled Gualavisí's name "Gualavasí." See "En Cuenca se ha capturado gran cantidad de propaganda comunista y algunos manifiestos sobre el proyectado congreso de Cayambe," *El Día*, February 4, 1931, 1; letter from Augusto Egas to the Ministro de Gobierno y Asistencia Pública, March 10, 1931, in Libro de Comunicaciones Oficiales de la Dirección de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública, 1931, 79, JCAP.

paper editorialized that "nothing serious or good can come out of that numerous, illiterate, and poorly prepared mass" of people assembled in Cayambe. The congress was nothing other than a demonstration "of the force and influence which the Communist Party has or thinks it has." It was importing doctrines from Russia, it was a danger to society, and *El Comercio* criticized the government for allowing communism to flourish in Ecuador.⁷⁰ *El Día* adopted similar attitudes in its editorials. The Indians were children who had "little understanding" and were "susceptible" to negative outside influences which could result in violence. Their primitive mentality made them incapable of reflection or engaging in dialogue, but easily manipulated into violent actions. The Indians were stupid, the paper contended, and the planned meeting was nothing other than whites manipulating the situation to their own benefit. Furthermore, this could not be a political party assembly because the vast majority of the Indians were not even citizens. The meeting was not for ideas, opinions, or votes (which were impossible), but would result in a violent demonstration of power. Despite the fact that the Indians were public about their demands, published their planned meeting agenda in the newspaper, met with the newspapers to explain the situation of abuses which they received at the hands of hacienda employees, and demanded respect for their human rights, the newspaper still claimed ignorance of the motives or intentions of the congress.⁷¹

70. "El congreso de campesinos," *El Comercio*, February 1, 1931, 3. Although *El Comercio* repeatedly referred to "communism" and the "Communist Party," it was not until the second party congress in October of that year that the Socialist Party of Ecuador (PSE) formally transformed itself into a communist party, although it had been allied with the Communist International before then.

71. "Varios millares de indígenas se han concentrado en Cayambe para asistir al primer congreso de campesinos del Ecuador," *El Día*, January 30, 1931, 1; "El congreso indígena," *El Día*, January 31, 1931, 3; "El verdadero fondo del problema indígena," *El Día*, February 2, 1931, 3; "El comunismo y el consejo del estado," *El Día*, February 6, 1931, 3.

These editorials reveal much about elite attitudes toward the meeting, and they also reveal the ideological issues which the Indigenous peoples themselves were pressing in the public mind. On the surface, these demands merely reflect racist perceptions which Ecuador's elite had toward the Indigenous populations. These attitudes were predictable and well established. The editorials also reveal a deep-seated anti-communism in elite society. Other issues, however, also emerge in these editorials. One main issue concerns the question of agency. The elite classes could not accept the idea that the Indians were able to organize their own movements for social change. The Indians' actions, however, contradict the claims that they were merely manipulated at the hands of leftist urban organizers. In addition, the fact that the government arrested various leaders indicates that it perceived the Indians' organizational efforts to be more of a threat to society than the government would have liked to admit publicly. More significant, however, is the issue of citizenship. As the editorial in *El Día* perhaps inadvertently noted, the Indigenous actions challenged accepted notions of citizenship in Ecuador. They refused to be excluded from political discourse or marginalized from the economic life of the country. They were demanding a larger role in society.

Other public voices also called for a change in citizenship restrictions. Petronio, a columnist in *El Día*, noted the injustice of having twenty thousand "citizens" (those who could read and write, the legal conditions for citizenship) elect officials to govern the two million inhabitants of Ecuador. Indians were marginalized from national life, primarily in political administrative terms. Petronio noted that Indians simply wanted to join the dominant culture, particularly in the economic arena. To deny them this opportunity would result in revolts, and blaming the situation on communists was an overreaction and a fear not based on reality. Petronio believed there was an economic basis to the "Indian problem," and a change in economic

patterns together with educational opportunities would dramatically change the situation.⁷²

These organizing actions in Cayambe also reveal the nature of the relationship between Indians and the Marxist left in Quito. The press reported that the Indians had been "exploited by false apostles."⁷³ Newspaper stories created a scenario with a chain of command through which instructions flowed from Marxists in Quito to local non-Indigenous communist leaders in Cayambe to Virgilio Lechón and other local Indigenous leaders at Pesillo and finally to the peons on the hacienda. Páez, the renter of the Moyurco hacienda, charged that the local leaders blindly obeyed orders sent from communists in Quito to the point that without thought they would kill, burn, and destroy as they were ordered.⁷⁴ Cornel Alberto Albán, head of the First Military Zone, declared that the communists had convinced the *huasipungueros* that the hacienda land was theirs, and taught them to hate until the death the owners and employees of the hacienda.⁷⁵ The ludicrousness of these ideas should be immediately obvious. Hundreds of years of exploitation had given the Indians a deep hatred toward their bosses. It did not take much effort to realize that a context of absentee landlords who profited greatly while those who worked the land scarcely benefitted from their labors was an unjust situation which needed rectifying. Nevertheless, the government continued to look for scapegoats to blame for the continual uprisings. Beginning in February of 1931, the government began a campaign to root out communist influence in Cayambe's education system which they believed resulted in school teachers instigating the Indians to revolt.

72. Petronio, "El congreso de campesinos," *El Día*, February 15, 1931, 1, 4.

73. "Los indios de las haciendas de Cayambe han tornado a sus diarias ocupaciones en el campo," *El Comercio*, February 5, 1931, 1.

74. Letter from Julio Miguel Páez to the Junta de Asistencia Pública, January 20, 1931, in *Comunicaciones Recibidas, Enero-Junio 1931*, 777, JCAP.

75. "Declaracions del Coronel Alberto Albán," *El Día*, February 6, 1931, 3.

During the days following the suppression of the meeting, *El Comercio* complimented the government for finally taking action against the threat of a social revolution. A surprising editorial on February 4, however, stated that it was a shame the congress was not allowed to go forward as it would have been a good lesson in parliamentary action. It compared the planned peasant congress to the National Congress. Whereas the "fathers" of the country came to the National Congress in automobiles, trains, and planes, the peasants walked for days on foot to theirs. Instead of staying at hotels for a congress which cost half-a-million sucres a year, the peasants stayed in straw huts and would not have spent a cent on theirs. "Oh, how much was lost with the failure of the peasant congress!" the editorial exclaimed.⁷⁶

For a period of several days in February 1931, Cayambe had become a police state. Military troops stopped all movement in the canton in an attempt to detain the leaders of the congress. Major Ernesto Robalino, the head of the military garrison in Quito, personally went to Cayambe to oversee the situation and to assure that the *Asistencia Pública* renters complied with the January agreement which they had signed with the government in an attempt to bring the situation under control. Within several days, the government proclaimed that all was calm in Cayambe. The Indians were returning to work on the haciendas, including those in Juan Montalvo where the congress was to have taken place and in Pesillo and Moyurco where the strike had occurred. Nevertheless, as a precaution the Ministry of Government sent a circular to all provincial governments and police chiefs prohibiting all socialist meetings.⁷⁷ Initially the government announced plans for an imminent withdrawal of troops from the area, but despite public claims that all was calm, persistent unrest compelled them to retain military control over Cayambe. Press reports indicate that although Cayambe's *Jefe Político* and other local leaders declared the situation to be under control, Robalino and other military leaders claimed that the situation was tenuous.

76. "Notas festivas," *El Comercio*, February 4, 1931, 3.

77. "Se prohíben las reuniones socialistas," *El Comercio*, February 6, 1931, 1.

The Indians had not gone back to work, and they were still demanding better pay and working conditions.

Why would military leaders contradict the claims of local officials who surely had a more accurate reading of what was happening on the ground? One reason would have to do with power--the military might wish to gain more control over society. But there is also the possibility of a deeper, more ideological reason. Indigenous peoples were beginning to address a global problem of structural cracks in society, and the military perceived a need to implement a global "solution" to the problem. Perhaps the most threatening aspect of communist involvement in these Indigenous protest movements was not that they would instigate revolts or put ideas into the Indians' heads, but rather that the outside support gave these protests a dimension and sustainability which went beyond the capability of local governmental forces to contain and control them.

Throughout this entire time, tensions continued to run high on the haciendas in Cayambe. The aborted congress came and went in terms of public awareness and official attention, but the conditions which led to the uprising on the *Asistencia Pública* haciendas continued. In late February, Toribio Valladares, one of the *mayordomos* (foremen) on the Pesillo hacienda, shot and gravely injured Lorenzo Farinango, one of the "peons" on the hacienda who was identified as one of the leaders of the recent uprisings. According to reports, at 8 p.m. on Saturday, February 21, Farinango was returning home in the company of two other people when Valladares shot him twice with a rifle at the bridge over the La Chimba river. Farinango was taken to the local hospital, but did not receive adequate attention there so he was sent by train to Quito. Valladares, who fled from the scene on horseback, had a reputation for being heavy handed and abusive with the workers on the hacienda. Despite these eye-witness reports, the *Jefe Político* of Cayambe and the local *Teniente Político* of Olmedo contended that they could not determine the author of the crime, although they claimed to have the situation entirely under their control. Under these conditions,

even the mainstream daily newspapers in Quito acknowledged that Indians were on the margins of receiving any justice from local officials, and it was understandable that they would continue to revolt.⁷⁸

In spite of elite and government hopes that peasant protests had come to an end, that was not to be. The underlying situation of economic exploitation and racial discrimination which had led to the initial revolts still existed. It was thus to be expected that the protests would continue. For the first time, Augusto Egas, the director of the *Asistencia Pública* program, met with the Indian leaders on February 14. He worked out another agreement with the workers which included the concessions that no one would work on Saturdays, women would be paid ten centavos a day for their labor, and *indios sueltos* (day laborers) would earn thirty-five centavos a day. Although the renters of the Pesillo and Moyurco haciendas accepted this agreement, for reasons which are not entirely clear it fell through. A letter from Egas to the Ministry of Government indicates that the Indigenous workers' demands were becoming more radical, and perhaps as a result of the peasant congress they would now be happy with nothing less than a full-fledged program of agrarian reform.⁷⁹

On March 10, 1931, barely a month after the government shut down the peasant congress in Juan Montalvo and repressed the strike at Pesillo, 141 Indians from Cayambe walked day and night to Quito in order to present their demands directly to the government. This group included fifty-seven women and about a dozen children, including Rosa Catujuamba, the wife of Lorenzo Farinango who had been

78. "Un indígena de Pesillo ha sido gravemente herido," *El Día*, February 24, 1931, 8; "Ayer llegó el herido procedente de la hacienda Pesillo," *El Día*, February 25, 1931, 4; "De Cayambe," *El Día*, February 26, 1931, 2; "Reconocimiento del balazo que el Mayordomo Valladares dio al indígena Farinango, en 'Pesillo,'" *El Día*, February 27, 1931, 2; "No se conoce al verdadero autor de unas heridas," *El Día*, February 27, 1931, 4.

79. Letter from Augusto Egas to the Ministro de Gobierno y Asistencia Pública, March 10, 1931, in *Libro de Comunicaciones Oficiales de la Dirección de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública*, 1931, 79, JCAP.

shot the previous month. The group stayed at the house of Luis Felipe Chávez, a socialist who supported their struggle and the father of Luis Fernando Chávez who had helped organize the congress in Cayambe. Egas agreed to arrange a meeting between these Indians and the president of the republic and to have the renters of the government's haciendas raise their salaries five centavos. But rather than complying with this agreement, Egas sent the group of Indians to the police who arrested them and then sent them forcibly back to their homes on the haciendas in Cayambe. In the process, the police injured several Indians including Virgilio Lechón, Rosa Catujuamba, and a boy named José Amaguaña.⁸⁰

This incident particularly highlights the importance which urban leftists had for the Indigenous movements and the nature of the role which they played. Not only did Chávez provide the Indians with housing in Quito, he also pressed for their rights with governmental officials there. After they were arrested and forcibly returned to Cayambe, Chávez met with Egas in a failed attempt to defend their rights.⁸¹ Egas, however, was determined to crush the Indigenous resistance. In order to defend the institutional interests of the *Asistencia Pública* program, he continually and repeatedly asked the government for a military force to evict the strikers from the haciendas. Normally, an hacienda would be able to do this on their own, but in this case there were simply too many protestors for the *hacendados* to handle with their own resources. In response, the military agreed to allow a squad of fifty soldiers from the Pichincha Battalion to remain in Cayambe. The Ministry of Government recommended another agreement to remove the leaders from the hacienda in order to resolve

80. "141 peones de Cayambe han venido a esta ciudad intempestivamente abandonando sus faenas del campo," *El Comercio*, March 13, 1931, 1; "Ayer fueron apresados 156 indígenas de las haciendas de Cayambe," *El Día*, March 13, 1931, 8; "No se efectuó la audiencia del presidente con los indígenas de Cayambe," *El Día*, March 14, 1931, 1.

81. "Se les obligará a salir de las haciendas de Cayambe a los indígenas," *El Día*, March 17, 1931, 1.

the situation. Everyone would be paid for their work plus another month's salary, the renters would keep the leaders' animals but would either pay for their houses or allow the leaders to retain their personal belongings, and everyone except the leaders could keep working. Egas was not happy with this solution. He wanted more soldiers and did not want to make any concessions to the leaders, either in terms of granting them a month's salary or awarding them materials from their huts since the *huasipungos* belonged to the hacienda and were thus technically hacienda property. The Ministry of Government quickly responded ordering the *Asistencia Pública* program to comply with the Ministry's directives. The Ministry also noted that the organizational leaders contended that they were not leaving the hacienda for reasons of insubordination but because of the continual problems they were having with the haciendas' renters.⁸²

In the face of these continued protest actions, Egas and Robalino, the head of the military forces in Quito, decided to travel to Cayambe on March 19, 1931, in order to personally study the situation. Upon their return to Quito, Egas reported on the trip in a long front-page story in *El Comercio*. He cast the situation of the *huasipungueros* in Pesillo in a very positive light, to the point of severely stretching the truth. He described the Indians as "*riquísimo*" (very rich) and stated that they should pay the *hacendado* for their access to pasture lands, that their salary of twenty centavos a day was fair, and that the Indians knew that they were getting a good deal. He refused to take the workers' complaints seriously, contended that the stories of bad treatment

82. Letter from Augusto Egas to the Ministro de Gobierno y Asistencia Pública, March 10, 1931, in Libro de Comunicaciones Oficiales de la Dirección de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública, 1931, 81, JCAP; letter from V. Aviedo to the Director of the Junta de Asistencia Pública, March 17, 1931, in Comunicaciones Recibidas, Enero-Junio 1931, 677, JCAP; letter from Ministro de Gobierno to Intendente General de Policía, March 17, 1931, in Comunicaciones Recibidas, Enero-Junio 1931, 767, JCAP; letter from Augusto Egas to the Ministro de Gobierno y Asistencia Pública, March 18, 1931, in Libro de Comunicaciones Oficiales de la Dirección de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública, 1931, 82, JCAP; letter from Ministro de Gobierno to the Director of the Junta de Asistencia Pública, March 18 1931, in Comunicaciones Recibidas, Enero-Junio 1931, 769, JCAP.

were exaggerated, and claimed that physical abrasions on the Indians were a result of fights among the Indians themselves. He described the situation in Cayambe as "calm," contended that the entire affair was exaggerated in Quito, and maintained that any problems in the region were the result of communist subversion.⁸³

On March 18, following Egas' orders, the employees on the Pesillo hacienda rounded up the livestock of the protesting workers. Rather than defending the Indians' rights, Egas expelled five leaders from Pesillo and two from the neighboring hacienda of La Chimba.⁸⁴ These actions triggered yet another protest march on Quito. An April 1 letter from the police chief in Quito indicates that 128 Indians from Pesillo and Moyurco were in Quito demanding their rights. The letter lists the names of eighty-six men and forty-one women who were present in Quito at the protest. The list is a virtual "who's who" of Indigenous protest in Cayambe in the 1930s, and includes the names of such well-known activists as Virgilio Lechón and Dolores Cacuango. The workers claimed they would return peacefully to the hacienda provided that they received a guarantee that the landlords and hacienda employees would treat them well, that the landlords respect the agreements which they had reached but were always broken, that the confiscated animals be returned, and that the leaders not be removed from the hacienda. The government, however, did not express any interest in negotiating with the Indians.⁸⁵

83. "La situación económica de los indígenas de Pesillo," *El Comercio*, March 24, 1931, 1-2.

84. Letter from Augusto Egas to the Ministro de Gobierno y Asistencia Pública, March 10, 1931, in Libro de Comunicaciones Oficiales de la Dirección de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública, 1931, 79, JCAP; "Crecen las dificultades en Cayambe," *El Día*, March 19, 1931, 1; "Los cabecillas indígenas de Cayambe han salido de las haciendas," *El Día*, March 27, 1931, 8.

85. Letter from General Jaramillo, Intendencia General de Policía de la Provincia de Pichincha to the Director of the Junta de Asistencia Pública, April 1, 1931, in Comunicaciones Recibidas, Enero-Junio 1931, 506, JCAP.

Egas had long advocated eviction of the Indigenous leaders as a solution to the problems on the hacienda. In September of the previous year shortly after the formation of the peasant syndicate "El Inca," Egas recommended to Delgado, Pesillo's renter, that a police detachment be sent to the hacienda to perform this function. In January, he once again sought to remove Virgilio Lechón from the Moyurco hacienda and repeatedly pressed this option as the best general solution to the problems on the haciendas. Egas had determined that the rights of agricultural workers were not protected under the existing labor law, so the Indians could be evicted from the haciendas without any legal formalities.⁸⁶

In April, Egas finally got his wish. Continuing to argue that only those Indians who continued working had the right to remain on the hacienda and that those who did not wish to work were free to leave, the organizational leaders were forcibly evicted. These leaders from Pesillo included Vicente Amaguaña, Juan Albamocho, Gaspar Alba, Florencio Catucumbamba, José Cacuango (all with *huasipungos*), Ignacio Alba, Segundo Lechón, José María Amaguaña, Venancio Amaguaña, and Pascual Albamocho (without *huasipungos*). Two *huasipungueros* from La Chimba (Florentino Nepas and Antonio Nepas) and four from Moyurco (Virgilio Lechón, Juan de Dios Quishpe, Benjamin Campués, and Rafael Catucumbamba) were also expelled. Another leader, Manuel Quinchiguango, was no longer working on the hacienda. In fact, many of the strike leaders were not *huasipungueros* but the sons and brothers of *huasipungueros*. All of these leaders were expelled together with their wives and children. They were allowed to keep their cattle and their personal belongings from their huts. Delgado now offered the remaining day laborers (*indios sueltos*) forty centavos a day, twenty centavos for women, a day of rest on Saturday, and thirty

86. Letter from Augusto Egas to José Rafael Delgado, September 2, 1930, in Libro de Oficios que dirige la Junta de Asistencia Pública, 1930, 352, JCAP; Letter from Augusto Egas to Sr. Ministro de Gobierno, January 7, 1931, in Libro de Comunicaciones Oficiales de la Dirección de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública, 1931, 6, 9, JCAP.

centavos for *huasipungueros* during harvest. Egas (quite incorrectly) claimed that at the beginning of the rebellion the Indians' demands did not include salary raises; the original list of seventeen demands included a request of a daily wage of forty centavos for *huasipungueros* and thirty centavos for women. Although they did not earn the full wage increase, they did gain other concessions such as a five-day work week.⁸⁷

Although women could not hold *huasipungos*, conditions on the haciendas impacted them directly, and they often emerged as important leaders in the rural struggles in Cayambe. This is an important distinction between the dominant white culture which sought to disenfranchise women and Indigenous societies which embraced and encouraged their contributions. For example, Tránsito Amaguaña was one of the most important and noted leaders which emerged out of this situation. She was born in 1909 on the Pesillo hacienda. Her mother, Mercedes Alba, had also led the peasant struggles. She demanded payment for her work from the hacienda's landowner. Instead, the landlord took away the family's *huasipungo* plot. Her mother then joined an uprising demanding land and justice from the landowner García Alcázar. After a month of resistance, the army was sent in and brutally repressed the uprising. For their political activity, her family felt the full force of the repression. Amaguaña only went to school for six months. As was common, she was required to work without pay on the hacienda from a very young age doing jobs for the *hacendado* such as sweeping rooms, washing plates, taking care of animals, and other odd jobs. She was married at the age of fourteen, and at fifteen with a baby on her back she joined clandestine meetings on the hacienda in Cayambe and political meetings in Quito. She met Dolores Cacuango, and together they organized peasant strikes and unions. Later, Amaguaña also helped organize bilingual schools for the Indian children. She has been called "a tireless fighter" who "represents the female memory of the history of

87. Letter from Augusto Egas, Segundo D. Rojas V., and Ernesto Robalino to Ministerio de Gobierno y Asistencia Pública, April 30, 1931, in *Comunicaciones Recibidas, Enero-Junio 1931*, 896-900, JCAP.

past struggles." Because of her involvement in leftist parties, she helped bridge the space between Indian rebellions and western politics.⁸⁸

With the evictions from Pesillo, Delgado wrote Egas that "the rest of the Indians (*indios*) will be content, will cease revolting, and more than anything will stop being deceived by people who only try to exploit their ignorance."⁸⁹ As an added incentive, given that it was Holy Week, Delgado offered the workers a day off if they would work an extra day the following week. Although Páez claimed to have complied with his agreement with the workers on the Moyurco hacienda, Delgado attempted to renege on his agreement with those at Pesillo and La Chimba. This situation led to the Indians once again calling upon their friends in Quito for help. Chávez helped them draft a legal appeal to the government citing physical beatings, Delgado's failure to allow the evicted leaders to keep their cattle and personal possessions, and Delgado's failure to respect the length of the work week. A month later, once again the workers presented the government a petition asking for them to respect humanitarian concerns and force Delgado to comply with the agreement to allow the evicted leaders to take their personal belongings and harvest the crops on their *huasipungos*. Meanwhile, Páez noted that although the Indians were working peacefully on the Moyurco hacienda, inevitably Lechón and other leaders would once again incite a rebellion. At the end of May, out of frustration but somewhat prophetically Egas stated that "we will never be done with these little incidents."⁹⁰

88. Martha Bulnes, *Me levanto y digo, testimonio de tres mujeres quichua*, Colección Ecuador/Testimonio (Quito: Editorial El Conejo, 1990), 14. Amaguaña recounts her life's story in interviews published in José Yáñez del Pozo, *Yo declaro con franqueza (Cashnami causashcanchic); memoria oral de Pesillo, Cayambe*, 2d ed., revised (Quito: Ediciones Abya-Yala, 1988), Rodas, *Tránsito Amaguaña*, and Bulnes, *Me levanto y digo*, 31-40.

89. Letter from José Rafael Delgado to the Director of the Junta de Asistencia Pública, April 23, 1931, in *Comunicaciones Recibidas, Enero-Junio 1931*, 893, JCAP.

90. Transcribed oficio of Sr. Intendente Accidental de Policía de Pichinga, April 21, 1931, in *Comunicaciones Recibidas, Enero-Junio 1931*, 711, JCAP; letter from Julio Miguel Páez to the Junta de Asistencia Pública, April 25, 1931, in

In his annual report for 1930 which he wrote at the end of March 1931, Egas briefly discussed events at Pesillo. His intention to downplay the events in Cayambe is evident. In a lengthy report, the uprising was the second to last topic he addressed. He blamed the conflicts on the haciendas on two causes: a fundamental evolutionary inferiority among the Indians which left them susceptible to the simplistic solutions which the Communists suggested, and the lack of proper laws which were indispensable for maintaining law and order among the Indians. Without draconian changes in the agrarian law, Egas maintained, there would be no end to the difficulties in administering the *Asistencia Pública* haciendas. There was a danger of Communist lawyers turning the peons into landlords and undercutting the *Asistencia Pública*'s work with the "truly poor" in hospitals, orphanages, and other institutions. He criticized the Indians for attacking an institution which was working for communal interests. Again, Egas reiterated his claim that the Indians at Pesillo were not exploited, that they were better off than workers in the city, and that the *Asistencia Pública* program was giving them a better life.⁹¹ Private communications, however, reveal a much deeper seated fear. In a letter to the Ministry of Government at the end of April, Egas conceded that in Cayambe there was a serious threat of a "*revolución comunista indígena*."⁹²

Egas' racism in these proclamations is clear. He never directly discussed the Indian's demands; he attempted to maintain an upper hand in the conflicts. Only once did he acknowledge that the white and *mestizo* employees on the haciendas had

Comunicaciones Recibidas, Enero-Junio 1931, 776, JCAP; Transcribed petition to Ministro de Gobierno, May 18, 1931, in Comunicaciones Recibidas, Enero-Junio 1931, 769, JCAP; letter from Augusto Egas to the Ministro de Gobierno y Asistencia Pública, May 26, 1931, in Libro de Comunicaciones Oficiales de la Dirección de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública, 1931, 170, JCAP.

91. *Informe de la Dirección de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública (1930)* (Quito: Imprenta Nacional, 1931), 50-52.

92. "Indigenous communist revolution;" letter from Augusto Egas, Segundo D. Rojas V., and Ernesto Robalino to Ministerio de Gobierno y Asistencia Pública, April 30, 1931, in Comunicaciones Recibidas, Enero-Junio 1931, 900, JCAP.

committed "minuscule" abuses, but that there was a wide chasm between these insignificant abuses and an alleged reign of terror for which the landlords and local officials could be held responsible. The previous year, several workers had come to his office in Quito to denounce the abuses they faced at the hands of employees on the hacienda. Rather than responding to their concerns, he began investigating the nature of the spread of "communism" on the hacienda.⁹³

During the first three months of 1931, rural protest actions in Cayambe repeatedly and consistently made front-page headline news in the national papers in Ecuador. Even after the uprisings had quieted in Cayambe, the actions there appeared to set the stage for protests elsewhere in the country. It was as if the revolt in Cayambe had opened the flood gates for other hacienda workers in other provinces to express their discontent. For example, *El Comercio* described an uprising in April on a hacienda in Guaranda in the central highland province of Bolívar as "almost equal to Cayambe."⁹⁴ The protest actions in Cayambe did not end with this strike. In August of that same year, Paredes and Maldonado once again were in Cayambe helping to organize an uprising of about five hundred Indians.⁹⁵ These were not isolated incidents; this type of protest would continue through the agrarian reforms of the 1960s.

Conferencia de Cabecillas Indígenas (1934)

The Primer Congreso de Organizaciones Campesinas in February 1931 in Cayambe represents the first attempt (although thwarted) in Ecuadorian history that diverse Indigenous groups unified in order to create a national-level organization in

93. Letter from Augusto Egas to the Ministro de Gobierno y Asistencia Pública, March 10, 1931, in Libro de Comunicaciones Oficiales de la Dirección de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública, 1931, 80, JCAP; letter from Augusto Egas to Sr. Ministro de Gobierno, January 7, 1931, in Libro de Comunicaciones Oficiales de la Dirección de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública, 1931, 6, JCAP.

94. "Los indígenas de las haciendas de beneficencia de Bolívar producen agitaciones como las de Cayambe," *El Comercio*, April 30, 1931, 1.

95. "Nuevo levantamiento de los indios de Cayambe se ha estado preparando," *El Comercio*, August 16, 1931, 1.

order to advocate for their common interests. The governmental repression which prevented this meeting did not stymie Indigenous leaders in their efforts to create such an organization.

At the Casa del Obrero (Worker's House) in Quito in 1934, leaders from various provinces gathered for a Conferencia de Cabecillas Indígenas (Conference of Indigenous Leaders) with the goal of creating a regional or national organization to defend Indigenous interests. Although this meeting had a minimal impact, it created the basis for a future national organization of rural workers. In reality, this was the birth of the Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios which was reorganized in 1944 and which the Ecuadorian government legally recognized for the first time in 1945. While not as tightly or centrally organized as later organizations such as CONAIE, the group which emerged out of the 1934 meeting supported local organizing efforts, attempted to organize several strikes on haciendas (efforts which largely met with failure), and published an occasional newspaper called *Ñucanchic Allpa* (Quichua for "Our Land").⁹⁶

Ñucanchic Allpa, an "organ of syndicates, communities, and Indians in general," underwent repeated deaths and rebirths during the course of its history. It was a bi-lingual newspaper, with important articles and editorials published in both Spanish and Quichua. It was a mouthpiece which presented Indigenous demands, emphasized the importance of education, and attacked the paternalistic policies of *indigenistas*. It fought for Indigenous rights, largely from a class-based perspective. In a May 1940 editorial which challenged the idea that the Indians were an "inferior race," the paper noted that there were two groups in Ecuador: proletarians and

96. CONAIE, 31, interview with Nela Martínez, Quito, April 27, 1996. Virtually no information other than that preserved in the oral tradition remains of this meeting. Mercedes Prieto has also searched without success for information on this meeting. See Prieto, "Haciendas estatales," 119. An article in *El Pueblo* in 1951 placed the date of this conference in 1936. See "El partido comunista organizador y defensor de los indios," *El Pueblo*, June 2, 1951, 6.

capitalists. The proletarian class included two million Indians in addition to poor *mestizos* and Afro-Ecuadorians, whereas the capitalists were the large landholders, industrialists, bankers, and whites in general. The editorial concluded with a list of nineteen demands which would need to be achieved in order to end the exploitation which the Indians faced:

1. Division of the State's large properties (*latifundios*) as well as private ones, and giving these along with water to those who work the land;
2. Abolish the practice of forced and free labor;
3. Absolute prohibition of *entradas*, *cargos*, *priostazgos*, *capitanias*, and *guiones*;
4. Abolition of *diezmos* and *primicias*, according to the law;
5. Abolition of *concertaje*;
6. Reduce the work day to eight hours, in accordance of the law;
7. Strict compliance with minimum wage laws;
8. Foundation of an Agricultural Bank for the peasants;
9. Creation of an Agricultural Institute;
10. Depreciation of farm tools;
11. No charges for all religious services;
12. Complete freedom of organization;
13. Abolition of *gobernadores*, *regidores*, and *alcaldes*;
14. Abolition of corporal punishment;
15. Absolute suppression of the services which brides lend priests in the weeks proceeding a wedding;
16. Abolition of the *doctrina* and *confesión* which priests and *alcaldes* impose;
17. More day schools for children, organized with an eye toward their complete spiritual and economic liberation;
18. Foundation of Sunday and night schools for adults of both sexes, organized with the same goals as those for children;
19. Suppression of domestic services lent to whites and *mestizos*.

The editorial ended with the note that "after four long centuries of spiritual and economic slavery," all of these demands were necessary "in the name of civilization."⁹⁷

The demands revolved around both economic issues (land reform, salaries, and

97. "¿Es de 'raza inferior' el 'indio'?" *Ñucanchic Allpa*, Epoca II, No. 15 (May 28, 1940), 1, 4.

working conditions) as well as a variety of cultural issues. This statement challenged the perception of the submissive role which Indians traditionally played in society. It was also a call for structural changes, such as the extension of credit and technical training which was critical to the success of any agrarian reform program but which was almost always missing from governmental proposals. This document also stressed the importance of education in order to achieve the "liberation" of the Indians. Taken in its entirety, this virtual laundry list of demands indicates the breadth of Indian demands in the 1930s and 1940s, and suggests that class (economic) and ethnic (cultural) demands played equally important roles in organizational ideologies.

Significantly, unlike the list of demands nine years earlier in Cayambe, land reform headed this lengthy list of demands. Land was not even an issue in the earlier Indigenous manifesto. Had land tenure patterns changed so significantly during the 1930s that a previously ignored topic would now head the list of demands? No, and in fact the presence of some of the same issues such as an eight-hour day and salary raises which were to have been settled in 1931 still appear here. Rather, what this represents is a shift in the ideology of the Indigenous movement. This shift was not away from ethnicity; the document raises many of the same cultural issues which the Indians presented at Pesillo in 1931, particularly those related to education and service obligations to the dominant society. Rather, the addition of more specific economic demands relating to land tenure and working conditions represents a deepening of the movement. In a ten-year period, Indigenous organizing efforts had moved noticeably in the direction of demanding more fundamental structural changes in society. Partially this was due to the fact that while in the 1920s Ecuador had experienced economic growth, throughout the 1930s it felt the effects of the global economic downturn.⁹⁸ Undoubtedly, this political change was also partially (or maybe even

98. Linda Alexander Rodríguez notes that the price index in Ecuador fell from 100 in 1932 to 262 in 1940, and continued to fall to 427 in 1943. Rodríguez, *The Search for Public Policy*, 171.

largely) the result of the influence of leftist elements, most significantly the Communist Party, which stressed class and economic issues. But it must be noted that this ideological shift did not change the ethnic and cultural mooring of the movement. The demands leave no doubt that, above all, this was an *Indigenous* movement.

These national-level organizational efforts did not take place in isolation from other leftist movements or intellectual trends. It is one thing to organize locally to resolve a land dispute with an hacienda owner or to gain better working conditions and wages, and it becomes a completely different situation if an organization's goals include effecting changes on a macro level. This is the fundamental difference between Indigenous revolts which took place during the colonial period and the organizations which rural actors began to form in the 1920s and 1930s. The goals which these organizations embraced required interacting for the first time with a state apparatus, which necessitated the accumulation of new skills.

In order to effect the desired profound changes in Ecuador's land tenure system, the Indigenous leaders would have to take their demands directly to the government located in the capital city of Quito. From as far away as northern Cayambe, people would walk, often barefoot with babies on their backs, to Quito for meetings and protests. They would first go to the town of Cayambe the night before a trip to sleep and leave from there at 3 a.m. At noon they would rest at Guayllabamba and later continue to Calderón by nightfall. The next morning they would arrive in Quito where they would spend anywhere from a few days to a month at the Casa del Obrero which was on the Plaza del Teatro in the center of Quito. Tránsito Amaguaña, one of the leaders from Cayambe, claimed to have made twenty-six trips like this on foot to Quito.⁹⁹ The Casa del Obrero was a meeting place for peasants, artisans, artists, workers, students, and intellectuals who were interested in causes of social justice. It was also commonly used as the gathering place for Indians from Cayambe

99. Rodas, *Tránsito Amaguaña*, 25.

when they came to the capital to participate in protests or to present their demands to the government.

Once in Quito, the leaders met various obstacles in communicating with the government. They faced logistical problems, including those of room and board. There were cultural and language barriers to be overcome. Many of the peasants in Cayambe were monolingual Quichua speakers and often illiterate. Petitions to the government needed to be written (in Spanish), often following a specific legal format. This was never a question of intelligence, conceptualization of issues which needed to be addressed, or the need for assistance in mapping out strategies; rather, it was a pragmatic issue of how to present demands to the national government.

It was in these issues that the Indigenous people from Cayambe turned to urban leftists and organizations such as the Casa del Obrero for assistance. Leftists, sometimes with legal backgrounds, assisted in drawing up petitions and helping the Indigenous peoples present their demands to the government. It is a mistake to see this as a paternalistic or manipulative form of assistance. To argue that the urban leftists manipulated the Indians purely for their own benefit is to deny agency to the rural actors. The Indians were caught up in capitalistic economic forces much larger than their small communities or haciendas, but they were capable of analyzing their situation and developing plans of action.

At the same time, it is an oversimplification to see the urban leftists as simple conduits which transmitted the rural demands to the central government without interacting intellectually with the authors of these demands. Naturally, in the process of drawing up the legal petitions the two groups discussed issues and problems which they faced. The urban leftists would introduce the Indians to intellectual trends which were broader than the immediate reality of Indigenous peasants in the countryside in the northern Ecuadorian highlands. For example, Nela Martínez, one of these urban Marxists who worked with the Indians in Cayambe, notes that in the 1920s and 1930s, *Amauta*, a journal which the Peruvian Marxist José Carlos Mariátegui edited, arrived

in Ecuador. Leftists would read and discuss his writings (both among themselves and with the Indigenous activists), and years later Mariátegui's works still maintained a central place in Martínez' private library.¹⁰⁰

What relevance would a Peruvian Marxist have for the rural population of Cayambe, and what kind of influence would his thought have on them? If Marxists in Quito were culturally distant from the reality of rural Cayambe, someone from the Peruvian coast (Lima) would seem even further removed from their reality and have little to say to them. Nevertheless, Mariátegui was one of the first Marxists to seriously analyze the situation of Indians in the Andean highlands and had much to contribute to an understanding of the problems which they faced. Mariátegui contended that "the problem of the Indian is rooted in the land tenure system of our economy," and only through fundamental economic change and land reform would social change take place.¹⁰¹ "The problem of the Indigenous peoples," Mariátegui wrote, placing the problem in very concrete material terms, "is a problem of land."¹⁰² He believed in the revolutionary potential of the Indigenous and peasant masses, and that only a class-based revolutionary movement could lead to their liberation and the end of exploitation. Mariátegui believed that once Indigenous peoples were introduced to a revolutionary consciousness, they would be unequalled in their struggle for socialism.¹⁰³ The rural communities could complement and even replace the historic role which Marxism traditionally gave to the urban working class. The Indigenous peoples would not simply implement a dogmatic copy of European socialism, but rather create an "indo-american socialism" which would grow out of Andean culture

100. Interview with Nela Martínez, Quito, April 27, 1996.

101. Mariátegui, "The Problem of the Indian," *Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality*, 22.

102. José Carlos Mariátegui, "El problema de las razas en la América latina," *Ideología y política*, 19th ed., *Obras Completas*, Volume 13 (Lima: Biblioteca Amauta, 1990), 42.

103. *Ibid.*, 84-85.

and language.¹⁰⁴ So central were Indigenous concerns to Mariátegui's conceptualization of Marxism and social struggles in the Andes that one author has observed that all of Mariátegui's essays were written from this point of view.¹⁰⁵

This was the ideological context for the formation of Ecuador's modern Indian movement. Other changes also helped force transitions in organizational strategies. Indians in Cayambe no longer were as isolated as they previously had been. In June of 1928 the railroad came to Cayambe, linking it with Quito. In October of 1930, Julio Miguel Páez and José Rafael Delgado, renters of the government haciendas in northern Cayambe, built a road to Ibarra, the capital of the neighboring province of Imbabura.¹⁰⁶ Not only did these changes in infrastructure more closely integrate rural workers in Cayambe into a capitalistic world system, they also made state power a much more immediate reality in rural areas. With roads and trains, it was easier for the government to move troops in quickly to repress uprisings and to extract Indigenous leaders to stand trial in Quito.

These organizational actions and protests in Cayambe marked an important turning point in the history of Indigenous organizing efforts in Ecuador. For the first time, broad-based actions sought to shift political balances and the social situation of society. It unified isolated local struggles across the parroquial borders of Olmedo, Ayora, and Juan Montalvo into a strong cantonal movement, and then brought these actors into contact with their counterparts across Ecuador. Rural workers also allied

104. José Carlos Mariátegui, "Aniversario y Balance," *Amauta* 3:17 (September 1928), 3.

105. Enrique Dussel, "El marxismo de Mariátegui como filosofía de la revolución," in David Sobrevilla Alcázar, ed., *El marxismo de José Carlos Mariátegui, V Congreso Nacional de Filosofía (Seminario efectuado el 2 de agosto de 1994)* (Lima: Empresa Editora Amauta, 1995), 32. For a comprehensive analysis of Mariátegui's Marxism as it relates to the Latin American context, see Harry E. Vanden, *National Marxism in Latin America: José Carlos Mariátegui's Thought and Politics* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1986).

106. "Un trozo de carretero entre Cayambe e Ibarra construyen varios ciudadanos," *El Día*, October 5, 1930, 1.

with urban leftists to press for economic demands, which strengthened the presence of the Socialist and Communist parties in Cayambe. Increasingly during these protest actions, the Indigenous workers claimed citizenship rights and demanded equal treatment from the central government, even though the government did not extend this recognition to the Indigenous peoples.¹⁰⁷ Galo Ramón has also observed that these rural actions "profoundly broke the *hacendado* system" in Cayambe. Peasant actions permitted leftist leader Rubén Rodríguez later to be elected to Cayambe's municipal council, "tearing from the landlords' hands the absolute control which until that point they had maintained over regional power structures."¹⁰⁸ Indigenous actions had initiated a process of social change which could no longer be detained.

These changes allowed the Indigenous peasantry in Cayambe to assume a growing awareness of the broad nature of the struggle which they faced. This, in turn, led to a globalization of organizational efforts which unified diverse rural organizations under one banner. Indigenous leaders from Cayambe played an important role in this process. As a result, in the 1920s and 1930s these leaders laid the groundwork for Ecuador's modern Indian movement.

107. Kim Clark has observed a similar phenomenon of Indigenous workers claiming citizenship rights in the province of Chimborazo in order to defend their interests. See Clark, 67. Clark also notes that "Paradoxically, these forms of resistance also implied a recognition and legitimization of the state. In cases like this the complexity of the dialectic of resistance and accommodation in situations involving domination is made evident." Clark, 70.

108. Ramón, "Cayambe," 165.

Chapter Seven

Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios: Class and Ethnicity in a Twentieth-Century Peasant Movement

In May of 1944, workers, students, peasants, Indians, women, and other elements of the popular sectors of society rose up against the government of Ecuadorian president Carlos Arroyo del Río and caused its downfall. The uprising began on May 28, and in Cayambe on the following day Dolores Cacuango led Indigenous forces in an attack on the local army barracks. On May 30, Nela Martínez and Luisa Gómez de la Torre helped organize a human enclosure around the Government Palace in Quito. Thus, they gained the surrender of the men stationed there. Without the support of the military, Arroyo resigned the presidency. This opened the way for the former president José María Velasco Ibarra to return to Ecuador and assume power for the second time. For three days, however, these women remained at their posts acting as if they were government ministers. Contemporary reports indicated that "women's committees" played an important role in the large street demonstrations which accompanied this change in government.¹ For several days, one author has observed, "Ecuador was in the hands of its legitimate owners."²

The "Glorious May Revolution" of May 28, 1944, represented a significant break in the political history of the Ecuadorian republic. Arroyo del Río was fraudu-

1. Sergio Enrique Girón, *La revolución de mayo* (Quito: Editorial Atahualpa, 1945), 336. A large body of literature exists on the May 1944 revolution in Ecuador, including the account which Girón, one of the military leaders of the uprising, wrote. A more recent and more scholarly treatment of these events is Silvia Vega Ugalde, *La Gloriosa: de la revolución del 28 de mayo de 1944 a la contrarrevolución velasquista*, Colección Ecuador/Historia (Quito, Ecuador: Editorial El Conejo, 1987).

2. Rodas, *Amor*, 60.

lently elected in 1940 as the elites' candidate in order to keep Velasco Ibarra from gaining power for the second time. The credibility of Arroyo's government, however, suffered after losing a war with Peru in 1941 and half of Ecuador's territory in the subsequent Río Protocol. Broad sectors of society including workers, students, Indians, women, and sectors of the military joined forces in the Alianza Democrática Ecuatoriana (ADE, Ecuadorian Democratic Alliance). Popular uprisings in Guayaquil and Quito against Arroyo's repressive government set the stage for its collapse in 1944 and the handing of the presidency to Velasco. Several hundred people were killed in the fighting which began at 11 p.m. on May 28. The following day, leaders established a provisional government in Guayaquil which was to govern until Velasco Ibarra arrived in the country. A wide variety of people served in this Junta, including the communist and labor leader Pedro Saad. Immediately after this successful uprising, Velasco passed through Cayambe on his way to Quito from his exile outside the country. In Cayambe, women, children, Indians and others "from all stations in life" down to the smallest settlements gave him a very warm welcome.³

Their participation in the "Glorious May Revolution" is but one example which demonstrates that the demands of the Indigenous peoples in Cayambe went beyond narrowly defined peasant concerns about land or ethnic issues of cultural preservation. Indigenous peoples built alliances with other social actors in order to struggle for fundamental structural changes in society. In addition to their participation in the May Revolution, Indigenous peoples participated in a variety of other social causes and movements. For example, Nela Martínez has observed that in the early 1940s, Indigenous leaders Cacuango and Jesús Gualavisí organized anti-fascist committees and "in Quichua condemned the fascism which they already had experienced."⁴ The

3. Vega Ugalde, 96; Girón, 355.

4. Nela Martínez, "Prologo," in Raymond Mériguet Cousségal, *Antinazismo en Ecuador, años 1941-1944: autobiografía del Movimiento Antinazi de Ecuador (MPAE-MAE)* (Quito: R. Mériguet Cousségal, 1988).

pages of *Antinazi*, the newspaper of the Movimiento Antifascista del Ecuador (Ecuadorian Anti-fascist Movement), describe these organizing efforts. In July of 1943, Cacuangó and her son Luis Catucúamba gathered a group of fifty Indigenous people in Yanahuaico in northern Cayambe to form the first rural anti-fascist committee. Cacuangó observed "the need that Indigenous peoples should organize an anti-fascist committee in order to struggle against the enemies of democracy, as others are doing in Quito, Guayaquil," and elsewhere in Ecuador.⁵ The following month, Gualavisí followed this lead by organizing a similar committee in the *parroquia* of Juan Montalvo in the southern part of the canton of Cayambe. Gualavisí, who served as the secretary-general of this new committee, observed that Indigenous people should not be indifferent to the Nazi and fascist struggle against democracy; it was an issue which affected all of them.⁶

These anti-fascist organizations were not simply inactive, paper organizations. At the Pichincha Provincial Anti-Fascist Conference held in Quito in September of 1943, Cacuangó was an official delegate for the Comité Indígena Antifascista de Yanahuaico (Indigenous Anti-fascist Committee of Yanahuaico) and Gualavisí represented the Comité Indígena Antifascista de Juan Montalvo (Indigenous Anti-fascist Committee of Juan Montalvo). Both Cacuangó and Gualavisí appear in a photograph from the closing session of this conference at Quito's Universidad Central, and in the published resolutions of the conference, they are singled out for their achievements. Cayambe, with the most politically conscious Indigenous population in Ecuador and the only rural area with organized committees, served as a stimulating model for the rest of the country, including the cities.⁷

5. "Indígenas de Cayambe forman el primer Comité Antifascista del campo en Yanahuaico," *Antinazi* (Quito) 2:24 (August 17, 1943): 2, facsimile edition in Mériguet, 253.

6. "Comité indígena antifascista se organizó en Juan Montalvo," *Antinazi* (Quito) 2:25 (September 5, 1943): 2, facsimile edition in Mériguet, 261.

7. Movimiento Antifascista del Ecuador (M.A.E.), "Informes y resoluciones:

This chapter builds on these and other examples in order to examine the class structure and ethnic ideologies inherent in Indigenous organizing efforts in Cayambe. First, it demonstrates that Indigenous organizational efforts in the 1940s had roots in labor unions and working-class struggles. Similar to the history of the 1931 strike in Pesillo, these urban leftist organizing efforts had an important influence on the ideologies and strategies of rural movements. This chapter then examines legislative reforms and governmental policies which Indigenous peoples and their urban-based supporters agitated for and utilized to the benefit of their movement. Finally, this chapter discusses the formation of Ecuador's first national Indigenous federation, and the role which ethnicity played in what was essentially a class-based organization. This chapter builds on the argument that without this early history, a strong Indigenous rights movement would not have developed later in Ecuador.

Labor unions and working-class struggles

Indigenous peoples' participation in broader social movements went far beyond their relations with Ecuador's anti-fascist committees. As shown previously, early Indigenous organizational efforts in Cayambe enjoyed significant support from the founders of Ecuador's socialist and communist parties. One of the most significant long-term political organizational efforts resulted from Indigenous relations with labor unions and working-class struggles. It is in observing and analyzing these interactions that the ideological significance of the interplay of class and ethnicity becomes apparent.

Compared to the rest of Latin America, little research has been carried out on labor history in Ecuador. In a bibliographic essay almost twenty years old, Richard

Conferencia Provincial Antifascista de Pichincha, Septiembre 20-27 de 1943," 28, 32, facsimile edition in Mériguet, 283, 284. Both Cacungo and Gualavisí are listed in the accredited delegate list on page 5 of this publication (Mériguet, 277), as well as in a photograph from the closing session of this conference reprinted in Mériguet, 286. A facsimile edition of a flyer for the closing session of the conference in Mériguet, 275, includes their organizations in the list of sponsors of the event.

Milk noted that general surveys of Latin American labor history such as those by Robert Alexander and Victor Alba "provide the only readily available summaries of Ecuadorean worker associations and their development."⁸ Ecuadorian scholars have invested more work into recounting the history of working-class and popular movements in that country, but this lack of scholarly attention merely reflects the relatively small size of labor unions in the country.⁹ In his landmark study *Organized Labor in Latin America*, Hobart Spalding remarks that in Ecuador in the post-World War I period, worker-class "organization remained embryonic."¹⁰ Robert Alexander notes

8. Milk, 179. Milk's dissertation "Growth and Development of Ecuador's Worker Organizations, 1895-1944" is the best English-language summary of Ecuador's labor history. In what he designated as a preliminary study, Milk examines the growth and development of labor from early mutual aid societies in the aftermath of the 1895 Liberal Revolution to the formation of national labor confederations in 1938 and 1944. Anton Rosenthal in his 1990 dissertation "Controlling the Line: Worker Strategies and Transport Capital on the Railroads of Ecuador, Zambia and Zimbabwe, 1916-1950" (Ph.D. diss., University of Minnesota, 1990) focuses on the actions of railroad workers, the first industrial workers to organize in Ecuador and an important catalyst behind the rest of Ecuador's labor movement. The most comprehensive survey to date of Ecuadorian labor history is Patricio Ycaza's two-volume *Historia del movimiento obrero ecuatoriano: De su génesis al Frente Popular*, segunda edición revisada (Quito: Centro de Documentación e Información Sociales del Ecuador (CEDIME), 1984), and *De la influencia de la táctica del frente popular a las luchas del FUT*, segunda parte (Quito: Centro de Documentación e Información Sociales del Ecuador (CEDIME), 1991). Two of the few articles on Ecuadorian labor history are Alan Middleton, "Division and Cohesion in the Working Class: Artisans and Wage Labourers in Ecuador," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 14:1 (May 1982): 171-94; and Ronn F. Pineo, "Reinterpreting Labor Militancy: The Collapse of the Cacao Economy and the General Strike of 1922 in Guayaquil, Ecuador," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 68:4 (November 1988): 707-36. No book-length treatments of the subject exist in English.

9. In addition to Ycaza's work, see Osvaldo Albornoz Peralta, *Historia del movimiento obrero ecuatoriano: breve síntesis* (Quito: Editorial Letra Nueva, 1983); Isabel Robalino Bolle, *El sindicalismo en el Ecuador*, 2d ed. (Quito: Ediciones de la Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador, 1992); Muñoz Vicuña, *Historia del movimiento obrero del Ecuador*.

10. Hobart A. Spalding, Jr., *Organized Labor in Latin America: Historical Case Studies of Urban Workers in Dependent Societies* (New York: Harper Torchbooks,

that in 1942 there were 451 registered unions in Ecuador. Despite this large number of unions, they reported only 22,778 members.¹¹ Others have observed that participation in labor groups has never exceeded twenty percent of the Ecuadorian population. Indeed, in the 1970s Osvaldo Hurtado placed the figure at nine percent of the economically active population, attributing this low number to the small industrial sector in the country.¹² About half this number participated as members in one of the country's three main labor confederations active at that time.¹³

As in most Latin American countries, the roots of Ecuador's labor organizations lie in mutual-aid societies which artisans in the urban centers of Guayaquil and Quito organized in the late nineteenth century. General Eloy Alfaro's 1895 Liberal Revolution encouraged this development. The coastal leaders in this revolution also treated workers as pawns in their perennial regional power struggles, manipulating labor's concerns in an attempt to dislodge highland elites from power. Anarcho-syndicalists held control of Ecuador's small labor movement until the latter part of the 1920s when socialists began to dominate the movement. Later attempts to revive an anarchist movement and regain its earlier dominance among workers met with failure.¹⁴

A general strike in Guayaquil in November of 1922 that resulted in a bloody massacre in which hundreds of workers lost their lives marks the beginning of the organized left in Ecuador.¹⁵ The strike emerged from a general situation of a declining

1977), 50.

11. Alexander, *Organized Labor in Latin America*, 126.

12. Hurtado, 235. When other associations (agrarian cooperatives, neighborhood associations, etc.) are included, the number rose to twenty-one percent. *Ibid.*, 236.

13. *Ibid.*, 241.

14. On anarchism in Ecuador, see Alexei Páez, ed., *El anarquismo en el Ecuador*, Colección Popular 15 de Noviembre, No. 6 (Quito: Corporación Editora Nacional, INFOC: 1986).

15. For treatments of the 1922 strike, see Patricio Martínez J., *Guayaquil, Noviembre de 1922: Política oligárquica e insurrección popular*, 2d ed., Historia de Pueblo Ecuatoriano, No. 3 (Quito: Centro de Estudios y Difusión Social, 1989);

economy with rampant inflation, unemployment, food shortages, and rising prices. Several student and worker protests took place in the weeks and months preceding the massacre, but the first significant event was a railroad worker strike on the Riobamba to Guayaquil line in October of 1922. The paralyzation of the rail line struck at the core of the government's control over the country and sparked a harsh reaction. Despite governmental efforts to repress it, the strike spread to other workers both on the coast and in the highlands. Strike leaders presented insurrectionary rhetoric which increased the government's fears that the strike could lead to a toppling of the government. On November 6, electric company and trolley car workers in Guayaquil demanded salary increases, eight-hour work days, and job security. A failure of negotiations led to a general strike on November 13 which brought the city to a standstill. Subsequently, workers marched through Guayaquil's streets, and leaders denounced governmental policies. The government captured and jailed numerous strikers and leaders. On the afternoon of November 15, strikers clashed with police who shot at them. Following apparent orders, the police herded the strikers toward the Guayaquil waterfront, killing many people and blocking anyone who attempted to flee the area. Perhaps a thousand people were massacred and thrown into the river or buried in a mass grave. As Richard Milk noted, authorities declared that "they had saved the city from a Bolshevik uprising and brought subversion under control."¹⁶ Although not the first such action, this protest in Guayaquil in many ways represents the birth of popular movements in Ecuador. Even though it was a futile tragedy in terms of achieving the immediate strike objectives, "November 15, 1922, became a rallying cry for labor and thus served as a milestone in the growth of Ecuador's labor

Pineo, "Reinterpreting Labor Militancy," Chapter Four ("Guayaquil; November 15, 1922," 67-94) in Richard Milk's dissertation "Growth and Development of Ecuador's Worker Organizations;" and Chapter Five ("Strikes on the Guayaquil and Quito Railway," 160-209, and in particular the section "The 1922 Strikes and Massacre," 178-90) in Rosenthal's dissertation "Controlling the Line."

16. Milk, 90.

movement."¹⁷ Rather than ending Ecuador's nascent popular movement as the government had intended, the struggle to redress Ecuador's social ills continued and strengthened.

The 1920s were a period of growth and internationalization for the labor movement in Ecuador. Many small labor unions emerged along with various efforts to organize a national labor movement. As with Indigenous peoples, labor rarely acted in isolation from other social forces in society. The history of labor organizing in the 1930s and 1940s suggests a tradition of Catholic unions in the highlands and leftist ones on the coast, which included participation of the socialist and communist parties. The oldest working-class organization in Ecuador is the Confederación Ecuatoriana de Obreros Católicos (CEDOC, Ecuadorian Confederation of Catholic Workers).¹⁸ CEDOC emerged out of the First National Catholic Labor Congress held in September of 1938 which the Catholic Church and Conservative Party had organized. Its overarching ideology was pro-Catholic and anti-leftist. It functioned as a conservative organization more concerned with championing religious causes and countering a growing "communist" influence in labor than articulating workers' demands. Philip Agee, a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) secret operations officer in Quito in the early 1960s, reported that the CIA supported CEDOC in an attempt to counter leftist influence in the labor movement.¹⁹ Partisans have often criticized CEDOC for this conservative ideology, but even at its founding CEDOC contained elements of progressive thought. Although formed from an anti-socialist and anti-communist ideology which opposed the idea of class struggle, the emergence of CEDOC was an

17. Ibid., 91.

18. In addition to the general works on Ecuadorian labor history cited in footnotes 8 and 9, Juan J. Paz y Miño Cepeda also discusses the history of CEDOC in *La C.E.D.O.C. en la historia del movimiento obrero ecuatoriano: 50 años de lucha, 1938-1988* (Quito, Ecuador: Editorial Voluntad, 1988).

19. Philip Agee, *Inside the Company: CIA Diary* (New York: Bantam Books, 1975), 122, 140, 625.

important development in the formation of popular organizations in Ecuador. It demanded an eight-hour work day, a day and a half of rest a week, a minimum wage, and accident compensation. Many of these demands were similar to those of leftist organizations.²⁰ Thus, while presenting an anti-socialist perspective, CEDOC also agitated for pro-worker positions. At its fifth congress in 1955, CEDOC began to focus more on industrial and rural workers. In the 1970s, CEDOC continued to undergo a process of radicalization, and in particular increased the intensity of its activities on agrarian issues. During this time, its leaders helped form the Federación Nacional de Organizaciones Campesinas (FENOC, National Federation of Peasant Organizations) as an alternative to communist-dominated rural organizations.

Although CEDOC was the first national labor union in Ecuador, it was not the first to organize peasants and rural workers. Almost thirty years before they helped form the FENOC, leftist unions had successfully organized rural actors into a strong movement for social change. The first successful effort to establish a national leftist labor confederation came in 1944 with the founding of the Confederación de Trabajadores del Ecuador (CTE, Confederation of Ecuadorian Workers), which subsequently was a major force in leftist organizing efforts in Ecuador. Communist and socialist party leaders as well as people from an anarcho-syndicalist political persuasion played a large role in forming the CTE and defining its ideology which sought to "better workers' economic and social situation and defend their class interests."²¹ The CTE established close relations with the communist-dominated Confederación de Trabajadores de América Latina (CTAL, Confederation of Latin American Workers). CTAL and especially its founder and president, Mexican labor leader Vicente Lombardo Toledano, had an important influence in Ecuador.

20. Milk, 133.

21. Confederación de Trabajadores del Ecuador (CTE), "Estatutos de la Confederación de Trabajadores del Ecuador (C.T.E.)," in Osvaldo Albornoz, Vladímir Albornoz, César Endara and others, *28 de mayo y fundación de la C.T.E.*, Colección Popular 15 de Noviembre, No. 4 (Quito: Corporación Editora Nacional, 1984), 194.

Lombardo Toledano visited Ecuador in 1942 and urged workers to form a national labor federation. In a front-page editorial in the newspaper *Antinazi*, the "syndicates, communities, and all Indian peoples" presented a cordial greeting to the *compañero* Lombardo Toledano in Quichua. They expressed their hope that his presence would serve to unify the working masses on the continent.²² During his time in Ecuador, he visited Cayambe where more than two thousand Indians received him. He met with Jesús Gualavisí, Dolores Cacuango, and other leaders and, according to a newspaper report, left Cayambe impressed with the reception he had received there.²³

In July of 1944, on the heels of the May Revolution which deposed Arroyo del Río and placed Velasco Ibarra in power, over a thousand delegates including workers, artisans, peasants, intellectuals, and political leaders met in Quito to found the organization. The CTE sought to improve the living and working conditions of the masses. Their demands included better salaries, a shorter work week, a guaranteed right to strike, the elimination of feudal trappings in agriculture, defense of democracy, and other elements which favored the proletariat within the framework of an international working-class struggle.²⁴ This was a period of high expectations for deep changes. Leftists had seen May 28 as the beginning of a Marxist revolution. Velasco, however, saw this victory as his own personal triumph. Because of the need to retain Velasco Ibarra's support, some of the CTE's objectives (including those related to land reform) were more moderate than those of CEDOC.²⁵ Leftist expectations were subsequently crushed as Velasco repressed labor movements, declared himself dictator, and began to persecute "bolsheviks" and "terrorists." This repression even extended to Indige-

22. "Ecuador Runacunapa Lombardo Toledano compañerota saludai," *Antinazi* (Quito) 1:11 (October 9, 1942): 2, facsimile edition in Mériguet, 130.

23. "En Cayambe el Párroco Dr. Caicedo, encabeza la manifestación a Vicente Lombardo Toledano," *Antinazi* (Quito) 1:12 (November 7, 1942): 6, facsimile edition in Mériguet, 142; Muñoz Vicuña, *Masas, luchas, solidaridad*, 65.

24. CTE, 194-95.

25. Milk, 152.

nous organizing efforts. From the National Assembly on January 30, 1945, the communist leader Ricardo Paredes denounced the mobilization of two army units, thirteen tanks, and two planes to Cayambe under the pretext of suppressing an alleged Indigenous uprising.²⁶ Within two years, most of the socialists and communists had left the government. Velasco soon alienated his base of support and a military coup subsequently overthrew him.

The CTE proudly stressed that since its birth, the demands of the rural masses formed a central element of its ideology. The organization struggled to extend social security benefits to peasants and included as part of its statement of founding principles a demand for agrarian reform. It called for land and water to be returned to Indigenous and peasant communities from which they had been snatched. It also called for the implementation of modern forms of cultivation (in particular cooperatives), the creation of an effective system of credit which would benefit the peasants, the expansion of irrigation systems, and the improvement of living conditions for salaried agricultural workers.²⁷ The CTE began "as an expression of a worker-peasant alliance and continues to maintain itself as such." It never gave up the struggle for a democratic agrarian reform and a defense of Indians in the face of state and employer violence.²⁸ Organizationally, the CTE provided an important defense of Indigenous rights in Cayambe and throughout Ecuador.

Governmental policies and legislative reforms

The 1930s and 1940s were a period of political instability and economic crisis in Ecuador, as well as a time of gains in social legislation and popular organizing efforts. In this period the country had twenty-one different presidents, including the socialist Luis Larrea Alba for less than two months in 1931. The left reached perhaps its highest level of electoral strength during these years, although it never was able to

26. Vega Ugalde, 117.

27. CTE, 195.

28. Muñoz Vicuña, *Historia del movimiento obrero del Ecuador*, 56, 59.

capitalize on this situation to gain control of the state. What leftist organizing efforts managed to accomplish, however, was the passage of social legislation. Popular organizing pressures helped promulgate legislation which could then be utilized to advance agendas for social justice. It was during the 1930s that much of the agrarian legislation that dealt with the "Indian problem" originated. Many of the same people who formed the CTE were involved in these legislative struggles and helped implement them to the benefit of Indigenous communities.

Although Indians were excluded from voting and positions of political power, actions such as the 1931 peasant strike and attempts to organize a national Indigenous federation placed pressure on those in power. Although Indigenous peoples did not play a direct and active role in the deliberations which led up to these legislative changes, their actions were a major motivating force behind the reforms. Subsequently, Indigenous organizations and sympathetic leftist leaders were able to utilize this legislation to advance their rural unionizing efforts. Thus, even though Indians were disenfranchised, they both influenced and took advantage of societal changes which were taking place on a broader level.

The two most significant legislative reforms of this era which related to Indigenous demands were the 1937 *Ley de Comunas* and the 1938 *Código de Trabajo*. The first extended legal recognition to a form of local community organization, and the second protected working conditions on the haciendas. Together they highlight critical issues which Indigenous communities and organizations faced in the 1930s. In the case of Cayambe, Indigenous peoples largely shunned the first law on the establishment of *comunas*, but embraced the advances in the 1938 labor code. Not only do these legal reforms reflect political and economic interests, they also highlight the nature of ethnic identity in the canton.

Ley de Comunas (1937)

Peasant and Indian pressure led to the passage of the *Ley de Organización y Regimen de Comunas* (commonly called the *Ley de Comunas* or Law of Communes)

in 1937. A *comuna* has been described as "the oldest form of peasant organization, with pre-colonial and colonial origins."²⁹ Literally, a "*comuna*" is a "commune," although it more accurately could be translated into English as "community," or specifically a rural community, although other Spanish words ("*comunidad*") more accurately translate as "community." Specifically, *comunas* were rural communities united by common interests and dedicated to improving "their living conditions and conserving their cultural and social values." They were allowed to hold material goods, such as pasture and farm land, industries, irrigation canals, and tools, collectively. Communally held goods were to benefit the entire community. Furthermore, if the community needed investment capital for an agricultural project, pending approval of the social welfare ministry they could mortgage communal property for a line of credit from a bank.³⁰

Comunas merged the concepts of Inka and traditional Andean forms of communal social organization (such as the *ayllu*) with those which the Spanish conquest imposed (the *comuna*). Despite the legal requirements and organizational structures, the *comunas* preserved a large part of traditional Indigenous governing mechanisms, including redistributive and exchange networks and other aboriginal social structures. The law was intended to extend legal protection to the rural communities in order to shield them from attacks and exploitation from outside forces. According to Cisneros, the law "marked a decisive step in the social and agrarian reform" of Ecuador.³¹

29. Instituto de Estudios Ecuatorianos (IEE), *Políticas estatales y organización popular* (Quito: Instituto de Estudios Ecuatorianos, 1985), 124-25.

30. For the federal regulations governing the formation of *comunas*, see "Ley de Organización y Régimen de las Comunas" (Decreto no. 142), *Registro Oficial*, No. 558 (August 6, 1937): 1517-19; and "Estatuto Jurídico de las Comunidades Campesinas" (Decreto No. 23) *Registro Oficial*, No. 39 and 40 (December 10 and 11, 1937): 2388-90. Data on specific *comunas* are kept in the archive of the Dirección Nacional de Desarrollo Campesino, Ministerio de Agricultura, Quito, Ecuador.

31. Cisneros, *Demografía y Estadística*, 151. Other analysts, however, have been

A perplexing problem presents itself to a study of *comuna* forms of organization in Cayambe. Although some of the first rural organizations in Ecuador emerged in Cayambe, *comunas* made only a late and relatively rare appearance in the canton, and then only in southern region, far removed from the earliest and strongest peasant syndicates in the northern area. Not a single *comuna* was formed in the area of Pesillo which experienced a heavy leftist organizing presence from the 1930s to the 1960s. Despite the apparent advantages of legal recognition, Indigenous peoples eschewed this form of societal organization. Only six communities in Cayambe formed *comunas* before the 1964 agrarian reform law. This was a minuscule percentage of the total number of *comunas* formed during these years. In comparison, during this same time period Indians and peasants organized 156 *comunas* in the province of Chimborazo.³² In 1938 alone, 255 communities organized themselves as *comunas* throughout the Ecuadorian highlands. Searching for an explanation for this pattern can reveal much about the nature of social organization in Cayambe and the basis which it provided for social protest.

Before the agrarian reform, very few *comunas* were organized in areas with a high concentration of *huasipungueros* because these communities were based on a different type of social structure. In Chimborazo, however, after the 1964 agrarian reform there was a virtual explosion in the number of *comunas* as former *huasipunguero* communities adopted this new form of social organization.³³ A variety

more critical of the significance of *comunas* for rural organizing efforts. This line of thought minimizes the importance of pre-colonial social organizational patterns in the formation of *comunas*, and argues that in any case the Spanish conquest fundamentally and irreparably disrupted the traditional social structure on which the *comunas* allegedly were constructed.

32. Tanya Korovikin, *Indians, Peasants, and the State: The Growth of a Community Movement in the Ecuadorian Andes*, Occasional Papers in Latin American and Caribbean Studies, No. 3 (York University: Centre for Research on Latin America and the Caribbean (CERLAC), n.d.), 10.

33. *Ibid.*, 9.

of explanations could be forwarded to explain an apparent lack of interest in Cayambe toward this new form of social organization. These explanations largely revolve around issues of identity and the nature of social organization within Indigenous communities in Cayambe. Although 338 communities legally organized themselves as *comunas* within the social welfare ministry during the first three years that this new law was in effect,³⁴ its net intent was to undercut the strength of existing rural organizing efforts. The government attempted to control peasant organizations in order to shield them from the influence of labor and other more radical organizations.

The legal incorporation of these rural communities was to contribute to their social development, as well as their moral, intellectual, and material improvement. The paternalistic nature and intent of this law, however, is clear; it gave to the state the obligation to protect and tutor the rural communities, and the authority to modify or reject organizational structures which were not to their liking.³⁵ CONAIE also criticized the law for altering the traditional structure upon which Indigenous communities were built in Ecuador. Through this legislation, the government imposed organizational forms which were foreign to traditional Indigenous structures. Rather than preserving traditional social and cultural values, the *Ley de Comunas* had a strong modernizing intent that sought to bury Ecuador's Indigenous past.

It is also important to consider in which areas *comunas* were formed. Areas of Cayambe with preexisting rural organizations had developed more of a proletarian consciousness. *Comunas* emerged in areas with a more traditional form of peasant organization; the members usually owned and worked their own small plots of land, and only occasionally worked on neighboring haciendas. *Huasipungueros* did not form *comunas*. Whereas in Chimborazo after the 1964 agrarian reform *huasipungueros* formed *comunas*, in a similar situation in Cayambe there was a strong

34. Zamosc, *Estadística*, 90.

35. "Estatuto Jurídico de las Comunidades Campesinas" (Decreto No. 23) *Registro Oficial*, No. 39 and 40 (December 10 and 11, 1937): 2388.

push to establish cooperatives instead of *comunas*. Many people in Cayambe did not see the *comuna* form of organization as appropriate to their situation. In cultural terms, the *ayllu* form of social organization on which the *comuna* was built was foreign to Cayambe's culture. This was not a local Indigenous structure which resonated with the people in the area; they had little reason to embrace it as their own. Even today, in communities with radical histories of political organization there is little interest in forming *comunas*. The concept of citizenship and the role which they wished to play in the state led Indigenous peoples in Cayambe to shun *comunas* but embrace the advancements established within the 1938 labor code. This legislation also caused a deep rethinking of Indigenous peoples' relationship with the state, and debates over the issue of citizenship are also apparent.

Codigo del Trabajo (1938)

Unlike their studied disinterest toward the *comuna* form of social organization, rural workers in Cayambe embraced progressive changes in Ecuador's labor legislation. If *comunas* were more appealing to peasant communities which attempted to preserve the traditional nature of their communities, a labor code was a more critical issue to rural workers who were attempting to come to terms with a capitalist world system. The appeal of the labor code to rural workers in Cayambe lay on several different levels. The legislation had a very real impact on their salaries and work conditions; it represented concrete gains comparable to those which they had demanded during the 1931 strike at Pesillo and in other protest actions. In fact, the Pesillo strike helped force the extension of the existing labor code embodied in the 1929 constitution which was intended primarily for urban workers to rural sectors. On a deeper level, the labor code also represented the nature of organizational changes which were taking place within rural organizations. Unintentionally, the labor code brought rural organizations into closer alignment with urban leftists and thus set the stage for the creation of the Ecuadorian Federation of Indians in 1944.

In 1938, urban labor unions won passage of a national labor code. General G. Alberto Enriquez (who replaced Federico Páez who had instituted the *Ley de Comunas* the previous year) promulgated the *Código del Trabajo* on August 5, 1938. The stated intent of the labor code was to regulate relations between workers and their masters. In many ways, this labor code was a very progressive piece of legislation with evident roots in the labor provisions in the 1917 Mexican Constitution. It established a minimum wage, an eight-hour work day, and legalized the right to organize and to strike. It regulated child labor, provided women with six weeks of paid maternity leave, and granted mothers the right to nurse infants at the worksite.

Although this labor code addressed the question of workers' rights in general and much of it was oriented toward urban factory workers, an entire section of the code was dedicated to the rights of agricultural workers. The code, perhaps unintentionally, created legal spaces which rural workers and their supporters could exploit to their advantage. Hacienda owners had to be more cautious in their affairs with their workers. No longer could elites claim, like Augusto Egas, the director of the *Asistencia Pública* program, stated in January of 1931, that landlords could do whatever they wished to workers on the haciendas because the labor code did not apply to them.³⁶ People on the haciendas in Cayambe were aware of the new law which "defended the peasants, the Indian workers."³⁷ With the assistance of urban sympathizers and under the threat of revolt, rural workers could utilize the code to force concessions from their employers.

The first article of the section on the rights of agricultural workers states that these dispositions would "regulate the relations between the landlord (*patrono agricultor*) and the agricultural worker (*obrero agrícola*), also called a peon."³⁸

36. Letter from Augusto Egas to Sr. Ministro de Gobierno, January 7, 1931, in *Libro de Comunicaciones Oficiales de la Dirección de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública*, 1931, 9, JCAP.

37. Bulnes, 34.

38. Ministerio de Prevision Social y Trabajo, *Código del Trabajo: Leyes anexas*,

Although many rural workers were Indigenous, ethnic markers are absent from this section of the code. Diego Iturralde noted that in the 1930s, legislation in Ecuador quit utilizing the term "Indigenous" and instead substituted "categories which were based on cultural and racial concepts with those based on an economic and work situation." With this change, Iturralde contended, protection of Indigenous communities as a distinct entity began to disappear, and instead they were "homogenized with the rest of the rural population, at least in issues referring to civil rights."³⁹ In Iturralde's view, this was a negative development that contributed to the erosion of ethnic identity in Ecuador. In reality, the removal of special protection for Indigenous peoples began with the removal of the Spanish crown at the time of independence over one hundred years earlier and the lapse of an entire set of protections which that entity provided for these "wards of the state."

There is, however, a positive aspect to this removal of ethnic markers from legislation. The labor code did not ghettoize Indigenous interests in a manner which assumed that Indian concerns did not go beyond narrow ethnic issues. In reality, Indigenous peoples were complex actors with concerns which went far beyond what could be codified into a law of this nature. In a sense, it was a major step forward that the government recognized that Indians had economic, political, and social concerns which placed them on par with other groups in society. The Indigenous workers on haciendas confronted issues similar to those which *mestizos* peasants from the sierra, coastal *montuvios*, and poor urban workers faced. The merging of these interests was a tactical advance for the Indigenous movement.⁴⁰

convenios y recomendaciones internacionales, Concordado y anotado por el Lcdo. Hugo Muñoz García (Quito: Talleres Gráficos Nacionales, 1954), Artículo 240, 156.

39. Diego Iturralde, "Legislación ecuatoriana y población indígena," Ministerio de Bienestar Social, Oficina Nacional de Asuntos Indígenas, *Política estatal y población indígena* (Quito: Abya Yala, 1984), 26.

40. Following this same ideological orientation, during the 1996 presidential campaign the national Indigenous organization CONAIE rejected a proposal to create a Ministry of Indigenous Affairs largely because Indigenous concerns cannot be

Thus, it was only natural that much of the labor code which directly impacted Indigenous groups would concern economic and not ethnic issues. For example, Article 248 of the code stipulated that the minimum salary for *jornaleros* (day laborers) would be set by a Minimum Wage Commission. In no case was the salary to fall below the level established by a law which the government of Federico Páez approved the previous year which had established a minimum daily wage of sixty centavos for agricultural workers in the Sierra and one sucre twenty centavos on the coast. Women and children under eighteen years old had the right to two-thirds of this salary.⁴¹ The *hacendado* was required to settle the accounts of the workers every year. The law also attempted to limit the amount of credit advances on the salary (called *socorros* or *suplicidos*) which the owners could extend to their workers. Article 265 of the labor code stated that "in no case should these *socorros* exceed fifty percent of what the peon should be collecting for his work." More than this fifty percent of the salary given out as *socorros* should be ignored when settling the bill. Also, if the advance was given in the form of products (such as barley or corn), the value of these were to be deducted at a fair market rate and in no case were damaged grain or other damaged goods to be deducted from the salary.⁴² As we have seen in the case of the Guachalá hacienda, however, it became increasingly common over time for the *socorros* or *suplicidos* which a worker received to far surpass the wage which the worker was to receive. This was the case even ten years after the passage of this law, which is an indication of the limitations which laws passed in Quito had on the social reality in

compartmentalized into only one sector of policy decisions.

41. "Fijase el jornal mínimo para los obreros manuales de la Sierra y la Costa," Decreto No. 21, *Registro Oficial* II:407 (February 4, 1937), 222. This law also established a minimum daily wage of one sucre for manual workers in the Sierra (one and a half sures in the city of Quito) and two sures on the coast, with women and children also earning two-thirds of this wage.

42. *Código del Trabajo*, Artículo 265, 166.

rural areas. These continual violations of the labor code, however, came back to haunt the Guachalá hacienda, and in 1954 the violations triggered a full-scale uprising.

The law gave hacienda owners substantial flexibility in the size, quality, and location of the plots which *huasipungueros* were to receive, but it did stipulate that the daily wage which *huasipungueros* earned was to be at least half of that which the *jornaleros* (day laborers) on the same hacienda earned. In addition, the *huasipungueros* were only to be required to work four days a week and were subject to the same limitations of an eight-hour work day and six paid national holidays as other workers in general.⁴³

The labor code also attempted to guarantee the basic rights of *huasipungueros* in the context of increasingly abusive labor practices on haciendas. For example, Article 252 stipulated that when a peon engaged in the personal domestic service for the landlord known as *huasicama*, he had a right to bring along his wife and children to the hacienda house. Furthermore, the *hacendado* was responsible for covering transportation expenses, food, housing, and a daily wage during the period of service. In reality, this was the traditional arrangement which most hacienda owners granted to their workers when they presented the *huasicama* service, but to have it codified into law gave workers a legal footing if their master did not want to meet even these minimal standards. This article of the labor code, however, proceeded to require the hacienda owners to pay not only the peon but also his accompanying family members who worked during the *huasicama* period of service. Payment for women's work on the haciendas was a long standing demand for which the workers continually struggled, and to have this included in the labor code represented a victory for the rural workers.

43. The six national holidays which workers were to observe were a combination of civic (May 24, August 10, and October 9) and religious (January 1, November 3, and December 25) holidays. *Ibid.*, Artículo 68, 60.

Similarly, this law also codified other traditional rights which *huasipungueros* normally enjoyed but occasionally hacienda owners would attempt to deny their workers. Specifically, the peons were granted rights to firewood and water on the hacienda for their personal use; the right to hunt and fish on the hacienda; pasture for up to three large animals and twenty small animals; plus the hacienda owner was to provide adequate housing for the workers. These rights were also to be extended to *jornaleros* (day laborers) and *destajeros* (piece workers) who worked permanently on the hacienda and at least four days a week.⁴⁴ The law made it clear that this was a baseline and not an attempt to establish a standard arrangement for *huasipungueros*. Article 261 prohibited the hacienda owners from shrinking the size of the *huasipungo* plots, decreasing the number of animals the workers were allowed to pasture, or otherwise limiting any of the benefits which the workers enjoyed before the code was in effect.

If *huasipungueros* were evicted from the hacienda (as in the case of the strike leaders at Pesillo in 1931), they had the right to remain on their plot until they harvested their crops. Furthermore, the labor code also prohibited other practices which occasionally had emerged in organizational demands during strikes and other collective protest actions. Specifically, the hacienda owners could not require their workers to sell their animals and other agricultural products from their *huasipungo* plots to the hacienda. Furthermore, the peons could not be forced to fertilize the hacienda lands with their animal droppings, nor draft their animals for use on the hacienda without paying for that service. Nor could the *hacendados* compel their workers to engage in the commonly required but unpaid extra labor requirements known as *faenas*. A violation of any of these prohibitions was to result in a fine from ten to fifty sucres, with the fine doubling for each violation. This is the only explicitly stated sanction for violations of the code in the entire section which governed agricultural labor.⁴⁵

44. Ibid., Artículos 253-254, 161-62.

45. Ibid., Artículo 263, 164.

The labor code also outlined the obligations which the workers had to the hacienda owners. They were to function for the best possible economic benefit of their master, and they were to use tools provided to them appropriately and carefully so as to not damage them, as well as return the tools when they finished the job. During harvest or other critical times of danger to the production of the hacienda, the peons were required to continue working "even during holidays and in overtime, collecting their salaries according to legal stipulations."⁴⁶

A critical examination of the *Codigo del Trabajo* indicates that often it did little more than codify what was already custom or common practice within labor relations between land owners and agricultural workers. In rural areas with a largely illiterate work force many of its more progressive elements could be conveniently ignored. Nevertheless, there were elements of the code which organizational leaders could effectively exploit to their own advantage. This is most apparent in the section of the code which governed labor conflicts and collective organizational agreements. Article 367 stated that workers in state industries had the right to organize themselves. While only urban industries were usually seen as "state" industries, it would seem that the haciendas in northern Cayambe which formed part of the *Asistencia Pública* program would also fit that definition with the corresponding corollary that the workers on these haciendas were also "state employees." There is nothing to indicate in this section of the code that these agricultural workers should be excluded from this category.

Even with that technical issue aside, all workers over the age of fourteen years enjoyed the right to join a worker association in the workplace, and the association would be under the protection of the state. Furthermore, workers had the right to strike (defined as "the collective suspension of work by the associated workers").⁴⁷ An employer could only fire strikers if they engaged in acts of violence against the

46. Ibid., Artículo 255, 162.

47. Ibid., Artículo 375, 228.

business or its personnel. Furthermore, the labor code also outlawed the use of scabs to replace striking workers.

In the context of the history of the relationships which Indigenous-peasant organizations in Cayambe maintained with non-rural actors, one of the most interesting elements in this section of the labor code was the designation of how labor disputes were to be settled. Before striking, workers were to present their demands to the employer who was given twenty-four hours to respond. If the employer did not respond positively, within forty-eight hours the boss and the workers were each to name two representatives to a labor tribunal who would work out a mutually acceptable agreement. Article 382 of the labor code stipulated that the members of this tribunal could not be part of the business or close family members. If this were to be applied to a situation of a strike on an hacienda in rural Cayambe, it is easy to imagine a broad range of qualified actors which *hacendados* could call on to represent their concerns in such a tribunal, but whom would the *huasipungueros* or *jornaleros* contract to defend their interests? Given the lack of transportation, their world of acquaintances was probably relatively small and probably included few people who were not closely related to someone who was also involved in the strike. They would hardly trust their fate to *mestizos* who ran stores or other small businesses in the area, and with whom they would occasionally have antagonistic relationships. In any case, although many people in their circle of friends and family members deeply understood the issues and probably could effectively articulate a defense of their interests, they lacked the legal training to face off with the highly trained professionals which the *hacendados* were sure to contract to represent their side.

So, then, on whom could the agricultural workers depend to defend their interests in front of the *hacendados*? There emerges perhaps only one logical group to which they could turn--urban-based leftist activists who were often highly educated, some of them even as lawyers. Although they might not always have a deep and profound understanding of the reality in rural Cayambe, here was a group of highly

motivated actors who also had deep historical antagonisms toward the landed class against which the workers on the hacienda were struggling. This, perhaps, played a role in how the interests of two somewhat disparate groups came to merge.

Indigenous organizations in Ecuador did not hesitate to utilize the provisions of the Labor Code to their own benefit. In 1940, a group of sixty-seven workers (both male and female) on the Pesillo hacienda protested to the Ministry of Labor concerning working conditions on the hacienda and violations of the 1938 Labor Code. The protest was not in vain. The Ministry acknowledged that Article 253 of the Labor Code gave them the right to cut firewood and pasture animals on the hacienda. Furthermore, the Ministry informed local officials of these laws so that they would respect the rights of the Indigenous peoples.⁴⁸

Thus, the 1938 *Codigo del Trabajo* had several important influences on rural organizing efforts, influences which the drafters of this legislation probably did not intend. Not only did the labor code lay down a baseline level of rights for rural workers, it also implicitly defended their right to strike and encouraged their association with outside actors who could help them defend their rights. Together with the *Ley de Comunas* the previous year, it represented an important victory for Indigenous groups. It was out of this context that rural workers together with their urban compatriots formed the Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios in 1944.

Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios (1944)

At its July 1944 founding congress, the CTE stated that agricultural syndicates, peasant leagues or committees, Indigenous communities, and agricultural cooperatives would form part of its organization. It further announced plans to group "all peasant and Indian organizations in Ecuador into a Federación Nacional Campesina e India" (National Peasant and Indian Federation) as an integral part of the CTE.⁴⁹ In August

48. "Quejas de los indígenas de diferentes provincias," *Ñucanchic Allpa*, Epoca II, No. 15 (May 28, 1940), 4.

49. CTE, 199-200.

of 1944, Indigenous leaders including many of those from Cayambe together with labor leaders and members of the Socialist and Communist parties gathered in Quito to form such an organization. The Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios (FEI, Ecuadorian Federation of Indians) emerged out of this meeting as a peasant wing of the CTE in order to agitate for peasant and Indigenous concerns from a class-based perspective. From the 1940s through the 1960s, it flourished as the main national organizational expression of highland Indigenous and peasant groups.

This was the third attempt to organize Ecuador's rural population into a mass movement for social change. The military foiled the first attempt at the Primer Congreso de Organizaciones Campesinas in Cayambe in 1931. A second attempt three years later at the Conferencia de Cabecillas Indígenas had minimal success and did not result in a legally recognized organization. Although it emerged out of leftist political party and labor union organizing efforts, the FEI was the first successful attempt in Ecuador to establish a national organization for and by Indigenous peoples. Although subsequently surpassed by other peasant and Indigenous federations and organizations, the FEI stands out as a milestone in the history of Ecuador's popular movements.

Although organizationally the FEI emerged from the CTE, most labor histories of Ecuador surprisingly gloss over the foundation and history of this daughter organization. Patricio Ycaza, one of Ecuador's leading labor historians, for example, devotes barely a paragraph to the founding of the FEI and its ideology.⁵⁰ Isabel Robalino provides a bit more space (less than two pages) to the subject, furnishing a brief overview of the history and trajectory of the organization.⁵¹ This neglect can be

50. Patricio Ycaza, *Historia del movimiento obrero ecuatoriano*, 133.

51. Robalino, 167-68. As virtually nothing has been written on the founding of the FEI, the following narrative summary is extracted from journalistic reports in the following articles in Quito's daily newspapers *El Comercio* and *El Día*: "Esta noche se inaugura el congreso indígena ecuatoriano," *El Día* (August 6, 1944): 8; "Anoche se inauguró el primer congreso indígena ecuatoriano," *El Comercio* (August 7, 1944): 4;

partially explained by the fact that most labor historians have focused their attentions on urban areas and have largely ignored the founding and initial struggles of rural organizations such as the FEI. Nevertheless, this "peasant" organization was organized as an ally of and with the support of urban working-class leaders. In fact, its interactions with urban leftists helped define the nature and direction of Indigenous organizations in Ecuador, and set the stage for later ethnic-based organizations.

The Primer Congreso Ecuatoriano de Indígenas (First Indigenous Ecuadorian Congress) at which the FEI was formally organized took place in the Casa del Obrero in Quito from August 6-8, 1944. The delegates for the congress came primarily from the northern and central highland provinces of Imbabura, Pichincha, Cotopaxi, and Chimborazo. The inaugural session took place on Sunday, August 6, 1944, at 8 o'clock in the evening. Cayambe had a particularly important presence at the congress. Jesús Gualavisí was elected the president of the congress, Rubén Rodríguez was elected as its vice president, and Dolores Cacuangó was the treasurer. In fact, of the congress' leadership structure only the secretary (Carlos Bravo Malo) was not from Cayambe. The importance of Cayambe in the struggle was further underscored by a talk which Francisco Andrango gave at the closing session of the congress on the role of Indians in Cayambe in the May Revolution.

The founding congress of the FEI was an open event, and the organizing committee invited the press as well as the general public to the meetings and published the agenda for the congress in the daily paper *El Día*. This was indicative of the explicitly inclusive nature of the organization. As evidenced by Rodríguez' role as vice president, this congress was not exclusively an Indigenous affair. Urban leftists played a complementary and supportive role within Indigenous organizations and brought skills which would heighten the organization's effectiveness in achieving its goals.

"Hora social en homenaje a delegados indígenas," *El Día* (August 8, 1944): 3; "Congreso indígena," *El Día* (August 9, 1944): 2; "Sesión de clausura del congreso de indígenas se llavará a cabo hoy," *El Comercio* (August 9, 1944): 12.

Manuel Rubén Rodríguez Mera, the vice president of the congress, was born to white parents in Cayambe in 1904. For the most part self-taught, Rodríguez came to a critical understanding of the socio-economic situation of Ecuador and the need to struggle for the liberation of Indigenous peoples. He saw the injustice and inhumane treatment to which they were subjected and dedicated his entire life to end this oppression. He was politically involved at a variety of levels. He helped organize the first agrarian syndicates in Cayambe, as well as the first Congreso de Organizaciones Campesinos in 1931. In 1932 at the young age of 28 years old, he was named mayor of Cayambe. He aspired to be elected to the National Parliament, and in 1934, 1950, and 1958 he ran unsuccessfully for this office. In 1940 and again in 1957 and 1970, he was elected to Cayambe's city council and was once named president of the Municipality of Cayambe.

As president, Rodríguez asked Dolores Cacuango to join the town council. He defended the ethnic interests of the Indigenous peoples of Cayambe, even advocated that Quichua be made an official language in Ecuador. In the 1940s, he helped form several Indigenous agrarian cooperatives. In 1946, he helped establish four bilingual schools with Indigenous teachers in Yanahuaico, San Pablourco, Pucará, and La Chimba. Because of his political activity and position of leadership on Indigenous issues, the military dictatorship imprisoned him in 1963. Because of health problems, he was released from prison and exiled from the country on October 14, 1963. He did not return to Ecuador until 1966. As a result of declining health conditions which had worsened in prison and the resulting persecution to which he was subjected, Rodríguez died on November 7, 1973. The enduring significance of his influence on Cayambe is reflected in the fact that in the 1996 electoral race for the presidency of the Municipality of Cayambe (a post which Rodríguez at one point held), Fausto Jarrín,

the victorious candidate, invoked Rodríguez' name implying that he was continuing the political project of the earlier leader.⁵²

In addition to Rodríguez, the Minister of Education, undersecretary for social welfare, representatives of labor and political organizations, members of the national congress, as well numerous members of the general public were present at the founding of the FEI. Characteristic of the general atmosphere at that time, the newly elected national president Velasco Ibarra was selected as the honorary president of the congress. Although Velasco Ibarra was not at the opening of the congress, several days later he (described as the *Exmo. Señor Presidente de la República*) was present for its closing. In addition, at the request of Cacuango, the Minister of Education, Minister of Social Welfare, Ricardo Paredes, and Vicente Lombardo Toledano were all named as honorary vice presidents. As is customary in Ecuador, messages of support and congratulations for the congress came in from a wide variety of political and labor organizations, including the Ecuadorian anti-fascist committee and the Socialist Party.

Despite this supportive presence of non-Indigenous people and organizations, it was the Indian leaders themselves who set the agenda for the congress and presented their demands. At the inaugural session, Cacuango spoke as the representative of the peasant syndicates of Tierra Libre, El Inca, and Yanaguaico, and Gualavisí spoke as the delegate of the agricultural workers' union of Juan Montalvo. In addition, Agustín Vega spoke in the name of the syndicates and *comunas* of the province of Cotopaxi, Ambrosio Lazo spoke for those of Chimborazo, and Francisco Andrango for those of Imbabura. After the Indigenous leaders were finished, other (non-Indigenous) people spoke including a representative of the Socialist Party, Nela Martínez (as a delegate of

52. For basic biographical data on Rodríguez, see Silvia M. Rodríguez Rojas, "Datos biograficos del Señor Rubén Rodríguez Mera: Resumen de su vida pública y personalidad," *Revista Centenario* (1983), 8-12; and Germán Cifuentes Navarro, "Rubén Rodríguez," in *Personajes ilustres del Cantón Cayambe, 1867-1980* (Cayambe: Ilustre Municipio de Cayambe, 1993), 27-29.

the Alianza Femenina Ecuatoriana, Ecuadorian Feminist Alliance), Ricardo Paredes (who was slated on the program to speak on the situation of Indigenous peoples in Ecuador), the vice president of the CTE, as well as the undersecretary of social welfare.

Nela Martínez Espinosa provides an excellent example of the type of non-Indigenous person who supported Indigenous organizing efforts in Cayambe and throughout Ecuador. Martínez was born to an elite landholding family in southern Ecuador in 1912. Nevertheless, her life was marked with an internationalist ideology and a commitment to solidarity "with her people, with humble people, with the workers, Indians, and women."⁵³ She was an untiring fighter for social justice and the rights of women and social justice. She was a writer and deeply involved in politics. Martínez began her political life in 1934 as a member of the Communist Party. Later she served on the Executive Committee and on the Central Committee of the party. Martínez was a member of the Alianza Democrática Ecuatoriana (ADE, Ecuadorian Democratic Alliance) which unified diverse sectors of society to overthrow Arroyo del Río's government on May 28, 1944. The significance of the role she played in actions such as the 1944 revolt should not be understated. She was a featured speaker in one of the large protest marches which led up to the fall of Arroyo del Río's government.⁵⁴ For three days following the May Revolution, she served as Minister of Government. She refused, however, to join the subsequent government of Velasco Ibarra. Nevertheless, she participated in the 1945 National Assembly in Ecuador as a representative of the working class. She also used her literary skills to serve as director of *Ñucanchi Allpa*, the newspaper of the FEI, and she was one of the founding members of the FEI.

53. Lilya Rodríguez, "Acción por el Movimiento de Mujeres," in *Acción por el Movimiento de Mujeres, Homenaje a Nela Martínez Espinosa* (Quito: Acción por el Movimiento de Mujeres, 1990), 23. This publication is from a homage paid to Martínez on May 29, 1990 in the Salón de la Ciudad in Quito. The following biographical data is extracted from this publication.

54. Girón, 118.

Martínez served as a personal secretary to Dolores Cacuango and accompanied her on trips such as that to the Second Congress of the CTAL in Cali, Colombia.

Despite her broad commitments to social justice, Martínez is primarily known for her feminist work. Particularly important is how her feminism intersected with ethnic issues and the struggles of Indigenous peoples. Martínez together with Luisa Gómez de la Torre and other mostly white, upper-class women formed the Alianza Femenina Ecuatoriana (AFE, Ecuadorian Feminist Alliance) in Quito in 1939. Its objectives were to contribute to the cause of world peace, provide solidarity to victims of war, and promote the incorporation of women into political movements in opposition to the government. The formation of this organization took place in the context of the Second World War and broader anti-fascist movements. The AFE had more of a liberal rather than socialist or communist orientation, although leftist women were some of its most important leaders. Although its leadership was comprised largely of elite intellectuals, AFE also had a presence in marginalized neighborhoods in Quito and in other cities throughout the sierra and on the coast.⁵⁵

Over the course of the next several days, delegates met and discussed the problems which they faced and how to attack these concerns. Supporters such as Rubén Rodríguez (who spoke on the character of the May Revolution which had taken place barely two months earlier) continued to play a role in the congress. An important function of the congress was to elect leaders of the new organization, initially to be called the Federación Indígena Ecuatoriana (Ecuadorian Indigenous Federation), which grew out of this effort. As with the formation of the congress, various Indigenous leaders from Cayambe served as the new organization's first office holders. In fact, despite the stipulation in the statutes that the headquarters for the executive committee be located in Quito delegates decided to place it in Cayambe until the new

55. Vega Ugalde, 52, 79-80.

organization's next congress. Delegates at the congress elected Gualavisí as the FEI's first president and Cacuangó as the Secretary General.

Dolores Cacuangó is considered to be a symbol of Indigenous struggles in Ecuador. A newspaper article from the 1940s described her as at the head of Indigenous struggles, the last to retreat, and always ready to suffer for the cause.⁵⁶ Cacuangó was born in the community of Pesillo in the northern part of the canton of Cayambe in 1881. Her parents worked on the San Pablourco hacienda, and as part payment of their debt to the hacienda's owner when she was fifteen years old she was sent to Quito to work as a servant. Like most Indigenous peoples born in the nineteenth century, she had to work from a very young age and never attended school or learned to read or write. Thanks to Eloy Alfaro's Liberal Revolution, in 1908 the hacienda on which Cacuangó lived passed from the hands of the Church to those of the Ecuadorian state. She rose to a position of leadership in the struggle against the hacienda system, including García Moreno's hacienda at Chungalá and other haciendas at Chaguarpungo and Ishigto. She also struggled to end the payment of *diezmos* (tithes) and the system of *huasicamas* in which peasant girls were forced to work in the landlords' houses. Although illiterate, she fought tirelessly for schools for Indigenous communities and was instrumental in setting up the first bilingual schools in Cayambe. Cacuangó served on the Central Committee of the Ecuadorian Communist Party along with Ricardo Paredes, Pedro Saad, Luisa Gómez de la Torre, Nela Martínez, and others.⁵⁷

56. "Dolores Cacuangó," *Antinazi* (Quito) 2:19 (April 17, 1943): 4, facsimile edition in Mériguet, 214. For basic biographical data on Dolores Cacuangó, see CICA Y - Museo Cayambe, "Dolores Cacuangó," in *Personajes ilustres del Cantón Cayambe, 1867-1980* (Cayambe: Ilustre Municipio de Cayambe, 1993), 11-13; and Raquel Rodas, *Crónica de un sueño: las escuelas indígenas de Dolores Cacuangó: una experiencia de educación bilingüe en Cayambe* (Quito: Proyecto de Educación Bilingüe Intercultural, MEC-GTZ, 1989).

57. A photo in Muñoz Vicuña, *Masas, luchas, solidaridad*, 91, of a Central Committee meeting in Quito, July 26-28, 1947, shows seventeen people, of which

Cacuango suffered for her beliefs. Along with other leftist leaders, she was persecuted after the Velasco Ibarra government took a right-wing turn two years after the May 1944 revolution. Velasco threatened to exile her to the Galápagos Islands. The local priest in Cayambe attempted to bribe her so that she would not continue to lead Indigenous revolts, but she continued her work for a more just society.⁵⁸ In 1958, she was imprisoned along with Rubén Rodríguez and Virgilio Lechón for leading the Communist Party of Cayambe. After being freed from prison, she continued her work with agricultural cooperatives in Cayambe. Cacuango's life was an embodiment of what Rosa Luxemburg noted in 1915: "socialism gives to every people the right of independence and the freedom of independent control of its own destinies."⁵⁹ Cacuango died in 1971, but her thought was immortalized in a mural which the famous Ecuadorian artist Oswaldo Guayasamín painted on the wall of the National Congress. The mural (combining her native Quichua with a heavily Quichua-influenced Spanish) says in part:

Ñuca tierra es Cayambe,	My land is Cayambe,
y no me jodan... carajú	and don't screw me around... dammit
Porque somos libres como el viento	Because we are free like the wind
libres fuimos, libres seremos...	we were free, free we will be
Todo manos, todos oídos,	All hands, all hearing,
todo ojos, toda voz...	all eyes, all voice... ⁶⁰

On Tuesday August 8, 1944, at 8 o'clock in the evening, the FEI congress ended at the Teatro Sucre. Three delegates from the congress, Francisco Andrango Cabezas, Luis Catucumbamba Cacuango (Dolores Cacuango's son), and Virgilio Lechón (who had also been active in the 1931 strike at Pesillo), went to the offices of the daily

Cacuango is one of three women and the only Indigenous person.

58. Rodas, *Crónica de un sueño*, 63.

59. Rosa Luxemburg, "The Junius Pamphlet: The Crisis in the German Social Democracy," in *Rosa Luxemburg Speaks*, ed. Mary-Alice Waters (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1970), 304.

60. "Dolores Cacuango un orgullo para Cayambe," *La Hora del Norte* (Quito) November 10, 1989, 16.

newspaper *El Comercio* to give the paper cordial greetings and to invite it and the public in general to the closing session. At this session, Matías Llanqui spoke on the situation of Indians in Ecuador, and Francisco Andrango spoke on the role of Indians in Cayambe in the May Revolution. Ricardo Paredes summarized the efforts of the congress, and finally Dolores Cacuango welcomed Velasco Ibarra who formally closed the congress. In addition, the children's theater of the Unión Sindical de Pichincha (Syndicate Union of Pichincha) presented a "Social Hour" in homage to the delegates of the congress at the closing session.

During the course of this three-day conference in August of 1944, delegates drew up statutes for the new organization which defined its goals and ideologies. The Ministerio de Prevision Social y Trabajo (Ministry of Social Welfare and Labor) accepted the new organization's statutes on January 29, 1945, a fact which has led some historians to mistakenly give 1945 as the founding year of the FEI. The goals of the organization formed a popular program of social reform. The Federation sought to:

1. Gain the economic emancipation of Ecuadorian Indians;
2. Raise the Indians' cultural and moral level while conserving whatever is good in their native customs;
3. Contribute to national unity;
4. Establish links of solidarity with all American Indians.⁶¹

The first goal indicated that the FEI would continue in the mode of an economically based class struggle which earlier organizations in Cayambe had already established. Many of the FEI's subsequent demands and programs revolved around the same issues of raising salaries, shortening the work week, and ending forced labor for women. Many of these goals are consistent with working-class or labor union goals. In fact, perhaps one of the most significant actions to come out of the foundation of

61. Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios (FEI), *Estatutos de la Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios* (Guayaquil: Editorial Claridad, 1945), 3.

this organization was not any sort of ideological shift on class issues, but rather the consolidation and institutionalization of the Indigenous struggle.⁶²

Nevertheless, these goals also reveal a dramatic forward-looking ideology on ethnic issues among the organization's founders and touch on themes which would only become significant forty years later. Unlike liberal *indigenista* ideologies which contended that Indigenous ethnic identities needed to be suppressed in order to raise their economic standing in society, the FEI believed that ethnicity did not exclude economic development. Although the FEI was organizing a class struggle, it never failed to see the Indians as exploited and ethnically oppressed. Particularly interesting is the fact that the FEI's demands were couched in terms of Ecuadorian "Indians" and not peasants or the rural proletariat. Although there is a mention of "national unity," it does not call for the replacement of an ethnic identity with a homogenized Euro-oriented national identity. Rather, it calls to preserve the uniqueness of Indigenous cultural identity even if it does not go as far as demanding the establishment of a multinational state. Furthermore, rather than calling for an international working-class movement, the fourth point indicates a consciousness of a pan-American Indian identity. This fourth and final goal reveals the germ of a pan-Indian ideology similar to that which had emerged in the 1920s in the United States but was largely absent in Ecuador and Latin America in general until years later. Ethnic identity tended to be local in nature, and it was not until improvements in infrastructure which brought isolated groups into continual contact with each other that such an ideology became politically significant. It does reveal, however, the macro level on which the FEI's leaders were thinking.

These statutes outlined the organizational structure which the FEI's founders intended the new organization to have. Although this structure never was fully implemented, it reveals the ideological underpinning which the founders gave to the

62. Ramón, "Cayambe," 166.

FEI. Grassroots organizations were to form cantonal committees of the FEI, and these committees were to form a provincial committee. Each committee was to have an Executive Committee comprised of five members and were to include a Secretary General as well as secretaries of organization, culture and propaganda, legal affairs, finances, women's affairs, and youth. The Central Council of the FEI was to be composed of the organization's Executive Committee as well as provincial Indigenous leaders, and was to function in the republic's capital (Quito). Local committees, however, were to float to areas of maximum Indigenous activity. Ultimate authority for the FEI lay in the organization's national congress. This congress was to take place annually, although in reality it never met with such regularity.

In addition to emphasizing this ethnic aspect of their organizing strategies, the statutes also underlined the significance of leftist elements in the organization's ideology. As noted above, the FEI emerged out of the CTE labor union. The FEI's statutes codified this organizational affiliation with the CTE. It would come to rely on its mother organization for support, guidance, infrastructure, ideological oversight, and training in strategies. The new organization's ideological affinity is also apparent in the insignia it adopted at the founding congress, which included a hammer and sickle, common communist symbols.⁶³ The FEI's subsequent actions further underlined its close affinity for leftist (specifically communist) political organizations. For example, in December of 1946 when Velasco Ibarra imprisoned Pedro Saad and other student and worker leaders, the FEI's Executive Committee published a circular calling for their liberty.⁶⁴

The Ministry of Social Welfare and Labor accepted the FEI's statutes with two small but politically charged changes. First, the Ministry changed Article Three of the

63. *Ibid.*, 8.

64. "La Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios," December 4, 1946, No. 39, Hojas Volantes 1946-1950, Biblioteca Ecuatoriana Aurelio Espinosa Pólit (BEAEP), Cotacollao, Ecuador.

statutes with the effect of essentially narrowing the base of the new organization. *Comunas* (Communes) were to be excluded from their organizational structure and membership was to be limited to syndicates, cooperatives, cultural institutions, and tribes which were present at the First National Indigenous Ecuadorian Congress where the FEI was formed. Excluding *comunas* would narrow the new organization's base of support. Apparently the government hoped that as Indigenous communities formed *comunas* the FEI would wither away and disappear. The strategic success of siphoning off the organizational strength is evident in southern Cayambe. In areas of the canton where Indigenous communities formed *comunas*, the FEI had a much smaller and later presence than in other areas.

Similarly, the second change to the statutes sought to limit the organization. This change fundamentally altered the intent of Article Fifteen in which the FEI intended to claim for itself the right to name functional representatives for the "Indigenous Race" in the National Congress. This functional senator was a white outsider who usually played a paternalistic role, was not accountable to Indigenous organizations, and often betrayed the interests of the Indians he was charged with defending. As amended, the Ministry conceded that the FEI could nominate such officials but did not allow them to have exclusive authority over this function.⁶⁵ Both of these changes were fundamental blows at the FEI's intent to establish itself legally as the primary and exclusionary representative of Indigenous peoples in Ecuador.

Nevertheless, the FEI together with its allies in the CTE and PCE attained a legislative voice in the 1944-1945 National Assembly. In this Assembly, Ricardo Paredes was designated the functional representative for Indigenous organizations. In this position, he struggled for constitutional reforms and other laws to benefit the

65. FEI, *Estatutos*, 10. The 1945 Constitution which was in effect for less than two years provided for a functional deputy for Indian organizations and required this deputy to be involved in related activities. This concession, however, was struck from the subsequent 1946 constitution. See Borja y Borja, 569, 570.

Indians. Paredes was also able to influence positively petitions and solicitudes presented to the Assembly.⁶⁶ This was the beginning of an ideological shift within organizing strategies. Rather than focusing primarily upon concrete economic issues of salaries and working conditions, Indians began to pursue in a much more serious manner political issues related to citizenship and their role in the administration of national policies. Rather than diminishing, these issues were to increase in significance during the remainder of the twentieth century.

Over the next several decades, the FEI played an important role in fighting for the rights and interests of Ecuador's highland Indigenous population and improving conditions for Ecuador's peasant and Indian population. The organization struggled for higher salaries, a shorter work week, pay for women's work on the haciendas, and the end to requirements of *huasicama* and personal service in landlords' houses. Although much of the new organization's base of support was in Cayambe, it sought to organize and coordinate efforts throughout the Ecuadorian highlands. Nevertheless, the Federation was most successful in Cayambe; its efforts to gain grassroots support elsewhere were often met with frustration.

Whereas the FEI achieved some degree of success in organizing the peasant masses in the Ecuadorian highlands, organizations on the coast did not achieve regional significance. Agrarian protest was often more local in nature and consisted of spontaneous and uncoordinated actions. The first rural organization on the coast was the Sindicato de Trabajadores Agrícolas Campesinos Pobres y Obreros Rurales del Guayas (STACPORG, Syndicate of Agricultural Workers, Poor Peasants, and Rural Workers of Guayas) which was founded in Milago on July 14, 1928. Subsequently, another syndicate was formed in the zone of Naranjal on November 3, 1928. Nevertheless, there were several efforts to organize coastal peasants on a regional level. On April 14, 1929, these organizations held the Primer Congreso Provincial del

66. "El partido comunista organizador y defensor de los indios," *El Pueblo*, June 2, 1951, 6.

Guayas de Obreros y Campesinos (First Provincial Guayas Congress of Workers and Peasants) in Guayaquil.⁶⁷

Organized parallel to the FEI and also an affiliate of the CTE as well as strongly influenced by the PCE was the Federación de Trabajadores Agrícolas del Litoral (FTAL, Federation of Coastal Agricultural Workers). FTAL emerged after the FEI and learned from its experiences. Hundreds of delegates from agricultural workers organizations, peasant groups, and *comunas* formed FTAL in September of 1954.⁶⁸ Highland leaders such as Dolores Cacuango and Tránsito Amaguaña shared their organizing experiences with the FEI and other organizations, and helped FTAL advance in their work. In July 1955, FTAL organized actions together with railroad workers demanding agrarian reform. Nationally, this was a period of major strike activity on the railroads, but these actions met with limited success for the peasants. Although FTAL developed a well-organized structure, a lack of economic resources, limited its effectiveness and influence. Ironically, the Asociación de Cooperativas Agrícolas del Litoral (ACAL, Association of Coastal Agrarian Cooperatives) organized under the auspices of the CEDOC often took a more aggressive and combative stance than did FTAL under the wing of the PCE. Whereas FTAL often took a pragmatic position in an attempt to work with the government in order to improve the situation of its members, ACAL more readily attacked the government for shortcomings in agrarian reforms and denounced abuses against peasants.⁶⁹

Ethnicity in a peasant movement?

67. Muñoz Vicuña, *Historia del movimiento obrero del Ecuador*, 25.

68. *Ibid.*, 51. On coastal organizations, also see John F. Uggén, *Tenencia de la tierra y movilizaciones campesinas: zona de Milagro*, Ecuador 1 (Quito: Andean Center for Latin American Studies (ACLAS), 1993).

69. Michael Redclift, *Agrarian Reform and Peasant Organization in the Ecuadorian Coast*, University of London, Institute of Latin American Studies Monographs, 8 (London: Athlone Press, 1978), 114-16.

In his history of Indigenous struggles until 1962, Osvaldo Albornoz lists seven issues for which peasants in the highlands campaigned. These included a defense of land, a defense of the *huasipungo* plots, improvements in wages, reduction in the amount and hours of work, suppression of the requirements of non-remunerative work, provision of tools, and better treatment including an end to abuses.⁷⁰ Osvaldo Barsky in his study of agrarian reform in Ecuador builds on this to argue that peasant movements in general and the FEI in particular were of a strictly defensive nature.⁷¹ This analysis, however, assumes that the FEI and other rural movements in Cayambe were traditional peasant movements rather than movements based on a rural proletariat. Barsky emphasized the defense of land, but the rest of these demands have more in common with traditional working-class demands than what one would expect from a peasant movement. The FEI was organized as a leftist movement designed to address economic issues facing a rural proletariat--salaries, length of a work week, and labor legislation.

Others have also been critical of the FEI's shortcomings. Most Indigenous activists and academics are hesitant to acknowledge the roots of Ecuador's modern Indian movement in the FEI's efforts some fifty years earlier. Leon Zamosc criticized "its excessive legalism and lack of radicalism, which are attributed to a narrow conception of the character of the anti-feudal struggle" as well as a lack of "a clear demand to eliminate the hacienda system."⁷² Are these justifiable criticisms? Did the FEI truly lack political demands which would include an intent to change the power structures? It is true that the founding statutes did not call for an elimination of Ecuador's hacienda system, but the general intent of organizational statutes are to formulate the broad ideological nature of the organization rather than to define a program for action. Although not specifically stated, elimination of the hacienda

70. Albornoz, *Luchas indígenas*, 117-23.

71. Barsky, 326.

72. Zamosc, *Peasant Struggles and Agrarian Reform*, 12.

system would fall within the category of gaining "the economic emancipation of Ecuadorian Indians" as stated in the first of four goals in the statutes. As will be demonstrated in the following chapter, the FEI pressured for a change in land tenure patterns which culminated in the 1964 agrarian reform law and the eventual diminution of the hacienda system in Ecuador.

Of much more importance and long-term significance than these two criticisms, however, are those which revolve around issues of ethnicity. The FEI is rarely recognized for its importance as an early precursor of ethnic movements which emerged in the 1960s and 1970s. Indigenous organizations, in particular CONAIE, have criticized the FEI for being too narrowly focused on the highland region, for being under the control of external, non-Indigenous agents such as the Socialists, Communists, and labor leaders, and for emphasizing class issues to the exclusion of ethnic identities.⁷³

Of these three arguments against the FEI, the first is rather ingenious. In the 1940s in the Ecuadorian highlands, people (whether rural peasants or urban-based *mestizo* leaders) had little awareness of other Indigenous ethnic groups on the coast or in the Amazon. To be Indian was to be Quichua and, to a lesser extent, to be a peasant was to be an Indian. Largely due to this conception of what an "Indian" was, its efforts were confined to the Ecuadorian sierra highlands; it would fall outside of the organization's mandate to work in areas which had no "Indians." As already noted, it was a remarkable leap forward in the FEI's founding statutes to call for solidarity among all American Indians. Rather, the FEI should be seen as paving the way for the emergence of this ideology in later organizations. In moving beyond the local level to unify the efforts of various organizations, the FEI created a milieu which allowed later pan-Indian organizations such as CONFENIAE or CONAIE to emerge.

73. CONAIE, 32.

Later Indigenous leaders also rejected early attempts such as the FEI because of its close relation with leftist political parties and its alliances with working-class movements. These endeavors were not perceived as purely Indigenous efforts, but were considered "corrupted" by their contact with *mestizo* Marxist struggles. Groups which organized on the basis of their ethnic identity and unique cultural heritage became very critical of the FEI, the class line which it espoused, and the perceived manipulations it suffered at the hands of leftist political party and labor leaders. José María Cabascango, a Quichua activist of the Pijal community north of Cayambe across the Imbabura provincial border who became a leader and president of CONAIE, criticized Indigenous organizations such as the FEI for being under the control of political parties (such as the Communist and Socialist parties) and other outside forces. Organizations such as the FEI, therefore, "definitely were not autonomous and independent organizations."⁷⁴ Similarly, in apparent disregard for the roles which Cacuango, Gualavisí, and other Indigenous leaders played in the organization, Melina Selverston contends that the FEI "was not led by indigenous people but rather by the [Communist] Party."⁷⁵ Furthermore, how is it justifiable to criticize the FEI for attempting to organize Indigenous peoples as rural workers when in areas such as Cayambe this is essentially what they were, and this economic role did not conflict with their ethnic identity as Indigenous peoples? Such an attitude unjustly dismisses the importance of the contributions of early organizations to later Indian movements.

In an attempt to define and control their own history, organizations, and sense of being, later Indigenous leaders have presented these early efforts as endeavors by outside political parties and actors to exploit Indigenous issues for their own political gain. But these criticisms of the FEI which might have been necessary at one time to establish newly formed Indigenous organizations' intellectual independence and

74. José María Cabascango, "Reflections on a Movement: CONAIE, Grassroots, and a Vision for the Future," *Abya Yala News* 10:1 (Spring 1996): 22.

75. Selverston, 138.

political autonomy may have been overstated. In the 1920s, early Marxist leaders looked to the rural workers in Cayambe as equals with whom they could join forces in order to struggle for needed social changes. Their attempt to raise the Indians' class consciousness was similar to their attitudes toward urban workers who might not yet understand the nature of their exploitation and the path which they must take to overcome this state.

These organizations also served a critical function in bringing new tactics to Indigenous movements. They helped introduce the idea of a non-violent strike, a strategy which has come to characterize Indigenous movements in the 1990s in Ecuador. Even commentators critical of leftist influence on Indigenous organizations concede their influence on Indigenous tactics.⁷⁶ In addition, leftist organizations helped bridge the gap between rural-based Indians and sympathetic urban-based *mestizos*.⁷⁷ Similarly, later Indigenous organizations relied heavily on contacts in the urban world to press for their political demands. Not only did these early organizations provide a training ground for Indigenous leaders, they were also important in defining the nature of subsequent Indigenous struggles. Specifically, as Albornoz mentioned, contact with leftist groups introduced the concept of the strike as an important weapon in the struggle for Indigenous demands.⁷⁸

Even though the FEI was organized as a leftist organization which the PCE and CTE supported, it was not entirely in the hands of non-Indian *mestizo* leaders. A December 1961 congress elected Miguel Lechón, who was both an Indian from Cayambe and a member of the PCE as president of the organization. Thousands of Indians came to Quito for the congress where Lechón shared the platform with the

76. Ibid., 134.

77. The almost absolute nature of this rural/urban Indian/*mestizo* division is further portrayed by the fact that the Indigenous Quichua language lacks the words "city" and "countryside." Rather, these concepts are expressed by *runa llacta* ("place of the people," i.e. Quichua people) and *mishu llacta* ("place of the *mestizos*").

78. Albornoz, *Luchas indígenas*, 113.

CTE president, other PCE organizers, and the leftist president Arosemena.⁷⁹ In January of 1962, Lechón joined a group of Ecuadorians who were invited to Cuba for the third anniversary celebrations of the triumph of the revolution. The CIA suspected that Lechón might have received guerrilla training during this trip.⁸⁰ Lechón later commented positively on his trip. "They live well there," he said. "Here the fight is bitter and hard, but it is for a better life and I think I will die as a Communist."⁸¹

The FEI staked out ideological territory in the popular movement halfway between an urban *mestizo* labor movement and an ethnic-based Indigenous movement. Manuel Escobar, who became president of the FEI in 1971, noted that "in the struggle of the popular sectors, we are different, we are Indians."⁸² As Indians they were an oppressed class which faced injustices and exploitation at the hands of white landholders, and their traditional cultures, languages, and lifestyles were threatened. Escobar, however, did not couch his basic demands in ethnic terms. Rather, he spoke of his work with cooperatives in Cayambe, land reform issues, the need for credit, and peasant and Indigenous demands for land titles. Although Escobar spoke as an Indian, the nature of the demands for which he struggled indicates that his ethnicity was almost incidental to (or perhaps deeply imbedded within) his economic and class-based demands. Undoubtedly, Escobar was both an Indian and a peasant at the same time.

Furthermore, the stated aims of the FEI, although not identical to the "Sixteen Points" which CONAIE raised during the 1990 Indigenous uprising, are not inconsistent with such demands. CONAIE's demands also dealt with issues of land rights,

79. Agee, 212.

80. Ibid., 217. Although she doesn't mention names, Muriel Crespi ("Changing Power Relations," 233) also mentions a peasant (probably Lechón) who went to Cuba in the early 1960s and another who went to the Soviet Union. For both, it was a radicalizing experience.

81. Cedric Belfrage, "Ecuadoreans Ripe for Revolt But They Lack Leadership," *National Guardian* (New York) 15:1 (October 15, 1962): 5.

82. Manuel Escobar, "La FEI.. el indio de poncho colorado," *Cuadernos de Nueva* (Quito) 7 (June 1983), 49.

access to water, credit, economic reforms, education (all of which are traditional peasant concerns), as well as Indigenous medicine and a call to proclaim Ecuador a multi-national state. Unwittingly, several observers have noted this continuity in CONAIE's program with earlier organizations it purports to reject. Anthropologist Lynn Meisch has characterized CONAIE's list of demands as incorrectly implying that Indigenous peoples in Ecuador are homogeneous and share the same wants, needs, and goals. "The demand for genuine land reform," Meisch wrote, "is the glue that binds the indigenous movement. Many *indígenas* do not have a clue, and could care less, about the rest of CONAIE's agenda."⁸³ In fact, the only demand in the "Sixteen Points" inconsistent with the FEI's program was a call to dismantle local political party organizations which CONAIE saw as manipulating political consciousness and elections in Indigenous communities.⁸⁴

CONAIE leader Nina Pacari, however, has pointed to a critical difference between earlier organizations such as the FEI and later ones such as CONAIE, although she concedes that "in the highlands, traces of indigenous organization can be detected in the Ecuadorian Indigenous Federation (FEI)."⁸⁵ These early organizations tended to focus on issues such as wages, land, and even cultural issues such as bilingual education, but "without a broader political perspective." In the 1990s, Pacari contended, "while these concrete demands remain central concerns of the indigenous movement, they are now accompanied by demands of a more political stripe: the right to self-determination, the right to our cultural identity and our languages, and the right to develop economically according to our own values and beliefs." Specifically,

83. Meisch, "We Will Not Dance on the Tomb of Our Grandparents," 58.

84. Meisch, however, has interpreted this demand as abolishing the post of *teniente político* which is an appointed position by the party in power. Given the historic animosities which rural communities have experienced with this official, if Meisch's interpretation is accurate CONAIE's demand *would* be consistent with the FEI's program. See Meisch, "We Will Not Dance on the Tomb of Our Grandparents," 72.

85. Pacari, 24.

CONAIE added to the Indian movement a new political demand which favors "the construction of a plurinational state that tolerates and encourages diversity among different groups in society."⁸⁶ From this perspective, current Indigenous mobilizations in Ecuador are not a repudiation of nor a reaction against earlier organizational expressions such as the FEI. Rather, what has happened is a natural maturation and deepening of the Indian movement. It is something that should have been expected to happen, and it should be embraced as a positive sign. This does not mean, however, that the earlier movements were "bad," "wrong," or need to be refuted. CONAIE could not have existed in Ecuador without the FEI and earlier mobilizations in the 1920s and 1930s, and to argue otherwise is to deny the historical roots of Indigenous and popular movements and organizations in Ecuador.

These early peasant organizations have lost much of the force which they once enjoyed. Leftist intellectuals have commonly pointed to these early organizations, particularly the FEI, as evidence of the importance of Marxist groups in organizing early Indigenous movements.⁸⁷ By the 1990s, the FEI had largely disappeared, being displaced by peasant organizations such as FENOC, ethnic federations such as ECUARUNARI, and Indian nationalist organizations such as CONAIE. As with most organizations, the FEI had outlived its usefulness. Or, perhaps more accurately, the popular movement had outgrown the FEI. The FEI, however, had been a critical and fundamental stage in the development of peasant and Indigenous movements in Ecuador. Although later Indigenous leaders have criticized its shortcomings, it represented an important part in the development of their history. Furthermore, elements of the FEI's agenda continued to be important to peasant-Indigenous movements in Ecuador.

86. *Ibid.*, 25.

87. Albornoz, *Luchas indígenas*, 116.

Chapter Eight

Una Granja Colectiva Comunista: Proletarian Pressure for Agrarian Reform

In 1954, Indigenous workers at the Pitaná hacienda rebelled citing the fact that they had not been paid for three to five months and had suffered other abuses at the owner's hands. In response, the police chief from Cayambe arrived at the hacienda with officers armed with weapons, including machine guns. Rather than attempting to resolve the situation peacefully, they looked for a provocation and shot at the unarmed protestors. The police killed four people, injured many others, and imprisoned a dozen Indigenous peasants.

Was this simply one more example of an all too common occurrence of rural workers presenting legitimate grievances only to have the landlord reject the petition and call in police action upon them? This event was similar to events surrounding the 1931 strike in Pesillo. Only this time this action didn't occur at Pesillo where such strikes were common events, but on the Guachalá hacienda where allegedly there was less protest, and the little protest which existed was confined to the private sphere. Furthermore, the progressive and modernizing influences at Guachalá which resulted in peasants gaining title to their land before the 1964 agrarian reform was to have made such overt protest actions unnecessary. So, what is the story behind this massacre?

As with previous improvements in wages and working conditions, peasants did not gain agrarian reform by passively waiting for the landlords or government to grant it. Furthermore, they did not gain these reforms merely through acts of passive resistance, as would be implied in James Scott's model of "the weapons of the weak." Rather, in Cayambe these peasants actively sought agrarian and other economic

reforms. This action also challenges the notion that Guachalá's owners freely and willingly gave their workers land titles to their *huasipungo* plots. Rather, this land transfer was a direct result of continual organizational pressure from below. As Leon Zamosc has concluded, "it was class conflict, and not the mere rationale of capitalist production, that motivated some modernizing landowners to" favor agrarian reform legislation.¹

The dynamics at work in Cayambe which led in the 1950s to rural revolts and eventually transfers of land titles were not limited exclusively to the economic sphere. Ethnicity also played a major role in the articulation of peasant demands. What does begins to emerge in the 1950s is the emphasis of class over ethnicity, a situation which came to be a stereotypical characterization of these early Indigenous organizations. Although ethnicity may have become more submerged in the 1950s and harder to locate, it was never rejected or deemed incompatible with organizational demands.

Part of this story is the emergence of the FEI in the southern part of the canton of Cayambe. As the previous chapters demonstrated, the FEI was strongest in the northern part of the canton on the *Asistencia Pública* haciendas where rural organizations predated the formal founding of the FEI by fifteen years. This form of organization arrived much more slowly in southern Cayambe, where rather than forming *sindicatos* the peasants were more likely to organize *comunas* or form associations. Nevertheless, by the 1950s the FEI was beginning to gain a foothold in southern Cayambe where workers had begun to be more active, vocal, and visible in pressing their demands. This process also led to the gradual blurring of ethnic and class ideologies.

Most of the protests in the 1950s revolved around two central demands: land and salaries. Rural protest was especially strong where the FEI had a solid presence. The major rural mobilizations which the FEI organized helped usher in agrarian reform

1. Zamosc, *Peasant Struggles and Agrarian Reform*, 19.

legislation in 1964. The effects of these protests, however, went beyond the material changes in salary structures and land tenure patterns. Through the process of organizing these struggles, rural organizations including the FEI established and strengthened ties with other sectors of society. In particular, contacts with urban-based labor unions influenced the nature of their struggles. In general, though, what can be observed in organizational strategies during this time was a move from an emphasis on salaries and work conditions to increased concern with land reform. This is a trend distinct from earlier movements. Although land had always been important to Indigenous communities, organizational leaders now introduced the concept of land *ownership* and this would become a defining characteristic of Indigenous demands. This was a lasting influence of the Communist Party on the ideological formation of Indigenous organizations. Although leftist influences were often cast in a negative light, they were not entirely so as they helped Indigenous and peasant organizations strategically focus on clearly defined and attainable issues which helped ensure their lasting importance.

This chapter examines social and political forces which led up to the passage of agrarian reform legislation in Ecuador. It contrasts organizing strategies and trajectories on private haciendas such as Guachalá in southern Cayambe with those on *Asistencia Pública* haciendas such as Pesillo in the northern part of the canton. This chapter demonstrates that agrarian reform was more the result of peasant pressure than the efforts of modernizing landlords. Furthermore, it analyzes the impact of agrarian demands on a rural working-class movement, and examines the beginnings of an ideological gap between rural Indians who favored a more exclusively ethnic analysis of society and urban leftists who continued to stress a class analysis.

Guachalá

The 1954 Pitaná strike did not happen in a political or social vacuum. This was a time of increasing mobilization and demands on the part of the Indigenous masses. In the months before that strike and massacre, a similar event occurred on the

La Merced hacienda in the *parroquia* of Píntag close to Quito which left three dead, fourteen hurt, and twenty-five imprisoned.² The *Hispanic American Report* at Stanford University noted that this action formed part of "an all-out drive against the syndicalistic and communal organizations of the Indians" which the government had launched.³ Governmental repression took place in the context of an increased Cold War paranoia over Communist subversion, organizing, and uprisings.

Although protest on the Guachalá hacienda tended to take place in the private sphere rather than being splashed across the front pages of Quito's daily newspapers, this does not mean that it did not happen or that it was insignificant. According to one account, in 1922, Juan Manuel Lasso Ascásubi rented the hacienda from his aunt, Josefina Ascásubi Salinas de Bonifaz. Lasso, a self-styled socialist, closed the church on the hacienda, armed his Indigenous workers, and sought (unsuccessfully) to use Guachalá as a base for launching a socialist revolution.⁴ On January 5, 1944 (almost six months before the Glorious May Revolution which ushered in a more progressive national government and before the formation of the FEI later that year which actively agitated for rural workers' rights), the Ministry of Labor in Quito sent Guachalá's administrator a letter notifying the hacienda of violations of the 1938 Labor Code. Humberto Correa, the provincial inspector from the Ministry and author of the letter, gave the hacienda one week to correct four violations of the code. All of the violations concerned wages and working conditions. The first violation charged that the hacienda was underpaying its workers. According to Article 250 of the Labor Code, *huasipungueros* were to be paid at least half of the minimum salary which day workers earned in the same area. The ministry mandated that the hacienda reimburse the workers for back pay at a rate of fifty centavos a day for work completed from 1942

2. See Albornoz, *Luchas indígenas*, 77-79.

3. "Ecuador," *Hispanic American Report* (Hispanic American Studies, Stanford University) 6:9 (October 1953): 25.

4. Diego Bonifaz, 27.

thorough September of 1943, and at the rate of seventy-five centavos a day from October 1943 onward.

The second violation related to the length of the work day and the work week. According to Article 251 of the Labor Code, *huasipungueros* could not be forced to work more than four days a week or eight hours a day. The letter from the Ministry of Labor does not indicate the hours which the workers were required to work, but the hacienda was ordered to lower those hours so as to bring them into compliance with the code. The third violation concerned the forced and unpaid labor of a *huasipunguero's* wife and family, and the fourth sanctioned mistreatment in word and deed of the workers. If these violations were not corrected within the allotted seven-day period, the hacienda would face a fine of fifty sucres for the first violation and one hundred sucres for each subsequent violation.

The most critical of these offenses, according to the provincial inspector, was the minimum wage violation. All four violations are significant factors, however, in understanding why the Guachalá owners began to favor a turn toward exclusive dependence upon wage labor. In fact, the third violation which concerned unpaid family labor might be the most significant for pushing the hacienda in this direction. The provincial inspector notified the hacienda that

only the *huasipungueros* are obliged to work on the hacienda, because it is they who have contracted their services and therefore they are the ones who must comply with their personal obligations with the owner. In no case can you require the *huasipungueros'* families to work.

If these family members worked, the inspector concluded, they must be paid their legally due and just salary.⁵ This legal requirement was not only a change from tradition, but it also struck at the very roots of the large profits which the hacienda could hope to gain from its Indigenous workforce. As Mercedes Prieto noted, the *huasipunguero* traditionally was expected to mobilize all of his family's resources to

5. Letter from J. Humberto Correa, Inspector Provincial de Pichincha to Señor Administrador de la Hacienda "Guachalá," January 5, 1944, AH/BC, 7/XI/22.

fulfill his contract with the *hacendado*.⁶ In contracting with a worker, the hacienda owner fully expected to be able to access the free labor of the worker's wife and children. A worker without such a family was worth only half as much to an hacienda. The fact that women could not inherit *huasipungo* plots from their fathers, husbands, or other male relatives ensured that they remained attached to a male and could be called on to provide free labor on the hacienda, including the personal *huasicama* service. If the hacienda owner could not utilize what essentially amounted to slave labor, there was less motivation to provide the corresponding *huasipunguero* with the plot of land, access to water, firewood, pasture land, and other benefits which he gained as part of the contract. Combined with the requirement to raise worker wages, these changes created a strong economic motivation for hacienda owners to press for a system of wage labor. Predictably, this was the direction which events at Guachalá subsequently took.

Although less significant in economic terms, the fourth violation of the labor code which concerned working conditions is important in understanding the development of popular organizations and peasant mobilization in southern Cayambe. Until this point in the letter, the inspector only mentioned violations of Chapter VI of the Labor Code which related specifically to agricultural labor. In this case, however, the inspector relied on Article 40 which prohibited physical or verbal abuse of workers in general, not only those engaged in the agricultural sector. Whether intentional or not, this essentially concedes a commonality of interests between the Indigenous workers in Cayambe and urban ones in Quito and Guayaquil.

The manner in which these violations came to the attention of the Ministry of Labor is significant. The Ministry did not go out into the countryside searching out violations. Rather, it was the workers themselves who brought these violations to the attention of the Ministry. This indicates, if nothing else, nascent efforts as early as

6. Prieto, "Haciendas estatales," 106.

1943 at Guachalá to organize the workforce on the hacienda; some type of formal or informal worker organization or association was present which could present these demands to the Ministry in Quito. Considering that, as in Pesillo some twelve years earlier, the work force was largely illiterate and Quichua-speaking, it is probable that outsiders were present to assist in the drafting of petitions and the presentation of demands to the hacienda as well as to governmental officials.

It is equally noteworthy what was excluded from the labor ministry's list of violations. In contrast to earlier petitions from Pesillo, there is no indication of racial discrimination or mention of ethnic demands in the labor ministry document. This is perfectly understandable, as non-Indians drafted the labor code. This also subtly reflects a negative aspect of relying on non-Indigenous actors as mediators to press for social and economic demands. The further these intermediaries moved from Indigenous communities, the less they would internalize Indigenous ethnic identity and the less anxious they would be to press vocally for ethnic demands. These strategic alliances, however, do not translate into a corresponding dilution of ethnic identity. Rather, what it meant was that perhaps ethnic identity would be less visible in the public arena.

Thus, beginning as early as the 1940s, workers began to organize for control of the Guachalá hacienda. The petition to the labor ministry in 1944 was not an isolated action. In 1948, Ecuadorian president Carlos Julio Arosemena sent in troops to put down an uprising in which workers from the Pambamarca part of the hacienda had taken over Guachalá to protest the actions of a *mayordomo*.⁷ The largest action, and most significant in terms of raising land conflicts at Guachalá in the public eye, however, occurred in 1954 at Pitaná.

Pitaná (1954)

7. Diego Bonifaz, 31.

Ten years after the provincial inspector for the Ministry of Labor investigated Labor Code violations at Guachalá, similar issues were still being raised on the hacienda. The workers described a situation of virtual slavery in which they were forced to work from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. for a sucre a day. If it was a bad year, the *huasipungueros* could not harvest anything from their garden plots and would face hunger. Esteban Collago, one of the workers on the hacienda, declared that he did not have a *huasipungo* plot, but was still forced to work free on the hacienda in order to protect his brother Cruz Collago's daily wages. César Troya Salazar, the hacienda's administrator, told him "if you do not work, I will erase your brother's *rayas*."⁸ According to the Indians, Troya was a "declared enemy of the Indians" and "one of the principal organizers of criminal acts." In September of 1953, workers at Guachalá denounced to the Ministry of Labor Troya's brutality and abuses in which he submitted the workers to "an intolerable regime" of abuses, beatings, and threats.⁹ On October 5, 1953, the inspector for agricultural work in the highlands announced that he had reached an agreement between the Indigenous work force and the owner of Guachalá. As a result of the agreement, the owner was to pay women for their work on the hacienda, grant workers the right to pasture lands, and promise better treatment of the workers from administrators and employees. An article in the Communist Party newspaper *El Pueblo* proclaimed that these advances were gained thanks to recent organizational efforts on the hacienda.¹⁰

Barely three months later, however, this apparently collegial agreement collapsed. Early on Sunday morning, January 10, 1954, the central government sent in seventy members of the National Civil Police force to the part of the Guachalá

8. "Lo que los indígenas no dijeron por presión de la policía," *El Pueblo* (January 16, 1954): 6.

9. El Comité Ejecutivo de la Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios, "La Federación de Indios frente a sucesos de Guachalá," *El Pueblo* (January 16, 1954): 6.

10. "Indígenas de hacienda 'Guachalá' obtienen mejoras," *El Pueblo* (October 10, 1953): 5.

hacienda called "Pitaná." When Neptalí Bonifaz divided Guachalá among his four children in 1947, he had given this part as well as the hacienda house to his daughter Maria Bonifaz Jijón de Uribe. At Pitaná, the police encountered several hundred Indians who had revolted against the administrator and scribe (*escribiente*) because of abuses. The police attacked the assembled group, and in the process they killed four *huasipungueros*, injured eleven more, and detained twelve people whom the government claimed to be leaders of the uprising. Although a failure in achieving the organization's immediate goals, this event shifted social and political dynamics on the hacienda which would soon result in the distribution of land to its workers. Furthermore, a closer analysis of this event allows for an examination of organizational structures on the hacienda, leadership strategies, and the role which class and ethnicity played in this process. It also reveals an urban left that while it remained committed to rural movements had become increasingly separated from their reality. Leaders in Quito who articulated these concerns to the public were not the same as those who were intimately involved in the struggles in Cayambe.

Previous to the attack at Pitaná, workers had continued to present their demands to the hacienda's administrator, César Troya Salazar. They denounced abuses which they suffered at the hands of the scribe, Rafael Mosquera. According to one organizer's testimony, on the eve of the massacre the FEI was busy distributing flyers urging the workers to press their demands with Troya.¹¹ The workers claimed that the hacienda had dropped their daily wages from one sucre fifty centavos to one sucre. Among other issues, the workers also accused the scribe of failing to credit them in the accounting book for the days which they had worked. Every day each worker was supposed to receive a *raya* ("line") in the accounting book to represent a day of work. The workers claimed that Troya owed three months of back wages to

11. Interview with Marieta Cárdenas in Salamea, 67.

the men and eight months of wages to the women. The hacienda was due to settle its yearly accounts with the workers on Monday, January 11, 1954.

The previous Friday morning, January 8, about eighty workers confronted the two hacienda employees about the apparent discrepancy between the days worked and the *rayas* which they had received in the accounting book. The workers took the accounting book in order to verify independently the information it contained. Pedro Pacheco, one of the Indian workers who the police subsequently arrested for his alleged leadership of the uprising, later testified that at 6 p.m. the next evening (Saturday, January 9) the administrator and scribe along with Gregorio Gualavisí (a *mayordomo* or manager) and Víctor Chimarro (a *mayoral* or foreman below the *mayordomo* in rank) came to the house of Manuel Collago to reclaim the book. The scribe Mosquera placed this event earlier in the afternoon at about 2 p.m. He said that the employees found only two small children at Collago's house; he had left the hacienda. On their return to the hacienda house, they met a force of perhaps two to five hundred workers chanting "we want meat." According to the employees, it was only "with great fortune they were able to flee with their lives from the fury of the Indians."¹² The Communist Party paper *El Pueblo*, however, called the claims that five hundred peasants were involved in the rebellion "fantastic" and an "absurd lie" since "in Guachalá, there are no more than one hundred Indian men."¹³

Later Eleira Sánchez, a female relative of one of the hacienda's employees and who was in the hacienda house at the time of these events, testified as to what happened. At 7:30 p.m. that evening several peons arrived at the door of the hacienda

12. "Falleció ayer otro indígena víctima de acontecimientos en la hacienda Cayambe," *El Comercio* (January 13, 1954): 16; "Dos indígenas de la hacienda 'Guachalá' fueron muertos por la policía," *El Comercio* (January 11, 1954): 3. This narrative summary is extracted largely from mainstream daily newspaper reports, supplemented with a series of stories in the January 16, 1954, issue of the Communist Party newspaper *El Pueblo*. Both Salamea and Albornoiz briefly describe the uprising, although both fail to provide much detail or interpretation.

13. "Masacre en Guachalá," *El Pueblo* (January 16, 1954): 1.

house carrying sticks, exhibiting an aggressive attitude toward the two employees, and demanding three months of back pay. In her testimony, Laura Espín, another female relative of an employee on the hacienda, claimed she heard the Indians chanting at the door "where are they," with others responding "they went to Cangahua [the parroquial capital], but they are in our hands."¹⁴ The employees telephoned police officials in Cayambe for help, who apparently immediately sent three policemen to the scene. Allegedly, the workers also threatened the policemen. Fearing the threats and perceiving a danger to their lives, Sánchez and Espín requested an automobile in order to retreat to the cantonal capital city of Cayambe. Once there, they notified the local governmental officials of the insurrectionary conditions on the hacienda. Apparently the administrator also called the police chief (*Intendencia General de Policia*) of the province of Pichincha advising him of the uprising and requesting police assistance.

At 1:45 on Sunday morning (January 10), the police chief sent thirty policemen to the hacienda. They arrived at 5:30 Sunday morning. This police force found Troya, the administrator, hiding in the hacienda house with his wife and servants, but otherwise everything was quiet on the hacienda; the alleged protesters were peacefully sleeping. Four policemen made rounds of the hacienda to check out the situation. Upon seeing this police force, four or five hundred Indians (according to police reports) came out to meet them. When he encountered the assembled Indians, Lieutenant Hugo Hermosa who led the squad of four policemen making the rounds signaled for help from the others who remained behind. Upon observing this commotion at a distance from the hacienda house, Enrique Fernández de Córdova, the local Cayambe police chief and commanding officer on the scene, ordered the other twenty-six policemen to assist the first four officers.

This official report is only one version of the events which led up to the massacre at Pitaná. According to Andrés Pacheco, one of the Indian workers who

14. "Los testigos y sindicatos de los sucesos de Guachalá rindieron sus declaraciones," *El Comercio* (January 12, 1954): 14.

was subsequently detained, he had left his house at 7 a.m. for a place called Loma Cascajal in order to receive his salary. He saw his fellow workers assembled there armed with sticks and rocks, but without any firearms. The police claimed that in addition to sticks and stones, the Indians had clubs (*garrotes*), machetes, barbs (*púas*), and firearms. According to the police account, the Indians shot at the four policemen (a highly dubious claim), and that the police had to shoot back to defend their lives. The workers resisted this attack, and so the police kept firing on the protesting workers. They tried to disperse the Indian workers with tear gas, but that had no effect. The Indians only responded with "that does not kill us, let's go on!"¹⁵

The Communist Party paper *El Pueblo* presented a different version of this story. According to this version, the police chief sent the four police officers not simply to review the situation on the hacienda but to arrest the leaders of the Indigenous uprising. Presenting what "should serve as an example of solidarity for peasant struggles," the *huasipungueros* resisted their fellow workers being carried off to prison. The police called in reinforcements with machine guns and proceeded to attack the assembled Indians as if they were on a battlefield. The result was a massacre in which the Indians were now fighting not only to defend the liberty of their comrades but also their very lives.¹⁶ The FEI and other Indians (including some of those who were detained) told a slightly different story in which they were not congregating in protest, but were simply going to hear the Sunday Catholic mass as was their custom when the police force attacked.¹⁷ Another version stated that the police flanked the path the Indians took to mass, and when the Indians peacefully passed by the police attacked with sticks and bullets, killing four people and injuring

15. "Sindicados por los sucesos de la hacienda Guachalá son enviados a cárcel pública," *El Comercio* (January 15, 1954): 3.

16. "Masacre en Guachalá," *El Pueblo* (January 16, 1954): 6.

17. El Comité Ejecutivo de la Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios, "La Federación de Indios frente a sucesos de Guachalá," *El Pueblo* (January 16, 1954): 6.

ten others.¹⁸ In his book *Las luchas indígenas en el Ecuador*, Oswaldo Albornoz presents yet another twist on the interpretation of these events. In order to avoid having to settle the accounts with the workers, the landlords attempted to arrest one of their leaders in order to provoke an Indian revolt which would justify bringing in the troops and violently crushing their resistance and ending their demands.¹⁹ In any event, the hacienda calling in troops overnight had caught the workers by surprise. It also appears that the troops fired on what had started as a peaceful protest.

As a result of the fighting, the police killed two Indians (Ramón Quishpe and Abel Pacheco) and injured eleven others (Rosa Collago, Cuito Limaico, Luis Quishpe, Pablo Collago, Cruz Collago, Nicolás Quishpe de F., Rafael Acero, Nicolás Quishpe P., Justo Pacheco, Carlos Quishpe, and San Antonio). Two policemen (Alfonso Castro and Sergeant Primero Ramírez) were also injured. Ramírez was injured when the Indians beat him with clubs and in the process destroyed the machine gun he held in his hands. According to a coroner's report, Pacheco died from two gun shot wounds, and Quishpe died from the tear gas. Later one of the Indians, Elías Quishpe, declared that he saw the hacienda's administrator Troya shoot Pacheco as well as club him on the head.²⁰ The coroner reported marks on the bodies which indicated hand-to-hand struggles with the police. Two days later, Luis Quishpe, who was also shot during the massacre, died in the Eugenio Espejo hospital in Quito. The following day, Emilio Quishpe, a worker on the hacienda who was not previously listed among the injured was found dead of a bullet wound on the hacienda, bringing the number of fatalities to four. Emilio Quishpe left behind four orphaned children.

After this confrontation, using the phone in the hacienda house, the Cayambe police chief called in an additional force of forty more policemen. After putting down

18. "Contra el terror sangriento en los campos," *El Pueblo* (January 23, 1954): 8.

19. Albornoz, *Luchas indígenas*, 80-81.

20. "Lo que los indígenas no dijeron por presión de la policía," *El Pueblo* (January 16, 1954): 6.

an uprising of eight hundred workers (according to the increasingly exaggerated numbers the police gave to the newspaper), they captured and detained about one hundred protesters. The police, however, only kept twelve of these whom they considered to be the leaders of the uprising and sent them to prison.²¹ After all, if they detained all of the Indians, they would have drained the hacienda of its workforce, which was not its intent. Several of those detained claimed not to have participated in any of the actions, but were only caught up in a police sweep after they left mass that Sunday morning. Several of the detainees also maintained that Ramón Quishpe and Abel Pacheco, the two Indians who were killed in the subsequent massacre, along with Miguel Collago (at whose house the hacienda employees had come looking for the account book), were the instigators of the revolt. Apparently two of the twelve were later released as several days later press reports indicated that ten protesters had been taken to the public jail in Quito where they were to await trial on charges of rebellion. The Indians, however, could not hope to receive any justice at the hands of the government forces. The ten Indians were held in the Quito jail where they complained of hunger because they were removed from proximity to their families who could bring them food. "We want to return to the land where we will die," the imprisoned Indians said. "Where else do we have to go?"²² Later, due to popular pressure, the judge in Quito was forced to release the detained workers.

Several interesting items emerge from these lists of names of people injured and detained as a result of the protests. First, although the overwhelming majority of the names belong to males, this is not exclusively so. Newspaper reports (including those from the Communist Party) only mention men as being among those revolting, but the list of injured includes a woman (Rosa Collago). The reports do not indicate

21. The twelve detainees were Pedro Pacheco, Andrés Pacheco, Justo Pacheco, José Cruz Farinango, Nicolás Pacheco, Miguel Collago, Elías Quishpe, José Manuel Quishpe, Abel Pacheco, Fermín Quishpe, Esteban Collago, and Rubén Rodríguez.

22. "Lo que los indígenas no dijeron por presión de la policía," *El Pueblo* (January 16, 1954): 6.

what role (if any) she had in the protests or how she was injured, but it does attest to the presence of women in the foray. In all probability, Indigenous women did appear in an active role in the protests, but because of the cultural biases of the dominant society which reported on the events their role was ignored. It is interesting to contrast this, however, with the white women who did appear in the newspaper reports. In their public pronouncements, female relatives of the hacienda's employees painted a picture of fear of the unwashed masses.

Another interesting fact which emerges from the list of injured and detained is the presence of non-Indian workers in the middle of the events. Specifically, Rubén Rodríguez was among those detained and taken prisoner. According to newspaper reports, Rodríguez did not work on the hacienda but because of his involvement in and support for the organizational efforts of the protesters the police ordered his provisional detention.²³ Rodríguez, of course, was no stranger to politics in Cayambe or to Indigenous organizational efforts. Rodríguez was a long-time communist organizer in Cayambe who had held elected office and played an important role in the founding of the FEI. Troya, the hacienda's administrator, had the police chief detain Rodríguez because he was a known communist agitator and believed to be the instigator of the uprising at Guachalá. Rodríguez later claimed that he was arrested at his house before the events occurred that Sunday morning at Guachalá. This indicates that the government was willing to utilize any rumors of uprisings among the Indigenous peoples as a pretense to crack down on the non-Indigenous left.²⁴ His presence in the midst of this protest, however, indicates that these events at Guachalá did not occur in isolation from the broader political context in Cayambe.

After this incident, the police claimed to have found two guns with numerous shells including spent ones in the possession of the Indians. They later also claimed to

23. "Los testigos y sindicatos de los sucesos de Guachalá rindieron sus declaraciones," *El Comercio* (January 12, 1954): 14.

24. "Contra el terror sangriento en los campos," *El Pueblo* (January 23, 1954): 8.

have found two "Reinsing" machine guns. In their testimonies, however, the Indians steadfastly denied that they had any firearms. They were poor and could not afford such gunnery, and had never seen those guns before. Furthermore, they denied the allegations that they had attacked the police. These and other police claims, according to the Communist Party's newspaper *El Pueblo*, were simply part of a campaign against the peasantry in order to discredit their demands. In fact, *El Pueblo* steadfastly contended that there was no uprising (*levantamiento*). Rather, what happened was a legal claim for overdue salaries.²⁵ All they wanted, the workers asserted, was to receive their just pay. Accusations of an armed uprising were simply a foil to draw attention away from their demands.

In the aftermath of the massacre, fifteen policemen would remain on the hacienda in order to prevent further disturbances. Some people blamed Troya, the hacienda's administrator, for the massacre, claiming that he had acted heavy handedly in the affair. José Pacheco, one of the *huasipungueros* who was present at the uprising, placed the entire blame for these events on Troya for not paying the workers on time.²⁶ Clearly, Troya had violated the long-respected status quo with his actions. Troya, however, defended what he had done claiming that he worked hard to prevent the hacienda from being converted into *una granja colectiva comunista*, "a collective communist farm."²⁷ Troya denied that there were any serious problems on the hacienda, but conceded that perhaps the scribe and foremen had been too zealous in protecting the hacienda from Indians who "believe that the hacienda is land of no one and belongs to all."²⁸ Troya denied that the hacienda was three months behind in

25. "Masacre en Guachalá," *El Pueblo* (January 16, 1954): 1; "Contra el terror sangriento en los campos," *El Pueblo* (January 23, 1954): 8.

26. Interview with José Pacheco in Salamea, 68.

27. "Falleció ayer otro indígena víctima de acontecimientos en la hacienda Cayambe," *El Comercio* (January 13, 1954): 16.

28. "César Troya Salazar, "Alrededor de los sucesos registrados en la hacienda 'Guachalá,'" *El Comercio* (January 15, 1954): 11.

paying its peons. The hacienda, according to Troya, did not get behind in its payments and did not owe a centavo to anyone. Rather, he claimed that during the holiday festivals many peons did not work or did not show up to have their *rayas* noted in the accounting book. In fact, January 10 was the day that these accounts left in limbo were to be settled. A neighboring landowner, however, speculated that Troya had essentially embezzled the hacienda's money which was to pay the workers, and that he triggered these actions to cover over his fiscal mismanagement.²⁹

Troya blamed the problems on outside agitators such as Rubén Rodríguez who came looking for trouble and tried to provoke the workers into joining a communist-led revolt. Troya praised the hacienda's owners for being very acculturated and having progressive attitudes. He contended that the owners sought to help their workers, but instead the Indians only responded with lawyers. Troya disagreed that worker salaries should be raised; if the Indians were paid more, they would only drink more. Rather than raising their salaries, the Indians needed to be educated. Through all of this, Troya continually claimed that he was not responsible for what had happened on the hacienda.

This uprising and resulting massacre was the first time that protest in Guachalá or in southern Cayambe was carried out so openly in the public arena. It represented a shift in political dynamics for the Indian struggle in Cayambe and the relations it had with exterior forces. The FEI and Communist Party began to take a more active interest in what was happening in this sector. The workers' demands increased the pace and force of the push for agrarian reform legislation. Ironically, the hacienda's actions further pushed these workers into the PCE/FEI camp. Who else was there in Quito to defend the interests of these rural workers who had been imprisoned in the capital? The support which these urban leftists lent to the peasants extended to providing housing for the family members of the imprisoned *huasipungueros* who had

29. Interview with Pompeyo Andrade in Salamea, 69-70.

come to Quito to visit them and assisting with the burials of those killed in the massacre.³⁰

After the massacre at Pitaná, the Communist Party declared that all of Ecuador was in solidarity with the massacred Indians. The workers "directed in large part by the Ecuadorian Communist Party, reject the abuses which were committed at Guachalá," their newspaper declared. "The large peasant masses, workers, democratic parties, and all of our people have to mobilize to defend the peasants at Guachalá." They called for the release of the imprisoned *huasipungueros* and an end to the persecution of Rubén Rodríguez. They also used this as an opportunity to criticize the conservative Social Christian Camilo Ponce Enríquez who, as the Minister of Government under Velasco Ibarra's third presidency (1952-1956), was responsible for the attack. In addition, the PCE condemned the country's landholding class and issued a call to arms against fascism.³¹ Two years later when Ponce Enríquez was elected to a four-year term as president, the Communist Party greeted this as a dangerous turn to the right with negative ramifications for workers on the haciendas. Having a representative of the landlords' interests in power would mean the entrenchment of a feudal system. Threats of massacres similar to that at Guachalá would lead to the increased impoverishment of the rural masses. There was a clear division between those who defended the interests of the Indigenous and peasants peoples, and those who treated them as a herd of cattle which they owned and could do with as they wished, including beating and massacring them.³²

For their part, the Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios stated that "the infamous feudal exploitation which rural workers suffer can only be maintained through bloody repression." Because of this, landlords used repression to "silence the just and

30. Interview with Marieta Cárdenas in Salamea, 67-68.

31. "Masacre en Guachalá," *El Pueblo*, January 16, 1954, 6.

32. "Hacienda El Hato: Vivo testimonio de la servidumbre feudal," *El Pueblo*, July 7, 1956, 4.

legitimate demands of the peasants." They criticized the government for placing police and military power at the disposition of the elite land-holding class in order to achieve their demands, rather than using it to bring about social justice. They concluded that although the landlords and government intended to paralyze the peasant struggle for better working and living conditions, the FEI and Indians in general would continue their struggle.³³ Marieta Cárdenas, director of FEI at the time of this strike, later claimed a leading role for the FEI in the uprising. "The FEI was the one which instigated the uprising," she stated. "Without us, I doubt that the peasants at Pitaná would have dared to do it." Several of the peasants there already were members of the FEI and participated in organizational congresses in Quito. From Quito, the FEI lent organizational and moral support to the struggles.³⁴

These statements from the Communist Party and the FEI did little to address the immediate issues which the Indians at Guachalá faced. This was partially due to the lack of an established history of relations and personal contacts with workers on these haciendas, particularly as compared to years of organizing experience with Indians on the *Asistencia Pública* haciendas in northern Cayambe. It also betrays the roots of a paternalism and ideological dependency on urban actors which would later become much more prevalent. In addition, however, was the awareness of the need for a fundamental structural change so that such abuses would not continue. The FEI, perhaps naturally, stressed this point much more strongly than did the Communist Party. The FEI called on all "Indians and peasants to struggle in an organized manner for better salaries, the stability of their *huasipungo* plots, and for land." Unlike the Communist Party, the FEI also introduced the issue of ethnicity into their discussions. It called on all Ecuadorians

33. El Comité Ejecutivo de la Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios, "La Federación de Indios frente a sucesos de Guachalá," *El Pueblo*, January 16, 1954, 6.

34. Interview with Marieta Cárdenas in Salamea, 67-68.

without regard to political opinions and religious beliefs to struggle for the immediate liberty of the Indigenous peoples of Guachalá, for the satisfaction of their rights, and for the liberation of the Indigenous masses which form the majority of the Ecuadorian population.³⁵

These demands did not fall entirely on deaf ears among the broader Ecuadorian public. An editorialist in Guayaquil's daily newspaper *El Universo* stated that "we believe that the hour has arrived to correct these injustices, returning those lands [in Guachalá] to their former owners from whom they were snatched."³⁶ Rural protest in Guachalá which previously had been carefully maintained in the private arena had catapulted land reform and ethnic rights issues onto the national stage from which it would never disappear.

Throughout all of the land struggles at Guachalá, the Bonifaz family which owned the hacienda somehow managed to remain above the fray. The Indians and their supporters in the Communist Party and the FEI continually leveled accusations of misconduct and abuse against the hacienda's high-ranking employees, particularly the administrator, *mayordomo*, and scribe, but never directly against the Bonifaz family. In fact, Marieta Cárdenas, the director of the FEI, claimed to be personal friends with the Bonifaz family and asserted that they did not openly oppose the FEI's organizing efforts.³⁷ Pompeyo Andrade, a neighboring hacienda owner and administrator, placed the blame for the uprising on the fiscal mismanagement of Guachalá administrator, César Troya. "Any of the Bonifazes," Andrade claimed, "would have solved that problem in less than five minutes." He claimed that Guachalá was not a revolutionary zone or one that would normally expect such uprisings. The Indian workers only wanted peace and were very loyal to the hacienda's owners. Furthermore, Neptali

35. El Comité Ejecutivo de la Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios, "La Federación de Indios frente a sucesos de Guachalá," *El Pueblo*, January 16, 1954, 5.

36. J. Orión Llaguno, "Como robaron Guachalá a los indios," *El Universo* (January 14, 1954), reprinted in *El Pueblo* (January 16, 1954): 1.

37. Interview with Marieta Cárdenas in Salamea, 67.

Bonifaz was one of the most generous of Ecuador's *hacendados*.³⁸ Perhaps the biggest shortcoming for Guachalá was the failure to keep this protest in the private arena; the issues which it sparked went far beyond localized intramural affairs within the hacienda.

Although never explicitly discussed in ethnic or racial terms, there is also an assumed subtext of tensions on this level. As previously noted, the agricultural workers in Cayambe were all Indigenous. The Bonifaz family, of course, belonged to the white elite. Newspaper and oral history accounts do not note the ethnic identity of the employees on the hacienda, but if patterns at other haciendas held true at Guachalá (which was almost certainly the case), these intermediaries between the *hacendados* and peons were primarily *cholos*, a transitional category indicating a social and cultural group of people who had left the Indian world but had not integrated themselves into white culture. In what would appear to be ironic to outsiders, the ethnic tensions between Indians and *cholos* were much more pronounced than that between the Indians and white landlords. Nevertheless, as a group which imposed the white owners' concerns on the hacienda and at the same time sought to demonstrate to those owners that they had risen above Indian "barbarity," *cholos* were particularly rough in their handling of the Indian workers. The workers, thus, bore the brunt of this racism and discrimination. On a certain ethnic level, the Pitaná strike was as much against the abusive and discriminatory treatment from the *cholos* as against the historically abusive land tenure patterns on the hacienda. Both cultural and economic issues informed the nature of the protest.

Although participants discussed the strike at Pitaná largely in class and economic terms, an ethnic dimension is also apparent in the discourse surrounding land rights. Occasionally workers or their urban leftist supporters would refer to the Indians' historic rights to land in Cayambe; they were the rightful owners but the

38. Interview with Pompeyo Andrade in Salamea, 69, 176.

hacendados had stolen the land from them. The strike, thus, was part of a campaign to regain access to this land. But whereas the white landowners would see the land as a commodity, the Indian workers considered it as a part of their ethnic heritage which they traced back to pre-Inka cultures. Land remained an important part of their identity, and it was this cultural, not economic, value which made it an important element of the struggle.

These struggles against conditions on the hacienda were not in vain. On October 2, 1959, twenty families at Pitaná received land from the Bonifaz family who owned the hacienda. Later others at Porotog (for a total of eighty-seven families) also received land. These plots averaged 4.6 hectares in size, and in total workers at Guachalá received about one thousand hectares of tillable and pasture lands, although Galo Ramón makes the point that the hacienda distributed *bad* land. These were some of the first peasants in Cayambe to receive land, and it predated the 1964 agrarian reform legislation by five years. Emilio Bonifaz, part owner of Guachalá and intellectual author of this transfer, was one of the first large landholders to give legal title of *huasipungo* plots voluntarily to his workers. For his noble efforts, Bonifaz received a medal of agricultural merit. His action created a model which was later followed throughout the sierra. During the early 1960s, landholders gave about three thousand *huasipungueros* title to their plots, the majority of these in the province of Pichincha.³⁹ This is seen as a forerunner of agrarian reform legislation, and because of such actions the Guachalá hacienda has long been seen as one of the leading modernizing forces in Ecuadorian agrarian policies and land tenure patterns.

39. Jaramillo, 198; Salamea, 66-76; Lucía Salamea, "La transformación de la hacienda y los cambios en la condición campesina," in *Ecuador: cambios en el agro serrano*, ed. Miguel Murmis and others (Quito: Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO) - Centro de Planificación y Estudios Sociales (CEPLAES), 1980), 261-62; Guerrero, *Haciendas, capital y lucha de clases andina*, 137; Bonifaz, "Guachalá, pt. II," 347; Ramón, "Cayambe," 167; Zamosc, *Peasant Struggles and Agrarian Reform*, 14; Barsky, 72-78.

Peasant syndicates on other private haciendas

Peasant struggles and the formation of syndicates on privately owned haciendas in Cayambe were not limited to Guachalá. Particularly during the 1950s as land struggles intensified at Guachalá, new peasant syndicates surfaced on other haciendas in Cangahua in southern Cayambe. In fact, it would appear that the struggles at Guachalá gave strength and encouragement to these other efforts. For example, peasants at Candelaria presented demands to their landlords which included higher salaries and better working conditions. They wanted salaries for *huasipungueros* to be raised from two sucres (in 1958) to 2.5 sucres, from one sucre to 2.6 sucres for women, and from three sucres to 3.5 sucres for day laborers who did not enjoy the benefit of a *huasipungo* plot. In addition, they demanded payment for overtime and vacations which they had never taken. The workers also called for an end to the practice of the church charging *diezmos* (the ten-percent tithes) and *primicias* (the first fruits which the *huasipungo* plot produced). Rather than negotiating these demands, the landowner sent in the police to imprison the syndicate's leaders.

Similar actions were also taking place at the San Antonio and La Libertad haciendas in southern Cayambe. Workers on the San Antonio hacienda faced some of the lowest salaries, worst working conditions, and poorest quality *huasipungo* plots in the area. San Antonio belonged to the Jarrín family, one of the old land-holding families in Cayambe who held much political power (including elected offices on the municipal council) and previously had rented *Asistencia Pública* haciendas from the government. In the late 1950s, the central government in Quito appointed one of the members of the Jarrín family as the *teniente político* for Cangahua which made it particularly difficult for the workers to organize and demand their rights. In fact, the workers were still fighting for many of the same rights which workers on other haciendas had long since achieved. Their list of demands included ending free work requirements on the hacienda, paying women for their labor, and providing the peons with the necessary tools to complete their tasks on the hacienda rather than requiring

the workers to provide their own. The most important complaints, however, revolved around the low salaries. The syndicate claimed that the hacienda owed some workers seven years of back pay. They called for *huasipungo* salaries to be raised from 1.5 sucres to 2.5 sucres (and to 3.5 sucres for those without *huasipungos*) in order to bring them into alignment with salaries on other haciendas.⁴⁰

The partial achievement of a syndicate's stated goals was not an incentive to relax their organizing efforts. Rather, throughout the 1950s and 1960s until the passage of agrarian reform legislation in 1964, peasant organizing efforts increased at an intensified pace. In 1962 at La Libertad, an hacienda in Cangahua which Neptalí Espinoza Jarrín owned, workers presented a list of demands which stressed increased salaries and better working conditions. They insisted on raises to bring salaries in line with national minimum wage laws. They also reiterated commonly repeated demands that workers not pay for the tools they utilized on the hacienda or be required to pay for losses to crops and animals. In addition, workers should not be required to work more than a month in the *cuentayo* or *chagracama* forms of labor protecting cattle and fields on the hacienda, and *cuentayos* should receive two *quintales* (two hundred pounds or about ninety kilograms) of potatoes or basic grains in addition to their salaries. Landlords should issue *cuentayos* rain ponchos and plastic bags to protect their hats. They also made a variety of other demands including the construction of housing, a health post, a building which the local syndicate could use, and a sports field. Almost as an afterthought, the syndicate also requested that day laborers receive *huasipungo* plots.⁴¹

The request for *huasipungo* plots at La Libertad in this list of demands appears strangely anachronistic in light of the fact that within two years agrarian reform legislation would formally outlaw this form of land tenure and service tenancy rela-

40. "Victoriosas luchas de los campesinos," *El Pueblo*, November 29, 1958, 6.

41. "Trabajadores de hacienda Libertad luchan por mejor vida," *El Pueblo*, December 8, 1962, 2, 7.

tions. Strangely missing, in view of this impending reform, is any mention of demand for land for the peasants. Rather, the continued emphasis on salaries and working conditions represents a continuation of issues from the birth of rural protest movements in Cayambe in the 1920s and 1930s. Furthermore, the nature of these demands would seem to betray a type of identity more akin to a form of rural proletarian identity than a traditional peasant identity with the related issues of demands for individual ownership of land.

Although the Communist Party worked to expose the government's lies and injustice which the workers at Guachalá faced, the demands which the party presented revolved more around their own issues rather than focusing on workers' demands. This was the beginning, perhaps, of ideological and strategic divisions between the Indians and urban communists which later led to a widely held stereotype of leftist paternalistic attitudes toward and strategic usurpation of Indigenous movements and the demands they presented. Although they had been born out of a common environment and struggle, by the 1950s a gap between the two forces had become apparent in their rhetorical statements and ideological discourse. This was perhaps partially due to the passing of the first generation of urban Marxists such as Paredes, Chávez, and Rodríguez who had intimate knowledge of and close contact with the Indians on the haciendas. It also reflects an increasing ideological rigidity on the part of urban Marxists. This division would become more pronounced through the 1960s and 1970s, as new actors joined the struggle for Indigenous and peasant rights.

Pesillo

After the formation of the FEI in 1944, organized protest continued on the *Asistencia Pública* haciendas in northern Cayambe in much the same vein as before. The FEI played a key role in defending workers' interests and assisting the peasant syndicates with their organizing efforts. Renters of the haciendas and their *mayordomos*, concerned with the continued force of the rural organizing efforts, sought to intimidate the peasant leaders as part of a strategy to destroy the syndicates.

For example, in the aftermath of a May Day rally which workers at Pesillo used to denounce abuses and exploitation, the landlords engaged in a fierce persecution of Neptalí Ulcuango, the local leader of the FEI. The Indigenous peoples on the hacienda came to his defense, and they were able to continue their organizational efforts.⁴² The Communist Party also continued to support the demands of the workers on the *Asistencia Pública* haciendas who worked "as beasts of burden, suffering the inhumane treatment of *mayordomos*, administrators, and renters."⁴³ Documents in the JCAP archives and articles in leftist newspapers indicate that the FEI kept constant pressure on the government regarding working conditions, land rights, and education in Cayambe.

Working conditions

Particularly in the pages of the Communist Party newspaper *El Pueblo*, abuses on *Asistencia Pública* haciendas were kept in the public eye. On occasion, the paper would dedicate an entire section entitled "Luchas campesinas" (Peasant struggles) to issues of land conflicts and the struggles of workers on haciendas. The PCE noted that agricultural workers would only achieve their just demands including improved living and working conditions through unity, organization, solidarity with organized workers in the city. For this reason, the party called on agricultural workers to organize syndicates as the best way to persuade the landlords and government to attend to their demands.⁴⁴ For example, in October of 1952 *El Pueblo* charged the renters of the governmental hacienda at Pisambilla of various abuses. They called on the hacienda to return *huasipungo* plots to the workers, pay salaries, provide tools for

42. "Los terratenientes desatan persecución contra los dirigentes campesinos," *El Pueblo*, May 29, 1954, 6.

43. "Trabajadores exigen la parcelación de las haciendas de la Asistencia Pública," *El Pueblo*, October 20, 1956, 4.

44. "Victoria de los trabajadores de Chaupi-Muyurco," *El Pueblo*, February 21, 1959, 7.

the workers, and fire the employees who oppressed the Indian workers.⁴⁵ These issues never seemed to disappear. Four years later, *El Pueblo* still accused the hacienda's renter of carrying out a campaign of terror and abuse against the *huasipungueros* and day laborers on the hacienda. This report charged that in an effort to draw attention away from these abuses and gain the sympathy of local officials, the hacienda's administrator had presented a false report to the police accusing workers on the hacienda of attacking him. As a result, several workers from the hacienda were in jail in Cayambe. The Communist Party, through their newspaper *El Pueblo*, sought to rally government officials and the public in general to defend the rights of workers on the hacienda and to take steps to improve their working conditions.⁴⁶

These debates also continued at an intense pace on the Pesillo hacienda. In 1954, workers were still paid a sucre a day and required to work a six-day week. The current renter announced plans to lower the salary to seventy-five centavos a day and to shrink the size of the *huasipungo* plots. As had become common by this time, the workers denounced the situation to the FEI and called on their comrades to help defend their interests. *El Pueblo* denounced the exploitation and brutal abuses of Helge Vorbeck, the *Asistencia Pública* renter. In addition to lowering the salaries of *huasipungueros*, Vorbeck had also instituted ingenious mechanisms for lowering the salaries he would be required to pay other workers on the hacienda. He had given about thirty day laborers (called *indios sueltos*) small plots of land about twenty square meters in size. He then called these minuscule plots "*huasipungos*" and correspondingly lowered their salaries to a sucre a day. In addition, he had imported higher-producing dairy cows thereby doubling the work of the milkmaids, but had not given them a corresponding raise in salary. This also meant increased labor and responsibilities for the *cuentayos* who cared for the cattle, who likewise did not receive a corre-

45. "Se agudizan las represiones en el campo," *El Pueblo*, October 25, 1952, 3.

46. "Persecuciones y atropellos a los indios de Hacienda Pisambilla," *El Pueblo*, May 26, 1956, 4.

sponding increase in remuneration. The paper also accused friends and family (including foreigners) of Vorbeck of raping women on the hacienda. According to *El Pueblo*, Vorbeck was the consul of Denmark in Quito. He was the owner of the La Victoria brewery and the Orangine soft drink bottling company in Quito. Apparently he was a Nazi sympathizer and leader in Ecuador during the Second World War, and after about ten years "reappeared to apply his bestial theories through the unmerciful exploitation of Indians."⁴⁷

Repeated strikes and continued agitation at Pesillo were not isolated phenomenon and did not go unrewarded. By 1958, the *huasipungueros* had managed to raise their salaries from 1.5 to two sucres, with an additional raise to 2.5 sucres planned to go into effect in January of 1959. Day laborers without the *huasipungo* plots had their salaries raised from three to five sucres, and milk maids had a raise from two to 2.5 sucres, with another raise to three sucres also planned for January. They also extracted a promise from Vorbeck to end the abuse on the hacienda and to build a literacy center. Workers at La Chimba won even greater gains. *Huasipungo* salaries were raised from 1.5 to 2.5 sucres, and from 3.5 to six sucres for day laborers. After accounting for the slowly depreciating value of the sucre, as Figure 1 on page 104 demonstrates, this was the first significant real increase in workers' wages since Alfaro's 1895 Liberal Revolution. In addition, the hacienda was to provide its workers with breakfast and lunch and with tools for the workers. Those working as *cuentayos* (caring for the cattle), or providing the domestic *huasicama* or *chagracama* (caring for the fields) services were also to receive fifty pounds (about twenty-two kilograms) of potatoes or barley.⁴⁸ Previously, only hacienda employees had enjoyed such

47. "El latifundio de la Asistencia Pública, terrateniente amenaza incendiar chozas de los indios," *El Pueblo*, March 20, 1954, 6; "En hacienda Pesillo," *El Pueblo*, April 16, 1954, 6.

48. "Victoriosas luchas de los campesinos," *El Pueblo*, November 29, 1958, 6.

bonuses, but now these economic benefits were to be broadened out to also include the workers.

Not all of the institutionally administered haciendas in Cayambe belonged to the *Asistencia Pública* program. The most significant exception was La Remonta in the *parroquia* of Ayora just north of the city of Cayambe which belonged to the Ministry of Defense. The working conditions and salaries La Remonta were similar to those on other haciendas in the area. Workers on that hacienda also formed a peasant syndicate in order to agitate for a variety of demands, including returning jobs and *huasipungo* plots back to workers who were fired. They fought to have salaries raised to 2.5 sucres for *huasipungueros* and to five sucres for those day laborers without the plots, and to have the work week for *huasipungueros* shortened to four days. They negotiated an agreement with these provisions with the landholder José Pallares Zaldumbide, but he reneged on the agreement. The workers regrouped, once again presented their demands, and once again won the previous demands plus an increase in salary for the milk maids and protection for the workers to gather firewood and use water and pasture resources on the hacienda.⁴⁹ Not only does this incident indicate the necessity of continued agitation in order to win concessions, it also demonstrates the need for constant vigilance in order to assure that the landlords complied with their agreements.

Land rights

Well-known activists such as Dolores Cacuango and Jesús Gualavisí who did not work on the northern public haciendas maintained an active presence organizing meetings of workers. According to the administrator of the Pesillo hacienda, they told the Indians that as descendants of the Inkas, they were the rightful heirs to the hacienda land. If they would refuse to work, the government would be forced to turn the land over to them. An August 1946 letter noted that Gualavisí "was known for his

49. Ibid.

activities of being a social agitator among the Indian class," and authorities sought to take actions to stop his activities.⁵⁰ In October of 1946, a letter from Moyurco's administrator to the *Asistencia Pública* program noted that "this pernicious woman" Dolores Cacungo was on the hacienda helping Indians build houses even though they did not have a formal contract with the hacienda to possess a *huasipungo* plot. The correspondence mentioned two workers in particular, Tarabata and Necpas, who had claimed *huasipungos* without authorization.⁵¹

These actions betray a significant shift in attitudes toward land issues among *huasipungo* organizations after the formation of the FEI. It was not that economic and working conditions had become unimportant. Throughout the 1940s and 1950s workers would continue to complain about the feudal exploitation on the government's haciendas. In 1959, workers on the Chaupi hacienda in Pesillo successfully presented a complaint to the labor inspector about low salaries, mistreatment, and abuses.⁵² For the most part, however, the focus of organizational demands had shifted. The primary demands no longer rotated around issues of working conditions and salaries. By all appearances, the communists had convinced the Indians that the land they were working was rightfully theirs, and that they should claim this as a central organizing issue. Similar to the situation at Guachalá, as Cacungo and Gualavisí's reference to the Inkas indicates, the true value of the land was not as an economic commodity but rather as a cultural artifact. By the 1950s, a commonly repeated demand, both from

50. Letter from J.A. Jalevalel, Personero Auxiliar to Director, JCAP, in Correspondencia Recibida, Segundo Semestre, Segundo Parte, 1946, 1554, JCAP.

51. Letter from Juan Francisco Sumárraga to Director, JCAP, March 21, 1946, in Correspondencia Recibida, Segundo Semestre, Segundo Parte, 1946, 1555, JCAP; Letter from C. Anibal Maldonado, Administrador, to Jefe, Departamento de Haciendas, Asistencia Pública, October 10, 1946 (Oficio #27), in Correspondencia Recibida, 1946, JCAP.

52. "Los trabajadores de Chaupi han presentado un reclamo," *El Pueblo*, February 7, 1959, 7; "Victoria de los trabajadores de Chaupi-Muyurco," *El Pueblo*, February 21, 1959, 7.

urban leftists and Indigenous activists on the haciendas, was to break up the government-owned haciendas and give the land to the Indigenous peasants, either individually or in the form of cooperatives.

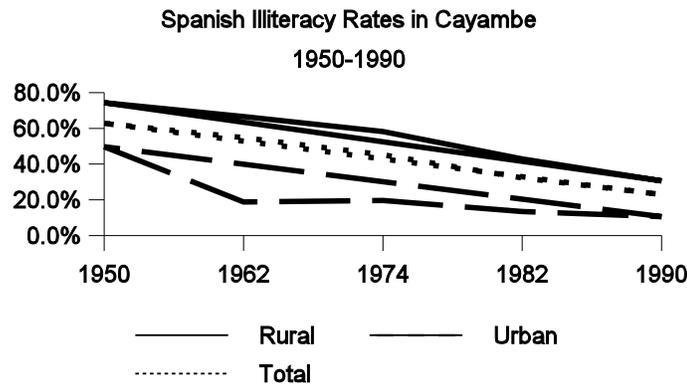
Governmental reports also reveal something of the organizational strategies on the haciendas. These reports make mention of frequent meetings which included Indian leaders such as Cacuango and Gualavisí who did not work on the hacienda, local leaders such as Manuel Andrango, Luis Iguagco, and Maniano Pilataxi who did, and urban communists such as Ricardo Paredes. The local leaders, according to the government, followed Gualavisí's orders. Gualavisí would enter the hacienda without permission, and when the administrator told him to leave, Gualavisí would refuse, saying that the administrator was not the owner of the hacienda. One night in 1946 the administrator encountered Gualavisí on the Pisambilla hacienda. Gualavisí had intended to sleep in the hut of one of the workers, but the administrator forced him to sleep outside and leave the next morning. Upon this eviction, Gualavisí solicited assistance from Paredes, and together they filed suit in Cayambe to defend Gualavisí's right to organize on the hacienda. In an effort to stop these organizing efforts, the JCAP considered firing one or two of the most dangerous leaders in order to set an example which they hoped would improve the conduct of the other workers. Rather than addressing and negotiating the workers' demands, the government sought to end the organizing efforts through repression and intimidation.⁵³

Bilingual education

Other factors also helped push for agrarian reform. Education, and in particular bilingual (Spanish-Quichua) education, was one of the most important of these. Although this movement took place on a national level, as with many other aspects of

53. Letter from Juan Francisco Sumárraga to Director, JCAP, March 21, 1946, in Correspondencia Recibida, Segundo Semestre, Segundo Parte, 1946, 1555, JCAP; letter from J.A. Jalevalel, Personero Auxiliar to Director, JCAP, in Correspondencia Recibida, Segundo Semestre, Segundo Parte, 1946, 1554, JCAP.

Ecuador's modern Indigenous movement it also had its roots in Cayambe. In the years following the founding of the FEI, the first bilingual schools for Indian children were established in Cayambe. Their roots, however, go further back. In 1933, Moisés Sáenz observed that, "the Ecuadorian Indian does not demonstrate any enthusiasm nor love for schools."⁵⁴ The actions of Indigenous peoples in Cayambe, however, tend to demonstrate otherwise. One of the demands from the strike in Pesillo in 1931 was that a school be established at Pucará.⁵⁵



Rural	74.4%	66.6%	58.2%	42.9%	30.6%
Urban	49.7%	18.8%	19.7%	13.5%	10.6%
Total	62.8%	54.8%	45.2%	32.3%	23.0%

Figure 5: Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos (INEC).

The need for schools should not be underestimated. One scholar calculated that in 1934, eighty percent of the *huasipungueros* (as compared to forty percent of the rest of the rural population) were illiterate.⁵⁶ Throughout the course of the twentieth century, this figure slowly dropped although rural illiteracy has always

54. Sáenz, 145.

55. "Pliego de peticiones que los sindicatos 'El Inca' y 'Tierra Libre' situados en la parroquia Olmedo, presentan a los arrendatarios de las haciendas donde trabajan," *El Día*, January 6, 1931, 1.

56. Oberem, "Contribución a la historia del trabajador rural de América Latina," 323.

lagged behind urban figures as well as behind the national average. As Figure 5 demonstrates, from 1950 to 1990 rural illiteracy in Cayambe slowly fell from almost three-fourths of the population to under one-third. At the same time, however, urban illiteracy fell from almost one-half of the population to barely ten percent.

Table 13: Monolingual and Bilingual Speakers (1950)

	Mono-lingual Spanish	Mono-lingual Quechua	Other Indigenous dialects	Spanish and aboriginal languages or dialects	Spanish and foreign languages or dialects	Aboriginal languages and dialects	Foreign languages and dialects
Ecuador	2,186,880	172,646	4433	84,361	17,669	82,305	2668
Canton of Cayambe	9984	3995	--	2046	42	4096	15
City of Cayambe	5367	16	--	516	21	95	12
Suburban Area	1744	524	--	593	12	548	3
Rural Parroquias	2873	3455	--	937	9	3453	--

Note: The terminology of the categories is retained from the 1950 census. The suburban population is defined as the population of the area outside of the city of Cayambe but within the limits of the urban *parroquias* of Cayambe, Ayora, and Montalvo.

Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos (INEC).

Census data from Cayambe not only attested to the need for rural schools, it also revealed the need for bilingual and inter-cultural schools which could tailor programs to the specific demographic needs of the region. In an analysis of language from the 1950 census, Gregory Knapp found that eight-two percent of the rural population and eleven percent of the urban population of Cayambe were Quichua speakers, including eighty-eight percent in the *parroquia* of Otón, eighty-seven

percent in Cangahua, and seventy-seven percent in Olmedo.⁵⁷ Leon Zamosc has defined these three *parroquias* as primarily Indigenous. Furthermore, he claimed that in 1990 over ninety percent of the rural population of Cayambe still lived in predominantly Indigenous areas.⁵⁸ This data demonstrates that Cayambe always has been and continues to be a predominantly Indigenous area. Naturally, there would be a high demand for bilingual education in the region.

A variety of governments in Ecuador have given lip service to the educational requirements of rural communities, but rarely have they followed through on their stated commitments. For example, the 1937 statutes which gave legal formation to *comunas* stated that "the State or the Municipalities will found at least one primary school in each community."⁵⁹ Article 171 of the 1946 constitution stated that "both public and private schools shall give special attention to the indigenous race."⁶⁰ Neither the national or local government, however, followed through on these mandates. In 1951, the *comuna* of Ascázubi Alto in southern Cayambe drew up by-laws which included the stated obligation for the community members to send their children to school and to pay twenty centavos a month toward the construction of a school building as well as a sports field, a community building, and other public works. The social welfare ministry (Ministerio de Previsión Social) accepted these by-laws with the amendment that if a *comunero* (community member) did not send his or her children to school, that person would be expelled from the *comuna* and lose access

57. Knapp, *Geografía Quichua*, 49-50. Knapp notes that because of mistrust of census officials and out of fear of the negative stigma attached to Quichua speakers, only forty-nine percent of the population in Cayambe provided information on language (p. 12). He has thus had to extrapolate these numbers.

58. Zamosc, *Estadística*, 77, 80.

59. "Estatuto Jurídico de las Comunidades Campesinas" (Decreto No. 23) *Registro Oficial*, No. 39 and 40 (December 10 and 11, 1937): 2389.

60. Ecuador and Pan American Union. General Legal Division, *Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador, 1946* (Washington: Pan American Union, 1961), 35, 39.

rights to any communal land and water as well as other communal benefits.⁶¹ Two years later the community enacted the same by-laws and the ministry responded with the same required revisions, but there is no evidence that the community ever expelled a member for truancy.

Indigenous schools began to appear in Ecuador in the 1940s, and the first such schools emerged in Cayambe. The strongest and most significant movements in this direction took place in the area around the Pesillo hacienda. Support for these schools came from private groups such as the Alianza Femenina Ecuatoriana (AFE, Ecuadorian Feminist Alliance), a Quito-based feminist organization. Dolores Cacungo together with Nela Martínez and María Luisa Gómez de la Torre, white communist women from Quito who helped form the FEI, organized the first schools. These schools represented true grassroots efforts and were never officially recognized, sanctioned, or supported by the Ecuadorian government. The goal was to have Indigenous teachers teaching children in their own native Quichua language. Teachers included José Tarabata in Pesillo, Neptalí Ulcuango in La Chimba, José Amaguaña (brother of Tránsito Amaguaña) in Moyurco, and Luis Catacuango (son of Dolores Cacungo) in San Pablourco. Indigenous leader Tránsito Amaguaña later noted that "we did not only struggle for land and better treatment, but we also wanted our children to be educated so that they would learn how to read the laws and keep track of accounts."⁶² It would be harder for landlords to abuse and exploit an educated work force which could independently verify the records which the landlords kept on their debts.

61. "Reglamento interno de la comuna Ascazubi Alto," Dirección Nacional de Desarrollo Campesino, Ministerio de Agricultura, Quito, Ecuador.

62. Rodas, *Tránsito Amaguaña*, 30. Also see Rodas, *Amor*; Rodas, *Crónica de un sueño*; and Consuelo Yáñez Cossío, *La educación indígena en el Ecuador*, Historia de la educación y el pensamiento pedagógico ecuatorianos, 5 (Quito: Imprenta Abya-Yala, 1996), 28.

Among outsiders who supported these early bilingual education projects, Luisa Gómez de la Torre was the most important. Gómez was the first woman to teach at an all-male school in Quito, the prestigious Colegio Mejía.⁶³ She was also an important communist leader who was deeply involved in a variety of causes and issues, including being active in the founding of the Communist Party. When the party split into socialist and communist wings in 1931, out of loyalty Gómez followed Ricardo Paredes into the PCE.⁶⁴ She was also one of the founders and leaders of the AFE. When Gómez died in November of 1976, the Communist Party applauded "her example as a fighter for a more just and humane country." The FEI noted her role as a founder of the FEI "and as a fighter for democratic agrarian reform, education, and the rights of the exploited and oppressed Indigenous masses." The organization noted its untiring commitment to continue this struggle for "a true agrarian reform and our national liberation."⁶⁵

Although these initial efforts came from the private sector, the government-run haciendas in northern Cayambe were also the site of some of the first governmental efforts to establish primary education in rural areas. Most likely, the government sought to co-opt leftist influence in the private schools. Although plans were to construct ten such schools throughout the highlands and the stated goal was to build enough schools for all of the children in rural areas, the first schools to be finished were in Olmedo. The state spent 100,000 sucres to establish five schools: two in Pesillo and one each in San Pablourco, Moyurco, and La Chimba. In 1949, 158 students attended the schools in Pesillo, eight in San Pablourco, seventy-four in Moyurco, and eighty-four in La Chimba. Unlike the locally run bilingual schools, the Indian workers did not have a high degree of identification with these schools. In

63. Vega Ugalde, 79-80.

64. Rodas, *Amor*, 50.

65. Published newspaper notes (possibly from *El Comercio*) on Gómez' death dated Quito, noviembre 23 de 1976 (FEI), and Quito, noviembre 25 de 1976 (PCE), both located in Mercedes Prieto's personal archive.

addition, the director of one of the schools complained that the government failed to provide proper facilities for the school, and threatened to take the school elsewhere unless these issues were addressed. The renters of the *Asistencia Pública* haciendas, however, were the chief enemies of the school. The elite landholders would rather have the children work than learn, and perhaps accurately perceived that educated workers would be harder to abuse and exploit.⁶⁶

The 1950s were a period during which the Indigenous movement broadened and matured in Cayambe. It moved out from key economic issues of salaries and working conditions to embrace land as a central demand. It was also a period during which explicit ethnic issues such as bilingual education began to assume a more central role in the formation of Indigenous identity and the structure of organizations. In the 1960s, all of these issues merged into a strong ethnic movement for land reform.

1961 march

Rural pressure for land reform culminated in a massive march on Quito on December 16, 1961. Twelve thousand peasants, Indians, and *huasipungueros* peacefully descended on the city to demand an agrarian reform program. Andrés Guerrero has called this massive event, which the FEI organized together with the CTE, "undoubtedly the largest urban protest march of Indigenous peasants in Ecuadorian history."⁶⁷ Almost three years later, the military government promulgated an

66. *Informe presentado por el Director de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública de Quito al Ministerio del Ramo* (Quito: Talleres Graficos Nacional, 1948), 84-85; *Boletín Informativo de la Junta Central de Asistencia Pública de Quito* (Quito: Imprenta del Ministerio de Tesoro, January-September 1950), 46-47; Letter from Luis Antonio Aguilar G., Director of Education, Moyurco to the Director of JCAP, September 16, 1946 (Oficio #155A), Correspondencia Recibida, Segundo Semestre, Primera Parte, 1946, 474, JCAP.

67. Guerrero, *Haciendas*, 97. In a related article, Guerrero discusses changes in ethnic identity in Ecuador from this march to the 1990 Indigenous *levantamiento*. See Andrés Guerrero, "La desintegración de la administración étnica en el Ecuador," in *Sismo étnico en el Ecuador: varias perspectivas*, ed. José Almeida and others (Quito: CEDIME-Ediciones Abya-Yala, 1993), 91-112.

agrarian reform law that finally put an end to the *huasipungo* system and began the transfer of land to those who worked it. Was there a connection between these two events? What were the forces behind the push for agrarian reform?

Land reform took place in the context of increasing leftist agitation. For example, meeting in Quito in May of 1959 for its twenty-sixth congress, the Ecuadorian Socialist Party issued a formal demand for land reform.⁶⁸ Velasco Ibarra promised agrarian reform as part of his 1960 presidential campaign, but after he gained office (for the fourth time), the promised reforms proceeded at a snail's pace. Increasingly, however, the left embraced agrarian reform as its *cause célèbre*. In the 1920s and 1930s, select individuals such as Ricardo Paredes, Luis Chávez, and Rubén Rodríguez had supported peasant and Indigenous organizing efforts. By the 1960s, their demands enjoyed much broader support. Pedro Saad, the leader of the Communist Party who worked primarily with urban rather than rural workers, called for a worker-peasant alliance to struggle against the feudalistic land tenure system in Ecuador.⁶⁹ Other communist leaders such as Jorge Rivadeneyra, who would later organize one of Ecuador's few armed guerrilla uprisings, came to the defense of a strike at Pesillo for higher wages and better working conditions. Rivadeneyra described this 1960 strike as very carefully planned and executed. After only twelve hours on strike, the workers gained concessions including a salary raise, a health post, paid vacation, rehiring seventeen milk maids who had been fired, and construction of a sports field. Following the example of the workers at Pesillo, Rivadeneyra predicted quick victory and

68. "Ecuador," *Hispanic American Report* (Hispanic American Studies, Stanford University) 12:5 (May 1959): 278.

69. Pedro Saad, "La reforma agraria," *Bandera Roja* (Guayaquil) 1:1 (January-February 1961): 7-52; Pedro Saad, "Sobre la alianza obrero campesina," *Bandera Roja* (Guayaquil) 1:3 (May-December 1961): 28-56.

liberation for the peasantry.⁷⁰ This was a period of growing euphoria and increasingly radical and important leftist agitation on a national level.

Agrarian activists also kept up pressure on the government. New leaders were emerging at the head of Indian and peasant movements, and often they were more aggressive in their tactics. Rivadeneyra describes Amadeo Alba, a leader from the 1960s at Pesillo, as "not vacillating for an instant, discussing issues as equals with the owners, demonstrating that Indians are also human beings" who "have a right to a dignified life and do not tremble in the face of danger, not even in the face of death."⁷¹ Alba was born in 1928 and grew up on the Pesillo hacienda. He attended Neptalí Ulcuango's primary school which was held in hiding against the wishes of the hacienda's renter José Rafael Delgado who did not want trained and educated workers who could more effectively lead peasant syndicates. When he was twelve years old, Alba joined the peasant struggle which Dolores Cacuango, Jesús Gualavisí, Virgilio Lechón, and others already had begun. After the triumph of the Cuban Revolution, Alba studied in Cuba for a month, an action which influenced his formation as a communist. Later a military government (1963-1966) imprisoned Alba along with other Indian leaders such as Tránsito Amaguaña for eighteen months at the Garcia Moreno prison in Quito.⁷²

These protests took place in the context of increasingly violent conflicts between the government and rural activists. On August 21, 1960, three hundred peasants in Milagro on the southern coast invaded public and privately-owned land shouting "vivas" to Cuba, Fidel Castro, and agrarian reform.⁷³ On February 5, 1961, the police and army repressed a revolt of two thousand Indians on the Columbe

70. Jorge Rivadeneyra, "Victoria campesina en Pichincha," *El Pueblo*, April 2, 1960, 6.

71. Ibid.

72. Pablo Guaña, "Amadeo Alba," February 27, 1991, CICAY.

73. "Ecuador," *Hispanic American Report* (Hispanic American Studies, Stanford University) 13:8 (August 1960): 546.

hacienda in the Chimborazo Province. The Indians revolted because the hacienda owner had not paid them, and he appeared to have no intention to do so. Three policemen were injured, two Indians killed, and over sixty Indians arrested when the authorities put down the revolt. The FEI and the CTE helped organize and lead the revolt, and were the ones who came to their legal defense and sought to gain freedom for the arrested Indians.⁷⁴

The December 1961 march on Quito for agrarian reform took place in the context of these increasingly radical conflicts over land and peasant and Indian rights. The march was organized in conjunction with the Third Congress of the Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios. Press reports in the days leading up to the march and congress indicated broad popular support for these actions. A press release from the Peasant Commission of the CTE noted that secondary and university student organizations supported the planned march and congress, and were canvassing the streets of Quito drumming up support for those events. Likewise, a variety of organizations such as the Frente de Escritores y Artistas Jóvenes del Ecuador (Ecuadorian Young Writers and Artists Front), Red Cross, and the municipal councils of Ambato and Ibarra supported the event.⁷⁵ The Federación de Trabajadores de Pichincha (FTP, Federation of Workers of Pichincha) offered in a press release its "class solidarity" with the peasant movement. The FTP was helping organize food and housing for the peasants who were traveling to Quito for the event, and were arranging Christmas treats for the Indigenous children. The FTP also announced plans to join the agrarian reform march in order to help the peasants in their petition to the national government for an

74. Erickson, et al., 145-46.

75. "Cooperan para Tercer Congreso de Federación Ecuatoriana Indígena," *El Comercio*, December 12, 1961, 15.

agrarian reform law.⁷⁶ A thousand peasants and workers from the canton of Cayambe planned to attend the protest march and congress in Quito.⁷⁷

The principal objective of the two-day FEI congress was to attain a just, radical, and democratic agrarian reform. For this reason, the FEI together with the peasant commission of the CTE organized the massive march on Saturday, December 16, from Chimbacalle to Plaza Bolívar (La Alameda) in Quito. The following day, a similar march for *mestizo* peasants on the coast was held in Milagro. Although agrarian reform legislation would primarily benefit the rural population in Ecuador, the FEI understood that this goal could be achieved only with support from broader sectors of society. They invited workers; teachers; students; leftist political parties; cultural, social, and sports clubs and organizations; and the public in general. Not only did peasant organizations reach out to leftist organizations for their support for agrarian reform, but leftist political parties also understood that a true agrarian reform was necessary to end feudalistic and exploitative economic relations in the country. The Partido Socialista Revolucionario (Revolutionary Socialist Party), one of the most radical of the leftist parties in Ecuador in the 1960s, encouraged the FEI to pass resolutions on agrarian reform which "would be revolutionary and reach for solutions to the Ecuadorian problem."⁷⁸

Despite the external support for the march, it was marked primarily by the presence of thousands of Indians from Ecuador's rural zones. Women took a visible and active role in the march on an equal footing with their male counterparts. The Quiteño daily newspaper *El Comercio* called this a "peaceful invasion" of thousands of Indians who cascaded like an avalanche through the streets of Quito for more than one

76. "FTP respalda a los campesinos que vendrán a Congreso," *El Comercio*, December 15, 1961, 3.

77. "Cooperan para Tercer Congreso de Federación Ecuatoriana Indígena," *El Comercio*, December 12, 1961, 15.

78. "III Congreso de Federación Ecuatoriana Indigenista se inaugura hoy en esta ciudad," *El Comercio*, December 16, 1961, 1, 14.

and a half hours, calling for agrarian reform legislation and other social demands. The Indians primarily came from the highland provinces of Chimborazo, Cañar, Tungurahua, Cotopoxi, Imbabura, and Pichincha, and shouted in Spanish and Quichua their demands for agrarian reform and an end to the *huasipungo* system. Dressed in traditional ponchos, dresses, and other clothing, the Indians carried signs with the names of their communities and syndicates. Signs called for bread, justice, education, and that land be given to those who tilled it. Other slogans referred to broader political issues, such as support for Fidel Castro and the Cuban Revolution. Signs demanding "*Tierra o Muerte*" ("Land or Death") linked their struggle to that of Emiliano Zapata's in the Mexican Revolution. Although less stressed than other economic or political issues, an undercurrent of ethnicity was also apparent in the discourse. One slogan read "We have been exploited for four centuries," rhetorically tracing the roots of the exploitation and land tenure system to the Spanish conquest and disruption of traditional economic and social patterns.⁷⁹

The leftist president Carlos Julio Arosemena Monroy, together with several of his cabinet members including the ministers of social welfare, treasury, and defense, led the march through Quito's streets. The previous month Arosemena had taken over the presidency from Velasco Ibarra who once again had alienated his support base and (for the third time) had been pushed out of power without completing his term of office. Speaking in a driving rain to the assembled crowd at the Plaza Bolívar, Arosemena criticized previous governments for not paying attention to Indigenous demands. He promised that his administration would execute agrarian and tax reform laws, and that the following Monday he would initiate legislation which would end the *huasipungo* system. In the face of this massive march, the new president was forced to take a radical position. Although the Marxist left was electorally weak, its members managed to exert "considerable influence over organized workers and students,

79. Ibid.

sectors with which they pressed the government to concretize the promised reforms."⁸⁰ After Arosemena, Indigenous leaders including Miguel Lechón from Cayambe spoke. Lechón, who was elected president of the FEI, called for education, medical attention, free land, water, electricity, and other elements of an infrastructure necessary to change land tenure patterns on the haciendas. He pointed out abuses and low salaries on the haciendas and proclaimed that Ecuador should follow the example which the recently triumphant Cuban Revolution set. Finally, Víctor Zuñiga, a Revolutionary Socialist Party member and president of the CTE, also spoke.⁸¹

Arosemena's speech was not the first time agrarian reform was seriously proposed in Ecuador. After the Cuban Revolution, the United States government began to impose programs (such as the Alliance for Progress) and pressured the Ecuadorian government to implement an agrarian reform program in order to prevent another such catastrophe from occurring in the hemisphere. As Philip Agee's account of the Central Intelligence Agency's activity in Ecuador in the early 1960s makes apparent, the United States saw this possibility as a very real threat.⁸² Agrarian reform legislation was first seriously considered in Ecuador in 1960. During the 1960 election, José María Velasco Ibarra gained a large base of support in the countryside because of his promises to promulgate agrarian reform legislation. After his election, however, Velasco Ibarra backed down in the face of opposition from large landholders. After Velasco was deposed, Arosemena agreed to sign the executive order which would enact agrarian reform legislation. Before he had a chance to act, however, a military coup in July of 1963 overthrew his government. It was thus a military government which enacted Ecuador's first Agrarian Reform Law in 1964 and established the Instituto Ecuatoriano de Reforma Agraria y Colonización (IERAC, Ecuadorian

80. Velasco, *Reforma agraria*, 94.

81. "El Dr. Arosemena expone su decisión de actuar para la eliminación de huasipungos," *El Comercio*, December 17, 1961, 1, 3.

82. Agee, 267.

Institute of Agrarian Reform and Colonization) to break up haciendas and give peasants small plots of land.

The shift in consciousness which occasioned the 1961 march is also reflected in editorials in the normally conservative paper *El Comercio*. An editorial after the march called for a re-thinking of racial prejudices against Indians. Indians are human beings, the paper editorialized, "with rights and not only obligations. They are capable of progress like any other men, and can form a creative and positive force" in improving the prosperity of the country. Reflecting a common *indigenista* assimilationist theme of the era, the editorial called for governmental policies which would lead to the progressive inclusion of the Indians into the national civilization and culture. Part of this would be to educate the Indians in order to improve their mental abilities and consciousness so that they would contribute to social progress in Ecuador.⁸³ Although still paternalistic, such attitudes on the part of the Ecuadorian elite represented a significant shift away from the blatant racism common in editorials which accompanied protest events in the 1930s.

Although the march can be seen as a watershed event, it did not represent a culmination of the movement. Despite Arosemena's promises, agrarian reform was not immediately forthcoming. He held power for another year and a half before the military evicted him from office on July 11, 1963, and during this period he was not able to pass agrarian reform legislation. Indigenous peasants did not passively await the promised reforms. Rather, organized actions took place at an ever-increasing rate of speed. For example, in May 1962, Indigenous peoples launched protests in Cotopaxi, Tungurahua, and Chimborazo against abuses they perceived in the national agrarian census.⁸⁴

Protest had moved out and away from its birthplace in Cayambe, but that does not mean that peasants and agricultural workers there had lost their fervor or desire to

83. "El problema indígena," *El Comercio*, December 17, 1961, 4.

84. Velasco, *Reforma agraria*, 77; Albornoz, *Luchas indígenas*, 87-88

push for radical changes. Particularly at Pesillo, Indigenous workers continued to agitate for higher salaries, better working conditions, and land. A list of demands from May of 1962 requested five hundred hectares of land in order to distribute five hectares each to one hundred workers who did not have a *huasipungo* plot. They also asked for an increase in size of *huasipungo* plots for those with lots smaller than one hectare, and to exchange those located on poor-quality land. In a break from tradition, they also requested that widows be allowed to continue living on their dead husband's *huasipungo* without being required to work on the hacienda. The petition also requested that *huasipungueros* be allowed to retire after thirty years of work, and for this service be allowed to remain on their *huasipungo* plots without further labor requirements on the hacienda. The petition demanded that fired workers be rehired, and it called for an end to feudalistic services such as the *cuentayos* which cared for animals in the pastures. As a result of presenting these demands to the *Asistencia Social* program, local police authorities persecuted the syndicate's leaders, in particular jailing the Secretary General Amadeo Alba. An article in *El Pueblo* noted that four hundred men and women came to his defense. The syndicate won the struggle because of the unity of the *huasipungueros* with their family members who were *peones sueltos* (day laborers) who did not have *huasipungo* plots.⁸⁵

Hidden in this story are indications of broad shifts in land tenure, service tenancy, and economic relations on haciendas in Cayambe which had a dramatic impact on the nature of organizational struggles and their demands. Forty years previous, José Delgado was rewarded for bringing additional workers to the hacienda and having them engage in a contractual agreement. Now, there was a labor surplus and *huasipungo* plots were a treasured commodity. Under these conditions, the peasant syndicate at Pesillo fought to retain the plots for those who had them and requested five hundred hectares to be divided among workers on the hacienda who did

85. "Boletín de la Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios," *El Pueblo*, May 12, 1962, 7.

not have any land. Furthermore, it was precisely this group of landless laborers who came to Alba's defense at Pesillo. Particularly at Pesillo, rural organizations were becoming increasingly radical and more closely affiliated with the Communist Party. At the same time, because of the changing economic conditions, access to land had become a more important issue than salaries and working conditions. In contradiction to what an orthodox Marxist interpretation might suggest, the movement of Indian workers reached its most radical zenith as it embraced the most traditional of peasant demands: land.

As the examples of Pitaná and Pesillo demonstrate, there were distinct histories and organizational trajectories in northern and southern Cayambe. Nevertheless, by the 1960s these movements had converged under the unifying demands for land. Within the context of increasing agitation for better wages and working conditions, there was a clear economic and political logic for haciendas to give some workers title to their small plots of land. This was not a gracious gift on the part of the *hacendados* nor entirely due to demands for lands among the peasantry. Rather, it was the result of a growing organized opposition with links to urban leftists and other sectors of society which together threatened structural injustices in society. Rural Indians and urban Marxists might have distinct ideas regarding the social and economic construct of land, but the end result which they desired and the means which they employed to achieve this end were generally compatible. As the next chapter will demonstrate, the 1960s introduced a new set of overt issues which had always existed implicitly within the rural movements: ethnicity and citizenship issues. For Indians within the peasant syndicates, their ethnic identity did not conflict with their class and economic demands, but this identity began to exhibit itself in new and interesting manners.

Part Three

Ethnicity and Nationalism

Chapter Nine

Ethnic Organizational Strategies in Peasant Movements

On August 3, 1964, 150 Indians from El Chaupi, Moyurco, and San Pablourco on the Pesillo hacienda revolted demanding justice from the current renter, Wilson Monge. Elites pointed to communist elements as underlying this uprising and accused Jorge Rivadeneyra Altamirano, a well-known communist leader who was apparently hiding among the Indians, as the primary instigator of this action. The police sent in twenty troops to contain the situation. Authorities noted that a current of subversion ran through all of the workers in this area and that precautions should be taken because it was harvest time on the hacienda. Although the situation remained tense, the following day the Indians returned to work. Monge informed the police that he had concrete information that the workers throughout the Pesillo, La Chimba, Moyurco, San Pablourco, and El Chaupi haciendas were planning another strike which would stop the harvest and cause serious economic damage to the landlords in the area.¹

Did agrarian reform mean the end of rural organizing efforts? As this action makes clear, the answer is a resounding no. Agrarian reform was a painfully slow and partial process which did not mean complete victory for Indigenous and peasant peoples. This protest at Pesillo occurred almost two months after the promulgation of the agrarian reform legislation, but the workers were still trapped in the same feudalism-

1. "Prodújose levantamiento de indígenas en la hacienda El Chaupi del Cantón Cayambe," *El Comercio*, August 4, 1964, 24; "Indígenas que se levantaron en El Chaupi tornaron a sus labores," *El Comercio*, August 5, 1964, 28; "Se denunció un posible paro de actividades en 5 haciendas en Cayambe," *El Comercio*, August 7, 1964, 28.

tic relations on an hacienda that the governmental *Asistencia Social* program owned and continued to rent to private individuals. What did occur around this time, however, was an ideological shift from class-based movements to ones based on ethnicity and finally the utilization of nationalism as an underlying political philosophy. Accompanying this ideological shift was the beginning of a slow decline of the FEI and the emergence of new organizations which more explicitly built on an ethnic identity. Although in terms of strategies, organizational structures, and demands, these new organizations were similar to those dating back to the 1920s, the emphasis on ethnicity created an imaginary ideological break which ushered in a new generation of organizational leaders. As this chapter will demonstrate, however, these organizations remained strongly rooted in earlier traditions and continued to struggle with the same contradictions inherent in attempting to organize an ethnic-based population whose primary interests, demands, and goals remained economic in nature.

Although ethnic federations emerged in the 1960s, ethnicity was an important political concept long before that. For example, at the Second Labor Congress in Quito in 1920, delegates, as Richard Milk has noted, "resolved that labor organizations desist from using the term 'indio,' for it was demeaning to the nation's original inhabitants." Rather, they were to use *indígena* which was considered to be more respectful and proper.² In addition, Ricardo Paredes and the Socialist Party in the 1920s explicitly included the Indigenous population in their organizing strategy. The difference from these earlier perceptions of ethnicity is that theoretically federations which emerged in the 1960s were to be organizational expressions of the Indians themselves rather than being dependent on leftist political parties and labor unions.

The formation of these ethnic organizations occurred in the context of two periods of repressive military rule alternating with civilian governments which were not necessarily any kinder to the popular classes or their organizational efforts. The

2. Milk, 60.

first period of military rule (1963-1966), like that of the 1925 Julian Revolution, was a time of some moderate reforms including Ecuador's first agrarian reform law in 1964. Ideologically, the military government sought to hold the line against what they perceived to be a "communist threat" in Ecuador after the triumph of a socialist revolution in Cuba. It outlawed the Communist Party, imprisoned many of its leaders, and suppressed the right to strike. A second period of military rule (1972-1979) coincided with a boom in oil exports. This military government, which General Guillermo Rodríguez Lara led, intended to use the oil revenue to develop the country economically. This period was similar to, though not as successful as, Peru's revolutionary nationalist military government of Juan Velasco Alvarado. It was also the era of Ecuador's second agrarian reform. Corruption and a lack of cohesion in the government limited the success of the reforms. In 1979 the government returned to civilian hands, but despite the façade of an electoral democracy and a relatively peaceful climate, the Indigenous and peasant populations were still largely excluded from political power and a role in the national culture. It is this situation which led to the appearance of powerful Indigenous uprisings which have rocked Ecuador in the 1990s.

This chapter examines three intertwined issues which have played an important role in the formation of ethnic and nationalistic discourse within peasant and Indian movements in Ecuador. First is the economic reality of the agrarian reform legislation. Despite high expectations among the *huasipungueros* in Cayambe and throughout Ecuador, the passage of agrarian reform legislation resolved very few problems. Second, an underlying and critically important issue which remained unresolved regarded the relationship of the Indigenous peoples to the state. In the 1990s, redefining citizenship was still an important element of ethnic and nationalistic discourse and demands. Finally, the third issue which relates to developments in ethnic discourse is the concrete historical reality of ethnic federations as they emerged in the 1960s and 1970s. Specifically, these federations utilized a rhetoric which

claimed that they were distinct from previous organizations partially because of their independence from outside actors. A brief examination of this history, however, reveals that often the success of Indian organizations depended directly on their success in establishing and maintaining dynamic relations with outside actors.

Economic realities of agrarian reform

The military government executed the Ley de Reforma Agraria y Colonización (Agrarian Reform and Colonization Law) on July 11, 1964. The first article defined the primary purpose of the law as "correcting the defects of the current agricultural structure through better distribution and utilization of the land." Article five called for improving conditions for peasant and agricultural workers through "the abolition of defective modes of tenure and work such as the *huasipungo*." Article sixty-five of this law stated that agricultural workers must be paid entirely in cash and outlawed partial or full payment for their work with scrip or land or water rights.³ In short, this law eliminated the *huasipungo* system which had been in effect for centuries in the highlands of Ecuador.

In the introduction to this agrarian reform law, the military government noted the importance of agriculture to Ecuadorian society and economy, and that this law would initiate historical changes in those structures. It acknowledged the colonial

3. Ley de Reforma Agraria y Colonización (Decreto Supremo No. 1480; Registro Oficial No. 297, Quito, July 23, 1964), 7, 15. There is a sizeable literature on agrarian reform in Ecuador. In addition to the previous works already cited by Barsky, CIDA, Guerrero, Redclift, Velasco, and Zamosc, see Howard Handelman, "Ecuadorian Agrarian Reform: The Politics of Limited Change," in *The Politics of Agrarian Change in Asia and Latin America*, ed. Howard Handelman (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981), 63-81; and the essays on Ecuador (José Vicente Zevallos, "Agrarian Reform and Structural Change: Ecuador Since 1964," 42-69; Emil B. Haney Jr. and Wava G. Haney, "The Agrarian Transition in Highland Ecuador: From Precapitalism to Agrarian Capitalism in Chimborazo," 70-91; and Nancy R. Forster, "*Minifundistas* in Tungurahua, Ecuador: Survival on the Agricultural Ladder," 92-126), in William C. Thiesenhusen, ed., *Searching for Agrarian Reform in Latin America* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989).

nature of land tenure patterns in Ecuador, and that these were "absolutely anachronistic and opposed to the social ideals of a modern state."⁴ It noted the unequal distribution of resources and the low level of social indicators in rural sectors. Landowners were given a twelve-month period in which they were to phase out the *huasipungo* system. The *ex-huasipungueros* were to receive their plots of land and were to have continued access to water, firewood, and other hacienda resources to which they were accustomed. In addition, traditional labor practices such as the *huasicamía*, *cuentarios*, and milkmaids were now to be paid according to the wage guidelines of the labor code. Furthermore, two representatives for the agricultural workers (one from the coast and the other representing the sierra and *Oriente*) who were "authentic agricultural workers" were to serve on the Executive Board of the agrarian reform institute together with governmental ministers.⁵ Optimistically, the government expected the law to create the basis for a new economy and new society which would not impede the country's future progress and would improve the well-being of the peasant majority.

As with most agrarian reform laws in Latin America, Ecuador's 1964 law was limited in scope and effectiveness. For years, peasants had struggled to gain access to the land which was in the hands of large landholders on haciendas. In Cayambe, the 1964 land reform law gave the Indians title to their small *huasipungo* plots and broke the former state-owned haciendas into cooperatives. The result, however, was a limited success for Indigenous peoples. Despite the rhetoric of improving the lives of peasants in Ecuador, there was little substance in the law to ensure this. Article 4 promised to guarantee the rights of agricultural workers, but the law largely failed to define what these rights were and how they were to be protected. It did not intend to improve the lives of the poor rural masses who worked the land. The agrarian reform legislation did not address fundamental inequalities in land tenure patterns in Ecuador

4. Ley de Reforma Agraria y Colonización, 1, 2.

5. *Ibid.*, 8.

but rather applied a reformist solution to the problem. Its ideological orientation was one of modernization, and the goal was to make agricultural production more efficient rather than attempting to achieve a redistribution of land and resources. Often peasants received only marginal land and had to pay the former landholders for it. The landlords also commonly required the peasants to pay for water, firewood, and access to pasture lands. Although the agrarian reform legislation eliminated the pre-capitalist relations of production which the *huasipungo* system represented, it only resulted in a continued dependence on the elite sectors of Ecuadorian society. The plots which peasants received were too small to support their families. This forced many people into the urban, unskilled, wage economy. As M.R. Redclift has observed, some landlords welcomed the end of the *huasipungo* system because free wage-labor could be exploited in a cheaper and more efficient manner.⁶

In Cayambe, agrarian reform simply meant capitalist penetration in the countryside, concentration of land holdings, and the development of agribusiness.⁷ The government provided Indigenous peoples with land, but not with agricultural equipment, seed, or technical assistance. The focus of the law was to force landowners to make efficient use of their land in order to modernize the country, and not towards redistribution of land or resources. Tiny plots of land combined with a lack of investment credit and technological training prevented a transition to sustainable agricultural systems. This area which previously had enjoyed rich agricultural production ceased to produce on a large scale. Rather, the former *huasipungueros* became a cheap, unskilled labor force which no longer had access to the services which the hacienda formerly provided such as water, pasture land, and roads. Often the peasants migrated to urban areas in search of work, which sometimes was impossible to find.

6. Redclift, 26-27.

7. Mario Mullo, "El movimiento indígena en la provincia de Pichincha," in *Historia de la organización indígena en Pichincha*, ed. Federación Indígena Pichincha Runacunapac Riccharimui (Quito: Abya Yala, 1993), 32.

The agrarian reform legislation thus had the twin effects of creating *minifundios* (small land holdings) which were less efficient than the former large haciendas and diminishing agricultural production while lowering the standard of living of the peasants.

The cap on land ownership in the Sierra was set at one thousand hectares, which affected only the very largest of the landed estates. The government never seriously enforced this limit on landholding size, and a lack of funding limited the effectiveness of the agrarian reform institute IERAC. From 1964 to 1970, only 10.2 percent of the highland peasant families (for a total of 27,087) received land, and the IERAC redistributed only 8.5 percent (125,231 hectares) of the land belonging to haciendas larger than five hundred hectares. Over three-fourths of these distributions took place during the first two years of the program, after which the rate of land redistributions slowed down considerably.⁸ During the entire period of agrarian reform in Ecuador, less than one million hectares were redistributed. Twenty percent of this land had belonged to seventy-four state-owned haciendas which were converted into peasant cooperatives. Furthermore, it was not generally the most productive land which was transferred to peasants, but marginal land including high *páramo* land (above 3,500 meters) which was not suitable for intensive cultivation. The plots which peasants received were often so small that they could not be farmed efficiently or provide for self-sufficient food production. The law, thus, resulted in an entrenched capitalization of the agricultural sector. Although numerous peasants did receive land under the provisions of these laws, the reforms had a very limited effect in improving their socio-economic position in Ecuadorian society. As Redclift has concluded, this proved to be reform in name only with no real redistribution of power or economic wealth.⁹ Furthermore, over time agrarian reform policies became more and more conservative.

8. Velasco, *Reforma agraria*, 98.

9. Redclift, 166.

In total, the government expropriated relatively little land. Rather than redistribution, the IERAC turned to colonization (purportedly of unoccupied lands, but usually of Indigenous lands often located in the Amazon) as a strategy to alleviate population pressure in the sierra. Most of the seven million hectares distributed was in the form of opening lands for colonization, largely in the *Oriente*. The implementation of traditional farming practices had a negative impact on both the Amazonian ecosystem and the cultures native to that zone. This mentality is evident in a 1970 article which advocated building a road directly from Cayambe across the Cordillera Oriental to the *Oriente* which was "rich with fertile lands, minerals, black gold, etc. and only awaited hardworking, honorable men desiring of their personal progress and that of the country . . . to move to this earthly paradise."¹⁰ Some agricultural technicians and policy makers had long advocated colonization as a strategy to relieve land pressure in the Sierra. Problems related to colonization strategies included the fact that many peasants did not want to leave the highlands, the lack of infrastructure (such as roads) into the areas to be colonized, the lack of investment capital to develop the colonized areas, and a lack of technical advice necessary to effectively produce crops in the different agricultural zone in the Amazon.¹¹ In sum, Ecuador's agrarian reform law proved minimal in terms of its effectiveness.

Scholars have debated heavily whether Ecuador's 1964 agrarian reform law was the result of peasant and Indigenous pressures on the government for land, or a result of the modernizing influence of enlightened landlords. A comparison of land struggles and debates over agrarian reform in two distinct areas in Cayambe such as Pesillo and Guachalá sheds light on this polemic. Fernando Velasco argued that in areas such as Pesillo which had an economy with *huasipungo* labor systems these struggles tended to be class-based, whereas in other zones like southern Cayambe

10. Eduardo A. Luna C., "Vía al Oriente por San Marcos solución a la Reforma Agraria," *Cayambe* 70, 25.

11. Basile and Paredes, 38.

which had a predominance of *comunas* and communities not closely tied to an hacienda labor system, there was not much struggle over land reform.¹² Protests such as those at Pitaná in 1954, however, challenge this interpretation. It is questionable whether in areas such as Guachalá these struggles did not exist or simply took place on a different level.

Oswaldo Barsky and Andrés Guerrero have carried on a significant portion of the debate whether agrarian reform was the result of peasant pressure or modernizing elites. Barsky contends that hacienda owners who sought to modernize Ecuador's agricultural system initiated the 1964 agrarian reform law. The implication of this argument is that peasants and other rural actors played a marginal role in the process of agrarian transformations which affected their lives. Guerrero, on the other hand, rejects this thesis and views these changes as a result of peasant actions and the class struggle between peasants and landlords. Like Velasco, Guerrero underscores the importance of peasant initiative.¹³

To focus exclusively or perhaps even largely on the actions of landlords in the enactment of agrarian reform is not only to deny agency to rural actors, but also to misrepresent what actually was happening with this historical process in Ecuador. Fernando Velasco observed that

from the beginning of 1960 there was a noticeable rise in social agitation in the countryside. In the Sierra and on the Coast the number of syndicates rose and petitions, strikes, and all sorts of demands and complaints became more common. It was a state of general effervescence, impulsed and articulated fundamentally by the Communist Party through the Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios in the Sierra and the Federación de Trabajadores Agrícolas del Litoral.¹⁴

12. Velasco, *Reforma agraria*, 166.

13. See Barsky, *La reforma agraria ecuatoriana*, and Guerrero, *Haciendas*.

14. Velasco, *Reforma agraria*, 77.

Velasco stressed an economic interpretation of agrarian reform which examined capitalistic penetration into the country and the social contradictions which these changes engendered.¹⁵

In the face of such pressures from below, members of the Ecuadorian elite began to advocate for change in the country's land tenure patterns. This was not as a concession to Indigenous demands for land or even a patronizing effort to help dispossessed elements in society, but rather involved more pragmatic concerns. Arguments advanced in the Senate included means to prevent a class struggle and to terminate obsolete institutions which were seen as impeding the modernization of the country. According to Guerrero, a similar strategy motivated landlords such as Bonifaz. His actions intended to calm peasant revolt by giving some land to the workers to form cooperatives. This released the pressure on demands for land, while at the same time allowing the hacienda to preserve most (including the best) land for the hacienda. Land distribution was costly, but not nearly as expensive as if a successful revolt resulted in the complete expropriation of the hacienda.¹⁶

It, therefore, becomes clear that the *hacendados'* and other elites' actions were far from altruistic, but rather deliberate and largely self-serving. Beyond this fear of loss of land, other scholars have argued that the slavery-like *huasipungo* system was less profitable than a wage-based system, and this was a further economic motivation which pushed landlords in this direction. In addition, many of the landlords gave land to their workers only *after* protests such as the December 16, 1961, FEI march on Quito. This is further evidence that their actions were not forward looking, but rather a result of pressure from below and because of an acknowledged fear of the imminent promulgation of agrarian reform legislation. In total, from 1959 to 1964 there were 3,019 cases of landlords liquidating *huasipungos* through private initiative. In essence,

15. Ibid., 64.

16. Guerrero, *Haciendas*, 99, 139.

elite sectors eventually began to encourage agrarian reform legislation essentially because it would function as an escape valve for rural protest actions.¹⁷

In addition to the modernizing influence of progressive landlords and the peasant pressure from below, Guerrero explains the shift in land tenure patterns in Ecuador in the 1960s as a result of another factor: the Cuban Revolution.¹⁸ Historians have commonly analyzed the first socialist revolution in the western hemisphere as the singularly most important event in the history of Latin America in the twentieth century. The influence of its agenda of implementing an agrarian reform program as well as other actions to create a more just and egalitarian society spread far beyond the island's coasts. Throughout Latin America during the 1960s, several reformist governments come to power (such as that of Eduardo Frei in Chile), armed guerrilla movements emerged (such as Hugo Blanco's efforts in Peru), and in general there was a political threat to United States hegemony in the region. The United States utilized various tools in an attempt to maintain control over this situation. This included United States president John F. Kennedy's Alliance for Progress program, whose primary intent was to prevent another "disaster" such as the Cuban Revolution from occurring within its sphere of influence. As a result of the Alliance for Progress program and other direct pressures which the United States government applied, from 1960 to 1964 eleven Latin American countries promulgated agrarian reform legislation. All of this was done to prevent the spread of communism in the region. Elites believed that the nationalization of limited resources was the best antidote to preventing broad-scale social revolts in the region.

Intellectually, therefore, Ecuador's agrarian reform law was born out of fear in the United States that Ecuador would experience a social revolution similar to Cuba's. Many scholars in Ecuador have come to interpret this law as an imperialistic act in which the United States government through programs such as the Alliance for

17. Velasco, *Reforma agraria*, 82.

18. Guerrero, *Haciendas*, 87.

Progress and the Peace Corps repressed the left, labor movements, and rural organizations such as the Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios. In essence, agrarian reform had a primary goal of eliminating leftist influence in rural organizational efforts and placing these under government control. John Uggen noted that IERAC became a direct competitor of the Communist Party, but with the superior resources of the national government.¹⁹ Fernando Velasco agreed that a main impetus behind eventual agrarian reform legislation was to eliminate leftist influence and organizations such as the FEI from among the rural masses.²⁰ As part of Kennedy's Alliance for Progress program, money and Peace Corps workers poured into Ecuador.

Although the United States government as well as elite elements in Ecuadorian society saw the Cuban Revolution as a threat and dangerous precedent, many peasant and Indigenous leaders admired the Cuban Revolution and looked to it as a model and example of what they would like to implement in Ecuador. Journalist Cedric Belfrage wrote in a 1962 issue of the New York-based leftist weekly newspaper *National Guardian* that in Ecuador "all the conditions seem ripe for a Cuban-style revolution, except one: the emergence of a leadership which can unite the people to make it happen." Given a situation in which "over half the population is barred from voting as illiterate," Belfrage noted that, "nothing remains for the people but armed struggle."²¹

Muriel Crespi observed that in the early 1960s, FEI leaders in Pesillo had extensive contact with Cuba and traveled there on occasion.²² Philip Agee specifically mentions Miguel Lechón as one of sixty-two Ecuadorians invited to Havana for the third anniversary of the triumph of the revolution.²³ Tránsito Amaguaña also traveled to Cuba in 1962 as a representative of Indigenous peoples in Ecuador. Later, she traveled to the Soviet Union where bands and parades of school children received her.

19. Uggen cited in Velasco, *Reforma agraria*, 100.

20. Velasco, *Reforma agraria*, 100.

21. Belfrage, 5.

22. Crespi, "Changing Power Relations," 233.

23. Agee, 217.

Upon her return to Ecuador, the military overthrew the government of Carlos Julio Arosemena. The military persecuted the political left and imprisoned its leaders. Amaguaña spent four months and four days in jail. In prison, guards would taunt her in order to break her spirit so that she would accuse other peasant leaders. She never gave in, and upon leaving prison the government wanted her to sign a statement that she would not return to organizing peasants. She refused to sign the statement and instead continued her organizing efforts.²⁴

In 1966, as a result of the land reform program, some of the land in northern Cayambe which the Liberal Revolution had taken away from the Church in the early part of the century was placed into a pilot program which converted the land into a cooperative that the local peasants would work and manage.²⁵ The 1964 law had pledged to promote better use of publicly owned land.²⁶ Some leaders had long requested an agrarian reform program which did not break up the haciendas into small private land holdings but rather advocated forming cooperatives with this land.²⁷ Other Indigenous intellectuals criticized this attempt at the formation of cooperatives as attempting to disrupt traditional forms of social organization and imposing state policies on Indigenous communities.²⁸ Amaguaña noted that although "the cooperatives did not solve the basic problems which peasants faced and furthermore led to new conflicts," at least with the cooperatives "the peasants no longer had to work for the *patrón* nor for the government, but rather worked for themselves and their families."²⁹

24. Rodas, *Tránsito Amaguaña*, 35-37.

25. Crespi, "Changing Power Relations," 234.

26. Ley de Reforma Agraria y Colonización, 7.

27. "El campesinado exige la parcelación de las haciendas estatales," *El Pueblo*, January 19, 1957, 4.

28. Guña, *Inti Raymi Cayambi*, 116.

29. Rodas, *Tránsito Amaguaña*, 38.

The large Pesillo hacienda was broken into two cooperatives. "Atahualpa" grouped together 150 families and a thousand hectares of land, and "Simón Bolívar" had twenty-eight families. An article which the Canton of Cayambe published in 1970 bragged about the success of the agrarian reform program at Pesillo. In only five years, IERAC's work had "unquestionably" resulted in favorable consequences which meant "a gigantic step forward in the progress of agrarian reform." This meant a "true change in the socio-economic structure of the country." Cayambe's government graphically represented the change with a "before" picture of a peasant plowing the ground with a team of oxen and an "after" picture of a modern combine harvesting the crop, a rare sight in Cayambe.³⁰ A report from the mid-1980s also listed the cooperative as owning three tractors, a truck, and a pickup.³¹

The cooperatives formed in the northern section of Cayambe for the most part, however, met with failure. This was largely due to two reasons. One was that the form of the cooperative structure was foreign to the traditional societal organization of the Indigenous peoples who inhabited the area. Perhaps following from this lack of experience with this type of organizational structure was the second reason for their failure--the cooperatives were badly administered. The agrarian reform legislation did not provide for the training of leadership for the cooperative, and members would often steal resources from it. People did not understand what the cooperatives could do for them in terms of providing credit and other resources. Not all the families joined the cooperatives, which led to discord and tensions between families. Many cooperatives began to break up, and in the 1980s, the Simón Bolívar cooperative divided its land among its members and formally dissolved.

A subsequent agrarian reform law which the military government passed in 1973 followed much the same pattern of the earlier law. The law, which landlords

30. Roberto Vizcaíno R., "Pesillo: un paso gigante en el progreso de la reforma agraria en Cayambe," *Cayambe* 70, 4.

31. Obando, 34.

generally supported, did not have redistribution as a primary goal. Instead, modernization, development, and improved efficiency of large estates were the focus. Despite the positive spin which IERAC attempted to place on its actions, legal reforms of land tenure systems had minimal positive effects on the Indigenous workers on haciendas.

IERAC listed as its basic objectives the intent to:

- ! effect changes in the defective structures of land tenancy, use, and distribution with the goal of directly benefitting the Indigenous population;
- ! achieve national integration by incorporating the Indigenous populations into the social, economic, political, and cultural development of the country, while at the same time respecting the values and customs of each Indigenous group with the goal of accomplishing that incorporation with the best possible benefit to Ecuadorian society as a whole;
- ! transform living conditions in the countryside; and
- ! redistribute the agricultural wealth.³²

In addition, IERAC claimed to support "the strengthening of peasant and Indigenous organizations" in order to avoid the breakup of large productive enterprises. Their support included such acts as providing technical assistance and training while always "respecting the cultural and historical values of the peasant and Indigenous sectors."³³ IERAC conceded that the execution of these goals had been accomplished in a "partial and somewhat incoherent form."³⁴ Statistically, these efforts resulted in little positive gain for the Indians. Until 1982, agrarian reform laws affected only about fifteen percent (about half a million hectares) of agricultural land in the Sierra. In 1974, 50.2 percent of this land (and largely the best land) remained in the hands of estates larger than one hundred hectares. In addition, from 1954 to 1974

32. Instituto Ecuatoriano de Reforma Agraria y Colonización (IERAC), "Política y acción respecto a la dotación de tierras en áreas indígenas," Ministerio de Bienestar Social, Oficina Nacional de Asuntos Indígenas, *Política estatal y población indígena* (Quito: Abya Yala, 1984), 131.

33. Instituto Ecuatoriano de Reforma Agraria y Colonización (IERAC), "Derechos de la población indígena," Ministerio de Bienestar Social, Oficina Nacional de Asuntos Indígenas, *Política estatal y población indígena* (Quito: Abya Yala, 1984), 37.

34. IERAC, "Política y acción respecto a la dotación de tierras en áreas indígenas," 131.

the average land holding size for a peasant fell from 1.71 to 1.5 hectares. These statistics led Manuel Chiriboga to conclude that the 1973 agrarian reform law "was an insignificant advance" over the previous 1964 law.³⁵

By the early 1980s, agrarian reform had essentially come to a standstill. Most analysts agreed that for the most part the attempt at agrarian reform had been a failure and the legislation had not achieved its objectives. Agricultural production had fallen, and poverty in rural areas had risen. Tránsito Amaguaña, a life-long Indigenous leader from northern Cayambe, contended that the agrarian reform legislation had "not satisfied the needs of the peasants, but it permitted capitalist penetration of agriculture."³⁶ In 1994, the national Indian organization CONAIE stated that these efforts "have not resolved the problem of Indigenous People and Nationalities." Rather they were "'agrotechnical' capitalist reforms which responded to the economic and political interests of national and foreign exploiters" which failed to take into account the need for a true and comprehensive development plan.³⁷ Other Indigenous organizations have also consistently criticized the agrarian reform laws. Later Indigenous organizations charged that the net result of the agrarian reform laws was the pauperization of peasants which caused "large sectors of peasants and Indigenous peoples to abandon the countryside and to sink into subemployment in the cities."³⁸ These organizations would demand that the government enact "a real and true agrarian reform that not only gives land but also raises workers' salaries, lends technical and agricultural assistance,

35. Manuel Chiriboga, "Los programas de desarrollo económico y social y la población indígena," Ministerio de Bienestar Social, Oficina Nacional de Asuntos Indígenas, *Política estatal y población indígena* (Quito: Abya Yala, 1984), 125.

36. Rodas, *Tránsito Amaguaña*, 37.

37. Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador (CONAIE), *Proyecto político de la CONAIE* (Quito: CONAIE, 1994), 31.

38. ECUARUNARI, "El movimiento campesino indígena 'ECUARUNARI,'" in *Población indígena y desarrollo amazonico*, ed. Ministerio de Bienestar Social, Oficina Nacional de Asuntos Indígenas (Quito: Ediciones Abya-Yala, 1984), 44.

provides sufficient financing to cover production demands, organizes the sale of products, and creates gathering points to market products."³⁹

Despite the general consensus that agrarian reform legislation had met with failure, there was little agreement on what direction to proceed. For the most part, the debate was between conservative political elites who favored a neoliberal economic model and the Coordinadora Agraria Nacional (CAN, National Agrarian Coordinating Body), a grouping of Indigenous and peasant organizations which CONAIE headed. The conflict revolved around the definition of the social function of land, including the question of private property and who should benefit from the production of land. The conflict came to a head in June of 1994 when peasant and Indigenous groups unified in an uprising called "La Movilización Por la Vida" (Mobilization for Life) which blocked roads and paralyzed the country for ten days in protest of the new agrarian law. Despite these protests, the government promulgated a new law of agrarian development in August of 1994 which created the Instituto Nacional de Desarrollo Agrario (INDA, National Institute of Agrarian Development) which replaced IERAC which had been formed in 1964. This new law formally brought Ecuador's attempts at agrarian reform to an end and implemented a neoliberal economic development model.⁴⁰ Land rights, however, continued to be a central demand for Indigenous organizations and remained a defining characteristic of ethnic identity.

39. Pichincha Riccharimui Ecuatorunari, *500 años de resistencia indígena y popular*, Cuaderno de Educación, No. 1 (Quito: Secretaría de Educación Alfabetización y Cultura Pichincha Riccharimui, May 1990), 7.

40. The new law was published as "Reglamento organico y funcional del Instituto Nacional de Desarrollo Agrario (INDA)," in *Ley de desarrollo agrario y reglamentos*, 2d ed., Colección Leyes (Quito: Editorial Jurídica del Ecuador, 1995), 141-87. The alternative proposal is available as Coordinadora Agraria Nacional (CAN), *Proyecto de ley agraria integral*, 2d ed. (Quito: Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador (CONAIE), 1994). For a summary of the uprising from one of its leaders, see Luis Macas, "La ley agraria y el proceso de movilización por la vida," in Ramón Torres Galarza, *Derechos de los pueblos indígenas: Situación jurídica y políticas de estado* (Quito: CONAIE/CEPLAES/Abya-Yala, 1995), 29-37.

Citizenship and constitutional reforms

Although land remained at the heart of Indigenous movements in Ecuador, citizenship and constitutional reform issues provided the underlying ideological motivation for these demands. By the 1990s, this discourse took on strong nationalist overtones as intellectuals spoke of Indian "Nations" in Ecuador and demanded that the first article of the constitution be reformed to affirm the multi-national character of the country. As with other developments in the Indigenous movement in Ecuador, these nationalistic claims have their historic roots in earlier organizations.

Under Spanish colonial administration, Indians were treated as wards of the state and legally inferior to other residents in the Americas. Along with this status, however, came the crown's paternalistic protection policies which defended the Indians from some of the colonial elites' worst abuses. With independence from Spain, all Ecuadorians (including Indians) were constitutionally declared to be equal. Indians in Ecuador, as with their counterparts across the Americas, were freed from a legally inferior status, but their real position in society fell due to the loss of protection from the Spanish crown.

The rhetoric of legal equality cloaked the reality of a discriminatory situation which the Indians faced. Part of this discrimination was due to a distinction between who was a "national" of Ecuador and who was a citizen. The Ecuadorian constitution bestowed Ecuadorian nationality upon those who were either born in Ecuador or gained the status through a process of naturalization. Citizenship, on the other hand, was limited to those men and women over twenty-one years old (lowered to eighteen in 1945) who could read and write. Furthermore, only citizens had the right to vote. This meant that only about three percent of the population voted in elections.⁴¹ Most

41. Rafael Quintero and Erika Silva, *Ecuador: una nación en ciernes*, 3 volumes, Colección Estudios No. 1 (Quito: FLACSO/Abya-Yala, 1991), cites figures from 1830-1899 (t. 1, 100), 1888-1895 (t. 1, 248), and 1931-1960 (t. 3, 148) which shows that participation varied between 0.3 percent of the entire population in 1830 and 5.7

people did not participate (and, furthermore, were not *permitted* to participate) in electoral politics. As David Schodt observed, most people were left untouched by changes of government in Quito; "Ecuadorian politics was a profoundly elitist politics."⁴²

The May 1944 "Revolution" was to open the way for broader popular participation in society, but in the end its net effect was minimal. It did not extend the vote to Indians and peasants. Accompanying a rise in literacy rates only about ten percent of the population now participated in elections. Within the space of two years, Velasco Ibarra turned his back on his previous supporters and began to persecute those on his left. One of the lasting effects of his government, however, was the constitutional codification of some of the progressive elements of social legislation which had been enacted over the previous twenty years.

In December of 1946, the government drew up a new constitution in Quito. Although this new magna carta included some of the progressive reforms of the 1938 Labor Code including a minimum wage, an eight-hour day, and the right to organize, it did not include many provisions which would prove beneficial to the rural workers in Cayambe. It still provided a legal basis for the continuation of the *latifundio* as the primary mode of agricultural production. Like the 1929 constitution, article seventeen extended the right to vote to women (although it was optional, unlike for men who were obliged to vote), but it still denied suffrage to illiterates which continued to make the election of officials a minority affair. As George Blanksten observed, roughly "95 per cent of Ecuador's Indians are illiterate; accordingly, illiteracy legally bars the Indian from any major participation in political life." This exclusion provided "a significant background against which political instability has developed in Ecuador."⁴³ Voting

percent in 1892, but began climbing only after the May 1944 Revolution.

42. Schodt, 68.

43. Blanksten, 73-74. Women had intermediately been given the right to vote in Constitutions of 1883, 1929, and 1946. Schodt, 19.

was largely the arena of wealthy white men; there was no outlet for peaceful political dissent from other sectors of society. It was not until the return of civilian rule in 1978 that illiterates were given the option to vote, extending this possibility to most Indians for the first time.

Although Indians played an important role in the May 1944 revolution which led to the re-writing of the constitution, there were few concessions to their demands in this document. Articles which directly addressed the Indigenous population did so in a paternalistic manner. For example, Article 171 on education stated that "both public and private schools shall give special attention to the indigenous race." Article 185 which outlined labor provisions stated that "agricultural labor, particularly by Indians, shall be especially regulated, above all in matters connected with working hours." It proceeded to proclaim that the confiscation of the *huasipungo* plots "without just cause shall be considered as untimely discharge of the worker."⁴⁴ There was little effort, however, to meet the general demands which the Indians and peasants had been pressing with the national government.

This constitution also failed to acknowledge the importance of ethnicity to the Indigenous actors in Cayambe and elsewhere in Ecuador. Article seven defined Spanish as the official language of the republic, even though it remained a minority language in the Cayambe backlands as in much of the country. It was not until the constitutional reforms of 1979 which accompanied the reintroduction of civilian rule after seven years of military dictatorships that Quichua was formally recognized. Although Spanish (*Castellano*) remained the official language, the resulting 1984 constitution (which remained in effect in the 1990s) stated in its first article that "Quichua and other aboriginal languages form a part of the national culture." It stopped short, however, of declaring Quichua or any of these others as official languages. This article also declared Ecuador to be a "single" unified state.⁴⁵ A

44. *Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador, 1946*, 35, 39.

45. Jorge Mario Eastman, *Constituciones políticas de los países del pacto andino:*

central political demand which Indigenous organizations pressed in the 1980s and 1990s was to reform this article to officially acknowledge the pluri-national, multi-ethnic character of the "state" called Ecuador.

This is the context of the citizenship demands which Indians would make throughout the twentieth century. Elites effectively excluded Indians from the exercise of political power. In so much as they could define a larger role for themselves in civil society, the Indigenous peoples would be able to guard their culture and improve their economic standing. Thus, a redefinition of "citizen" often lay at the very heart of the demands which Indians were making.

Emergence of ethnic-based Indian federations

Beginning in the 1960s, Indigenous peoples from across Ecuador began to organize themselves into organizations and confederations to defend their native cultures and languages (which led to the formation of bilingual schools), traditional lands, and human rights (including a struggle against cultural and racial discrimination). Some of the earliest and best-organized of these Indigenous movements emerged from Ecuador's Upper Amazon basin. The two best and most powerful examples of this phenomenon were the Federación de Centros Shuar (Shuar Federation) and the Organización de Pueblos Indígenas de Pastaza (OPIP, Organization of Indigenous Peoples of Pastaza). Although distinct in terms of organizational structures, strategies, cultures, and goals, together they reveal much of the nature of the development of ethnic identity within the context of political organizations. Later, similar organizations also appeared in the highlands.

Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Perú, Venezuela, 2. ed., corr. y aum, Colección "Fondo de publicaciones" (Bogotá, D.E.: Secretaría Ejecutiva del Parlamento Andino, 1991), 238. The 1945 constitution which was briefly in effect after the May 1944 Revolution contained similar language in Article five recognizing "Quechua and other aboriginal languages as part of the national culture," but the subsequent 1946 constitution removed this reference. See Borja y Borja, 564.

Briefly considering the recent history of these organizations sheds light on ethnic dynamics within earlier peasant movements in Ecuador. Unlike previous organizations, these new ethnic federations were to be Indian-led efforts. Nevertheless, they did not emerge in isolation from non-Indian actors. Many of these ethnic organizations were products of the efforts of progressive sectors of the Catholic Church to organize Indigenous peoples. This history also provides a concrete historical context for understanding how land and citizenship demands influenced the formation of ethno-nationalist discourse in Ecuador.

Amazonian federations

The Shuar formed the first lowland ethnic federation in 1964. With a base in Salesian missionary efforts, the Shuar Federation advocated for self-determination, economic self-sufficiency, defense of their lands, bilingual education, health care, and civil rights. Ernesto Salazar has argued that the Federation developed out of “the need to consolidate the current Shuar economic structure, which has been gradually encompassing wider segments of the native population.”⁴⁶ Editorial presses and publishing houses played an important function in preserving Shuar identity. In 1976, the Federation and Salesian Mission founded Mundo Shuar which published about seventy books mostly on Amazonian cultures and in particular the Shuar. Through these publishing efforts the Shuar sought to preserve their heritage and project a positive image of their culture to the outside world. By entering the political arena as a federation, they have been able to defend their lands and consolidate their economic position in the *Oriente* in the face of advancing white colonization. Although this work is not without its drawbacks, Salazar declared that the Federation’s unusually successful

46. Ernesto Salazar, "The Federación Shuar and the Colonization Frontier," in *Cultural Transformations and Ethnicity in Modern Ecuador*, ed. Norman E. Whitten, Jr. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981), 610.

efforts ‘have proved that they do have insight into the future as well as determination to survive the white nationalist and foreign invasion.’⁴⁷

The Quichua, Achuar, Shuar, and Zaparo peoples of the province of Pastaza in the Ecuadorian Amazon formed the Organization of Indigenous Peoples of Pastaza (OPIP) in 1978 in order to defend their land rights and to promote environmental policies which would lead to sustainable management of natural resources in the *Oriente*. OPIP also sought to promote unity and organization of the peoples of Pastaza; obtain land rights to their ancestral territories from the government of Ecuador; and to develop policies for the conservation and sustainable management of natural resources in their territories, for the benefit of Indigenous peoples and for the rest of humanity. OPIP has been particularly active in petitioning the Ecuadorian government for autonomy over native lands in the Amazon region. In August of 1990 OPIP presented the Ecuadorian government with a plan to hand over control of ninety percent of the land (including petroleum deposits) in the eastern province of Pastaza to the Indigenous peoples. The plan would not only have given the people in the Amazon autonomy over their own affairs, but it would also have stopped the ecological and cultural devastation of their territory. Rather than exploiting the land for short-term benefits, OPIP's natural resource management plan would preserve the environment "for the benefit of the children of our grandchildren."⁴⁸

These two distinct examples from two different Indigenous groups in the Ecuadorian Amazon reveal how Indigenous organizations came to rely upon outside

47. Ibid., 598. For more information on the history and organizational structure of the Shuar Federation, see Federación de Centros Shuar, *Federación de Centros Shuar: solución original a un problema actual* (Sucua, Ecuador: La Federación, 1976).

48. Les Field, "Ecuador's Pan-Indian Uprising," *Report on the Americas* 25:3 (December 1991), 43. On OPIP, also see Suzana Sawyer, "Indigenous Initiatives and Petroleum Politics in the Ecuadorian Amazon," *Cultural Survival Quarterly* 20:1 (Spring 1996): 26-30 and Suzana Sawyer, "The 1992 Indian Mobilization in Lowland Ecuador," *Latin American Perspectives* 24:3 (94) (May 1997): 65-82.

actors and the infrastructure which they provided. Although the Shuar Federation was commonly revered for being the first truly authentic ethnic organization in Ecuador run by and for Indigenous peoples, it would not have achieved its success were it not for the support of outsiders, in particular Salesian missionaries. They provided critical technical assistance so that the Shuar could successfully interface with the outside world. The role which the Salesian mission played is not entirely unlike that which the Communist Party played in Cayambe some thirty years previous when Indigenous peasants there sought to organize their ethnic and class interests. Similarly, OPIP has had to maintain close relations with non-Indigenous environmental groups in order to achieve its agenda. Working with non-Indians does not negate Indian identity. Similar to the Amazon, in the highlands the Catholic Church also played an important role in the formation of ethnic organizations in the 1960s and 1970s.

Peasant-Indigenous organizations in the highlands

The emergence of these ethnic federations in the sierra highlands took place in the context of fundamental changes in land tenure patterns which resulted from Ecuador's first agrarian reform program. In the 1970s, Muriel Crespi observed "that this new political configuration is triggering change in Indian ethnic identification" and their relations with the white world.⁴⁹ Tránsito Amaguaña, one of the early Indigenous leaders in Cayambe, noted that after the FEI gained what had become its principal demand (land reform), it began to lose power and influence. The Indigenous struggle began to search for new roads and new goals. In particular, it defended and promoted a respect for Indigenous cultures and self-determination.⁵⁰ Beginning in the 1960s, and particularly during the 1970s, new forms of organization based on ethnic identity began to emerge in the Ecuadorian highlands. Out of this emerged two competing peasant-Indigenous organizations, the Federación Nacional de Organizaciones Campesinas (FENOC, National Federation of Peasant Organizations) and

49. Crespi, "St. John the Baptist," 478.

50. Rodas, *Tránsito Amaguaña*, 39.

ECUARUNARI (Ecuador Runacunapac Riccharimui, a Quichua phrase which means to awaken the Ecuadorian Indians).

The three main peasant organizations which have emerged in the Ecuadorian highlands (FEI, FENOC, and ECUARUNARI) have occasionally worked together as they did in 1978 when they cooperated in the founding of the Frente Unico de Lucha Campesina (FULC, United Front for Peasant Struggle). ECUARUNARI and FENOC also together organized a "Great National Peasant and Indigenous March 'Martyrs of Aztra.'" ECUARUNARI also voiced on occasion their support for a worker-peasant alliance and lent their support to the Frente Unitario de los Trabajadores (FUT, Unified Workers' Front), a national labor union founded in 1975.⁵¹ More commonly, however, these three groups competed for the allegiance of the same group of Indigenous peasants in the highlands. Local peasant or Indigenous organizations normally allied with only one of these organizations, which affected their ideological orientation with regard to issues of class and ethnicity.

Although the CTE formed the FEI in 1944 to organize Ecuador's rural peasant and Indigenous masses, and communists had been actively working toward this goal since the 1920s, other organizations also recognized the potential in organizing highland Indians. Aside from the CTE, the other organization which fought the hardest for their allegiance was Central Ecuatoriana de Organizaciones Clasistas (CEDOC, Ecuadorian Central of Classist Organizations). CEDOC was the labor organization which had experienced a series of ideological shifts since it was founded in 1938 with the goal of stopping Communist influence in labor movements and emphasizing a conservative religious spirit in Ecuador's workers. By the 1970s, CEDOC had moved significantly to the left and had assumed a definite classist position. In many parts of the sierra, the FEI remained a paper organization with little

51. ECUARUNARI, "El movimiento campesino indígena," in *Población indígena y desarrollo amazonico*, ed. Ministerio de Bienestar Social, Oficina Nacional de Asuntos Indígenas (Quito: Ediciones Abya-Yala, 1984), 50.

concrete or long-term organizational structure or plan of action. CEDOC filled this gap. With a religious agenda resulting from its Catholic orientation, CEDOC did not seek to address structural issues. Rather, they helped peasants organize against abuses by large landholders, organized literacy classes, and at points also served a social function in rural communities.

The peasant organization which CEDOC formed in 1968 was called the Federación Nacional de Organizaciones Campesinas (FENOC, National Federation of Peasant Organizations). FENOC emerged out of a progressive tradition within CEDOC and the Catholic Church. In its proclamations and actions, FENOC consistently presented itself as a classist peasant organization interested in issues of land and agrarian reform. Ethnicity emerged primarily as a tool to mobilize the rural masses. Out of the struggle for land reform in the early 1970s, emerged organizations such as the Unión de Organizaciones Campesinas de Cayambe (UNOCC, Union of Peasant Organizations of Cayambe). UNOCC was founded on April 24, 1976, and was affiliated with FENOC. In 1980, UNOCC was reformulated as the Unión de Organizaciones Campesinas Indígenas del Cantón Cayambe (UNOCICC, Union of Peasant Indigenous Organizations of the Canton of Cayambe).⁵²

Similar to FENOC but more closely associated with ethnic organizing efforts was a second organization named ECUARUNARI which grew out of progressive sectors of the Catholic Church. ECUARUNARI, as implied in its name "Ecuador Runacunapac Riccharimui" (Awakening of the Ecuadorian Indians), sought to "awaken" people in the sense of opening their eyes "in front of the oppression and exploitation in order to struggle for our rights which have been denied throughout history since the period of the Spanish Conquest."⁵³ ECUARUNARI was founded in

52. See CEDEP, *Las luchas campesinas, 1950-1983* for an institutional history of this organization.

53. Pichincha Riccharimui Ecuarrunari, *500 años de resistencia indígena y popular*, 3.

June 1972 in Tepeyac in the province of Chimborazo. From its beginning, ECUARUNARI engaged in serious struggles with the state. In 1973, a year after its founding, landlords killed one of the organization's leaders, Cristóbal Pajuña, in the province of Tungurahua. A year later the military dictatorship killed another leader, Lázaro Condo, in Chimborazo.⁵⁴ The organization intended to unify the concerns of eleven highland organizations, one coastal organization, and one Amazonian organization. Its basic goals were to defend the right to education, health care, and basic services, as well as struggle against the oppression, exploitation, and discrimination which peasants and Indigenous peoples faced.⁵⁵ ECUARUNARI promoted the formation of cooperatives and associations at the grassroots level, and functioned as a development organization which sought to modernize agriculture, develop bilingual education, and work on other similar projects.

Ideologically, ECUARUNARI was influenced partially by the example of the Cuban Revolution, but perhaps more by liberation theology and the Latin American Bishops conference in Medellín in 1969 which declared capitalism to be a sin and embraced the Church's preferential option for the poor. ECUARUNARI was opposed to traditional leftist politics which subordinated Indigenous ethnic issues to those of peasants in general, thereby ignoring the cultural and linguistic aspects of Indigenous society. They reacted against seeing Indigenous issues solely in terms of class rather than race or ethnicity. CONAIE has called ECUARUNARI "the first truly Indigenous organization in the sierra."⁵⁶ It emerged out of progressive religious sectors who sought to offer an alternative to the FEI, which had come under increasingly rigid control of the Communist Party.

54. Mullo, 35.

55. Ibid., 33; Pichincha Riccharimui Ecuarunari, *500 años de resistencia indígena y popular*, 3.

56. CONAIE, *Nacionalidades indígenas*, 128.

Class and ethnicity have been two main themes throughout ECUARUNARI's history. During its first phase (1972-1977), it emphasized an Indigenous consciousness. At the organization's third congress in 1977, there was an ideological shift toward a clear emphasis on a class orientation. It, therefore, presented a class-based conception of the peasant-Indigenous movement.⁵⁷ At the organization's fourth congress in 1978, ECUARUNARI defined itself as "a national peasant and Indigenous organization which searches for total and radical change in the current situation of marginalized, oppressed, and exploited peoples." Furthermore, it was "an anti-imperialist organization which struggles for a definitive liberation of our country, for a society without exploitation" and "for the unity of Indigenous peoples and all exploited sectors of our country."⁵⁸ Whereas authors such as Francisco Ron have analyzed this move as a positive one which broadened its social base, Roberto Santana believed that such class politics were essentially "politics of integration" which diminished the importance of ethnic identity among Ecuador's Indigenous populations.⁵⁹ Although ECUARUNARI assumed positions consistent with a leftist ideology (it condemned the U.S. invasion of Grenada and supported revolutionary struggles in Central America), it always affirmed an ethnic identity and allied itself with Indigenous organizations. Nevertheless, ECUARUNARI's historic vocal opposition to traditional leftist politics has led to a perception of ECUARUNARI as a more conservative organization which remained apart from political struggles and was more involved in issues of economic development.

Still, ECUARUNARI on occasion has embraced a concept of the popular struggle which went beyond the narrow demands of Indigenous farmers. They expressed the need to "build unity with other peasant organizations, with urban

57. Ron, 13.

58. ECUARUNARI, 45, 46.

59. Roberto Santana, "El caso de Ecuarrunari," *Nariz del Diablo* (CIESE, Quito) 2:7 (1981), 35.

workers, with all exploited people, in order to struggle for a free country."⁶⁰ They pointed to "the need to *unify forces* between Indigenous and peasant sectors and with the working class in a common program of struggle" to achieve "the revolutionary transformation of our country."⁶¹ In creating an ideological framework for their struggle, not only did they rely on the example of Indigenous leaders such as Rumiñahui, Túpac Amaru, and Daquilema but also *mestizo* and leftist leaders such as José Martí, Augusto César Sandino, and the Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutions as "expressions and syntheses of a future toward which we are advancing: the new society."⁶²

Part of this ideological orientation in favor of a broad-based struggle influenced ECUARUNARI's attitude toward other sectors of the population. In a 1981 statement, the organization stated that it was "conscious that we can not continue considering all *mestizos* as enemies of our nationality." They noted that everyone suffered oppression, and "because of this, our organization favors the unity of all rural workers: peasants and Indigenous peoples."⁶³

The Federación de las Organizaciones Indígenas y Campesinas "Pichincha Runacunapac Riccharimui" (Federation of Indigenous and Peasant Organizations "Awakening of the Indians of Pichincha"), the provincial branch of ECUARUNARI in Pichincha under which affiliated organizations in Cayambe were grouped, was formed in 1974. It brought seventy grassroots organizations together in order to struggle for common demands. The goals of the organization were to improve living conditions, improve infrastructure, struggle for land, create educational opportunities, and mobilize peasants. A short history of the organization recounts its actions in the 1970s when it worked together with labor unions and other popular organizations in national

60. Pichincha Riccharimui Ecuarrunari, *500 años de resistencia indígena y popular*, 3.

61. ECUARUNARI, 48.

62. *Ibid.*, 50.

63. *Ibid.*, 49.

strikes in 1975 and 1981, and participated in the labor front FUT and the coalition Frente Amplio de la Izquierda (FADI, Broad Leftist Front) which grouped the communist and other leftist political parties. It also worked together with FENOC and FEI in organizations such as the Frente Unido de Reforma Agraria (FURA, United Front on Agrarian Reform) and a national peasant-Indigenous march and a national peasant-Indigenous meeting in 1982.⁶⁴

In the Canton of Cayambe, Pichincha Riccharimui (as the organization was often informally called) was particularly active in the southern *parroquias* of Cangahua and Juan Montalvo in addition to the neighboring *parroquia* Tupigachi in the Canton of Pedro Moncayo. With the birth of CONAIE in 1986, the organization adopted a more ethnic identification. Nevertheless, organizational leadership often embraced leftist revolutionary ideas purportedly at odds with the Indigenous movement. For example, in their newsletter *Rumiñahui*, editor César Pilataxi (who was an Indigenous leader from Pesillo in northern Cayambe) noted that the popular movement was in a state of crisis because it had lost "its means of struggle--class solidarity." In order to regain the initiative, the leaders and members would have to fight with Túpac Amaru, Daquilema (eighteenth and nineteenth-century Indigenous leaders from Peru and Chimborazo), Che Guevara, and Fidel Castro (Cuban revolutionary leaders) for freedom and socialism.⁶⁵ Although explicitly organized as an Indigenous organization, in marches Pichincha Riccharimui often fell back on old leftist slogans such as *Hasta la victoria siempre* ("Toward victory always") and *Luchando creando poder popular* ("Struggling creating popular power") which leftist parties and labor unions have repeatedly used for years. The organization effectively combined class and ethnic symbols in the rhetoric surrounding the movement. Although Pichincha Riccharimui was commonly considered to be more "ethnic" than either the FEI or the FENOC, its

64. Mullo, 36-37.

65. "Hacia el XII Congreso de la Federación Pichincha Riccharimui!" *Rumiñahui* 6 (December 1995): 1.

intellectual roots lay in Cayambe's long tradition of leftist political organizational efforts.

Cayambe provided much of the leadership for all three of these organizations (FEI, FENOC, ECUARUNARI). It also created an intellectual atmosphere which encouraged the challenging of state structures. Since agrarian reform, organizations have more commonly embraced ethnic terminology rather than that of class. As the Pichincha Riccharimui slogans make clear, however, the organizations have never made a clean break with their leftist past. It is not clear that doing so would serve any constructive purpose, or that they would have any motivation for doing so. Humans are complex entities, and there is nothing that prevents an Indian from being a communist.

**Conclusion:
Indigenous Versus Leftist Perspectives on Nationalism, Ethnicity, and
Class**

In June of 1990, a powerful Indigenous uprising, the largest ever in that country's history, swept across Ecuador paralyzing the country for a week. Indigenous peoples from the coast, sierra, and Amazon united in defense of common political goals to an extent never before seen in Ecuador. The Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador (CONAIE, Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador) emerged at the forefront of these protests. Indigenous leaders organized CONAIE in 1986 with the intent to combine all Indigenous groups from throughout the country into one large pan-Indian movement dedicated to defending Indigenous nations' concerns and agitating for social, political, and educational reforms. It intended to be the organizational representative for Ecuador's Indigenous peoples to the government, and to provide institutional support to local and regional organizations.¹

Throughout the twentieth century there has been a dramatic shift in Indigenous consciousness and ethnic identity in Ecuador. A powerful movement for social change emerged out of a population which the dominant classes traditionally viewed as backward and docile. Indigenous organizations moved from organizing for salaries and working conditions to presenting demands for land reform. Finally, Indigenous organizations championed political demands of territoriality and issued calls to reform Ecuador's national constitution in order to reflect the plurinational and multicultural reality of Ecuador.

1. CONAIE, *Nacionalidades indígenas*, 268-72.

CONAIE outlined the demands of the 1990 uprising in a sixteen-point document which summarized its agenda for re-defining Indigenous peoples' role in society. This document outlined a program for Indigenous control over their own affairs and included demands for land ownership and distribution; called for a commitment of national resources needed for economic development in Indigenous communities; defined the Indigenous peoples' relationship with the national state; spoke of Indigenous nationalities; and proclaimed Ecuador to be a multi-national state. Other points concerned financing for bilingual education programs in Indigenous communities, Indigenous control of archaeological sites, and the expulsion of the Summer Institute of Linguistics from Ecuador.² These demands are part of an uprising with revolutionary implications that shook Ecuador and threatened its white, elite, power base.

Various observers have argued that this uprising was unique in that it rallied various sectors of the country, including the Church, students, and urban labor, under demands which Indigenous organizations led. "Without planning or foresight," one scholar noted, "CONAIE found itself the only popular organization that could represent the distressed rural population of the Sierra."³ The unprecedented action of Indigenous peoples leading a national uprising led a political scientist to observe that Indians which were "the sector considered to be most conservative by the left, and most passive by the dominant culture in society, turns out to be one of the strongest forces for democratic change today."⁴

Support from non-Indigenous sectors became critical to CONAIE's success in demanding resolution of land disputes, institution of bilingual education, and the

2. These demands are printed in the Ecuadorian daily newspaper *Hoy*, June 29, 1990, 5A, and are reprinted in Field, 41.

3. Zamosc, "Agrarian Protest and the Indian Movement in the Ecuadorian Highlands," 62.

4. Melina Selverston, *The 1990 Indigenous Uprising in Ecuador: Politicized Ethnicity as Social Movement*, Papers on Latin America #32 (Columbia University: The Institute of Latin American and Iberian Studies, 1993), 25.

recognition of Ecuador as a pluri-national state. In addition to its work among Indigenous sectors, CONAIE also developed solidarity networks with labor unions. CONAIE noted that with the crisis which Ecuador faced, "popular and Indigenous organizations see the importance of together strengthening our struggles of resistance."⁵ CONAIE actively reached out to popular organizations in order to work together to achieve common goals. This trend within CONAIE emerges clearly in a document entitled *Proyecto político* (Political Project) which CONAIE presented in 1994 "to various organized social sectors, to peasants, workers, women, students, professionals, intellectuals, religious workers, military personnel, and democratic and humanistic politicians."⁶ This statement from CONAIE explicitly states that their struggle went beyond isolated issues. In addition to land issues, they also looked at broad-ranging goals such as industrialization, unemployment and underemployment, housing, education, health, and racial discrimination. Two things emerge in the presentation of this document. First, in order to argue with integrity for a pluri-national state, one must respect the existence of other (and non-Indigenous) cultures. Second, in order to achieve their stated goals, it becomes necessary to reach out and build alliances with various different sectors of society, including non-Indigenous peasants, workers, Christian Base Communities, women, environmentalists, teachers, professionals, progressive intellectuals, and students. Thus, "CONAIE summons all men and women who struggle against social injustice, economic exploitation, racial discrimination, violations of human rights, the destruction of nature, the contamination of the environment, etc. to back the 'political project' which has as a principal objective the construction of a New Model for the State and for a Pluri-national Nation."⁷

5. "El porque de la ingobernabilidad," *Nacionalidades Indias* (Quito) 3:7-8 (April 1994): 1.

6. CONAIE, *Proyecto político de la CONAIE*, 1. For a broader discussion of this document, see "CONAIE lanza proyecto político," *Nacionalidades Indias* (Quito) 3:7-8 (April 1994): 14-15.

7. CONAIE, *Proyecto político de la CONAIE*, 16, 1.

Viewed from the historical depth of the development of Indian movements throughout the twentieth century, CONAIE's reliance on outside supporters becomes a logical action with clear precedence.⁸

CONAIE created a political position which had much in common with leftist movements. It postured an anti-imperialist position which denounced economic, political, ideological, and technological dependence on outside forces and announced moral, political, and material international solidarity for other movements. CONAIE extended its solidarity to those who suffered under colonial and neo-colonial systems "as well as people who suffer economic blockades and military invasions from imperialist forces,"⁹ a clear reference to the situation in Cuba. These attitudes are similar to those of earlier international leftist movements. Even their position on "The Indian Question" echoed that which Mariátegui wrote in the 1920s. CONAIE stated that the dispossessed position of Indigenous peoples in Ecuador was "not solely a pedagogical, ecclesiastical, or administrative problem as the dominant sectors would have it, but rather it is fundamentally an economic-political structural problem."¹⁰ In many ways, however, CONAIE's position went far beyond that which leftist movements typically presented. Although it defined the struggle as an international frontal

8. Even anthropologists such as Norman Whitten who normally emphasize internal and ethnic aspects of Indigenous populations point to external actors as "highly salient features" of CONAIE's actions. Whitten points in particular to the role of Catholic liberation theologians, foreign governments, and Ecuadorian political parties in aiding and training participants. Norman E. Whitten, Jr., "The Ecuadorian Levantamiento Indígena of 1990 and the Epitomizing Symbol of 1992: Reflections on Nationalism, Ethnic-Bloc Formation, and Racialist Ideologies," in *History, Power, and Identity: Ethnogenesis in the Americas, 1492-1992*, ed. Jonathan David Hill (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1996), 216.

9. CONAIE, *Proyecto político de la CONAIE*, 14, 27.

10. Ibid, 5. Mariátegui argued that the situation of the Indigenous masses could not be solved through moral appeals to conscience, religious conversions, or education, but rather their problems were rooted in the nature of the land tenure system and that only through fundamental economic change and land reform would social change take place. See Mariátegui, "The Problem of the Indian" in *Seven Essays*, 22.

assault on the economic, political, and ideological capitalistic system which hindered the self-determination as well as economic and political independence of Indigenous peoples and other social sectors, the organization declared that its goal was not simply to take control of the governmental power of the State. Rather, the goal was "the transformation of the nature of the current power of the hegemonic uni-national State which is exclusionary, anti-democratic, and repressive," and in its place construct "a Humanistic, Pluri-national New Society."¹¹

The 1990 uprising and CONAIE's role in this discourse, however, did add new ideological elements to the Indian movement in Ecuador, and it is worth briefly considering these. The goal that recent Indigenous leaders in Ecuador have articulated is not to isolate and preserve Indigenous societies from outside contact, but to bring themselves into participation in a national dialogue on their own terms. For the Indigenous peoples of Ecuador, constructing a new concept of nationality apart from the nation-state has become central to their struggle for cultural survival. "Ecuadorean national identity," anthropologist Mary Crain has observed, "was frequently modeled according to European patterns and its social orientation was toward the outside." The role of the Indigenous (and African) population was that of "the savage other" which provided a convenient contrast to the "dominant constructions of national identity."¹² Although the Indigenous population comprised a large percentage of the population, national identity remained an elite, urban, white construct far removed from the demographic reality of the country. Indians were "reduced" to rural villages where alternatively they could provide a labor force on which to build the economic development

11. CONAIE, *Proyecto político*, 7. It must be noted that not all people are in agreement that alliances between Indigenous organizations and popular movements are positive or even work. "From an indigenous point of reference," one activist has written, "indigenous peoples' histories remain colonial when reduced to class." Delgado-P., "Ethnic Politics and the Popular Movement," 82.

12. Mary Crain, "The Social Construction of National Identity in Highland Ecuador," *Anthropological Quarterly* 63:1 (January 1990), 46.

of the country, or they were simply eliminated as an impediment to that development. An irony in Ecuador (which can also be found elsewhere) is that the legendary Reign of Quito and Atahualpa's Inka Empire which flourished before the Spanish conquest are central to the development of that country's national identity, whereas the descendants of those heroic figures are seen as savages who must be subdued. They were given no role in the construction of a national culture and history. Crain argues that this role began to change in the 1960s and 1970s with the passage of agrarian reform legislation and the discovery of oil in Ecuador's territory.¹³ The integration of the Indigenous population into the national ethos occurred on two levels: elite classes saw their territory as a source of exploitable national wealth and at the same time Indigenous peoples launched an unprecedented level of political organization and mobilization.

Part of the current political struggle in Ecuador is between ideologies of nationalism as articulated by the elite state power structure in Quito and those of Indigenous nationalism forwarded by groups such as CONAIE. The contested terrain is native identity and native history and territory. The state seeks to exploit Indigenous cultures for its own economic benefit, especially in the realm of tourism. This not only leaves the tragic irony that the lives and cultures of centuries-dead ancestors are valued more highly than the current inhabitants of the land, but also leads to the exploitation of local traditions for national purposes thereby undermining ethnic and cultural identities. David Stoll gives one example of this in the exploitation of the "exotic" Huaorani in the Ecuadorian Amazon for purposes of "ethnic tourism," and the havoc that it plays on local culture.¹⁴ Mary Crain gives another example in a community just north of Cayambe where the government used an idyllic depiction of an Indian

13. Ibid., 47.

14. Stoll, 314-16. On issues of ethnic tourism, also see Randy Smith, *Crisis Under the Canopy: Tourism and Other Problems Facing the Present Day Huaorani* (Quito: Ediciones Abya-Yala, 1993).

that was far removed from reality on a postage stamp series.¹⁵ Clearly, the state is ready and willing to exploit native symbols in the construction of a national reality as long as they remain on an abstract and non-threatening level. This may even extend to the point of cynically manipulating local and popular culture in order to strengthen the elites' hegemonic control over national identity.¹⁶ When confronted with the Indigenous demand to recognize Ecuador as a pluri-national state with the accompanying compromises and dialogue which that would require, however, the state is much less willing to accept Indigenous peoples as a legitimate and necessary part of the political discourse.

The control which the Ecuadorian nation-state seeks to exercise over the Indigenous peoples is not limited to overt political and economic actions which seek to control natural resources such as the agricultural potential of the region and the exploitable oil resources. The state has also attempted in a variety of ways to integrate Indigenous nations into one central nationality. Although well-meaning, bilingual teachers and the education system can be a form of the extension of the dominant culture into isolated regions with the resulting homogenization of cultures. Others have also examined how missionaries, normally seen as being concerned with a religious or supernatural sphere, operate as "agents of secularization" that impose a naturalistic world view on Indigenous peoples.¹⁷

In an essay on indigenist thought, Roxanne Dunbar Ortiz noted that in the 1980s "Ideological changes in the Indian movement have been profoundly affected by the revolutionary struggles in Central America."¹⁸ The reverse, however, has probably been even more true as increasingly powerful ethnic-based Indigenous movements have challenged the analytical basis which the left has traditionally used in Latin

15. Crain, 52-53.

16. Ibid., 50.

17. Elmer S. Miller, "The Christian Missionary, Agent of Secularization," *Anthropological Quarterly* 43:1 (1970), 22.

18. Ortiz, "The Fourth World and Indigenism," 101.

American. In a discussion of the relationship of an Indigenous ethnic struggle to a class-based popular struggle, Indigenous organizer Nina Pacari has noted Indigenous disagreement with orthodox leftist efforts to incorporate Indigenous struggles into a proletarian class struggle. She states that the Indigenous ethnic struggle is not against class struggle, but is a complementary struggle. Although Indigenous peoples are peasants and workers, they are a people with their own characteristics and customs. Pacari calls on the left to recognize and respect these differences as they organize together, and not to subjugate Indigenous peoples to a proletarian ideology which would depersonalize and assimilate them, deny their unique history, and eventually end their identity as a people.¹⁹

Recent evidence points to the beginnings of an ideological shift on the part of the left along the lines which Pacari and other Indigenous leaders desired. In a 1993 document analyzing the current situation in Ecuador, the Central Committee of the Partido Comunista del Ecuador (PCE, Ecuadorian Communist Party) stated that Ecuador has a plurinational society comprised of a diversity of cultures, languages and peoples with different historical origins. They criticized the ideological project of *mestizaje* which sought to exclude Indians as a part of the country, and instead encouraged the development of a new ideology which encompassed the ethno-cultural diversity of the country. Echoing (but without explicitly mentioning) CONAIE and its ideological position, the PCE stated that "the Ecuadorian State must be pluri-national," and called for the "constitutional establishment of the rights of Indigenous nationalities and ethnic groups."²⁰

19. Nina Pacari in Martha Bulnes, *Me levanto y digo, testimonio de tres mujeres quichua*, Colección Ecuador/Testimonio. (Quito: Editorial El Conejo, 1990), 61-62.

20. Partido Comunista del Ecuador, *Por la reconstitución histórica de la izquierda, hacia una nueva sociedad: Documento central de debate político del XII Congreso Nacional del Partido Comunista del Ecuador* (Quito: Partido Comunista del Ecuador, 1993), 14.

The PCE also stated that "our project promotes the demands of the oppressed, subaltern, and exploited classes of Ecuadorian society, of Indigenous peoples and nationalities."²¹ They recognized that Indigenous peoples, organized under the banner of CONAIE, were leading demands for land and that the 1990 Indian uprising "consolidated a political and social space for the Indians . . . much like in the 1970s labor unions gained a place in the public scene."²² Do these statements mean that the PCE was giving up a class analysis in favor of an ethnic strategy? Actually, rather than abandoning class, this document demonstrates a maturing understanding of the complex nature of Ecuadorian society. The PCE recognized that "the demands of unionized workers do not always coincide with the needs of peasants and Indians."²³ However, the party still emphasized the need to develop a class identity and criticized Indigenous leaders who stressed ethnicity to the exclusion of unified participation in a popular struggle for peace, democracy, and progress.²⁴ The PCE was willing to support Amazonian Indians' struggles against oil companies because the party saw it as part of a unified struggle against international capital, but it did not share the Indigenous movement's goals of autonomy and self-determination. Rather, it favored incorporating the Indigenous movement into a process of developing a Western concept of a unified nation-state, although one organized along socialist lines.

Nevertheless, the 1993 PCE document demonstrates a clear realigning of political forces in Ecuador's popular movements. The PCE recognized that although its members still believed a unified leftist political party to be a Good Thing, they lived in a time in which there was a multitude of popular movements. They had moved beyond paternalistic attitudes that excluded Indians from participation in forces for political change or saw them as a passive force which needed to be organized. Rather,

21. Ibid., 16.

22. Ibid., 18.

23. Ibid., 19.

24. Ibid., 28.

they expressed a certain recognition and respect for the dynamic strength of ethnic claims. If anything, they appeared to be moving toward an intellectual synthesis of class and ethnicity. Even if the possibility of a unified party seemed remote and perhaps not even desirable, together with CONAIE's willingness to work with popular movements the possibilities for strategic alliances to work on common goals appeared to be better than ever.

For CONAIE, the creation of a multi-ethnic state is not only an Indigenous concern but is also inherently bound up in the question of the establishment of a broad-based political movement for social and economic change. In looking for "a real and definitive alternative to [their] situation of oppression and exploitation," CONAIE desired the assistance of others for the construction of a new society which was "not only the job of the Indigenous peoples but for all of society."²⁵ For many, the collapse of East European communist regimes in the late 1980s seemed to invalidate the possibility for revolutionary change in Latin America and elsewhere in the Third World. This idea emerged out of the mistaken belief that Latin American revolutionary movements emanated out of Moscow. Rather, there are truly Indigenous roots of revolutionary change in Latin America, and one must look to Latin America, and not outside the region, to understand movements for social change. The result in the 1990s thus has not been a Marxist revolution, but an international Latin American movement built on issues which transcend narrow contemporary political boundaries. The question for leftists, therefore, becomes not to organize a Marxist class struggle but to search for positive social changes rooted in the Latin American reality. Part of this reality in the Andean Region are multi-lingual, multi-cultural, multi-national societies which are not comprised only of whites and Indians, but many different groups struggling to regain their historical identity.

25. Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador (CONAIE), "500 años de resistencia india," *Casa de las Américas* 29:174 (May-June 1989): 117.

The formation of multi-cultural alliances has become a defining characteristic of Ecuador's modern Indian movement. Although the formation of an Indian movement embracing a broad-based strategy for social change may appear to be a recent and novel idea, deeper reflection reveals that this is not the case. This is not the first time that Marxists and Indians have embraced in support of common goals. It is a theme which traces back to Indigenous participation in the foundation of the Ecuadorian Socialist Party in 1926 and Marxist support for peasant syndicates on rural haciendas. This history was born and nurtured in Cayambe, and it is there that Ecuador's modern Indian movement has its roots.

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