

**SOCIAL CHANGE IN THE NEOLIBERAL ERA:
THE INDIGENOUS MOVEMENT IN SAQUISILI, ECUADOR**

by

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DEDICATION

In memory of Father Carlos for his example of a life lived in the name of social justice.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ALG- Alternative Local Government

CCT- Coordinadora de Conflictos de Tierra -- Land Conflicts Coordinator

CMS- Coordinadora de Movimientos Sociales -- Social Movements Coordinator

CODENPE- Consejo de Desarrollo de las Nacionalidades y Pueblos Ecuatorianos --

Council for the Development of Ecuadorian Nationalities and Peoples

CONAICE- Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas de la Costa Ecuatoriana --

Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Coast

CONAIE- Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas de Ecuador -- Confederation of

Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador

CONFENAIE- Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas de la Amazonia Ecuatoriana

-- Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon

DINEIB- Dirección Nacional de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe – National Directorate

of Bilingual Intercultural Education

Ecuarunari- Ecuador Runakunapac Riccharimui -- Awakening of the Ecuadorian

Indigenous-Kichwas

FEI- Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios -- Ecuadorian Federation of Indians

FETEP- Federación Ecuatoriana de Trabajadores Agropecuarios -- Ecuadorian

Federation of Agricultural Workers

FOIN- Federación de Organizaciones Indígenas de Napo -- Federation of Indigenous Organizations of Napo

FTA- Free Trade Agreement

FTAA- Free Trade Area of the Americas

ILO- International Labor Organization

IMF- International Monetary Fund

INGO- International Non-governmental Organization

Jatarishun- Jatun Tantanakuy Runakunapak Inka Shimipi Uyasha Ninchik, translated to signify the Union of Indigenous Organizations of Saquisilí.

MICC- Movimiento Indígena y Campesino de Cotopaxi -- Indigenous and Peasant Movement of Cotopaxi

MICH- Movimiento Indígena de Chimborazo -- Indigenous Movement of Chimborazo

MIR- Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionario -- Movement of the Revolutionary Left

MPD- Movimiento Popular Democrática -- Popular Democratic Movement

MUPP-NP- Movimiento de Unidad Plurinacional Pachakutik- Nuevo País (Pachakutik) -- Plurinational Pachakutik Unity Movement- New Country (Pachakutik)

NGO- Non-governmental Organization

NSM- New Social Movement

OPIP- Organización de los Pueblos Indígenas de Pastaza -- Organization of the Indigenous Peoples of Pastaza

OSG- Organización de Segundo Grado -- Second Tier Organization

OTG- Organización de Tercer Grado -- Third Tier Organization

Pachakutik- (see MUPP-NP)

PCE- Partido Comunista de Ecuador -- Communist Party of Ecuador

PRAGUAS- Ecuador Rural and Small Towns Water Supply and Sanitation Project

PRODEPINE- Proyecto de Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indigenas y Negros del Ecuador --

Project for the Development of Indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian Peoples of Ecuador

PSP- Partido Socialista Popular -- Popular Socialist Party

PSP- Partido Sociedad Patriótica 21 de Enero -- January 21 Patriotic Society Party

SMO- Social Movement Organization

SSC- Seguridad Social Campesina -- Peasant Social Security

GLOSSARY¹

Arranche (Sp.)- Practice of seizing goods that are for sale and paying a below market price for them

Cabildo (Sp.)-In Ecuador, the democratically elected authorities of a community, generally consisting of a president, vice president, treasurer, secretary, trustee (síndico), and representatives (vocales)

Carishina (K.)- manlike

Chichería (Sp.)- Bar selling corn beer

Diezmo (Sp.)- tithe of 10% paid to the Catholic Church by indigenous peoples, outlawed in 1891

Gringo(a) (Sp.)- white foreigner

Hacendado (Sp.)- owner of a large farm, called hacienda

Huasipungo (K.)- allotment of hacienda land for the use of a peon and family

Huasipunguero (K.)- hacienda peon who worked in exchange for an allotment of hacienda land

Mestizo (Sp.)- dominant ethnic group, signifying a mix of European and Indigenous ancestry

Runa (K.)- Kichwa, literally person

Teniente Político (Sp.)- sheriff

¹ Entries are marked (Sp.) for Spanish and (K.) for Kichwa.

ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores social change in the post-Cold War period through a two-year ethnographic study of the Ecuadorian indigenous movement. Like many other 1990s social movement organizations, the CONAIE (Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador) pursued social transformation along three pathways: participatory democracy, cultural citizenship, and development with identity. In all three the CONAIE has met with seeming success, and yet the outcomes of its twenty-year history have disappointed many. Drawing on participant observation, including a year of residency in an indigenous community, and formal interviews in Saquisilí, one of the highland cantons where the CONAIE and its political party were strongest, this dissertation argues that the three routes of social transformation have not produced theorized progressive outcomes. On the contrary, they have strengthened the neoliberal capitalist project they were meant to subvert.

Participatory democracy established a form of participatory clientelism that served to easily establish links between indigenous communities and neoliberal development agents. Cultural citizenship produced complex situations in which certain expressions of indigeneity were not considered ‘Other.’ However, those expressions, defined by the dominant ‘national’ culture, effectively excluded actually existing indigenous peoples. Development with identity perpetuated under-development by its

reliance on romanticized notions of indigenous tradition held by development agents, restricting indigenous aspirations to what they consider culturally appropriate.

Moreover, it is argued that the three routes of transformation have been mechanisms of neoliberal governmentality, through which the rationalities of neoliberalism, understood in the Foucaultian sense, as a mode of governance, and practices based on those rationalities have shaped indigenous subjectivities into self-regulating, neoliberal subjects.

This dissertation asserts that neoliberal governmentality grants indigenous peoples opportunities to participate in state spaces of empowerment but that change is limited to cultural rights and that which does not threaten the economic order. Although at times they can push beyond the pre-established parameters and challenge neoliberalism, participation in Saquisilí demobilized the indigenous movement, reinforced neoliberalism, and restricted the scope of social change.

CHAPTER 1

Social Change in the Neoliberal Era

“The indigenous movement celebrates the 20th anniversary of its great uprising under national scrutiny. . . .the denouncement of corruption in the use of funds, does nothing but ratify that its political and social role is once again under a magnifying lens, as it has been so many times since June 4, 1990, the date which turned [indigenous people] into valid political actors.

... The [current] situation does not seem very different from what they went through when other governments turned their backs on them. From this situation to playing a vital role is a stretch that seems to respond more to wishes than to reality. Winners or losers?”²

Twenty years have passed since indigenous Ecuadorians staged the massive national uprising that began the CONAIE’s (Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador) social and political leadership in the country and throughout Latin America. During the 1990s, the CONAIE was viewed, domestically and internationally, as a legitimate representative of not only indigenous interests but also of national popular interests as a whole. Through its ability to convoke large mobilizations, two of which caused the fall of presidents, and legitimacy as an actor working against unpopular neoliberal economic reforms, the CONAIE was arguably the most powerful social actor of the 1990s.

The CONAIE’s importance has declined since the early 1990s, as has its acceptance and legitimacy. It holds no favor with Ecuadorian president Rafael Correa,

² *El Comercio*. June 2, 2010. “¿Perdedores o triunfadores?” Editorial, written by Marco Arauz Ortega, commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the 1990 Indigenous Uprising.

who has called the CONAIE's current directorate "pseudo-leaders,"³ and the CONAIE's bases have ignored several recent calls to mobilize.⁴ In addition, despite modest gains, the indigenous Ecuadorian population remains the poorest, with dismal social indicators, including a 70% poverty rate for indigenous-headed households.⁵ Likewise, discrimination against indigenous people remains a common occurrence in Ecuador. How did the CONAIE lose both its status as a legitimate representative of Ecuadorian popular interests and its strength as a mobilizing force? The question is particularly puzzling given that the CONAIE has been successful in most of its endeavors, has continued to receive support from progressive sectors around the world, and indigenous Ecuadorians continued to struggle to improve their life conditions.

Like many other social movements in the 1990s, the CONAIE pursued social transformation along three avenues—participatory democracy, cultural citizenship, and development with identity. These three means of social change, and the movements that pursued them, were lauded as examples of post-Cold War, post-revolutionary radical transformation. And though all three have been embraced by progressives the world over, the resulting transformations have not lived up to the expectations of a post-revolutionary revolution. In this dissertation I argue, along with a growing number of scholars (e.g., Hale 2004; 2006; Hale and Millaman 2006; Lucero 2008; Postero 2007) that the limited nature of the transformations is best explained through an understanding of the primary context in which social change has been pursued: neoliberalism.

³ *El Comercio*. June 26, 2010. "El anticapitalismo se avivó en los discursos."

⁴ Although the CONAIE has successfully staged major mobilizations in 2005, 2006, and 2010.

⁵ Data from 2007 (INEC). Poverty rates in rural indigenous zones are even higher.

Each of the three means of post-Cold War social change has turned out to be a mechanism through which the logic of neoliberal governmentality was communicated, legitimized, and reinforced. Together, the mechanisms of neoliberal governmentality have worked through often explicitly anti-neoliberal movements to legitimize the neoliberal project, to structure the field of social contest as to restrict the scope of social change, and to demobilize once strong social movements.

Theoretical Framework

The framework used in this analysis begins with the assertion that neoliberalism is a mode of governance (Foucault 1991) that produces rationalities and subjectivities, and that many activities that have been thought to be anti-neoliberal are themselves products of the rationalities and subjectivities produced through techniques of neoliberal governmentality. I am using government here in the Foucaultian sense as ideas, strategies, theories, and practices that “endeavor to shape, guide, direct the conduct of others,” and oneself (Rose 1999:3). The “target” of government, then, is the population itself (Foucault 1991:100), which is to become self-governing, docile subjects through diverse regulations, practices, and techniques of the self. It is important to note that the state is but one element of governance in this analysis, and, I argue, not always the most influential disciplinary power given the particularities of neoliberalism.

To consider neoliberalism a form of governance requires understanding both the economic philosophy (neo-liberalism) and the ways that economic measures have been rationalized. Economic neoliberalism takes as its core principles the rationality of the market, the importance of the individual as rational actor, and the inefficiency of the state

(Harvey 2005). Based on these economic principles, state budgets and services shrink and the responsibility for welfare shifts to the private sphere. Neoliberalism in practice, or rather those policies and procedures that have come to be known as neoliberalism, however, “were not realizations of any philosophy,” but, rather,

“contingent lash-ups of thought and action, in which various problems of governing were resolved through drawing upon instruments and procedures that happened to be available, in which new ways of governing were invented in a rather *ad hoc* way, as practical attempts to think about and act upon specific problems...But, in the course of this process a certain rationality, call it neo-liberalism, came to provide a way of linking up these various tactics, integrating them *in thought* so that they appeared to partake in a coherent logic. And once they did so, once a kind of rationality could be extracted from them, made to be translatable with them, it could be redirected towards both them and other things, which could now be thought of in the same way.” (Rose 1999:27)

Neoliberalism is a rationality that, at its core, is concerned with a reconfiguration of state-society (and market) relations and so is as much an economic project as a subject-making one (Hale 2006:20; Lucero 2008:132; Postero 2007:6).

The rationality and subjectivities that emerge in any mode of governance do so out of this process of “cobbling together” available techniques that can serve as “a form of truth – [that] establish a kind of ethical basis for [government] action” (Rose 1999:27). Importantly, contestation is itself a part of this process; the logic that emerges is a result of both neoliberal techniques and resistances to those techniques. In other words, there is no power/resistance dichotomy but rather power is exercised and flows through myriad everyday interactions and practices. “There is not a single discourse or strategy of power confronted by forces of resistance, but a set of conflicting points and issues of opposition, alliance, and division of labour. And our present has arisen as much from the logics of contestation as from any imperatives of control” (Ibid.:277).

As Fisher said, to govern is “to structure the field of possible actions of others” (1997:458). Thus, in Rose’s explanation of the analytics of governance, the question of governance becomes, “what conduct has come to be problematized at specific historical moments, the objects and concerns that appear here, and the forces, events, or authorities that have rendered them problematic” (1999:21). The rise of the identity politics era (Hale 1997), or the “return of the Indian” as it has been called in Latin America (Albo 1991), is pointing to a mode of governance in which the exclusion of ethnic minorities has become problematized.

Multiculturalism has been labeled the “cultural project” of neoliberalism (Hale 2004) and targeted indigenous development programs “correlates” of neoliberalism (Lucero 2008:131). It can be argued, however, that beyond “correlates” and “cultural projects,” neoliberal modes of governance have structured the possible actions of contemporary indigenous anti-neoliberal organizations, directly and indirectly through various techniques (Foucault 1991:100), such that those actions have produced self-governing, docile indigenous subjects who are more completely integrated into and act within the confines of neoliberal global capitalism. Until recently, when indigenous resistance was shown to reinforce the neoliberal project it was stated as an “unintended consequence” of paradoxical compatibility (Lucero 2008:121-2). This research reveals, however, that the compatibility results from the processes through which modes of governance are produced; that is, through the implementation of disciplining techniques and resistances to those techniques. Indigenous peoples demands for agrarian reform, education, respect, and infrastructure were shaped into the pursuit of participatory

democracy, cultural citizenship, and development with identity, which became sites of contestation in which the rationalities of neoliberalism shaped indigenous subjects.

At first glance it does not seem possible that the collective rights demanded by indigenous peoples would be compatible with, let alone produced by, a neoliberal project that is thought to embrace only individualism and the free market. Charles Hale has pointed out (2004), however, that subjectivities produced by neoliberal governance are concerned, not with “radical individualism” but with operating within the confines of global capitalism (17). Collectives can be integrated into the neoliberal system just as easily as individuals. Moreover, by legitimating indigenous participation as collective actors and privileging their participation in the state, society, and market, neoliberal governance obscures itself while creating “unspoken parameters” (Ibid.) within which legitimate indigenous engagement can safely (without threatening neoliberal projects) occur. Any indigenous activity that occurs outside these parameters is easily dismissed as illegitimate.

The inclusion of indigenous peoples as culturally differentiated citizens with the right to determine their futures and the future of the states in which they reside has been lauded as the great success of the indigenous organizing that emerged in the 1990s. Indigenous mobilizations have also stopped, or delayed, various neoliberal economic policies from being enacted.⁶ Nonetheless, after twenty years of cultural recognition, participation in the state, and indigenous-directed development, many of the accomplishments have fallen short of the expectations of indigenous actors and their allies. In 2004 long-time activist scholar Charles Hale called for reflection on the very

⁶ In Ecuador various water privatization measures have been defeated through the pressure of massive indigenous mobilizing. Dollarization was similarly delayed by indigenous and popular protest.

things that have until now been celebrated. “While indigenous movements have made great strides over the past two decades, *it is now time to pause and take stock of the limits and the political menace inherent in these very achievements.* (Hale 2004:16, emphasis added). This dissertation answers Hale’s call.

Neoliberal Restructuring and Indigenous Protest in Ecuador

Beginning in the 1970s, Latin America underwent two major changes, democratization and neoliberal economic restructuring. Democratization ended periods of civil war and bloody dictatorships that had wracked much of the region and raised expectations about the quality of life. At the same time, neoliberal restructuring caused many painful reforms, impoverished the middle class, and made survival more difficult for the already poor. Large foreign debts caused economic crises and loan defaults. Governments were forced to implement austerity measures in order to qualify for an International Monetary Fund (IMF) bailout loans. People throughout the continent protested in response to the harsh measures, which tended to increase the cost of living and decrease government social spending.

The story of Ecuador follows the general trends in Latin America more broadly, though there are several things that set Ecuador apart from its neighbors (Schodt 1987).⁷

In 1979 Ecuador celebrated its ‘return to democracy,’ after the second of two military dictatorships (1961-1963 and 1976-1979) came to an end. The return to constitutional rule raised citizens’ expectations about their quality of life and the responsiveness of their

⁷ Schodt notes, for example, that Ecuador did not have the level of *caudillismo* found in other countries because of the early professionalization and middle-class background of the military. Regionalism, the bitter rivalry between the power elites of the coast and the highlands, also makes Ecuador distinctive.

government (León 2004). This was especially true for indigenous Ecuadorians, most of who became eligible to vote for the first time in 1979.⁸ Indigenous Ecuadorians had also been freed from the pre-capitalist labor relations that marked their lives in the highlands with the passage of agrarian reform laws in the 1960s and 1970s. Thus, their expectation was of improved social and economic opportunity.

The expectations that the democratic opening brought were met, unfortunately, with worsening economic conditions. Despite the increases to state income from oil exports that began in 1972, the government accumulated major foreign debt during the 1970s and wasted most of the oil money it had received. Economic troubles in the early 1980s, such as high interest rates, closed international finance markets, and the fall in the price of oil, made it harder to make debt service payments, thus forcing the government to negotiate with the IMF and to move towards a neoliberal economic model (Acosta 2001).

Throughout the 1980s foreign debt continued to grow, reaching a high of 117% of GDP in 1989 (Acosta 2001), while the general economic situation of Ecuadorian families worsened. The conditions imposed by the IMF, which directly and negatively affected the lives of most Ecuadorians, included raising prices on consumer goods, devaluing Ecuador's currency, raising the rates paid for public utilities,⁹ and decreasing social spending. A 2001 report issued by the Ecuadorian government, the World Bank, and Latin American research centers noted that the overall social impact of these structural adjustments was negative and that the policies did not accomplish what they had intended

⁸ The 1979 constitution established universal obligatory suffrage. Before, various restrictions on voting, including literacy requirements were used to disqualify the vast majority of indigenous citizens.

⁹ Raising the price of electricity was a stipulation in six of the nine letters of intent to the IMF signed by the Ecuadorian government between 1983 and 2000 (Acosta 2001).

(CELA 2001); general living standards declined, unemployment grew, and exports declined as a result of the structural adjustment policies implemented in the 1980s and 1990s.

The brunt of the social and economic costs of structural adjustment policies was carried by the indigenous population, as can be seen by comparing national statistics with statistics for the indigenous population.¹⁰ In 1990 73% of the nation but 95% of the rural sector was unable to meet its basic needs (SIISE 2003). By 2001 those numbers had improved slightly, to 61% nationally and 85-90% rurally (Ibid.; CELA 2001:17). One reason for continued indigenous poverty remained their limited access to agricultural lands, with 75% of highland farms possessing only 5 hectares or less (SIISE 2003). Nationally, 92% of arable lands belonged to one-third of landholders (Ibid.). Other social indicators continued to demonstrate that the social and economic situation of indigenous Ecuadorians during this time period was difficult. For example, 53% of adult indigenous women were illiterate in 1999 and had averaged less than 2 years of formal schooling, and only 4% of the entire indigenous population had completed secondary education.¹¹

Although they have faced overwhelming poverty and social exclusion, the indigenous sector has also been the most active in protesting the conditions imposed by neoliberal restructuring. The CONAIE, formed in 1986, became a major social actor as a result of the 1990 Uprising. It went on to lead major mobilizations in 1992, 1994, and

¹⁰ Often the statistics are for the rural sector, rather than the indigenous population in particular. This is for two reasons. First, it is impossible to have an accurate accounting of the numbers of indigenous peoples, with estimates ranging from 4% of the population to upwards of 40% (Chisaguano 2006:17-19). Second, the majority of indigenous people continue to live in rural areas, and rural areas in the highlands and Amazon regions continue to be dominated by indigenous communities. In the province of Cotopaxi, for example, 96% of self-identified indigenous people live in the rural sector (Ibid.).

¹¹ "La exclusión social en el Ecuador: los indígenas y la educación." SIISE. <http://www.siise.gov.ec/IPublicaciones.htm>.

1999 for land reform and against privatization and other structural adjustment measures. In 1997 they led the marches that led to the ouster of President Abadala Bucaram. In 2000 they again ousted a president, Jamil Mahuad, and in 2001 mobilized against his successor, Gustavo Noboa for his implementation of Mahuad's dollarization plan.¹² The CONAIE also led the continental fight against the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) and the subsequent bilateral Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the United States in 2006. In addition, the CONAIE was the main force behind the rewriting of Ecuador's constitution in 1998. The CONAIE's supporters in the constitutional assembly fell short of their primary goal, which was to restructure Ecuador as a plurinational state, but the new constitution did recognize Ecuador's multicultural, multilingual makeup and guarantee various collective rights to indigenous peoples.¹³

To compliment its massive protest mobilizations and ability to overthrow presidents, the CONAIE formed a political party in 1996. Referred to as the Pachakutik,¹⁴ the party was formed in conjunction with the Coordinador de Movimientos Sociales (CMS- Coordinadora de Movimientos Sociales--Social Movements Coordinator), which represented urban social movements and popular sectors. Pachakutik had some immediate success in 1996, with the election of its members to the national congress and to provincial and municipal positions of authority. In the 2002 elections, Pachakutik formed an alliance with Lucio Gutierrez, the military leader who had assisted them in ousting President Mahuad in 2000, which successfully landed Gutierrez in the presidency

¹² In 2001 the official currency of Ecuador became the US dollar.

¹³ Another constitution was signed in 2008. Although the indigenous sector did not participate in the writing of this constitution, it does recognize Ecuador as a plurinational state.

¹⁴ The full name is the Movimiento de Unidad Plurinacional Pachakutik-Nuevo Pais, the Pachakutik Movement of Plurinational Unity- New Country. According to the election laws of Ecuador, the Pachakutik is a political movement, not a party. This simply means that there are different regulations that apply to it than to the more institutionalized parties.

and indigenous leaders in prominent cabinet positions.¹⁵ The party also placed 11 members in the national Congress, and elected 5 provincial prefects, 13 provincial council members, 39 mayors, 61 city council members, and 117 parish council members.¹⁶

The alliance with Gutierrez was short-lived and quite detrimental to the strength of the CONAIE/Pachakutik.¹⁷ Gutierrez himself was ousted in 2005, by pressure from urban sectors in Quito, and the CONAIE/Pachakutik was blamed for bringing him to power. The Pachakutik's strength in local and national elections waned during this time period, as indigenous communities were divided in their loyalties between Pachakutik, the party begun by Gutierrez,¹⁸ and a small evangelical indigenous party, Amauta Jatari, which was begun by former CONAIE president Antonio Vargas.¹⁹ The situation worsened for Pachakutik in the 2006 elections, in which their presidential candidate, long-time CONAIE leader Luis Macas, received less than 5% of the vote. Indigenous-majority cantons in the highlands voted for the PSP (Partido de la Sociedad Patriótica-Party of the Patriotic Society)²⁰ in the first round of elections and current President Rafael Correa in the second round of elections.

¹⁵ Gutierrez and then CONAIE President Antonio Vargas held state power, briefly, in 2000, as two-thirds of the *Junta de la Salvación Nacional*, or Junta of National Salvation. The Junta held power for less than a day, until the Vice-President could be installed.

¹⁶ www.pachakutik.org.ec

¹⁷ CONAIE and Pachakutik are separate organizations, one social and the other electoral. However, Pachakutik authorities are typically members and leaders of the CONAIE and the two organizations are linked together in the popular imaginary.

¹⁸ Partido de la Sociedad Patriótica (PSP- Party of the Patriotic Society). The Gutierrez administration used state resources, such as funds in the Ministry of Social Welfare, to establish strong client networks in many indigenous communities.

¹⁹ Vargas was president of the CONAIE in 2000 and, as mentioned, was part of the Junta that established Lucio Gutierrez as a national political figure. He was Amauta Jatari's presidential candidate in the 2002 elections, against Gutierrez, but sided with Gutierrez after the President's split with CONAIE and eventually became the Minister of Welfare.

²⁰ The former president's brother was the PSP presidential candidate.

Grounding the Research in Local Experiences

“Hegemonic or global forms of power rely in the first instance on those ‘infinitesimal’ practices, composed of their own particular techniques and tactics, which exist in those institutions on the fringes or at the micro-level of society” (Foucault 1980: 99).

The CONAIE is hierarchically structured, with thousands of indigenous communities forming the base of the organization. Each community is affiliated with what are called second tier organizations (OSG-Organizaciones de Segundo Grado), which, depending on the location, can represent all of the communities of a parish or canton. The OSGs are grouped together in third tier organizations (OTG–Organizaciones de Tercer Grado), at the provincial level. Finally, the OTGs belong to one of three regional organizations, Ecuarrunari (Ecuador Runakunapac Riccharimui- Awakening of Ecuadorian Indigenous/Kichwas) in the highlands, CONFENAIE (Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas de la Amazonía Ecuatoriana -- Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon) in the Amazon, and CONAICE (Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas de la Costa Ecuatoriana--Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Coast of Ecuador) in the coast, which in turn all belong to the CONAIE. The organizational structure, which will be analyzed more thoroughly in chapter two, allows for the extreme diversity of experiences in the three regions of the country as well as in the micro-regions within each province.

All too often studies of social movements mask the heterogeneity of experiences in order to present a cohesive narrative of *the movement*. The scalar nature of organizing, which is particularly pronounced in the CONAIE,²¹ is easily overlooked when studies

²¹ It will be demonstrated in chapter two, for example, that there is not a shared ideology or vision of what the movement should be within the CONAIE.

focus on the official discourse of a movement organization. When the diverse local experiences are considered, however, it draws attention to the difficulty in pin-pointing a single given position or experience as belonging to the indigenous movement organization in its entirety. The CONAIE is made up of many people, after all, from an indigenous woman in an Amazonian community who struggles for her children to have a better education to an internationally recognized leader who has given speeches at the United Nations (and the University of Michigan). Recent scholarship has begun to correct for the neglect of the community and OSG in previous indigenous movement studies (Korovkin 2001; Perreault 2003b) by spending time in communities and OSGs. As Perreault argues (2002), “attention to the micropolitical scale forces attention to the scalar nature of processes and the manner in which they interact within and between different scales of the organization” (14). That is, the best way to capture the diversity of lived experiences, and gain an understanding of how those lived experiences relate to experiences at other scalar levels of the organization, is to first ground the work in the community and OSG and then scale up to the provincial, regional, national, and transnational levels.

In order to capture the scales of the movement, then, the current study focuses its research in one location, a community in the canton of Saquisilí, which is located in the province of Cotopaxi, roughly 50 miles south of Quito. Saquisilí is a rather small canton, with 120 square miles of territory and 20,000 inhabitants. The population is split between the rural, indigenous sectors, organized in 39 communities, which make up 65% of the total population, and the remaining 35% of the population in the urban and semi-urban, primarily mestizo sector. Saquisilí is home to one of the largest weekly markets in

Ecuador; every Thursday vendors and buyers from throughout the highlands come to buy and sell produce, livestock, clothing, and household goods. Although not as poor overall as some areas of Cotopaxi, Saquisilí does have a significant incidence of child malnutrition, 40% overall and 61% rurally (Calero and Molina 2010), a majority (84%) of the population unable to meet basic needs (SIISE 2003), and poor agricultural conditions, with only 1% of arable lands being irrigated.²² As in the rest of Ecuador, poverty is concentrated among the rural, indigenous population. The rural Saquisilí parish of Canchagua is indicative of this pattern, with 95% of the population living below the poverty line (Kaltmeier 2008:13). Economic activity in Saquisilí is centered on agriculture and commerce. In the 2001 census²³ 13% of respondents were classified as commercial vendors and 33% worked in agriculture or livestock. In the rural areas, agriculture and livestock are the dominant industries, representing 70% of the rural population.

Historically, rural Saquisilí was dominated by extensive land holdings called haciendas. Beginning in 1930 the vast majority of land in Saquisilí belonged to the Central University, located in Quito,²⁴ with an additional number of smaller, private haciendas and what were known as free communities.²⁵ Rather than using the haciendas for their own production, however, the University rented out the properties to various wealthy individuals. Most indigenous people in Saquisilí worked for the large haciendas as *huasipungueros*, a Kichwa term literally meaning people at the door of the house. The

²² This statistic was presented by employees of one NGO working in Saquisilí, on November 26, 2004, and recorded in fieldnotes from that same date.

²³ Calculated using the INEC database, available at www.inec.gov.ec.

²⁴ Kaltmeier (2008) provides an excellent history of the haciendas in Saquisilí, and their transfer from owner Gallo Almeida to the Universidad Central (see especially 19-22).

²⁵ Groups of indigenous families living on land not held by the hacienda.

huasipunguero worked for the hacienda in exchange for usufruct rights on a piece of the hacienda's land, called the *hausipungo*, and a small wage.²⁶ Those who were not *huasipungueros* often ended owing the hacienda some amount of labor each week, without pay, for the use of hacienda resources, typically water, pasture, foot paths and firewood.

Despite the horribly exploitative relations that typified the hacienda, indigenous Ecuadorians were able to begin struggling for better working conditions, better pay, and, eventually, for the right to own the land that they had worked for generations. Agrarian reform laws were passed in the 1960s and 1970s, and legally recognized communities were formed to take advantage of the agrarian laws and to provide some limited collective protections.²⁷ Today, the lands have been divided among the individual families of each community, with little communal land existing. The agricultural conditions are not good, however, particularly with the scarcity of water in the canton. More and more, families are searching for non-agricultural sources of income, including migrant labor in cities, and focusing on advanced education for the youth.

In the 1980s the communities came together in a search for unity and as a means for improving the quality of life in rural Saquisilí. They formed what is today the OSG known as Jatarishun,²⁸ which is the largest social organization in Saquisilí. The Jatarishun represents all of the communities in the canton of Saquisilí, as well as various other social groups, such as the indigenous catechists, the bilingual teachers, and informal laborers.

²⁶ In practice, the meager wages were seldom paid.

²⁷ The Law of Communes (Ley de Comunas), of 1937, established this right. It will be discussed in chapter two.

²⁸ Jatarishun stands for Jatun Tantanakuy Runakunapak Inka Shimipi Uyasha Ninchik, which the organization translates as Unión de Organizaciones Indígenas (Union of Indigenous Organizations).

Early leaders of the Jatarishun were also central to the formation of the MICC, the Movimiento Indígena y Campesino de Cotopaxi (Indigenous and Peasant Movement of Cotopaxi), which is the OTG representing all of the OSGs in the province of Cotopaxi.²⁹

One thing that distinguishes Saquisilí from most other cantons is the level of electoral success that Pachakutik has enjoyed there. Between 1996 and 2007 indigenous Pachakutik mayors and city council members controlled the local government of Saquisilí. They opened the doors of the municipal building to indigenous people and instituted a participatory budget planning process, designed to focus on the most important areas of development. The Saquisilí mayor's office sought funding from NGOs and also from the provincial government, which from 2002 was headed by Prefect Cesar Umajinga, an indigenous leader and member of Pachakutik.³⁰

As will be discussed below, the research concentrated on one particular community, here called Yacu Chico. This community is generally typical of the other large communities in Saquisilí.³¹ Its population is divided between Catholics and Protestants, with roughly half belonging to each religion. There had been conflicts over religion in the past but, like most places in the highlands, the people of Yacu Chico have accepted the two religions. The community elects its officers once a year and holds regular, usually monthly, assemblies to decide on matters related to the community. Every community member must participate in the regular *mingas*, which are communal

²⁹ Cotopaxi is home to the third largest indigenous population in the highlands (13% of all Kichwas), with at least 24% of the population identifying as indigenous (Chisaguano 2006). The history as well as social and economic conditions of indigenous people in Cotopaxi as a whole are similar to those described here for Saquisilí.

³⁰ The prefect is the top elected office in a given province. Each province also has a governor, who is appointed to represent the president of Ecuador.

³¹ There has been a tendency for sectors of large communities to break off and form their own legally recognized community. According to discussions in the Jatarishun, this move was generally because of the desire to have a school closer to the sector's location or because of power disputes among family groups.

workdays, generally for infrastructure maintenance and development projects, pay dues, and generally follow any mandates agreed upon by the community. Assemblies and *mingas* are becoming harder to schedule, though, because many households migrate to Quito, or other urban areas, for work, and not all of them return regularly. In the more remote and less arable communities, during the week one only encounters those who are too old or too young to work in Quito. The people of Yacu Chico speak a mix of Kichwa and Spanish, with small numbers of monolingual Kichwa speakers and growing numbers of monolingual Spanish speakers. Yacu Chico is an important community in the history of the Jatarishun, as its members and leaders have participated from its inception.

A Brief Note on Terminology

Throughout the dissertation I primarily use the term indigenous or indigenous people. Most of the recent scholarly work on indigenous movements does so as well, although other terms used include Indian, Kichwa, and Runa (a Kichwa term meaning people). I use the term Indian in particular phrases for theoretical purposes, or in direct quotations. However, I prefer the term indigenous because it is the term that is most often used, in Ecuador, by indigenous people and their organizations. The terms ‘communities’ and ‘rural people’ are also sometimes used interchangeably with the term indigenous. The community is an official, state recognized administrative unit and, though not the case throughout Ecuador, all of the communities referred to in the current study are made up of indigenous people.

In addition, I have elected to spell Kichwa, which is the name of the largest indigenous nationality in Ecuador and their native language, according to its recently

standardized spelling, rather than the previous Quichua. Again, here I follow the lead of the organizations themselves. When assigning fictitious names to people and places I assign them in Kichwa, Spanish, or a mix, in accordance with the true name. Please note that most indigenous people have Spanish names because, until recently, no indigenous names were on the list of state-approved names from which parents could select their child's name. Today, any name may be given but only a limited number of indigenous activists have begun to use Kichwa names.

Methodology

My preliminary research began in the summer of 2002. I attended the Arizona State University Ecuador Summer Field School, which is a six-week program of study. The program includes intensive Kichwa language classes as well as courses on Kichwa culture and research considerations in Kichwa communities. I was able to supplement the summer language training with Quechua³² courses at the University of Michigan. By the time I began my main research period I was able to effectively communicate in Kichwa and Spanish. In addition to the Field School, I conducted formal interviews during this preliminary research period and met with academics in Quito.

The majority of fieldwork was conducted between October 2004 and July 2006 and consisted primarily of participant observation and interviews. Participant observation occurred simultaneously in three primary sites: the community of Yacu Chico,³³ the

³² Kichwa is a dialect of the Quechua language spoken in Bolivia and Peru.

³³ The name means Little Water in a mix of Spanish and Kichwa. I have assigned the community a fictitious name, so as to keep anonymous the identity of community members with whom I most interacted. I use the proper names of communities when necessary for the historical context, however, and fictitious names when necessary to protect the identity of the speaker.

second-level indigenous movement organization (OSG) that represents the 39 communities of Saquisilí, the Jatarishun,³⁴ and the indigenous organization representing all of the OSGs in Cotopaxi, the MICC.³⁵ Between November 2004 and November 2005 I resided with a family in Yacu Chico and participated in the formal and informal life of the community (and the family). Formal interactions included monthly meetings of the community assembly and of an agricultural cooperative to which many community members belonged, irregular assembly meetings that took place when urgent matters arose, religious and secular celebrations such as baptisms and graduation parties, and frequent communal work days called *mingas*. Informal community life revolved around the daily exigencies of rural life, such as waiting for collective taxis to pass by on their way to Saquisilí.

During the time that I lived in Yacu Chico, I would travel to Saquisilí on most weekdays in order to conduct participant observation at the Jatarishun and, on days when I went to Latacunga, at MICC. In general, I tried to model my daily schedule on that of a Jatarishun leader. Typical activities in which I participated included monthly assemblies, special workshops or meetings, visits to communities for various reasons, formal meetings with government or NGO personnel, planning meetings, and traditional ceremonies.³⁶ In addition, much time was spent sitting around the office, talking with community members and leaders and doing administrative work, such as typing official

³⁴ Jatun Tantanakuy Runakunapak Inka Shimipi Uyasha Ninchik, translated to signify the Union of Indigenous Organizations of Saquisilí.

³⁵ Movimiento Indígena y Campesino de Cotopaxi- Indigenous and Peasant Movement of Cotopaxi. Generally, “peasant” is dropped out of the name when referred to in conversation and the local media. That is, the organization is generally referred to as ‘the indigenous movement.’

³⁶ There was an association of shamans (traditional healers) that was in the process of formation and they invited me to participate with them on two occasions. Once, for a cleansing ceremony at Quilotoa Lake and a second time for a *pachamanka*, literally earth pot, a traditional cooking technique that has fallen out of practice.

letters. I also participated in weekend workshops, volunteered at the bilingual high school (Colegio Jatarishun), and attended major provincial and national organization meetings.

Participation in the Jatarishun and, most importantly, my one-year residence in Yacu Chico, helped me to gain access to community members and leaders in ways that would have otherwise been impossible. I believe that my rapport with (most of) the community members came from their seeing me do the same things that they did. I worked hard (with sometimes comic results³⁷) at the *mingas* and ate lunch from communal piles of food, I sat through the seemingly interminable assembly meetings on hard wood benches (or the cold cement floor), and suffered the cold wind while standing like packed sardines in the bed of a pickup truck on the morning commute down to town.³⁸ In addition, I offered my time to community members and the Jatarishun. In Yacu Chico I tutored English, took and printed photographs for groups and individuals, and collaborated in other small ways whenever possible. At the Jatarishun, I was asked to facilitate focus groups for developing the organization's long-term plan, give talks on various topics, and type documents.³⁹

From November 2005 through July 2006 I lived in Latacunga, the provincial capitol of Cotopaxi, a 20-minute drive from Saquisilí. Although the access and credibility

³⁷ I attempted every task that was assigned to community members. When we trekked to the highest community lands to collect *paja*, the grass used for thatching roofs, among other things, I pulled *paja* with all my might. My pile of *paja* was pathetically small in comparison to everyone else's, however, including children. It was not a big contribution to the work of collecting *paja* but I provided some comic relief as everyone had a good laugh.

³⁸ I mention these things to highlight that these choices made me stand out in comparison to other 'outsiders' who have come to the communities. My life in Yacu Chico was still more comfortable than most everyone else's.

³⁹ The Jatarishun was most interested in my volunteering to teach English at Colegio Jatarishun, the bilingual high school affiliated with the organization. This high school met on the weekends, which was also when most community meetings and *mingas* were held. As a compromise, I worked at the high school on Sundays, unless it conflicted with other community or organization activities.

afforded me as a result of my residence in Yacu Chico was invaluable, it also limited my mobility. During the second half of the participant observation, then, I moved to Latacunga and purchased a car in order to make day trips to Yacu Chico and other communities. I continued to participate in community activities and in the Jatarishun's daily activities. However, I was also able, during this time period, to conduct more formal interviews, attend meetings that occurred in the evenings, and more easily access libraries and other relevant events in Quito. In addition, I conducted a very brief research trip to the province of Chimborazo, where I participated in a municipal assembly and conducted formal interviews. Although some ethnographic moments were lost with the purchase of a car, others were gained. I became more valuable to leaders who did not have access to a vehicle and was able to transport small numbers of community members in my car, which provided a more confidential environment for conversation.

In addition to participant observation, I conducted formal semi-structured interviews. The interviews were semi-structured in order to be able to adapt them to the position of the individual being interviewed and to the changing political, social and economic contexts. Interviews were tape recorded, conducted in Spanish,⁴⁰ and ranged from 30 minutes to 10 hours.⁴¹ The interviews were conducted primarily with community and organization leaders. However, I also interviewed people who could be considered "outsiders" to the movement. In particular, I interviewed people who began as indigenous members or *mestizo* allies of the movement but who have since separated from, or

⁴⁰ I speak and understand basic Kichwa. For older interviewees who I knew to be more comfortable operating in Kichwa, I asked them to speak in Kichwa during the interviews and told them that I would work with a translator to transcribe the interviews. However, they preferred to answer in Spanish.

⁴¹ Typical interviews lasted 45 minutes to 1.5 hours. The longest interviews were conducted over multiple days.

become outspokenly critical of, the movement. Table 1.1 provides a list of formal interviews, and identifies each interviewee’s affiliation. It is difficult to identify an affiliation for most movement participants because of the scalar nature of organizational participation. For example, every one identified as an OSG leader is also a base community member. The people identified as Pachakutik from Cotopaxi have, in every case, also been leaders of MICC, an OSG, and a community. Thus, the categorization of interviewees should be taken only as a rough indication of the individual’s affiliation at the time of this research.

Table 1-1: Interviews with Community Members

Name	Affiliation	Date	Interview Location
Wilfredo	Yacu Chico	Sept. 8, 2005	Saquisilí
Salvador	Yacu Chico	June 25, 2006	Yacu Chico
Joaquin	Yacu Chico	Feb. 11, 2005	Saquisilí
Carlos	Napo Community	July 12, 2002	Tena
Cynthia	Napo Community	July 17, 2002	Tena

Table 1-2: Interviews with OSG Leaders

Name	Affiliation	Date	Interview Location
Cesar	Jatarishun	May 2005	Saquisilí
Bartolo	Jatarishun	Feb. 15, 2006	Saquisilí
Diego	Jatarishun	May 2005 ⁴²	Saquisilí

⁴² The specific dates of some interviews were not recorded.

Ofelia	Jatarishun	Sept. 7, 2005	Saquisilí
Ricardo	Jatun Ayllu	June 1, 2006	Chimborazo

Table 1-3: Interviews with OTG (Third Level Organizations) Leaders

Name	Affiliation	Date	Interview Location
Jorge	MICC	June 25, 2006	Latacunga
Juan Carlos	MICH	May 30, 2006	Riobamba
Segundo	FOIN	July 16, 2002	Tena
Marco	OPIP	July 8, 2002	Puyo

Table 1-4: Interviews with Pachakutik Leaders and Elected Officials

Name	Affiliation	Date	Interview Location
Patricio	Pachakutik	May 31, 2006	Chimborazo
Martin	Pachakutik	May 25, 2006	Riobamba
Manuel	Pachakutik	May 31, 2006	Chimborazo
Alejandro	Pachakutik	Feb. 2006	Latacunga
Fernando	Pachakutik	May 2002	Quito
Nestor	Pachakutik	May 23, 2002	Latacunga
Wilson	Pachakutik	July 24, 2008	Saquisilí

Table 1-5: Interviews with Regional and National Organization Leaders

Name	Affiliation	Date	Interview Location
Luís	Ecuadorunari	May 2006	Quito
Pablo	CONAIE	May 2006	Quito

Cristóbal	CONAICE	May 18, 2002	Esmeraldas
Edison	CONAIE	June 4, 2002	Quito
Antonio	CONFENAIE	July 8, 2002	Puyo

Table 1-6: Interviews with Others (Indigenous unless noted)

Name	Affiliation	Date	Interview Location
Eduardo	Bilingual Education	Jan. 2, 2006	Latacunga
Rodolfo	Catholic Church (mestizo)	June 27, 2006	Latacunga
Danilo	Catholic Church (mestizo)	May 2006	Latacunga
Galo	CODENPE (mestizo)	May-June 2002	Quito
Arturo	Radio Latacunga	January 24, 2006	Latacunga
Sisa	Ex-member MICC	July 4, 2006	Latacunga
Humberto	Ex-member MICC	Oct. 2006	United States
Victor	Ex-ally (mestizo)	Feb. 20, 2006	Latacunga
Jaime	Ex-ally (mestizo)	April 26, 2005	Latacunga
Marisol	Ex-ally (mestizo)	Feb. 2006	Quito
León	Ex-ally (mestizo)	Jan. 23, Jan. 29, Feb. 28, and Mar. 5 2006	Latacunga

The final research method employed was a limited number of focus groups. The leaders of the Jatarishun asked me to facilitate focus groups in several communities as part of their efforts to develop a long-term strategic plan (this process figures prominently in chapter five). The topics of discussion were relevant to my research and I was given permission to use all of the available data. Each focus group was a daylong meeting with 15-45 community members present each time, and the time was divided between collective conversation and small group work. Focus groups were mixed in terms of age, gender, and level of experience with the organization. The collective conversations and group presentations were recorded.

There are limitations to the methodologies employed in this study. First, the local and regional contexts in which indigenous organizing takes place limit the generalizability from any given location to another. The geographical location of Saquisilí along with its status as a large weekly market, segregated urban and rural populations, and indigenous mayor (during the research period) set it apart, in important ways, from many other indigenous organizing contexts. An important particularity of Cotopaxi is that, unlike most other provinces, the indigenous organizations and the indigenous-led political party are not formally separated. While it is important to keep in mind the particularities that make Saquisilí a unique case, the advantage is that Saquisilí had a strong organizing history and more Pachakutik electoral success than anywhere else in the country.

A second limitation of this study is that, although I interacted with hundreds of indigenous community members in Yacu Chico and the Jatarishun, my direct interactions were limited to those people who were active in the social life of the community and to

those who were willing to interact with me. There were many people in Yacu Chico that I never met, including those who worked in Quito or elsewhere for many months at a time,⁴³ several elderly people who were confined to their homes, and others who did not regularly participate in community social life. In addition, most of the direct interactions occurred in Spanish. Although I could speak and understand most conversations in Kichwa, there was a general reluctance to speak directly to me in Kichwa. Typically only those people comfortable speaking Spanish would engage me directly in conversation. Most of the formal meetings that I attended were conducted in a mix of Spanish and Kichwa so my field notes have been translated from both languages. All translations are my own, unless otherwise noted.

Finally, I acknowledge that my own subject position, as a white female academic from the United States, influenced my fieldwork, in ways that I could never fully know. As Postero notes (2007:98), being a *gringa* (white woman, usually from the US or Europe, as the term is used in Ecuador) presented both opportunities and challenges. First, as a *gringa* I was sometimes afforded the social roles common to indigenous men. That is, I was allowed to enter arenas typically reserved for men and behave like a man in those contexts. Rather than serving food, a typical woman's role, I would be invited to sit and eat at the head table, for example. It was accepted that *gringas* were *carishina* (manlike).⁴⁴ There were, nonetheless, a set of safety issues to deal with that were also related to this same dynamic. There were many occasions when I did not participate in an

⁴³ I did interact with people who returned to the community periodically, including some community members who returned every weekend and others who only returned for important family events.

⁴⁴ There are several connotations with the word *carishina*, but it can mean one that is always out of the house, which is also known as *allku chaki* (dog foot).

activity because of the potential for such issues.⁴⁵ Second, as time passed on, my presence began to be accepted, or go unnoticed, in a way that could be related to gender. I was dismissed as unthreatening, perhaps, because of my gender. Third, my very *gringa*-ness was a type of capital that extended well beyond any economic opportunity that people perceived me to present.⁴⁶ Rather, leaders of the Jatarishun, and others, often invited me places and introduced me in ways that suggested they were ‘showing off’ *their gringa* as a way of legitimizing themselves and their organizations.⁴⁷ Finally, my own perceptions of people and situations were certainly influenced by my race, class, gender, and nationality. There were differences in daily life that were challenging to my own sensibilities, particularly with regards to gender inequality and corruption. I attempted to remain aware of my own perceptions and how they affected my fieldwork findings by analyzing particularly strong or negative reactions as they occurred. There were potentially many other biases of which I remain unaware, including ways in which I constructed my ‘self’ as ethnographer, in relation to the ‘others’ of my research (Clifford 1986:23-24).

Despite the limitations discussed above, ethnographic methods are well suited for answering the research questions presented here. Participant observation and in-depth

⁴⁵ For example, during the brief research in the Amazonian region (Puyo), I did not camp overnight at the CONFENAIE headquarters, with the male leaders, because all of the other women went back to town. It was one of the moments when being the only woman present felt like a problem.

⁴⁶ It was often assumed that I had connections to a NGO project or would otherwise somehow provide economic assistance to people near me.

⁴⁷ There was some dissatisfaction in other communities that Yacu Chico had ‘stolen’ the *gringa*. I do not want to suggest that every community was anxious to have me live with them but there were several community representatives that approached me and asked me to live in their community. The Jatarishun itself requested that I spend a few weeks living in each community so that I could gain an overview of the whole organization and so that there would not be bad feelings between the communities. However, moving every few weeks would have limited the depth of participant observation. Instead, I lived in Yacu Chico but visited other communities whenever possible and volunteered at Colegio Jatarishun, which enrolled students from throughout Saquisilí.

interviews capture lived, everyday experiences. In this case, ethnography allowed the experiences of typically marginalized groups, non-leaders and those that have been shut out of the movement organizations, to be counted among the many experiences making up indigenous organizing in Ecuador. The study presented here aims to understand how the opportunities and limitations presented by neoliberalism have been experienced by indigenous Ecuadorians, for which ethnography is a useful approach.

Overview

The dissertation is organized into six chapters. Chapter two provides a history of indigenous organizing in Saquisilí and chapters three through five each take as their focus one of the three forms of social change pursued by indigenous organizations in Ecuador. Each of these chapters serves as an analytic of neoliberal governance while also contributing to the literature regarding its specific topic.

Chapter two begins with the most basic of the CONAIE's accomplishments: its recognition as a legitimate social actor and representative of indigenous peoples in Ecuador. This chapter addresses issues of articulation (Hall 1996), which is to say representation and legitimization, through an analysis of the acceptance of the CONAIE as the most legitimate social actor in Ecuador during the 1990s. The chapter formulates the need to analyze articulatory processes through a local-historical lens, paying special attention to the silences in the discursive structures that emerged and the flow of power. Next, the chapter takes up the historical narrative of the CONAIE, and particularly of the 1990 Uprising that marked CONAIE's emergence as the legitimate representative of indigenous Ecuadorians. The analysis focuses on local actors in Saquisilí and

demonstrates how historically heterogeneous organizing efforts were eventually cobbled together as the CONAIE, which became the official representative of all Ecuadorian indigenous groups. Finally, the analysis highlights the particular consequences that flowed from the legitimization of the CONAIE. By exposing the role of neoliberal governance in that accomplishment, this chapter sets up the need to more closely evaluate the subsequent accomplishments of the CONAIE and the “menace” inherent in them (Hale 2004).

Chapter three considers participation within government decision-making spaces through an analysis of the indigenous-led alternative local government (ALG) in Saquisilí (1996-2009) and its participatory budgeting process. An ALG is defined as any local government that has reformed its institutions to incorporate citizen participation and oversight. In the chapter it is argued that a variety of actors, with diverse motivations, constitute and operate within participatory institutions. Despite the radical discourse of the ALG in Saquisilí, actors were able to creatively use the spaces for other goals. For example, neoliberal development agents used the ALG to promote the goals of neoliberalism; they dominated the ALG process because of the economic power they wield. Likewise, communities and leaders used the ALG budgeting process, which is designed to be citizen-directed and transparent, to continue funding political patronage networks (political clientelism). Often there were demonstrations of participation and performances of transparency in local state-society interactions that were enacted in order to fit the discursive structure of participatory, radical democracy, but the performances did not change the expectation that interaction would occur through clientelism.

Chapter four takes up the issue of political incorporation of indigenous citizens and explores how the simultaneous inclusion and exclusion of indigenous Ecuadorians works. It is argued that a symbolic role, here called Indigenous Gentleman, has been created for indigenous Ecuadorians' incorporation into the nation. The Indigenous Gentlemen (modeled after Hale and Millaman's "authorized Indian" [2006]) are modern, formally educated, professionals who speak Spanish well, and who maintain important elements of recognized (authentic) indigenous culture, specifically language, dress, and worldview. Indigenous Gentlemen are accepted by Ecuadorian national society. However, the majority of indigenous Ecuadorians do not possess the economic, social, or linguistic resources to ever be considered Indigenous Gentlemen. They are labeled the 'Indian Other' and are considered culturally lost. They speak neither their native language nor Spanish well, for example, and despite the help that the nation has given them are unwilling or unable to move forward. Although the two categories seem fairly fixed, it is impossible for any 'actually existing' indigenous Ecuadorian to occupy the Indigenous Gentleman category in more than the most tenuous manner. Performing indigeneity that is at once authentic and recognizable has proven impossible.

In chapter five how development shaped indigenous peoples into neoliberal subjects, with the cultural identity specifically desired by agents of development, and confined indigenous social movement organizations (SMOs) to demands deemed permissible for the dominant development paradigm, "development with identity" is demonstrated. The chapter begins by illustrating the pervasiveness of development agents and projects in indigenous SMOs and the everyday lives of Indigenous Ecuadorians. Next, the chapter elaborates the way that indigenous culture was defined and imposed by

development agents. The imposed identity, or indigeneity from above, thus channeled indigenous demands, and indeed people, into ways of being that were permissible because they matched neoliberal conceptions of authentic indigeneity. Finally, the chapter concludes by demonstrating how SMOs were trapped in the development paradigm, unable to put forward a contestatory political project, which would conflict with the neoliberal paradigm. The result was a perpetual state of under-development for Indigenous Ecuadorians, since projects failed to make a significant improvement in poverty rates, and the legitimization of the neoliberal mode of governance.

By way of conclusion, chapter six summarizes arguments made in each chapter and offers an analysis of how participatory democracy, cultural citizenship, and development with identity, individually, are mechanisms of neoliberal governmentality. In practice, the three mechanisms are intertwined and combine to make a larger program of neoliberal governance. This larger program has produced a difficult context for social transformation. In Ecuador, social movements have been demobilized, the neoliberal project has been legitimized, and the scope of transformations considered has been reduced such that radical changes do not appear possible from within the spaces created by neoliberalism.

CHAPTER 2

Articulating Indigeneity: The Rise of the CONAIE

In the 1990s indigenous movements in Latin America surprised the world with their massive organizing force and novel demands. Some of the surprise stemmed from the belief, held by most analysts, that indigenous people were rapidly acculturating and so were doomed to disappear as a social entity (Warren and Jackson 2002). Instead, indigenous peoples throughout the continent demanded that they be recognized and respected as indigenous Nationalities and Peoples⁴⁸, with the collective rights that designation entailed.

Many scholars have taken up the task of explaining why indigenous movements emerged at that time and why they have been so successful in gaining the rights and recognition so long denied indigenous peoples. Despite convincing and useful explanation of the emergence of indigenous movements, the literature has not investigated why the particular indigenous movement organizations that emerged did so. How, given the multitude of organizing practices in indigenous Latin America, did particular movement organizations, which articulated indigenous identification in particular ways, become recognized as representative of indigenous peoples? Why did indigenous people organize as indigenous Nationalities and Peoples and why were they accepted and legitimized by local and global actors?

⁴⁸ I use capitalization here to highlight that Nacionalidades y Pueblos is constructed as indigenous identification. I use the term peoples throughout the text, without capitalization, to designate a more general social grouping.

The CONAIE is one of the indigenous organizations that has most intrigued scholars, as it entered the world stage with such dramatic force in the 1990 Uprising, united the disparate indigenous populations of the Amazon, Highlands, and Coast, and quickly took a leadership role in the continent-wide mobilization and organization of indigenous peoples in the 1990s. As one leading scholar qualified, CONAIE is Latin America's "strongest, oldest, and most consequential indigenous movement" (Yashar 2005: 85). And yet, at the time of the 1990 Uprising the CONAIE was an unknown group of indigenous intellectuals interested, primarily, in bilingual education. The masses that participated in the Uprising were local communities and nascent trans-communal organizations that came out of the processes of communalization, agrarian reform and land conflicts, development, liberation theology, and leftist political organizing. How, then, did the CONAIE, which was unknown to the majority of Uprising participants, become recognized as the organization responsible for the Uprising and the most legitimate representative of all indigenous Ecuadorians?

These questions can most fruitfully be addressed as issues of articulation. How do movement identities, and subsequent demands, tactics, and strategies (Clemens 1996), become articulated in the "double" sense of expression toward other actors, "vertical voice" and of the forming (conjoining) of a collective identity "horizontal voice" (Lucero 2008:4, 48; see also Clifford 2001:477-8)? If collective identities are productive, in that they create what they are said to represent (Lucero 2008:114), and if power can be viewed as the ability to define, then what role do hegemonic forces have in shaping the collective identities expressed by social movement actors? How do some collective

identities become legitimized and others not? What consequences flow from the legitimization of a given collective actor?

These are all important questions to answer for two reasons. First, recent scholarship has pointed to a strong relationship between identity and the strategies and structures of organizations. Despite the importance of identity, then, there is still not enough known about the process through which collective identity is constructed. Second, understanding the process of constructing a legitimate indigenous voice tells us something about the constellation of power through and by which agents of social change must navigate. That, in turn, informs the analysis for other topics related to indigenous movements.

This chapter addresses issues of articulation, which is to say representation and legitimization, through an analysis of the acceptance of the CONAIE as a legitimate social actor in Ecuador during the 1990s. The chapter begins with a review of the literature on the emergence of indigenous movements in the 1990s and formulates the need to analyze articulatory processes through a local-historical lens, paying special attention to the silences in the discursive structures that emerged and the flow of power. Next, the chapter takes up the historical narrative of the CONAIE, and particularly of the 1990 Uprising that marked CONAIE's emergence as the legitimate representative of indigenous Ecuadorians. The analysis focuses on local actors in Saquisilí and demonstrates how the histories of heterogeneous organizing efforts were hastily combined as the CONAIE. There were many agents who played a role in this cobbling together and the evidence highlights the role of neoliberal actors in selecting and legitimating the CONAIE. Finally, the analysis highlights particular consequences that

flow from the legitimization of the CONAIE. The CONAIE's success in gaining legitimacy is the first of its major accomplishments.

Explaining the Emergence of Indigenous Identity-Based Movements during the 1990s

That indigenous identified movements emerged in the 1990s was a surprise to most social scientists. Globalization was thought to be homogenizing the world and the specificity of ethnic identity was set to disappear. Moreover, indigenous people had been exploited for nearly 500 years. It seemed unlikely that they would suddenly embrace such stigmatized labels.⁴⁹ This was particularly accepted in the Latin American context due to the more transient and cultural, rather than biological, bases on which ethnic distinctions were made. Indigenous people could opt out of their indigeneity by becoming *cholos* and mestizos (De la Cadena 2000; Stutzman 1981). Despite the many reasons why new organizations should not have formed around indigenous identity, they did.

Scholars have produced three explanations for the rise of indigenous identified organizations in the 1990s:⁵⁰ the state, globalization, and identity construction. Each of these explanations contributes to understanding the reasons why movements emerged when and where they did. However, as will be demonstrated below, the first two of these explanations do not address the question of why particular indigenous identities emerged and were politicized in specific times and places. The third approach does consider the

⁴⁹ Examples of particular stigmatized labels include *indio* (Indian) which is even today used to describe objects or people negatively. In some cases, indigenous Ecuadorians have also embraced the term *runa*, meaning people in Kichwa, but used to designate indigenous/Kichwa people. I use the term indigenous throughout, rather than Indian, because it is the term most often used by indigenous Ecuadorians.

⁵⁰ Deborah Yashar identifies two additional explanations, primordialism and instrumentalism, that have been applied to indigenous movements by laypeople and NGOs (2005:9-13).

dialogic process of identity construction, which would explain why particular forms of indigenous identity emerged, but does not consider the role of power in the ‘dialogue.’ The concept of articulation, as outlined by Stuart Hall, will be employed here in order to ascertain why certain indigenous actors emerged and were legitimized at that particular historical moment. The politics of articulation, in a historically grounded approach, unpacks the ways in which indigeneity has been articulated and how groups are positioned within a given field of articulation.

The State, Citizenship, and Indigenous Autonomy

The state-centered theory developed at a time when many scholars had declared the state was no longer the primary target of contemporary social movement action. New social movements were not concerned with taking over the state in the old Left sense but rather sought to change society and the way people viewed themselves and each other. State-centered theories, however, have convincingly argued that the state remained the intermediary between social movement members and the processes of globalization (Beverley 1999). Yashar’s 2005 book is the best example of the state-centered explanation and will be reviewed here (but see Otero 2003 for a review of other state-centered approaches). Yashar’s core argument is that states actively shape identity politics by validating, privileging, or at times opposing, a given identity category. The sudden rise of indigenous identity-based movements was a result of states shifting away from their recognition of corporatist groups⁵¹, which had inadvertently allowed spaces of

⁵¹ Corporatism has been defined as “state-designated forms of political representation and mediation between the state and societal groups” (Yashar 2005:48).

limited autonomy for indigenous communities, and towards a new state-society relation that therefore threatened those autonomous spaces.

As Yashar explains, Latin American states shifted to a new type of “citizenship regime,” which she defined as “a complex of state institutions” that define “*who* has political membership, *which* rights they possess, and *how* interest intermediation with the state is structured” (2005:16, emphasis in the original). Latin American states had, historically, constructed corporatist or populist citizenship regimes. However, beginning in the 1970s states began shifting to a neoliberal citizenship regime. The move thereby politicized indigenous identities because the new regimes ceased to recognize the corporatist collective units through which indigenous people had gained social rights, such as unions and cooperatives (Ibid.:48). Neoliberal regimes provided political rights to their celebrated political subject, the individual, while they eliminated the social rights, and unintended indigenous autonomy, that corporatist regimes had offered.

In the Ecuadorian case, Yashar argues that indigenous people in the sierra forged indigenous spaces of autonomy out of the 1937 *Ley de Comunas*. These indigenous spaces, it is noted, were created, inadvertently, by the unequal reach of the state, and stood against what had been the intended outcome of the law, the full integration of indigenous Ecuadorians as peasants. Furthermore, the agrarian reforms of 1964 and 1973 in Ecuador are also portrayed as corporatist regimes that inadvertently, “created a space in which indigenous communities could secure more local autonomy to sustain and strengthen local practices and authority systems” (95). The passage of the reforms also created expectations about land ownership, credit and technical agricultural assistance, and education that the Ecuadorian government was unable to meet (98). The movement

that eventually emerged out of this context, the CONAIE, was thus framed as an indigenous movement because those autonomous spaces had been constructed as indigenous spaces.⁵²

Yashar's state-centered approach offers several important insights, chief among them the continued centrality of the state as an interlocutor and arena of struggle in contemporary identity-based movements. The struggle for respect, not legal changes or access to state power per se, made it evident that the state was not the only focus of change for indigenous movements. Nonetheless, concrete interpretations of those demands, such as the recognition of traditional medicine as an expression of indigenous science and technology that is as valid as western science, have been negotiated through the state. Likewise, inclusion in the state, on their own terms, has been a central demand of indigenous organizing, particularly the ability to hold elected office and to access state resources as equal citizens. Yashar asserts this clearly: "Citizenship is at the core of democracy. It is also at the core of indigenous mobilization in Latin America and beyond" (31).

This dissertation follows Yashar's assertion that the state remains an important actor and that state institutions remain key sites of struggle for indigenous organizations. The evidence presented here verifies Yashar's assertion that neoliberal citizenship regimes were the primary motivator for indigenous mobilizations. There are two caveats that are added by this analysis, however. First, that the state is not the only, or perhaps the most important, agent of neoliberalism. Indigenous communities had contact with many other agents, such as employees of supranational institutions and NGOs, who also

⁵² Yashar also notes that the Amazonian indigenous organizations were more inclined to organize as ethnicities, rather than classes, and that this greatly influenced the CONAIE.

emphasized neoliberal shifts. Indigenous organizations were willing to address their development desires to non-state actors, which meant that non-state actors were involved in the neoliberal shift. Second, Yashar's assumption that neoliberal regimes require the incorporation of individual liberal citizens, and so must unmake prior forms of collective recognition, runs counter to a growing body of research linking multiculturalism and the granting of collective rights to the neoliberal agenda. The evidence from Saquisilí suggested, on the contrary, that neoliberal projects actively construct rights-bearing social groups who were presented with privatized collective representation and culturally delimited rights.

Although Yashar's arguments are generally supported by the data from Saquisilí, it is questionable whether or not corporatism was responsible for creating spaces of indigenous cultural reproduction. Rather, reading those spaces as particularly indigenous is possibly teleological—they organized as indigenous people in order to protect the spaces; ergo the spaces must have been indigenous. Yashar tended to draw a sharp distinction between the language of class and the language of ethnicity when such sharp boundaries failed to reflect how people viewed themselves and their identities. As Postero and Zamosc noted, being poor (or a peasant) is sometimes experienced as synonymous with being indigenous (2005:26). Furthermore, there existed a complex aligning and constant re-aligning of class and ethnic identifications in rural Ecuador. In Cotopaxi, for example, the MICC was originally called the MCC (Movimiento Campesino de Cotopaxi--Peasant Movement of Cotopaxi), reportedly because its

members were too embarrassed to call themselves indigenous (MICC 2003:20).⁵³ The original name, MCC, highlights that it was not inevitable that indigenous movements organized as such, given the extent of the negative connotations that indigeneity was burdened with and the general reluctance to identify oneself as indigenous.

It is not clear that the spaces of autonomy that corporatist regimes created were expressed as indigenous spaces. Community spaces allowed people to organize collectively for gains they could not have made as individuals and protected the individual members from at least some of the abuses of the dominant mestizo sector.⁵⁴ Likewise, there was a sense that the community was a space free from the abuses of *mestizos*, which could be read as a form of indigenous autonomy. Nonetheless, community members did not themselves frame their community spaces in terms of their ethnic identity, nor did they advocate for the protection of communities in ways designed specifically to protect ‘indigenous’ space. Cultural work, through an articulatory process, was necessary in order for communities and peasant unions to become “traditional” indigenous spaces. The state-centered approach, then, cannot address why movements emerged as indigenous movements.

Globalization and Indigenous Mobilizing

The second explanation for the rise of indigenous organizations in the period leading up to the 1990s, globalization, expands the focus of explanation beyond the state

⁵³ The name today, MICC (Indigenous and Peasant Movement of Cotopaxi), and its shorthand name, Indigenous Movement, further demonstrates that peasant and indigenous are tied together in complicated ways. In general, members of MICC-affiliated communities were more likely to refer to themselves as poor people or peasants, not indigenous peoples, in the everyday interactions observed in the course of this research.

⁵⁴ For example, by resolving conflicts in the community, they avoided the cost and danger of the justice system.

and looks directly at the paradox that globalization, thought to be a homogenizing force, made ethnic differences salient again. The generally accepted laundry list of changes brought about through globalization includes economic and social universalization, victory of the European nation-state model, communication technologies, democratization, and the growth of international organizations (Langer 2003). Economic considerations are central to most versions of the globalization argument. Greater integration into the market, structural adjustments, and the resulting economic crises motivated indigenous organizing in Latin America. Zamosc, for example, argued that the indigenous sector was the one hardest hit by the economic crisis brought on by neoliberal economic policies (2003). In his analysis of the 1990 Uprising, Zamosc contended that the high cost of living was a central grievance expressed by participants (Ibid.: 48). The cost of living was relevant to indigenous Ecuadorians during this period, moreover, because they had become more dependent on the market for agricultural inputs and basic goods and services (43). Zamosc concluded that the 1990 Uprising was similar to the “IMF riots” witnessed in other countries.

Zamosc went on to argue that the Uprising had an indigenous ethnic expression because as a group indigenous people were disproportionately impacted by the economic policies. In a similar vein, León (1992) connected economic and social-structural changes to explain why essentially economic grievances took on an ethnic identification. He located the changing power relations in the countryside—primarily the breakup of the hacienda in favor of modern, market-oriented production—as the main reason for indigenous identification in the 1990 Uprising). The end of *gamonal* power and increasing contact with the market meant that indigenous Ecuadorians had to negotiate

new types of relationships with the mestizo sector while simultaneously staving off the threat of acculturation (1992:385). Thus, the argument is that market integration impacted indigenous people economically and socially as they faced new threats to indigenous cultural autonomy.⁵⁵ Although there is compelling evidence presented by both of these highly respected scholars, two key questions remained unanswered. Why did indigenous people defend their cultural autonomy instead of accepting the path of acculturation? Why did indigenous Ecuadorians specifically identify as Nationalities and Peoples instead of some other possible collective identity?

A second group of globalization scholars center their work on the emergence of a global civil society, with transnational activist networks and global cultural norms and notions regarding indigenous rights, human rights, environmentalism, and participatory development (Meyer et al. 1997). Alison Brysk argued that marginalized peoples have been able to appropriate these international norms and use global symbolic appeals to create new forms of politics: “in the spaces between power and hegemony, the tribal village builds relationships with the global village” (2000:2). It is the global village, not the state, that responds to the symbolic appeal of indigenous activists. “It takes a global village to grant the tribal village voice, space, and a response within and across borders” (Ibid.:283). Indigenous people may have organized and resisted for the past 500 years, but transnational networks, new technologies, and new formulations of international

⁵⁵ Stroeble-Gregor, Hoffman, and Holmes (1994) elaborated a Bolivian version: neoliberal reforms and corruption of left parties exposed existing democracy as an instrument for the white middle and upper classes, which led to the idea of an ethnic basis for exclusion and so a new Indian consciousness. See also Nash 2007.

norms gave them novel weapons and allowed them to scale up their appeal from the hyper-local to the global (Ramos 2002).

An international normative structure based on the rights of indigenous peoples did emerge during the period in question. The International Labor Organization's (ILO) Convention 169 on "Indigenous and Tribal Populations" is an example of the international norms that emerged at this time, the evolution of which can be highlighted by comparing the ILO's 1957 Convention of the same name. The 1957 Convention 107 refers to "indigenous, tribal, and semi-tribal populations" that governments are responsible for protecting with actions designed to promote development, raise the standard of living, and realize "their progressive integration into the life of their respective countries."⁵⁶ Governments were to develop actions, then, with the objective of "fostering individual dignity" and advancing "individual usefulness and initiative."⁵⁷

By 1989 Article Two of the convention had been updated to reflect the classification of indigenous populations as "peoples." Now governments were responsible for "developing, with the participation of the peoples concerned, ... action to protect the rights of these peoples and to guarantee respect for their integrity."⁵⁸ In thirty years the focus had shifted from the integration of individuals to a self-directed, collective development focused on the rights of historically excluded indigenous peoples in which creating equality while preserving indigenous worldviews was the primary objective.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ ILO 1957, Art. 2.1.

⁵⁷ ILO 1957, Art. 2.3

⁵⁸ ILO 1989, Art. 2.1.

⁵⁹The shift in international norms are found throughout the two documents. In 1957 education was to be provided in the native language but with a "progressive transition" to the national language (Art. 23). In

An analysis of the ILO Conventions 107 and 169 demonstrates that international norms and ideas regarding indigenous peoples dramatically shifted during the twentieth century. Global normative organizations such as the ILO framed indigenous rights as the collective rights of peoples (opting out of the more politically complex designation of nationalities) to self-determination and cultural, social, and economic development that would end structural inequalities. Members of a people were protected by human rights norms and by collective indigenous rights. Indigenous activists used the 1989 Convention as a tool of legitimization, allowing them to demonstrate the international recognition of their rights as peoples. Ecuadorian activists were able to bypass their home state, which did not ratify 169 until 1998, and claimed a larger, global authorization of their collective rights.

To stress the role of transnational networks and norms is to assert that indigenous movements were successful in gaining national and international support because indigenous leaders had learned to operate within the “western project,” thereby making their demands “translatable” (Ramon 1992). The idea that indigenous people framed their struggles to match the terms employed in global cultural standards is appealing, if slightly simplistic for its instrumentality. However, there is an issue of timing. Throughout the second half of the twentieth century indigenous people throughout the world were organizing. Some indigenous peoples took part in the process of developing international norms. This explains why the CONAIE, formed in 1986, used a discourse similar to that

1989 Article 27 states that education programs, to be developed in conjunction with indigenous peoples, should be in the native language and incorporate indigenous history and knowledge. Rather than a transition to the dominant national language, the 1989 Convention guarantees the opportunity to gain fluency in the national language (Art. 28.2).

found in the ILO's Convention 169. In other cases, however, the framing of indigenous movements as collective rights movements occurred after the organizations already had long histories as peasant organizations. The global language of rights and the hyper-legitimization of indigenous peoples' struggles during the 1990s contributed to the subsequent indigenization of organizations that had until then been identified and structured as peasant unions (see also Becker 2008).

Taken together, globalization theories generally lack analytical rigor because they celebrate the role of global culture and transnational activists without problematizing the effect they have on indigenous peoples and organizations. The framework of rights and the work of transnational activists are painted as positive, and negative outcomes regarded as unintended consequences. Thus, the globalization argument does not ask why this particular framework of indigenous collective rights emerged during this particular time period or what consequences may have resulted from its hegemonic rise. Why did the 1989 Convention stress self-determination, participation of indigenous representative bodies, and collective rights of indigenous peoples rather than some other set of norms and notions? More importantly, despite the many anti-neoliberal activists who were members of these transnational networks, supporters of the neoliberal project, such as the World Bank and the government of the United States, have put forward the same celebrated characteristics of indigenous movements. Why were the same characteristics agreed upon by actors with such varying relations to the neoliberal project?

The Power to Define

A third explanation for the emergence of indigenous movements in particular, and identity-based movements more generally, focuses on the socially constructed nature of identity and draws from the New Social Movement (NSM) literature and post-structural theories (e.g., Foucault 1980; Laclau and Mouffe 1985; Touraine 1988). The theoretical approaches discussed so far took it for granted that an indigenous identity existed and became politicized according to structural shifts or political opportunities. Post-structuralist approaches, however, highlight the constructed and constantly changing nature of identity. There is no fixed indigenusness with pre-determined characteristics and constituents. Thus, this group of theorists contended that the key struggle of identity-based movements was the struggle to define and give meaning to their identities and history. Movements organized around identity because their objective was the appropriation of the identity itself (Melucci 1980). Indigenous Latin Americans, accordingly, were said to be in a struggle to define not only themselves and their own history but also the history of the nation-states to which they belonged (Alvarez et al. 1998). By creating a shared understanding of history, an ethnogenetic process (Hill 1996), indigenous movements challenged hegemonic histories and definitions.

The constructivist approach to identity has produced multiple lines of research. For instance, some scholars have raised the issues of what content is added to the “shopping cart” (Nagel 1994) or “tool kit” of culture (Swidler 1986), how that content is shaped through dialogic interactions with a multiplicity of actors, and how actors claiming to speak for indigenous peoples draw on indigeneity constructs to claim authenticity and legitimacy as representatives. As an example, Jackson (1995) demonstrated how Colombian indigenous groups had to invoke a form of indigenous

ethnicity that appealed to non-indigenous actors, meaning it was not indigenous people alone who defined indigeneity and grant legitimacy. As she states, “Winning the battle for self-determination increasingly involves acting and speaking with an authority that arises from an “Indian way,” (5) which must be demonstrated in order to obtain benefits from the state and NGOs (Ibid.: 12).

Specific attention has been drawn to the complex positioning of indigenous leaders who must convey authentic indigeneity while also being able to operate in westernized settings. (Conklin 1997; Lauer 2006) The need to appeal to broad national and international sectors has, thus, pushed out the “traditional” leaders of indigenous communities in favor of those capable of using dominant forms of communication (Spanish; written; rights-based discourse) and operating within the context of national and international expectations (Bartolomé 2002). The need to be legitimized, then, created competition among leaders, organizations, and identity constructs to become recognized as an authentic representative of indigenous peoples.

The constructivist approach begins to address the question of why indigenous-identified organizations emerged during the late twentieth century and how indigenous identification was shaped through interactions on multiple levels. However, this approach has thus far been limited because it incorporates the idea of power without allowing for differential power to be enacted within the process of identity construction and, more importantly, legitimization. Jordan and Weedon (1995), for example, asserted that social power manifests itself in competing discourses and that all signifying practices involve relations of power. They go on to say that collective identities are sites of resistance to hegemonic definitions of what people are or should be. While it is true that forming a

collective identity as indigenous people, rather than, say, peasants or mestizos, could be read as resistance to a certain type of hegemonic construction, this move takes away the role of hegemonic actors in constructing those identities of resistance. Latin American states, supranational organizations, and international non-governmental organizations (INGO) have all actively constructed indigenous collective identities. The constructivist approach recognizes this as indigenous identities are constructed “in dialogue” with indigenous actors in multiple sites. Dialogue, however, does not do justice to the differential power flowing through dialogic interactions. Ignoring the flow of power within dialogic fields risks not recognizing the hegemonic within its sites of resistance, or sites constructed as resistance. Why one formulation of indigeneity comes to be legitimized over another has to do not only with dialogue but also the power to define even within sites of redefinition.

Politics of Articulation

There is one constructivist approach that has been able to grapple with the role of multiple forces in shaping identities of resistance and it stems from Stuart Hall’s (1996) reworking of Gramsci’s notion of articulation. By asking how identities become articulated in particular ways, the politics of articulation exposes how articulations are “pre-figured” or historically constrained, by “fields of power” or “places of recognition” (Li 2000:152). Articulation theory, like other constructivist approaches, adopts a non-essentialist understanding of identities as being constructed through discursive practices (Hall 1996). Most importantly, Hall asserts that identities are “constituted within representation” (4), meaning that rather than the essential questions—who are we and

where do we come from—producing a collective identification requires asking, “what we might become, how we have been represented, and how that bears on how we might represent ourselves” (4).

This linking of identification with representation highlights the dual meaning of articulation as both expressing (representing, articulating) a collective identity and as conjoining actually existing political subjects to the collective identity (Li 2000:152). The idea of articulation, and the articulatory process, then, goes further than other constructivist approaches in understanding the dynamics of identity construction because it understands that sites of articulation are simultaneously sites of agreed upon and contested discursive frameworks. Such an understanding places discursive frameworks within fields of power in ways that dialogic interactions normally are not.

The most ambitious application of articulation theory to Latin American indigenous organizations is the recent book by José Antonio Lucero (2008; see also Ramos 1998 and Nelson 1999). The book posited the same central question as this chapter: Why do movements and movement organizations achieve differing levels of unity and representational strength? Or, to the case in point, why did the CONAIE emerge as the legitimate representative of indigenous identification, articulated as indigenous Nationalities and Peoples? In answer to these questions Lucero offered a comparative analysis between Ecuador and Bolivia and between national level organizations within each country.

The theoretical model developed by Lucero contains three explanatory variables: multiscale identity construction, political opportunity structures, and structural contingencies (2008:23) According to the model, identities are constructed from “below,”

by indigenous leaders and communities, and from “above,” by both elites and opportunity structures. In addition, the interactions that construct identifications constantly reshape opportunity structures (structural contingencies), such that the conditions under which identities are articulated are constantly in flux. With these variables, Lucero was able to analyze maneuvers of position from above and below and, rather than present just a snapshot view, examine how those positions changed over time. Lucero analyzed the CONAIE’s position as the most representative indigenous organization in the country and concluded that the CONAIE was able to push its position as the most representative organization through its identification as indigenous Nationalities and Peoples. In effect, the CONAIE was the hegemonic indigenous organization until its poor decision to align with Lucio Gutierrez caused its legitimacy to be questioned.

Although this dissertation finds support for Lucero’s model, the evidence from Saquisilí did not support the same conclusions as those arrived at by Lucero, which are limited by his selection and interpretation of the data. Lucero’s interpretation of the CONAIE was flawed for three reasons. First, Lucero took discursive structures to be both more and less than they were. While not simply a process of appropriating identity formations “from above,” organizations and individual leaders were able to utilize a public discourse that may be quite apart from everyday understandings, interactions, and practices. The post hoc interpretation of discourse is limited in that it must take the discourse that is encountered (enunciated and recorded) as the total discursive structure present. Moreover, many have acknowledged that representations produce what they are supposed to represent (Lucero 2008:32). Yet, multiple discursive structures may be producing multiple representations at any given time. The singular discourse that emerges

veils the existence of others. Discursive structures are, therefore treated as more than they were (real and significant because they are uttered) and less than they were (constraining, such that diverse points of view are eventually excluded). The analysis presented here attempts to recognize the importance of discursive structures, how they are produced and the effects that the existence of particular structures have, while also seeking to discover the silencing of alternative articulations. Silences, exclusion, and local discursive structures are key to understanding the politics of hegemonic articulations.

Second, analyses of articulation ought to be carried out with an eye to the diversity of expressions and experiences at the everyday local level. The local-historical view captures the complex constellation of actors, discourses, representations, and identifications in competition at any given moment. However, the dichotomy presented by Lucero of above/below, or indigenous/elite, did not resonate with the diversity of competing and sometimes compatible organizations that eventually came to be called the CONAIE. The comparative analysis offered by Lucero, which focused on the regional differences in Ecuador, concluded that the most important characteristic about the CONAIE was its ability to unite, nationally, the parallel experiences of the Amazon and the Sierra. The more puzzling story, visible at the local level, however, was how junctural unity had been constructed and projected out of significantly different experiences, goals, and representations. The local analysis presented in this chapter captures the conflict and lack of unity present within those organizations identified with the CONAIE, which has been articulated as a united, national actor.

Finally, it is argued here that the analysis of articulatory processes considers the role of power in the productive process of identity construction. Rather than assuming

that indigenous identities were counter-hegemonic, “post-liberal” (Yashar 2005), or sites of resistance, it is recognized here that indigenous identities were constructed through processes that entailed “consensus, exclusion, alliance, and antagonism” (Clifford 2001:473). That is to say, current articulations of indigeneity were formed in a process in which hegemonic forces played a role and, though they may be used to challenge neoliberal hegemony, they also formed part of that hegemony.

To summarize, this chapter argues for an analysis of articulatory processes similar to that presented by Lucero (2008) but with three additional areas of attention—alternative articulations that have been silenced, the local and historical diversity of experiences combined during articulatory processes, and the role of governance in the articulation of resistance. With these three foci a conclusion different than Lucero’s is reached. The CONAIE’s position as the hegemonic indigenous organization (2008:164) was a result of neoliberal agents legitimizing the CONAIE in the late 1980s and early 1990s while silencing other, more threatening (Hale 2002) articulations of resistance.

This argument is based on the idea that neoliberal governmentality produced an articulatory process around indigenous identity because it was possible to construct indigeneity and indigenous resistance to neoliberalism in accord with the emerging rationales of neoliberal governance. For neoliberal agents indigenous movements were more moderate than leftist, class-based movements and did not represent as direct a threat to the dominant and existing economic order. Multiculturalism, of which this articulatory process was a part of, became the ‘cultural project’ of global capitalism during the neoliberal era because “proponents of the neoliberal doctrine pro-actively endorse a

substantive, if limited, version of indigenous cultural rights, as a means to resolve their own problems and advance their own political agendas” (Hale 2002:487). What is more,

“...the concessions and prohibitions of neoliberal multiculturalism structure the spaces that cultural rights activists occupy: defining the language of contention; stating which rights are legitimate, and what forms of political action are appropriate for achieving them; and even, weighing in on basic questions of what it means to be indigenous” (Ibid.:490).

The findings from Saquisilí demonstrated that those limits were defined by the rationales that underpinned neoliberal governmentality.

Indigenous Organizing in Ecuador, 1960-1990

The thirty-year period before the 1990 Uprising was one of intense organizing throughout indigenous Ecuador. The organizing dynamic responded to global processes and, specifically, the fight for control of Latin America in the Cold War. The battle for influence over rural populations spurred agrarian reform measures and rural development programs, such as Kennedy’s Alliance for Progress, and more intensive organizing by the already present communist party affiliates. Religious organizations got involved in the struggle as well, with Protestant missionaries and the Catholic Church actively organizing throughout Latin America. Finally, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) proliferated during this time period and eventually became a dominant force in rural organizing. These are the organizing experiences that culminated in the 1990 Uprising. The specific organizing processes present in Saquisilí, and Cotopaxi more generally, will be considered in order to better understand the diversity of actors present in the 1990 Uprising, and subsequently, the CONAIE.

The Catholic Church in Saquisilí, Cotopaxi

The Catholic Church was, until the 1960s, a part of the system of domination that enforced the racialized superiority of white-*mestizos*. In the Amazon region, missions were responsible for ‘civilizing’ indigenous peoples, to which end they founded settlements and boarding schools. In the highlands, the local priest formed part of the power triad, along with the landowner (*hacendado*) and sheriff (*teniente político*). In addition, the Catholic Church was itself the largest landowner in the highland regions and enforced a system of religious *fiestas* that effectively indebted indigenous people to town *mestizos*.

The collective memory of indigenous people today includes the abusive, exploitative relationship between the Church and indigenous communities, particularly in the collection of a heavy agricultural tithe, called the *diezmo*, that though outlawed in 1891 was routinely collected through the mid-1900s. In an interview in Yacu Chico, one older community member recalled that the only time Church personnel came to the community was to indicate what portion of each family’s harvest should be delivered to the church in Saquisilí. “They would take four or five *quintales* (100 pound bags of produce) for their own use [from each family].”⁶⁰ The Church was also remembered as a part of the Conquest, and its particularly egregious debate on whether indigenous people had souls is often mentioned (Macas 1993).

Throughout Latin America the Catholic Church began a dramatic change in the 1960s, represented by the turn towards liberation theology taken at the 1968 Second General Conference of Latin American Bishops (see Dussel 1981:143-147 for an analysis

⁶⁰ Interview with Salvador on June 25, 2006.

of the Conference and its conclusions). In Ecuador, this was the first period in which the Church worked with indigenous people to educate, organize, and advance indigenous communities. There is evidence to suggest that some efforts were aimed specifically at reducing the influence of the Communist Party (PCE- Partido Comunista del Ecuador) in rural communities. This was the expressed purpose of the Catholic and Conservative Party sponsored FETEP (Ecuadorian Federation of Agricultural Workers), founded in 1965 (Becker 2008:157). However, the most lasting impact on indigenous organizing came from progressive priests, nuns, and lay workers.

Of the progressive elements in the Ecuadorian Church at the time, none was more influential than Noble Peace Prize nominee Monseñor Leonidas Proaño, dubbed the ‘Bishop of the Indians.’ In 1960 Proaño, working as the bishop of Riobamba, began the *Escuelas Radiofónicas Populares* (Popular Radio Schools), which conducted Kichwa-language literacy programs at set times, with trained facilitators from each participating community (Espinosa 1992:186). Monseñor Proaño conducted his own land redistribution, handing control over some of the Church’s haciendas to the indigenous communities working on them. He is also credited with sponsoring the meeting, and training many of its participants, that gave birth to the ECUARUNARI, in 1972. Although Proaño’s influence was strongest in the province of Chimborazo, he had a profound impact on the Church, the indigenous movement, and the country as a whole, which continued long past his death in 1988.

In Cotopaxi, the Catholic Church began its progressive turn in 1969 with the assignment of three young priests to the canton of Salcedo, located in the southernmost

section of Cotopaxi.⁶¹ The young priests were not all a part of the liberation theology school of Proaño⁶² but rather approached their work from a humanist perspective.

According to one of these priests, they learned Kichwa and taught literacy classes in the communities so that indigenous peoples could “discover that they are human beings, who can think, speak, and have free will.”⁶³ They also attempted to validate indigenous culture so the people would “see that their culture was unique and good.”⁶⁴ In the early 1970s the Church began selecting and training catechists, young leaders who could lead community bible reflections, and as early as 1976 those catechists began to organize themselves in order to solicit support from the Church (Kaltmeier 2008:134-135).

The advent of today’s Jatarishun began with those catechists in 1976 and in the seemingly unrelated decision of the young priests to take on the problem of *chicherias*⁶⁵ in Salcedo, a nearby canton. The *chicherias* took advantage of the rural indigenous population, by offering the only place in the urban town centers where they could stay the night, in return for their consumption of alcohol. Given the long distances and poor transportation options, indigenous people unable to make the long journey home usually had no choice but to stay at a *chicheria*. The priest and the communities decided to create a safe place for rural people to stay in town, called the *Casa Campesina de Salcedo* (the Salcedo Peasant House); organizing began in 1973 and the *Casa Campesina* was officially inaugurated in 1975 (MICC 2003:33-34). The Bishop of Latacunga recognized the benefits of the *Casa Campesina*, as both a victory against the *chicherias* and as a

⁶¹ This was followed shortly by the establishment of a Salesian mission in the early 1970s in Zumbahua.

⁶² One of these priests, Victor Corral, went on to become recognized as a follower of Proaño and a supporter of the indigenous movement (See Espinosa 1992, for a more detailed analysis of the Catholic Church’s role).

⁶³ Interview with Danilo in May 2006.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ A tavern selling *chicha*, the traditional fermented corn drink.

central location for indigenous organizing, and so began to build similar *Casas* in Saquisilí and Pujilí. The Saquisilí *Casa Campesina* was constructed in 1983 and became the home for indigenous organizing, eventually forming the headquarters of the Jatarishun. During the same time period, the Church also sponsored meetings of community leaders from throughout the province. That network of leaders became the foundations of MICC.

The mid-1980s was a very active time for Catholic organizing in Saquisilí, and throughout Cotopaxi. As the catechists came together at the *Casa Campesina*, they organized for a multi-community water project, financed by Swiss Aid, which was the first of many development projects to be administered by the organization. A group of nuns had moved to Saquisilí and, along with the priest, worked with the catechists and others in the communities. The sisters coordinated their activities with the political Left, both Catholic and secular, and were remembered in Saquisilí fondly as key supporters in the early days of the organization (Kaltmeier 2008:149).⁶⁶ In focus groups, early leaders of the Jatarishun commented that their objectives were to unite the communities, to fight against mestizo abuses, and to find development assistance.

Catholic-based organizing owed its success to one more important agent, a Church-owned radio station called Radio Latacunga. The radio station, broadcast from the central cathedral in Latacunga, was launched in 1981 as the “*voz del pueblo en*

⁶⁶ The first indigenous bilingual high school was also formed at this time, under the direction of the Salesian mission in Pujilí, and among its graduates were the majority of Cotopaxi’s indigenous leaders of the 1990s; the current prefect of Cotopaxi, Cesar Umajinga, current director of bilingual education, Arturo Ashca, and Assembly member and former CODENPE chief Lourdes Tiban, among many others, graduated from the Jatari Unancha high school. Jatari Unancha expanded to include a program in Saquisilí and the nuns working there helped to form what would become known as Colegio Jatarishun, the bilingual high school affiliated with the Jatarishun organization. The role of the Church in formally educating leaders was fundamental in the rise of the indigenous movement.

marcha (voice of the people on the march),” and included programming in both Spanish and Kichwa. The Radio helped create the contemporary indigenous organizations through two mechanisms. First, it developed leaders who became known outside of their home areas. Most, if not all, of the prominent indigenous figures in Cotopaxi today are thought of as ‘products’ of the radio. Many indigenous youth were trained as Popular Reporters, a job that entailed attending meetings and events in communities and recording local news programs. Thus, the reporters and leaders of the communities became recognized and legitimized as such. Second, the Radio gave voice to the budding organizations in a way that made communication easier and more direct, and that raised awareness of the organizing that was occurring throughout the province. As one reporter remembered it, the radio provided a space where “we [leaders, catechists, and reporters] could participate, give our opinions, and that is how people became better organized.”⁶⁷ For another collaborator, the sharing of plans, dreams, complaints and organizing experiences on the radio is what gave meaning to the nascent movement organization.⁶⁸

In summary, during the 1970s and 1980s the Catholic Church was the social actor with the most recognized influence on the indigenous movement. In Saquisilí, and throughout the highlands, the community leaders that emerged at this time were primarily catechists, trained and educated through the progressive Catholic Church. Priests, nuns, and lay workers contributed to a process of cultural valorization, education, and organization that became the foundation on which contemporary indigenous organizations were built. The Church also provided material support, non-indigenous allies, and a means of communicating with leaders throughout the province, and the

⁶⁷ Interview with Arturo on January 24, 2006.

⁶⁸ Interview with Victor on February 20, 2006.

country. However, although the Church's role in the indigenous movement is well recognized, the close relationship between the Church and the organized Left, as well as the Left's almost equally important role in organizing the indigenous movement, has been almost entirely erased from the historical record, or at least neglected.

The Left in Saquisilí, Cotopaxi

The role of the Ecuadorian Left in organizing the contemporary indigenous movement has been largely expunged from the historical narrative of organizations such as the MICC. As will be demonstrated below, erasing the Left has been made easier because of two factors: the considerable overlap of the Left with NGOs and the Catholic Church and the clandestine nature of most of the Left's activities and organizations. The one antecedent that remains acknowledged is the FEI (Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios--Ecuadorian Federation of Indians), which was formed in 1944 by the Communist Party. The FEI trained two of the modern indigenous movement's icons--Dolores Cacuango and Tránsito Amaguaña, who began the first bilingual education initiatives, and also organized workers on the state-owned haciendas, which served to unite communities and win land and labor concessions (see Becker 2008 for details).

Although these early efforts are recognized as having been valuable, the FEI, and the Left more generally, has been dismissed as paternalistic, reductionist, and self-interested. By the 1970s, the FEI was defunct and, the dominant narrative goes, with the help of the Catholic Church indigenous Ecuadorians began to form organizations in which they had more voice and which emphasized and responded to their struggles as an ethnic group. This standard narrative, however, expunges the active role of the Left

within indigenous organizations through the early 1990s, and beyond, as well as the overlap between the Left and the more widely acknowledged role players, the Catholic Church and NGOs.

The presence of the Left can be traced back to the 1930s and was particularly strong on the haciendas that now constitute Tigua (Pujilí canton) and Maca (at the time, part of Saquisilí, but now a part of Latacunga canton). From these communities the call for change spread as workers on haciendas communicated with each other and organized.⁶⁹ The period from the 1940s on was one of escalating tension, marked by confrontations that at times became violent and ended in the loss of life. However, by the 1960s all of the state-owned hacienda workers were affiliated with the FEI (Kaltmeier 2008:43), forming the first network of leaders who were able to ‘scale up’ beyond the level of individual haciendas. Widespread collective action, such as boycotting the 1962 agrarian census (Becker 2008:xviii), became possible through the communication organized by and the trust that had developed in that network of leaders.

Although the FEI focused exclusively on public hacienda workers, known as *huasipungueros*⁷⁰ because they worked in exchange for usufruct land and little or no pay, the influence of the FEI extended, indirectly, to indigenous people living beyond the confines of the haciendas.⁷¹ Through personal connections with FEI-affiliated communities, those from free communities learned of the socialist lawyers who offered legal services to indigenous people. In Yacu Chico, for example, one leader recounted

⁶⁹ At any given time people from different communities could be found working on a hacienda. Part of what made the work so grueling was, in fact, that the workers had to travel great distances to get to their work sites.

⁷⁰ In Kichwa, literally the people at the door of the house.

⁷¹ Roughly 10% of indigenous people lived in free communities in the 1960s (Quintero and Silva 1991, cited in Lembke 2006:160).

that the name of a lawyer was passed on through another leader's brother-in-law, who lived in a FEI-organized hacienda.⁷² Thus, the influence of the FEI was extended beyond the public haciendas.

In 1964 the Ecuadorian government passed the first of two major agrarian reform laws. The law was primarily aimed at ending the precarious labor relations of the *hausipungo* system and modernizing rural Ecuador, in terms of its labor force and its agricultural production. The law mandated the end of all unpaid labor and the surrender of the usufruct land occupied by *huasipungueros* to the occupants. There has been much debate about the driving force behind the 1964 law. Whether the law was a convenient way for landowners to rid themselves of costly pre-modern relations (Barsky 1988) or the result of intense pressure by indigenous Ecuadorians for land redistribution (Guerrero 1991; see Becker 2008:128-129 for a summary of the arguments), there were two outcomes of the law that have been agreed upon. The economic position of indigenous Ecuadorians worsened and the FEI lost its *raison d'être*. Thus, agrarian reform brought the end of the FEI. However, its base organizations, *huasipungueros* now formed into legally-recognized communities, complete with experienced organizers and new economic challenges, remained intact and active, opening the door for new organizations to take root.

Leftist parties and the Catholic Church primarily sponsored the new organizations of the 1970s and 1980s, with many Church personnel identifying politically with the Left. The organizations themselves varied, from clandestine cells of leftist militants to NGOs and from state-sponsored literacy projects to groups illegally seizing hacienda land. One

⁷² Interview with Salvador on June 25, 2006.

influential, primarily clandestine leftist party active in Cotopaxi was the MIR (Movimiento de la Izquierda Revolucionaria--Movement of the Revolutionary Left—a party begun in Chile), which set out to identify potential cadres in the indigenous communities. As one member of MIR explained, “we looked for the type of people with a little spark, that had a perspective as future leaders.”⁷³ The indigenous MIR cadre identified at that time have gone on to serve in top positions in the CONAIE, MICC, national and provincial government entities, and international development projects. But the original training by MIR, as befits a mostly clandestine institution, has gone unacknowledged. Although many contemporary leaders were trained in underground leftist cells, those experiences too have been erased from the historical record as a result of their clandestine nature.⁷⁴

In addition to its clandestine operations, the Leftists of this era were distinctive for many reasons. Many activists were disaffected from the mainstream electoral parties and advocated for non-participation in elections.⁷⁵ They were also deeply inspired by the work of Monseñor Proaño and the ongoing revolutionary struggles in Central America. “We were part of a left that tried to be Latin American...and that is why we began to study other worldviews, like the indigenous one.”⁷⁶ Under those influences, the activists of the Left embraced the value of indigenous culture and indigenous peoples as historical subjects in their own right. In fact, as Becker (2008:172) points out, it was a leftist who first brought the term Nationality to indigenous Ecuadorians. At the same time, the

⁷³ As MIR members are not public about their affiliation, I leave this quotation without a name.

⁷⁴ According to interviews, it was common for leftists to work openly with a broad organization, such as a community, while also maintaining a smaller, underground cell. In interviews and informal conversations it was difficult to obtain confirmation about a person’s leftist training. Although it was never denied, when asked indigenous leaders were evasive or reverted to a general discussion of the left.

⁷⁵ Voting is compulsory in Ecuador. The militants advocated for nullifying the ballot.

⁷⁶ Interview with Jaime on April 26, 2005.

coming fall of the Soviet Union and resulting crisis of the Left was palpable and many leftists lost faith in their organizations and parties.⁷⁷ The militants searched for a new motor of change and found indigenous communities. Many formed or began to work for NGOs, seeking to assist the communities in their struggle for structural transformation (Bebbington 1997).

The generation of militants disaffected from the mainstream Left became proponents of more radical tactics for the land struggle, principally land seizures. Communities had typically won legal procedures that mandated they be sold, at a fair price, hacienda lands. In many cases, owners even began selling land preemptively, in an effort to get a better price or avoid other problems that might arise during a legal battle. Some conflicts were not able to be resolved legally, dragging on for years, and in a few cases communities rejected the idea of paying for land to be redistributed. In those cases, communities and their leftist allies began to advocate illegal actions, primarily land invasions and holding owners hostage. The level of violence used against indigenous communities increased dramatically during this period, as owners hired bands of paramilitaries to pursue leaders and intimidate community members. Several leaders lost their lives. However, according to those interviewed during the Jatarishun history project, in the end the violence and threats served to galvanize the people and strengthen their collective resolve to struggle for justice and a better future for their children (Kaltmeier 2008: 116-119).

A final characteristic of both leftist and ecclesiastic activists working with indigenous communities at this time is that they were usually affiliated with more than

⁷⁷ Details of the fractions and positions within the Ecuadorian Left can be found in Rodas Chaves (2000).

one institution. The same person often represented the Left, the Church, NGOs, and even the state. For example, Father Javier Herrán, an important Church supporter of the indigenous movement, managed the Radio, organized bilingual education programs, and worked for the Central Bank of Ecuador and its Rural Development Fund, FODERUMA (MICC 2003:42-7). Some activists identified with leftist cells worked for the Radio and were employed by NGOs and state-funded literacy programs. When one former Saquisilí priest was asked about the work of the Left in the communities, he stated that the Sisters would take leaders aside, implying that they were aligned with or considered a part of the Left as well as the Church.

The multiplicity of affiliations of those involved in indigenous organizing sheds light on the complexity of identifying individual actors within a discursive structure as belonging to one already fixed position. Leftist, indigenous, Catholic Church, development, and state are all labels that could be applied, simultaneously, to any given actor within the indigenous movement of this time period. But which of these labels qualifies as “above” and which are “below”? Furthermore, if an individual speaker has multiple labels, which one determines their location? Is an indigenous community member trained in a leftist cell and working for an INGO “above” or “below”?

Indigenous Organizing on Indigenous Terms

To discuss the important role of non-indigenous allies inside indigenous organizations is not intended to deny the locus of change that came from within indigenous communities themselves. Apart from the FEI, the earliest organizing occurred around the process of forming legally recognized communities. In 1937 the Ecuadorian

government instituted the *Ley de Comunas* (Law of Communes), which recognized the legal status of indigenous communities, which were defined as groups of at least fifty people who agreed to govern themselves through an elected council, or *cabildo*. The community became the smallest administrative unit recognized by the state,⁷⁸ and for the most part, the vehicle by which indigenous people came to lobby the central government.⁷⁹ As Becker noted (1999), the law was designed to draw small population centers into the nation-state and to promote the social, economic, intellectual and moral development of Indigenous Peoples (537) through inclusion under a corporatist regime (Yashar 2005).

The community became a particularly important organizational form after the 1964 Agrarian Reform law made it the only entity through which land claims could be made. A legally recognized community could petition the state to force large landowners to sell their property. A common method of land redistribution in Saquisilí, for example, was for a legally recognized community to claim ‘demographic pressure,’ or the need for more land to support the families of the community. If the ruling was favorable, the state set a price for the hacienda and gave a loan to the community so that they could pay the owner.⁸⁰

Although the support of leftist lawyers was indispensable in this process, it was the communities themselves that sought out the assistance. In interviews and meetings people mentioned many reasons for organizing themselves, including abuse by mestizos

⁷⁸ The province, canton, and parish, which made up the prior administrative structure, continued to be extant.

⁷⁹ Becker elaborates how Indigenous peoples in Cayambe refused the community structure, seeing it as an assimilationist tactic of the central government (1999).

⁸⁰ The work of FEPP, another key figure in rural Ecuador, was to administer these types of loans.

in the market (*el arranche*), sexual abuse of indigenous women by mestizos, exploitative working relations on haciendas, the lack of education, water, and other basic infrastructure, land tenure, being treated “as animals,” and a general feeling of not being willing to take the mistreatment any longer. As one young leader remembered, “...our parents were tired already, so it was almost the consciousness they had themselves that they began to organize and that is where the church appears, the progressive priests who wanted the liberation of the people.”⁸¹ Older leaders offered a similar thought, “we reflected on it and said that never again will we live like this.”⁸² The consciousness-raising efforts of the Left and the Church had a major role in the emergence of these feelings. In addition, other factors, such as the rural power vacuum produced by the breakup of haciendas and the expectations created by the 1980 ‘return to democracy,’ created changes within indigenous communities that contributed to their rejection of racialized abuses at that historical moment.

To conclude, the period between 1960 and 1990 was one of intense organizing. Indigenous communities, the Catholic Church, the Left, NGOs of various stripes, and development projects sponsored by the national government, the U.S., and others, set about organizing indigenous communities as indigenous peoples, rather than as peasants. A combination of factors, including the decline of the hacienda and the consciousness-raising efforts of allies, meant that indigenous Ecuadorians were taking it upon themselves to fight the racialized social hierarchy that had kept them from being treated as equals within Ecuadorian society. However, although there were networks of leaders forming there was no consolidated organization or identification that had become salient.

⁸¹ Interview with Arturo on January 24, 2006.

⁸² Interview with Bartolo on February 15, 2006.

There were also no sharp distinctions between the Church, the Left, NGOs, and, at times, the state.

The 1990 Uprising and the Rise of the CONAIE

The 1990 Uprising was the hallmark moment of indigenous mobilizing in Ecuador. It also marked an unprecedented political opening for indigenous Ecuadorians, which resulted in part from previous major changes in Ecuadorian politics. In 1988, with the election of Rodrigo Borja, the repressive era of President León Febrés Cordero ended,⁸³ and the idea of the state and democratic elections gained legitimacy on the left and in indigenous organizations. President Borja's approach to the Indian Question was state-controlled incorporation of indigenous peoples, thus precluding the possibility of a counter-hegemonic project with its own proposals. To this end, he began a bilingual literacy program and, in 1988, negotiated with the CONAIE to begin a bilingual education system. Borja also continued the structural adjustment policies that had begun in earnest during the Febres Cordero administration. In contrast to the positively perceived political opening, then, socio-economic conditions in rural communities continued to deteriorate.

The Uprising was a moment of great unity among the disparate voices, experiences, and realities of rural Ecuador, although mobilization actions were generally locally focused. Through the narrative of the two primary actions in which people from Saquisilí took part, the occupation of Santo Domingo Church in Quito and a massive march and rally in Latacunga, it will be demonstrated that the Uprising was a

⁸³ From 1984-1988 Leon Febres Cordero served as President of Ecuador. His regime is remembered as the closest to a brutal dictatorship that the people of Ecuador have experienced with instances of torture and disappearances unprecedented in Ecuador's modern history.

spontaneous reaction inspired primarily by the catalyst of the Santo Domingo Church occupation. However, the unity that prevailed during the mobilization, what could be called a unity of spirit, rather than a unity of organization, was short-lived. By the end of the Uprising, the CONAIE was named the representative of indigenous Ecuadorians, despite its being unknown in places like Saquisilí.

The Taking of Santo Domingo Church—La Toma

By the late 1980s the only community in Saquisilí that maintained an active land redistribution claim was Yanaurcu Grande.⁸⁴ A leftist group working specifically around land conflicts and affiliated with the PSP (Partido Socialista Popular—Popular Socialist Party) had begun to work in Yanaurcu, openly with the community and clandestinely with a closed, leadership cell.⁸⁵ The group united communities with active land disputes from throughout the highlands into the Coordinator of Land Conflicts (CCT—Coordinadora de Conflictos de Tierra). They also organized urban support networks and Christian-based communities into the Popular Coordinator (Coordinador Popular).⁸⁶

In 1989 the Coordinadora militants decided to plan an action that would serve as a launching point for a more intense period of social struggle. After a year of planning, on May 28, 1990, thirty members of Yanaurcu Grande, along with roughly 100 other conflict-community members from other provinces and a handful of mestizo allies, took over the Santo Domingo Church in Quito. Their only demand was that standing land conflicts be resolved immediately. Things could have ended badly, as the government

⁸⁴ One reason the conflict was ongoing is that the community refused to pay for the land, a position that could stem from the greater role of the militant Left in Yanaurcu (Kaltmeier 2008: 120).

⁸⁵ Interview with León on July 12, 2002.

⁸⁶ Mentioned in the CONAIE document “Agenda 1991” on the page titled “Levantamiento Indígena Nacional” (n.d.)

sent in armed personnel that day and refused to talk with those occupying the church. Twelve members of the group then began a hunger strike yet still the Borja administration refused to acknowledge the CCT. The primary thing that saved the people in Santo Domingo was, initially, the decision of CONAIE leader Luis Macas to back the CCT and identify them as members of the CONAIE. “They [armed personnel]⁸⁷ were going to exterminate us...we had to legitimize ourselves by appearing as CONAIE.”⁸⁸

Why did the CCT inside Santo Domingo have to appear as the CONAIE in order to protect themselves? That question must be broken down into two others: (1) How was the CCT able to appear as part of the CONAIE if land conflicts were not on the CONAIE’s agenda? (2) Why did the CONAIE enjoy such legitimacy *before* the Uprising, which is commonly said to have been the source of CONAIE’s acceptance as an interlocutor in Ecuadorian politics?⁸⁹ In answer to the first question, the CONAIE simply added the resolution of standing land conflicts to its agenda at that moment. In fact, the list of demands made by the CONAIE in 1990 reflected a hodgepodge of agendas, ranging from the free import and export of indigenous handicrafts to irrigation water and a price freeze on basic industrial goods. The CONAIE’s Lucho Macas has acknowledged that the leadership began to see the advantage in expanding their platform beyond bilingual education, which had been their main focus until then (Macas, Belote, and Belote 2003). Once the CONAIE opened to the possibility of an expanded agenda, its platform became open and additive, adding all indigenous sector demands together. The open platform allowed the CONAIE to subsume the CCT and other independent

⁸⁷ It was unclear, from the interview, if they were military or police.

⁸⁸ Interview with León on July 12, 2005.

⁸⁹ Most recently, in an editorial marking the 20th anniversary of the Uprising: “June 4, 1990 turned them into valid political interlocutors” (“Perdedores o Triunfadores?” Arauz Ortega, June 2, 2010, *El Comercio*).

organizations (León 1993). It also allowed enough flexibility to attend to highly localized issues, and the varying regional realities, while simultaneously taking on national and global issues. In short, the taking of Santo Domingo Church pushed the CONAIE to open its agenda and take on all manner of issues that could be constructed as of indigenous interest.

The national government recognized the CONAIE, in part, because it had worked with the CONAIE in 1988 around the issue of bilingual education. At that time the Borja administration designated the CONAIE as the organization in control of DINEIB (Dirección Nacional de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe – National Directorate of Bilingual Intercultural Education). More generally, however, the Ecuadorian state had been in a process of multicultural recognition since the transition to constitutional, democratic rule. In 1979 an office of Indigenous Affairs (Asuntos Indígenas) had been formed, bilingual education was approved in 1982, and the 1988 presidential campaign of Borja courted the indigenous vote with promises of more multicultural reforms, including the recognition of Kichwa as an official language (Winn 2006:274).

The CONAIE also enjoyed an array of international support before 1990 (CONAIE 1989:13; Brysk 2000:122).⁹⁰ According to Victor Breton Solo de Zaldivar, there was a move in the 1980s by international development agents to directly fund indigenous peasant organizations (2003:146). Although many of the organizations had been established to struggle for land redistribution, “...it was now hoped that, by helping

⁹⁰ Before 1990 the CONAIE was supported by Oxfam America (<http://www.oxfamamerica.org/partners/confederacion-de-nacionalidades-indigenas-del-ecuador>), ILDIS (Instituto Latinoamericano de Investigaciones Sociales – Latin American Institute for Social Research), which is a branch of the German Fundacion Friedrich Ebert (<http://www.fes-ecuador.org/pages/inicio.php?lang=ES>), and the Italian-funded MLAL (Movimiento Laico de America Latina—Catholic Lay Movement of Latin America).

them to consolidate, they would become actors capable of carrying out rural development projects” (Ibid.:146). The CONAIE and its affiliates were being groomed, before the Uprising, “to do the work of subject-formation that otherwise would fall to the state itself” (Hale 2002:496).

The CONAIE was also an appealing choice for the Ecuadorian state and development agents because it represented a moderate multicultural position that did not pose a threat to the economic system. At the CONAIE’s first congress, in 1986, its moderate position was evidenced by the resolutions it made, including “to struggle for the direct participation of peasants and indigenous people in the Public Administration of the State,” “...the creation of an indigenous bank,” and “...search for internal and external funding ... to realize community projects and courses” (CONAIE 1989:270). When compared with the leftists inside the Santo Domingo Church, the CONAIE then was a more ‘well-behaved,’ “authorized Indian” (Hale and Millaman 2006) whose agenda effectively supported the neoliberal project and the self-regulating practices of participatory democracy, cultural citizenship, and development with identity.

Earning Respect in El Salto Plaza

For the remaining communities of Saquisilí, the Uprising began a few days later. The CONAIE had been planning a mobilization since its Congress in April, held in Cotopaxi. The response from communities was more clearly related to the work of local, diverse organizing processes, however, and a response to the occupation of Santo Domingo Church than to the brief planning by the CONAIE (Rosero 1992; Taxo 1993). As many participants recalled, they heard on the radio about the occupation of Santo Domingo and were called to support that action, which combined with their own grievances, desire for change, and organizational process. In other words, it was not the

work of the CONAIE but of communities, the Church, and the Left that went into making the 1990 Uprising. “It’s not like in 90 we said let’s have an Uprising in a month and that’s it. No, it’s a long job.”⁹¹

Throughout Cotopaxi indigenous people came down from their communities and converged on the city centers. “It was incredible how the people came out like ants and covered the roads.”⁹² In Saquisilí, the priest and nuns reported that some 3000 people were housed at the *Casa Campesina* during the three days of local action. Most of those days were spent battling for control of the Pan-American Highway, the main transportation artery running through the country, keeping traffic blocked and the country paralyzed for days. In an effort to keep the highway blocked and to bring their grievances to the authorities of Cotopaxi, indigenous communities throughout Cotopaxi marched into Latacunga for what became the galvanizing symbolic action of the Uprising. After marching through the main streets, the indigenous mobilization, estimated from 10,000-30,000 people, came to the El Salto Plaza, regular site of the city’s main market. The governor and other authorities were called out to the Plaza and subjected to a peoples’ trial, in which they were reprimanded for their abuses. They were made to sign documents guaranteeing the changes in service that the people demanded. Most of this people’s trial was conducted by Alberto Taxo, now a world-renowned shaman. He took control of the microphone and found an unprecedented way for an indigenous Ecuadorian to speak to a mestizo authority. “He made fun of [her] and oh, how the people made fun of and laughed at authority, which for us signified a new era.”⁹³

⁹¹ Interview with Alejandro Luis in February 2006.

⁹² Interview with Jaime on April 26, 2005.

⁹³ Ibid.

It would be difficult to overstate the impact of the 1990 Uprising, and particularly the mobilization to El Salto, for indigenous Cotopaxenses. It was most often described to the researcher as having been two things: successful and unified. As for success, everyone who talked about the 1990 Uprising during the course of this research drew attention to the positive outcomes of the action. Respect, an end to racialized discrimination, and the recognition of indigenous peoples as an important sector of society were the important gains made. “The people have woken up. We are all Ecuadorians with rights.”⁹⁴ Local ethnic relations were altered by the Uprising (Carrasco, 1993), and the national imaginary was opened to include the indigenous movement.

It is significant that people perceived a sea change in Ecuadorian society as a result of the Uprising. However, twenty years later it is worth revisiting the changes that have been brought about. The Uprising ended when the Borja administration agreed to begin talks with the CONAIE regarding their 16-point mandate. The talks broke down several times⁹⁵ but agreements were reached on some points. Nevertheless, many of the 16 points have remained pressing issues, particularly access to water, the price of consumer goods, and financing for DINEIB and other indigenous institutions. This observation raises the question of whether or not entering talks with the government, which has been the way most major mobilizations have ended, was that beneficial to the movement. Unfortunately, there is no answer to the counterfactual question of what gains could have been made if they had refused dialogue. Some participants believed that they had enough force in 1990 to bring about radical social transformation. However, regardless of the weak gains made on the 16 points, the most significant outcome was

⁹⁴ Interview with Juan Carlos on May 30, 2006.

⁹⁵ “Agenda 1991” (CONAIE n.d.)

that the CONAIE became positioned as the largest and most important social-political actor in all Ecuador.

The second characteristic that has been assigned to the Uprising was a near perfect nation-wide unity. “We would all die or we would all live, but together.”⁹⁶ One of the most interesting things about this unity, however, is that it was not based on shared organizational or ideological grounds, particularly at the national level. Rather, everyone joined in despite their varying political and ideological orientations (Males 1993). The decision to participate was made at the level of communities, many without prior knowledge of the CONAIE and its platform (Rosero 1992; Taxo 1993). Moreover, the salience of grievances across localities lent unity to the participants.⁹⁷ The unified spirit and actions of the participants in the Uprising was only later constructed as a type of nationally unified movement, as will be demonstrated below.

Constructing Organizational Unity

After the 1990 Uprising indigenous leaders met to consolidate, organizationally, the unity of spirit and action the people had achieved on the streets. They brought with them many ideas about what their movement was about, including many incommensurable perspectives.⁹⁸ In the end, Lucho Macas, a candidate of consensus among the various factions,⁹⁹ was elected as president of the CONAIE. The CONAIE-affiliated organizations maintained local autonomy while they broadly united as indigenous Nationalities and Peoples. Furthermore, the CONAIE was constructed as the

⁹⁶ Fieldnote from March 14, 2006.

⁹⁷ Interview with Alejandro Luis in February 2006.

⁹⁸ Moreno Yanez and Figueroa identify the three discourses used at the 1990 Congress, held in Guayaquil in December, as leftist-popular, ethno-ecological, and statist related to particular demands (1992). Others suggested that at issue was either an insurrectionary left position or a developmentalist position amenable to NGOs (Leon).

⁹⁹ Interview with Leon.

legitimate representative of all indigenous Ecuadorians because it was structured as a governing council of the Nationalities and Peoples. “The CONAIE is the legitimate representation of 4 million inhabitants” (CONAIE 1989:268). Research for the current study, however, found that CONAIE’s position as the legitimate representative of Ecuador’s indigenous nationalities and peoples created a situation in which it was unable to form a strong national organizational identity. This conclusion contrasts with the assertion that CONAIE used its position to become the hegemonic indigenous representation (Lucero 2006, 2008). On the contrary, the CONAIE’s identification as Nationalities and Peoples was successful in procuring state and international support but cost the broader indigenous movement the opportunity to consolidate an indigenous identity and agenda.

Nationalities and Peoples is now the officially accepted identification for indigenous Ecuadorians. This is reflected in the creation of the CODENPE (Consejo de Desarrollo de las Nacionalidades y Pueblos Ecuatorianos—Council on Development for Ecuadorian Nationalities and Peoples), the 2008 Constitution’s chapter entitled “Rights of Communities, Peoples, and Nationalities,” and the list of currently recognized Nationalities and Peoples¹⁰⁰ that appears in nearly every document pertaining to indigenous Ecuador (especially if written for international consumption). Particular groups of people have been identified as constituting each of the nationalities and

¹⁰⁰ There are currently 14 nationalities and 16 Kichwa peoples recognized by CODENPE.

peoples. On the CODENPE website, for example, the cantons, parishes, and SMOs of each nationality and pueblo are identified.¹⁰¹

However, who was identified as the Nationalities and Peoples is a more complicated matter. Cotopaxi has been designated the home of the Panzaleo Kichwa pueblo. According to the CODENPE website, the Panzaleo Pueblo is “in a process of self-definition and recovery of its identity.”¹⁰² In Cotopaxi, however, the designation as Panzaleo is entirely unknown to average community members. Indigenous leaders themselves are divided on the matter, with some rejecting the categorization and others occasionally calling for anthropological studies to determine “who we really are.”¹⁰³ The term Panzaleo itself is only used by leaders when operating within contexts in which the identification as Panzaleo is expected. For example, the only use of the word Panzaleo recorded during regular MICC meetings was in reference to the World Bank’s mega-project, the PRODEPINE (Proyecto de Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indigenas y Negros del Ecuador –Project for the Development of Indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian Peoples of Ecuador), which had caused major divisions within the organizations. A leader intervened in the discussion to say, “If the project is Nationalities and Peoples, then [the MICC President] needs to go as the Panzaleo representative to the US, to the World Bank, and protest.”¹⁰⁴

Panzaleo Kichwa is an identification (used in the sense of how others identify a social group) that has been officially recognized and so used to articulate indigeneity

¹⁰¹ For example, the Natabuela Kichwas are said to be located “in the province of Imbabura, cantón Antonio Ante: Andrade Marín, San Francisco de Natabuela, and San José de Chaltura parishes and marginalized urban zones of Atuntaqui; and in Ibarra canon, San Antonio parish” (www.codenpe.gov.ec).

¹⁰² http://www.codenpe.gov.ec/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=293&Itemid=651&lang=es

¹⁰³ Fieldnote recorded on July 10, 2005.

¹⁰⁴ Fieldnote recorded on February 15, 2005.

vertically. It is not, however, a product of an ethnogenetic process through which a shared history and identity (in the sense of a collective to which individuals conjoin themselves) are created. Instead, the horizontal construction of indigeneity, as indigenous people, has been more salient. In part, the CONAIE's historical narrative has constructed this broad collective identity. The historical narrative is of "indigenous peoples" that have been resisting since the arrival of the Spanish. Contemporary movement organizations are simply the continuation of the struggles during the Conquest, throughout the Colonial period, and into the Republican era (See especially CONAIE 1989). The narrative, which prominently includes indigenous people being treated as beasts of burden and independence from Spain as merely a change in master, is a shared understanding of indigenous history and identity, with elements repeated in everyday interactions.

Indigenous identity-based on this shared construction is what gives the CONAIE unity during its mobilizations while the identification as Nationalities and Peoples is what lends the CONAIE legitimacy as a representative in vertical interactions. Problems arose, however because of the disarticulation between indigenous identity and the Nationalities and Peoples identification. In effect, local identities and organizing experiences have not been "cobbled together" organizationally. In other words, an individual's identity, articulated as an indigenous person has not been equated with the CONAIE as an organization. Community members who were active in their community but not in the Jatarishun (or their OSG, in case of other cantons) were unfamiliar with the CONAIE and often discussed the CONAIE as an unrelated organization. These are community members who themselves have participated in mobilizations often credited to the

CONAIE. Thus, while they are the foundational base of the CONAIE, they themselves do not know of the CONAIE.

The lack of ownership on the part of the CONAIE's bases is a result of the differences between horizontal and vertical voice, discussed above, and of a particular feature of the CONAIE's organizational structure, collective membership. The CONAIE can most accurately be described as a confederation of communities. Each community, though, is affiliated with an OSG, such as the Jatarishun in Saquisilí, and an OTG, such as the MICC, which is affiliated with Ecuarunari and, finally, the CONAIE. Thus, the basic unit of membership is the community. In other words, belonging to the CONAIE is a collective issue, based on residency in an affiliated community, rather than a common political or social ideology.

Collective membership is highly effective for mobilizing large numbers of people. Communities in Saquisilí range in size from about 20 to 200 households. Mobilizing one community is thus equal to mobilizing a much larger number of people. When a community makes a decision to participate, that decision is binding: "in the community it's everyone or no one...when resolutions are made in the community, they are fulfilled."¹⁰⁵ Nonetheless, collective membership also includes many people who feel indifferent, critical, or even hostile towards the CONAIE. Collective membership has become particularly contested as the CONAIE-affiliated organizations have become resources for political parties and development funds, thus raising what is at stake in deciding who belongs.

¹⁰⁵ Interview with Eduardo on January 2, 2006.

The collective membership, based on residency, would make CONAIE something like a government, rather than a SMO.¹⁰⁶ However, the CONAIE's leaders, those with what can be called active membership, do maintain certain ideological positions and organizational goals. The tension between the CONAIE's position as a governing body and as a SMO is played out in contestations over membership. On February 1, 2006 leaders of the OSGs affiliated with the MICC gathered in Latacunga to discuss a possible mobilization against the bilateral Free Trade Agreement negotiations.¹⁰⁷ What transpired was a poignant example of the contested and undefined membership of the CONAIE.

As the floor was opened up for discussion, a former elected official affiliated with Pachakutik, Fernando, challenged one young man's right to be present. He accused the young man, Ricardo, of being with the MPD (Movimiento Popular Democrático–Popular Democratic Movement), a rival electoral organization, and of publicly speaking out against Fernando while he was in office. As it turns out, Ricardo was an elected officer of his community, making him a legitimate representative based on collective membership. He also eventually became a candidate for the MPD, which disqualified him from active membership.

On that day, however, Ricardo gave an impassioned speech about his indigenous identity, his pride in being indigenous, and his loyalty to the CONAIE and MICC. He did

¹⁰⁶ Leaders have maintained that the CONAIE is more than just an indigenous organization; it is the governing body of the *nacionalidades y pueblos*. This claim draws its strength from the organizational structure that we have already discussed.

“Of course it is not the only indigenous organization. We are not just an indigenous organization but rather we are the government, the authority of the indigenous *pueblos*. So, we differentiate ourselves from the simply indigenous organizations, like the FEINE and the FENOCIN and the FEI. Because of this frame the CONAIE is the only organization that represents the indigenous *nacionalidades y pueblos* ...the structure of the traditional governments and so we are considered as the *nacionalidades*' own government” (Interview with Pablo in May 2006).

¹⁰⁷ Fieldnote recorded on February 1, 2006.

admit to being a member of the Seguridad Social Campesina (Peasant Social Security) but he claimed that, “they say it belongs to the MPD but it belongs to us peasants.” After hearing from both Fernando and Ricardo, a lengthy discussion ensued, in which it was revealed that three other OSG officers were identified with other political parties as well. Fernando’s reaction was to question, “then why did you accept the OSG leadership nomination?” In the end, Ricardo was asked to leave the meeting and the issue of the other OSG officers was postponed until another day.

The standoff between Ricardo and Fernando demonstrated how the CONAIE’s designation as the legitimate representative of Ecuador’s indigenous Nationalities and Peoples limited the prospects of developing a broader, more consolidated indigenous movement with transformative goals. The majority of CONAIE’s base, through collective, residential membership, did not identify themselves as a part of the CONAIE or as Nationalities and Peoples. Rather, they identified as indigenous communities associated with their local organizations. The identification as Nationalities and Peoples gave the CONAIE legitimacy, at least outwardly, but because of its organizational structure its ability to develop the kind of agreed upon discursive content that a SMO with a transformative vision might be expected to have was restricted. Of course, it cannot have been anticipated that such a consolidated indigenous movement would have come about after the Uprising. Certainly, though, the resources and opportunities made available immediately following the Uprising did mean that all social change efforts were channeled through the CONAIE and, because the possibilities seemed endless, no political project was consolidated.

Articulating Indigeneity in the Neoliberal Era

This chapter has demonstrated how neoliberalism in Ecuador produced an articulatory process around indigeneity. Furthermore, that process legitimized the CONAIE as the representative of all indigenous Ecuadorians because the CONAIE was most compatible with the neoliberal mode of governance emerging in the 1980s. In the process of legitimating the CONAIE, calls for radical change were moderated and, eventually, discredited. Although the CONAIE was able to use its representative status to subvert the neoliberal order at certain critical moments, its identification as Nationalities and Peoples, collective membership structure, and lack of a consolidated political project have made it organizationally weak.

This chapter argued for an analysis of articulation similar to Lucero's (2008), but with three additional emphases. First, I argued that attention should be paid to the silences within discursive structures, and particularly the alternative articulations that are silenced. In the Ecuadorian case, the Left has been excluded from the historical narrative of the indigenous movement. Most record of the CCT as the organization responsible for the occupation of Santo Domingo Church has been expunged from the historical record and the CONAIE has been given credit in its stead (León 1993). Second, the discourse of indigenous identity has been silenced in favor of an identification as Nationalities and Peoples. The radical left and broad indigeneity were not legitimized because they did not respond to neoliberal governmentality. The CCT, for example, did not want to participate in state spaces or to develop projects in conjunction with development agents. Rather, they sought land redistribution without financial compensation, a move that would have taken them out of the credit and development cycle.

Second, through an analysis of local experiences before and during the Uprising, this chapter demonstrated that the CONAIE was constructed as a unified national actor to justify its representativity. This narrative of unity constructed communities and organizations as the bases of the CONAIE, even when the individuals within those communities and organizations were themselves unaware of what the CONAIE was. The result has been the chronic organizational weakness of the CONAIE, particularly as it entered the more competitive arenas of electoral politics and development projects. As Warren and Jackson pointed out, indigenous movements “come in the highly contested plural” (2002: 11). The ability to subsume them all under the CONAIE originally appeared as a great strength but without a unifying political project it also became a weakness.

Third, this research has shown the need to add an analysis of the flow of power through discursive structures. Why has the identification of Nationalities and Peoples, and the CONAIE as its representative, gained legitimacy when neither one accurately reflects the diverse organizing experiences of indigenous communities? By demonstrating that the CONAIE was unknown to most indigenous Ecuadorians before the Uprising but had been legitimized by the Ecuadorian state and international development agents, the role of power in this articulatory process was exposed. That is, the CONAIE was selected by neoliberal agents to represent indigenous Ecuadorians because the CONAIE, as an expression of neoliberal multiculturalism, was effective at reconstructing indigenous subjectivities and integrating self-regulating indigenous subjects into the neoliberal order.

Although all sites of articulation are opportunities for resistance, to be used creatively in counter-hegemonic ways, the presentation of indigenous articulation as necessarily counter-hegemonic, reinforcing the false dichotomies of neoliberal/indigenous and state/indigenous (Gustafson 2002), misrepresents the hegemonic forces working to articulate and legitimate neoliberal multicultural subjects. The CONAIE was chosen for support by the state and other neoliberal agents because it embodied the rationality of neoliberal governmentality, including indigenous peoples, and granted limited cultural recognition while leaving intact the overall economic regime. The CONAIE has been strong enough to oppose certain elements of neoliberal capitalism, especially water privatization and unregulated ‘free’ trade. Nonetheless, the CONAIE’s predominance as legitimate social and political actor has in turn reinforced, rather than subverted, neoliberal governmentality. The next three chapters explore the types of social change pursued by the CONAIE since the 1990 Uprising—participatory democracy, cultural citizenship, and development with identity—to demonstrate how each of these has reinforced the neoliberal mode of governance, by communicating, rewarding, and restricting indigenous political subjectivity to neoliberal rationalities.

CHAPTER 3

Alternative Local Government (ALG) in Saquisilí

By the 1990s ‘actually existing democracy’ was suffering a crisis of legitimacy in much of the world. For “third wave” (Huntington 1991) democracies, in particular, the transition to democratic rule had created an expectation not only of institutional and procedural reforms but also of resolving social inequalities and granting full rights to all citizens (León 2004:89). The implementation of structural adjustment policies, a parallel process to democratization, however, made plain the gap between expectations raised by the transition to democracy and the policies that neoliberal elites adopted in the name of the people (Postero and Zamosc 2005). States remained in the control of national and international elites who enacted unpopular reform packages, which generally economically devastated the vast majority of the population, particularly those excluded groups that had looked forward to the promises of democratization (Almeida et al. 1993).

In the face of a post-transition “spiral of delegitimation” (Nun 1991, cited in Slater 1994:25), many groups searched for ways to ‘democratize democracy’ by aligning democratic institutions and practices with their democratic ideals. In particular, experiments in participatory democracy proliferated, and in many places alternative local governments (ALG) were established. In this dissertation, ALGs are defined as local governments that have instituted practices designed to increase citizen participation in planning, decision-making, and oversight. For many supporters of ALGs, such as the World Bank, they represented ways to improve the quality of democracy and maximize

public investment efficiency and effectiveness. The political left was similarly attracted to the ALG promise of improving governance but also saw a potential for creating new kinds of radical states and state-society relations, which were central to the post-socialist project (Beverley 1999; Harris 2002). In most cases, however, ALGs have had only limited success in improving democratic practice and transforming state-society relations.

Why, given their broad support and access to funding, have ALGs generally been unsuccessful? If the ALG reforms have not created a qualitative shift toward deeper, more transparent, and citizen-directed participatory democracies, then what have they done? If ALGs have not been successful, then why do these type of reforms remain at the heart of contemporary efforts to change societies? These are the questions this chapter will answer. First, a general review of democratic theory is given, and then, in more detail, the model of empowered participatory governance (EPG) outlined by Archon Fung and Erik Olin Wright (2003) will be reviewed. Next, the chapter demonstrates that the EPG model and theories of democratic practice rely on the assumption that the correct changes in institutions will produce major social transformations. Thus, when ALGs have been unsuccessful, mitigating factors, insufficient institutional reforms, and unintended consequences have been blamed. In contrast, this dissertation contends that it is important to understand the actors within ALG institutions in order to evaluate the transformational potential of institutional reforms.

In Saquisilí development agents relied on the ALG model to push the neoliberal agenda and shape indigenous people into neoliberal participatory subjects who acted according to the rationales of neoliberal governmentality. At the same time, indigenous Saquisilenses supported the ALG as a means of gaining greater access to state resources

for their clientelistic political networks. After 12 years, the ALG experiment in Ecuador produced a new form of participatory clientelism, effectively constituting and constraining neoliberal indigenous subjectivities in accord with and within neoliberal practices, and thus contributing to the demobilization of the Jatarishun and other groups that were not part of the neoliberal structure, both formally and informally.

Democratizing Democracy

Much recent work on normative democratic theory has taken the need to improve the quality of democracy as its central task. Theories of such a transformative, radical democracy contain three main conceptual currents. The first current, which begins with Tocquevillian ideas regarding the role of civic life in democratic governance, establishes the context in which democratic institutions work best. Theorists here have argued that the denser associational life is, the higher the quality of democracy will be. Voluntary associations create the conditions necessary for a democratic community: solidarity and trust (Cohen and Rogers 1995; Skocpol 2003). The greater the extent of connections among associations and individuals, what Fox termed the “thickness of civil society” (1996), the more likely decisions will be made to serve the collective good. The quality of civic life has been shown to shape democratic institutions and the possible outcomes of those institutions (Putnam 1993).

The second current, participatory democracy, establishes the actors within democratic institutions. At the core of participatory democracy is the idea that ordinary citizens should make decisions regarding government activities directly affecting them and have oversight mechanisms to ensure that their decisions are followed (Fung and

Wright 2003:15). The merits of participatory democracy, as compared to its representative counterpart, begin at the practical level of governance. When citizens develop solutions to local problems, those solutions are more likely to be efficient and effective (Cabannes 2004:38). Local people have a greater understanding of the problems that they face and will take greater ownership of state-sponsored activities if they have been actively involved in their creation (Cohen and Fung 2004; Fung and Wright 2003:25). The merits of participatory democracy extend beyond the practical level. Following Rousseau, Sader argues that participation is itself a transformative practice that radically alters the state-society relationship (Sader 2004). The transformative potential is particularly strong in societies marked by the historical exclusion of particular population segments (Baiocchi 2003:52-57; Selverston-Scher 2001).

Deliberative democracy forms the final current found in radical democratic theory, and it establishes norms for decision-making within democratic institutions. Beginning with Habermas' writings on the role of rational critical debate in the public sphere, contemporary theorists have extended the normative model of deliberation to include facilitated discussion in which decisions are made based on the most reasonable course of action (Calhoun 1992; Fung 2004). Deliberative decisions are fairer than decisions made in representative democracies because of the norms guiding them. Rather than maximizing self-interest, actors must be willing to choose the most reasonable proposals for all involved (Fung and Wright 2003:17-18).

Although the three currents do not exist together without tension (Cohen and Fung 2004), each takes a central part in the proposition of radical democracy: that democratic institutions can be reformed to such an extent as to create a qualitative shift in

the nature of the state. During the final decades of the twentieth century the formation of such a new, radical, plural democratic state became the focus of post-socialist theorizing on the left (Beverley 1999; Harris 2002; Hunter 1985; Laclau and Mouffe 1985) and its projects to ‘rethink revolution’ or develop ‘real utopias.’ One of the most clearly delineated of these projects is Archon Fung and Erik Olin Wright’s Empowered Participatory Governance (EPG) model, developed in response to the challenge of developing “transformative democratic strategies” (Fung and Wright 2003:4). Fung and Wright clearly wed the three currents of thought outlined above, taking their general principles, goals, and institutional design features particularly from participatory and deliberative ideas. They outline, for example, three institutional design features of the EPG model, which include a devolution of decision-making authority to local units, the creation of formal networks connecting the local units to each other and to authorities, and the creation of new state institutions assigned the task of facilitating problem-solving efforts (Ibid.:15).

The EPG model is a commendable theoretical endeavor and proves useful specifically because the authors have designed it to be tested empirically (Fung and Wright:25, 29-30). This has allowed those doing research on ALGs¹⁰⁸ to begin with the model and then identify mitigating factors that may have helped or hindered the ability of a given ALG process to live up to its transformative potential. For instance, Fung and Wright identify literacy and a balance of power among groups as facilitating factors (23).

¹⁰⁸ As a normative model, the EPG is too narrow to cover the entirety of experiments in participatory democracy. For this reason, I use ALG to signify actually existing reformed governments and EPG to refer only to the model.

In other cases (Arroyo and Irigoyen 2005), factors such as the presence of NGOs and the characteristics of the mayor have been identified as factors that can sustain ALGs.

The approach taken in testing this model brings to the surface a problematic assumption found with the EPG model itself, that institutional reforms are themselves transformative. Fung and Wright (2003) maintain, for example, that a balance of power can be achieved through, “self-conscious institutional design efforts” (23). If institutions can be adequately reformed to fit the EPG model and to take into account local characteristics that could interfere with EPG operations, then states should become fairer, more effective, and more equitable. Moreover, Fung and Wright claim, whether EPGs in practice will produce the desired results or “a host of negative and unintended consequences must be settled primarily through empirical examination” (25). The authors assume that institutions, properly designed, can only produce either positive, intended outcomes or negative, unintended consequences; their transformative potential is assigned *a priori*.

The oversight that Fung and Wright make, which they share with most democratic theorists, is to not acknowledge that institutions constitute spaces that actors interpret and occupy in creative and sometimes contradictory ways. To put it plainly, the actors within an institutional space arrive with a variety of intentions and desired outcomes. Actors can adopt the discourse and symbols of an institution without necessarily aligning their intentions with those of the institution. As the literature currently stands, however, when outcomes differ from the stated institutional goals, the tendency is to claim the perversion of stated institutional goals into unintended consequences (Hirschman 1991), and to search for mitigating factors that caused the institutional project to fail. Rather than

searching for mitigating factors and unintended consequences, first the aims of various actors involved must be understood.

Moreover, the transformational potential of participatory democracy can no longer be assumed. To begin, development agents, here defined as any organization or its representatives that operate within the development field, are both the promoters of participatory democracy (Cabannes 2004:38; Sousa 2004a) and the vehicle through which neoliberal rationalities are ‘taught’ (Postero 2007:168). Development agents’ focus is on citizen participation as the ultimate guarantor of efficient and effective public management, as made clear in the following Inter-American Development Bank document,

Abundant evidence shows the positive impact of citizen participation on the fulfillment of local needs through *more efficient allocation of fiscal resources*. In other words, citizen participation in the context of fiscal decentralization *could greatly enhance the development effectiveness of public funds and promote social equity* (Rey de Marulanda 2004:5, emphasis added)

Indeed, participation in planning has become a central imperative to development to the extent that some authors have been prompted to label it the “tyranny of participation” (Cooke and Kothari 2001). Participation promotes practices that are key in forming neoliberal subjects and development agents are responsible for much of the work on indigenous subjectivities done in the participatory spaces of Saquisilí.

Participatory democracy, as enacted in Saquisilí by the indigenous movement, was part of a “language of contention” (Roseberry 1994) used as both a site of resistance to and enforcement of neoliberal governance. More specifically, the participatory processes allowed indigenous Saquisilenses to re-route clientelistic political networks through indigenous authorities in an attempt to gain access to more state resources.

Participatory spaces such as the budget assembly provided development agents with access to indigenous communities and, through the practices of development projects, allowed agents to push neoliberal economic positions on to indigenous communities that had previously opposed them. Moreover, through their participation in state decision-making, the indigenous communities and their organizations ended up validating the neoliberal project and restricting their ability to act as an extra-institutional social movement. To participate is to accept, and legitimize, the neoliberal state and the provision of limited services through competition for development projects. To participate is to accept that the only valid means of expressing an opinion is within the guidelines of the participatory institutions.

Ecuador's Indigenous-led ALGs

Ecuador joined other third wave democracies in 1979 when a progressive military junta instituted constitutional rule. Ecuador's central government suffered periods of great instability during this democratic period, reflected by the thirteen presidents and one junta that have been in power since 1979. The "return to democracy," as it is often labeled in Ecuador (León 2004), did begin a slow process of government decentralization. However, it was not until the 1997 Law of 15%, which transferred 15% of the federal budget to subnational political units (provinces, cantons, and parishes), that local governments began to attain control over significant discretionary budgets.

The return to democracy ushered indigenous Ecuadorians into formal electoral politics. Until then, literacy requirements effectively prohibited the vast majority of indigenous Ecuadorians from voting. Despite the right to vote, however, indigenous

Ecuadorians remained excluded from formal politics and severely discriminated against until the post-Uprising context of the 1990s. In 1995 the CONAIE entered electoral competition by constituting a political party that would represent indigenous and urban social movement sectors. It was through this party, MUPP-NP¹⁰⁹ (Pachakutik), that indigenous-led ALGs began. One of the original Ecuadorian ALGs was founded in Saquisilí. The first Pachakutik mayor, Antonio Llumitasig (1996-2004), instituted a participatory development plan and a participatory budget process, in which a yearly assembly was held and citizens deliberated and prioritized projects to be funded. His first term ended on a high note, as he was re-elected with a majority of urban *mestizo* support. After Llumitasig's two terms, Pachakutik demonstrated great organizational strength by successfully supporting another indigenous Saquisilense for mayor, Segundo Jami (2004-2009). Pachakutik also won the majority of city council seats in 2004, a time when Pachakutik's performance had declined throughout the country. Nevertheless, despite the sweeping victory in 2004, the bases of Pachakutik were divided by 2009 and the mayor's office was lost to a rival party.

Development and Neoliberalism in Radical Democracy

When Antonio Llumitasig was sworn in as the mayor of Saquisilí in 1996, he faced enormous social, political, and economic challenges. In response, he drew on his experiences working with a U.S.-based Christian NGO to find partners who could provide development resources. The mayor encountered ample outside support for his participatory proposals, because NGOs, and other development agents, prefer to partner

¹⁰⁹ Movimiento de Unidad Plurinacional Pachakutik-Nuevo Pais (Pachakutik Plurinational Unity Movement- New Country).

with more efficient actors. ALGs serve as coordinating bodies that can streamline the delivery of development resources. Development coordination allowed the Saquisilí municipal government to extend basic services and infrastructure to more citizens, but coordination came with a price; there was a tendency to promote the priorities and long-term goals of development agents, even when they ran counter to the long-term goals of the ALG and its supporters. Although the ALG, in conjunction with development agents, delivered more resources to its citizens than the Ecuadorian state ever had in the past, it has also played a role in legitimizing the very ideas of neoliberalism its supporters have long fought against.

Linking Development Agents and Beneficiaries

Connecting communities and outside agents is an important first step in development. In the past, merely gaining access to the indigenous communities was difficult for non-indigenous outsiders. As Don Salvador of Yacu Chico explained, people in the communities distrusted the intentions of outsiders who offered them help.

But the parents didn't know [about education], they said that they are going to take them [the children] away, the ones that know how to read and write, to the military base. That made them afraid. And so at that time, the time of my brother, when the teachers came and wanted to put kids in the school, they would just take some slow kids and say in this community there are just these dumb kids, how are they going to be able to learn to read and write.¹¹⁰

Foreign aid workers were especially distrusted.

Of course [we controlled who entered the community]. Because that way, as Indians we understood that here are only Indians ... Even more, I remember a few years ago, seeing some foreign people, well, nothing doing, they had to be kicked out. ... Some other people came, saying they could maybe help us get water, because we just carried it from the river...but the people didn't believe us, [they

¹¹⁰ Interview with Salvador on June 25, 2006.

said] that can't be done, they are just coming to take away our land. That was our only way of old thinking, that they were going to steal the land or they were going to take the good children...¹¹¹

The basic demographic realities of the communities were unknown and access was impossible to gain. It was even dangerous to make attempts to 'contact' the communities. In the 1960s, for example, several agrarian census workers were attacked, and even killed, in the province of Cotopaxi. The vestiges of distrust were obvious during the course of this research, as well. A friend was relieved, for example, when I told her that I had not chosen to live in a particular community because "they have been known to burn gringos."¹¹²

The distrust of outsiders slowly shifted as indigenous leaders pushed their communities to take advantage of the assistance offered by outsiders. Through their organizing efforts during the agrarian reform period, leaders began working with NGOs, the Church, and others on the Left. People in the communities trusted the judgment of the leaders because of their history of sacrifice for the sake of the communities. As one former collaborator and NGO worker put it, "the indigenous leaders were organic. They lived [in the communities]. They grew there and they struggled there."¹¹³ The pattern was that if leaders supported development agents then the community members would usually accept them as well.

For development agents, indigenous authorities and leaders were partners who

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Fieldnote entry on November 18, 2004. There was a rumor that the community had attempted to burn alive or had burnt alive and eaten a group of foreigners who came to look for a lost Incan treasure they thought might be in the area. I did ask members of this community about the rumor and they neither denied nor confirmed it. I should also point out that this is one of the communities that invited me to live with them and that I attended functions in the community and always felt welcomed.

¹¹³ Interview with Jaime on April 26, 2005.

understood the inner workings of the communities and served as their traditional authorities. Agents depended on the municipal authorities' familiarity with the communities to provide links to the best-suited project recipients. If an agent sought a community with particular characteristics, they needed only ask leaders for a recommendation. The World Bank, for example, stated in the PRAGUAS (Ecuador Rural and Small Towns Water Supply and Sanitation Project) plan that "alternative municipal governments would coordinate (a) the supply and demand of WSS [Water Supply and Sanitation] in Indigenous municipalities to ensure that PRAGUAS II is accessed by those who meet eligibility requirements..."¹¹⁴

Development agents could also call upon the authority of the Jatarishun, which served as the union of all *cabildos* (elected community authorities), and municipal authorities to enforce program rules. As an example, representatives from one NGO, after many failed attempts on their own, appealed to the leaders of the Jatarishun for help with collecting loan payments from community members.¹¹⁵ Without a recognized local authority, it would be difficult for outside agents to develop a strong rapport with the communities.

The Cuban literacy program, Yo Si Puedo (Yes I Can), exemplified the way the ALG and Jatarishun linked agents and beneficiaries. The program made its way to the people of Saquisilí in 2005. Agreements were first signed with the provincial and municipal governments, and then a Cuban coordinator for Saquisilí was introduced at a Jatarishun meeting. The coordinator worked with community leaders at the Jatarishun

¹¹⁴ "ECUADOR Rural and Small Towns Water Supply and Sanitation Project II (PRAGUAS): Social Assessment and Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP), Draft." <http://go.worldbank.org/9TBQ8XYER0>

¹¹⁵ Fieldnote entry on September 7, 2005.

meetings to obtain lists of potential participants and facilitators, in order to determine in which communities they would begin work, and to schedule meetings and classes in the communities. Municipal authorities often attended these same meetings and were able to offer municipal resources to assist the coordination efforts and to clarify any misconceptions community leaders had about the intent of the program. The legitimacy of leaders, gained through decades of social struggle, was transferred to the program and its coordinator because they were introduced through the Jatarishun and the municipal authorities.

As the program progressed, the coordinator provided updates at the Jatarishun meetings and asked for the leadership's assistance when the program encountered problems. At one meeting, for example, she appealed to the authorities of each community for help with attendance and punctuality because many students were not finishing the program. She stated some of the reasons why participants were not graduating, and finished by threatening to report to the Jatarishun those who did not support her.¹¹⁶ Without the authority of the municipal government and the community leaders it would have been difficult, if not impossible, to coordinate this massive, and ultimately successful literacy effort.

The institutional reforms made in Saquisilí forged ties between development agents and indigenous communities. As both a legal and moral authority, the suggestions made by leaders and elected officials tended to be respected by community members and development agents alike. For service providers, the municipal government was a coordinator with knowledge of the local situation. And for community members,

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

government officials were known leaders with a history of struggle on behalf of the communities. In some cases, the ties made development projects more effective, as in the Cuban literacy program, which mobilized resources of both the Jatarishun and the municipal government. The close ties, however, provided development agents with the opportunity to naturalize their involvement in movement activities and to “educate” indigenous communities (Postero 2007:168), forming them into properly behaved development participants.

Teaching the benefits of efficiency and effectiveness, one of the ALG’s stated goals, proved another way to form neoliberal subjectivities. ALGs were supposed to be more efficient than local governments without development partners because of cost sharing. In most cases development agents structured a cost-sharing scheme whereby the local government and recipient community were responsible for a certain percentage of the overall project cost. In PRAGUAS II, for example, the municipal government was required to finance 20% of the project, while the community and PRAGUAS covered the remaining 80%.¹¹⁷ Most privately sponsored projects in Saquisilí dealt with water, sanitation, health, and education, all of which were expensive endeavors.¹¹⁸ By paying only a fraction of the cost, the municipality could fund more projects in a given year than would otherwise have been possible.

¹¹⁷ The community must cover 10% of the project cost in cash and 20% of the cost in kind, typically in labor. PRAGUAS covers the remaining 50% of the cost. Most development projects have similar arrangements.

¹¹⁸ For example, major recent projects have included a multi-year literacy program sponsored by the Cuban government, the multimillion Euro PASSE (Program of Support for Health Sector), which seeks to improve the coverage, quality, and efficiency of basic health and sanitation services, the aforementioned PRAGUAS, and a local agency CODESOCP (Committee for Social Development “Path to Progress” Saquisilí), sponsored by World Vision, which specifically works on preventative health, nutrition, and educational needs of sponsored children and their families (Slideshow presentation presented by the Saquisilí Municipal government at the 2008 assembly).

Cost-sharing schemes also taught “responsible participation” (Postero 2007:167) and legitimized the privatization of what had been public infrastructure and services. The contributions made by community members were considered a way of making development activities less paternalistic while improving a sense of ownership over the projects themselves.¹¹⁹ The move also made the people responsible for their own development, primarily by allowing them to propose, finance and execute all projects. Moreover, cost-sharing schema privatized the cost of infrastructure and services that had been the responsibility of the state.

While the coordination with outside development agents offers perhaps the most significant advancement in public resource management, there were concerns about the discrepancies among the long-term development goals held by agents and local communities. The priorities of development agents trumped the priorities of citizen participants. In 2005 more than 10% of the participatory budget¹²⁰ went toward projects that were never discussed at the assembly but were partially funded by development agents. This suggested that the extent to which coordination improved governance may have depended on the correlation between local demands and the interests of development agents. In the case of Saquisilí, the projects funded with that 10% of the participatory budget in 2005 were mostly water projects, a major concern for nearly all of the communities. Projects similar to the ones funded were even requested at the assembly, although by communities other than those that received the funding.

In contemporary Saquisilí the discrepancies between the participatory budget

¹¹⁹ See, for example, Indigenous Peoples Plan 171 of the World Bank.

¹²⁰ The dollar amount given for these projects represented 11% of the participatory budget. However, there were two projects that did not have reported dollar amounts.

process and the preferences of development agents were subtle. Nearly all communities lacked vital services and could greatly benefit from the type of development that agents were offering. In addition, the municipal government tended to work with development partners who promoted the development priorities established by citizens. The discrepancies were significant, in this case, not because they were critical issues in Saquisilí but because there was, at a minimum, the chance that development agents and the large budgets they command could come to dominate the budgeting decisions of any ALGs that were to rely on outside funding.

Privatizing Public Goods–Water Projects in Saquisilí

Despite similar areas of development concern, there was a profound difference between agents and local community members in terms of broader long-term goals. Many development agents promoted neoliberal political and economic principles, specifically privatization and open markets, which the indigenous organizations strongly opposed. During the planning and execution of projects the neoliberal goals were often hidden, as all parties tended to focus on the project at hand, not its larger implications. The practices of projectism¹²¹ effectively took the issue of water privatization out of the public discourse.

The issue of water rights exemplified the conflicting positions of agents and communities. The indigenous movement adamantly defended water as a public good and

¹²¹ I use Paul Little's definition of projectism: "a specific modality of development whereby daily activities undertaken by indigenous peoples, such as the defense of their territory, the productions of food and political organization, need to be "translated" into a project format for their subsequent financing by a governmental program..." (2004:5), which "represents a Western, bureaucratic, modernizing, short-term modality for confronting daily problems (Ibid.:6).

access to water as a right. Indigenous organizations consistently mobilized to stop government plans to privatize water, including a major mobilization in 1994. As recently as 2006 indigenous organizations mobilized against a bilateral Free Trade Agreement with the United States, motivated primarily by the threat of water privatization. If there was one issue that all of the indigenous communities in Saquisilí were concerned about, it was maintaining the status of water as a public good.

Despite this strong stance to maintain the status of water as a public good, however, organizations that would open up the control of water to non-state actors worked with the indigenous movement in Saquisilí. PRAGUAS, the aforementioned World Bank sponsored water and sanitation program, stated its programmatic goal as delegating municipal-run water and sanitation systems to “autonomous operators,” that they identified as being either public or private.¹²² It is unclear from PRAGUAS documents how the determination to go public or private would be made but it is clear that the threat of privatization existed. Thus, communities that have risked their lives to protect water rights have potentially, voluntarily, handed those rights over to the World Bank.

The logic of developmentalism, which operates through funding finite, short-term projects, kept attention focused on the current phase of the project and obscured the potential for privatization, as little discussion took place on the local level. One major daily paper reported only that PRAGUAS, “...offers financing for potable water and environmental sanitation projects to small municipalities.”¹²³ In the 2004 assembly, the local PRAGUAS representative’s sole explanation to the environment budget planning

¹²² “Lessons from small municipalities in Ecuador: Delegating water and sanitation services to autonomous operators.” World Bank Field Note, February 2005. www.bvsde.paho.org/bvsacd/cd25/delegating.pdf

¹²³ *El Hoy*, July 21, 2007.

group was that after the projects were done they wanted to develop commercial opportunities in the water business, if the supply of water was sufficient.¹²⁴ This comment, and the long-term goal of the PRAGUAS program, were neither discussed nor remarked upon. The focus remained only on how many communities would be able to benefit with improved access to water.

Contemporary indigenous movements are torn between the long-term general goals of social transformation and the immediately pressing needs of their communities. One movement supporter, when discussing why he felt that the communities would work with any organization, regardless of their motives, said, “It is the need of the people. It is not having potable water, not having electricity, [not having] something productive, [not having] solutions to be well in life.”¹²⁵ The same problems seemed to apply to the movement’s ALG counterparts. On the one hand, they promoted locally informed alternative developments, which provided more services than the Ecuadorian state had in the past. On the other hand, they legitimized and brought into their communities the very agents of neoliberal development they nominally opposed.

It may seem surprising that ALGs have proliferated in neoliberal states, given that neoliberal theory limits the role of the state and is “suspicious” of democracy (Harvey [2005] 2009:66). There are, however, many ways in which neoliberal states could easily adopt radical democratic reforms. First, the neoliberal state must guarantee a good business climate, which is threatened in lesser-developed countries by political instability, limited infrastructure, and poor social conditions. It is vital that a certain level of development be reached, then, in order to guarantee an environment conducive to

¹²⁴ Fieldnote entry on December 15, 2004.

¹²⁵ Interview with Jaime on April 26, 2005.

investment. This may be why the development field has flourished during the same neoliberal period; development agents provide the services that were once expected of states.

In this regard ALGs are compatible with neoliberal theory because they rely so heavily on outside development funds. Although the ALG in Saquisilí appeared to provide more services to more citizens, in effect it acted primarily as a coordinator with private, or supranational, development agents, who provided much of the funding. In general that led to the acceptance of the neoliberal model of the state. The main role of the state, as expressed in the local context, was to facilitate development relationships. In addition, the ALG was able to provide development agents with unprecedented access to project recipients, which contributed to the transition of indigenous communities in Saquisilí from privatization protesters to privatization clients. Through the knowledge and legitimacy given them by social movement leaders, development agents were able to penetrate communities that had been untrusting of outsiders, and the social movement activities of the organization were suspended in favor of participating in development projects that were oriented towards economic goals rather than social ones. In sum, not only are radical democratic institutions compatible models of the neoliberal state but they also promote the privatization of services and demobilize anti-neoliberal actors.

Patrons, Clients, and Participants in Planning and Oversight

The remaining set of actors that were vital to the establishment of the ALG in Saquisilí included indigenous community members and leaders. The communities and their leaders formed the base of the Pachakutik party and so were the primary force

behind the election of Llumitasig. In addition, the vast majority of participants in the participatory budget assembly were indigenous community members.¹²⁶ Indigenous authorities and community members used participatory spaces to gain access to the state resources they had historically been denied, but it was done in such a way as to reinforce the standard practices of clientelism. Political clientelism, most easily understood as “a relationship based on political subordination in exchange for material rewards” (Fox 1994:153), has dominated Ecuadorian politics and social life. It, and the culture of corruption it fosters, have been blamed for the country’s inability to modernize and progress. Thus, ending clientelism was one of the main stated goals of the ALG reforms. Contrary to that goal, however, clientelistic interactions and relations were merely adapted to include the neoliberal logic of participation.

Two specific democratic mechanisms were deployed by the Saquisilí ALG to control clientelism: citizen participation in budget planning and accountability measures. Citizen-based planning happens on two key levels in Saquisilí. At the level of long-term planning, there was a development plan towards which all government spending had to be oriented. The Participatory Plan for Municipal Development was, as its name suggests, created out of a municipal-wide assembly in which citizens developed a vision of what they wanted their city to be like. The participants designated four strategic development areas (health and sanitation, education and youth development, urban development, and environment and sustainable development) and outlined the challenges, priorities, and goals for each. As the foundation of the budget process the Plan attempted to ensure that the vision of Saquisilí held by the people guided their elected officials.

¹²⁶ The largest proportion of the population comes from the indigenous sector so this is not an overrepresentation of indigenous peoples in the assembly.

The second level of citizen participation in planning was centered on the yearly budget assembly, the main purpose of which was to first evaluate the past year's spending and then designate priorities for the next year's budget. Before the assembly, each community, neighborhood, and other association met and discussed their development needs. Through discussion the group decided on one or two projects, which it felt were of the highest priority, to propose at the assembly.

In one community pre-assembly meeting that I attended, for example, the President reported, "regarding the municipal budget, each community should come up with one proposal. I thought it could be water system improvement."¹²⁷ Another community member suggested making a request for school infrastructure. The community members began to debate the two suggestions. They had been trying for some time to complete a water improvement project and so quickly decided that this was the project proposal they would present at the assembly. The next step was for a group of community leaders and representatives to attend the assembly and participate in the working group for the corresponding strategic area, in this case health and sanitation. The working groups were responsible for prioritizing all of the requested projects in their designated area and presenting their priorities to the general assembly. After each working group presented their proposals, the assembly voted on the overall budget priorities.

The ALG planning process was designed to guarantee that money was not wasted on unwanted or untenable projects and that citizen priorities were given the highest

¹²⁷ Fieldnote entry on November 27, 2004.

consideration. This was a vast improvement over the many failed projects that were not planned based on local conditions and needs.

Look at sheep [livestock] improvement. We have worked a lot in that area. We got animals from other haciendas but our land doesn't have the right conditions. We do not have irrigation water and so we have not managed to improve the sheep... There are only a few of us who have really benefited from all of these projects. Some people, they receive something from a project, like an animal, and then turn around and sell it.¹²⁸

Another project, which provided loans in the form of materials for productive projects, ended up leaving in debt the small farmers it was supposed to help. The main problem with this project was its failure to account for local conditions. For example, some participants received materials to build a greenhouse. The plastic houses, unfortunately, were unable to withstand the highland winds and blowing soil and thus were shortly torn to shreds.

Other participants received new breeds of guinea pigs and modern cages in which to raise them. Most of the guinea pigs died, likely because the farmers were unfamiliar with the care of these breeds. The farmers with healthy guinea pigs did not fare much better, though, as the local market was too small for them to profitably sell their animals. In the end, the people refused to pay back the loans and the project was ended. As one Yacu Chico resident told me, "They were supposed to help us but I lost money. I had so many beautiful guinea pigs but they just all died, and the [NGO technical trainers did], nothing. How can I pay them when it already cost me!"¹²⁹

This project failed and caused tensions between the Jatarishun and its sponsoring NGO. These were projects in which the people were keenly interested, but they simply

¹²⁸ Fieldnote entry on December 7, 2005.

¹²⁹ Fieldnote entry on December 24, 2004.

did not consider the local environmental conditions, market characteristics, or technological capabilities. Furthermore, this project's failure was directly related to the development industry's tendency to apply project models that have worked in one location to others. This kind of bureaucratic generalizability reduced the conditions of poverty and the solutions of under-development to a generalizable formula without considering the variation in each localities' social, economic, and environmental factors.

Another factor that non-participatory development projects left out was the will of the beneficiaries. Countless projects failed simply because the would-be beneficiaries were uninterested. In one community people received machines for knitting sweaters, which were to be sold at the weekly market in Saquisilí. A member of the community mentioned that the machines had not even been taken out of their boxes. In another project, a farming cooperative, people were giving up long before construction was completed. One element of the project was shared profits from raising and selling pigs. After the death of several pigs and meager profits from the sale of others, the financial gains were disappointingly small, especially once divided among 100 families. When they discussed their disappointment, members of the cooperative repeatedly mentioned that they had been uninterested in this aspect of the project and had known it would not work.

The main reason people were uninterested in these projects was that they were organized as communal cooperatives rather than as individual or family businesses. This was a common complaint among community members; “none of the communal projects work” and people are more interested in “organizing as little groups or families.”¹³⁰

¹³⁰ Fieldnote entry on December 10, 2004.

Nonetheless, the community remained the favored unit for project sponsors. People in the communities had failed project fatigue. If they were to commit to a productive project, it would have to be planned in a way that interested them and which was appropriate to their needs and skills, and which was suitable for the local economy. The participatory budgeting process in the assembly allowed for a much greater level of control by the communities. If they did not like a given project proposal, they simply did not support it at the assembly.

In Saquisilí, then, resources were no longer wasted on the above types of projects. Citizens themselves had to propose the project and actively participate in its execution. Thus, large-scale projects in Saquisilí did a better job of reflecting the priorities of citizens than before. As one example, road improvement has been added as something of an unofficial fifth strategic area of development at the assembly because it is a major area of concern for all of Saquisilí's inhabitants. Likewise, the greater contact with government officials has made citizen participants, particularly indigenous citizen participants, feel closer to their government, which could have led to a sense of ownership over public works.

Nonetheless, citizen-based planning has had only a limited impact on government efficiency and effectiveness in Saquisilí, in large part because of the ways in which citizens and elected officials expected to interact with each other. One sunny, cold afternoon there were five of us huddled into the back of a pickup truck, heading for one of the communities. I was acquainted with one of the men in the truck, Manuel, so we struck up a conversation. When it turned toward politics, I asked Manuel what he thought of the mayor's work. "He hasn't done anything. He is from the same place as us but even

so, he hasn't done anything."¹³¹ Manuel supported the rival Amauta Jatari political movement¹³² in the local elections, though, so I was curious if he would have a negative opinion of all of the Pachakutik authorities. I followed up by asking what he thought of the Prefect of Cotopaxi, also a member of Pachakutik. "Oh, he is pretty good. He's from a different part of Cotopaxi but even so he gave us a community center last year."¹³³ He's a good authority."¹³⁴

Manuel's comments typified remarks, in meetings and informal conversations, about good authorities being those who gave some kind of direct financial support or focused on public infrastructure. Indigenous leaders also frequently complained about the situation: "The people still think about public works made of cement, of infrastructure works. They still do not give value to the productive works, to things related to the environment; but there is progress."¹³⁵ These comments reflected the continued acceptance of political patron-client relationships, which are maintained by all Ecuadorian political movements.

...they give some ten little bags of cement to make some fence, okay. Almost like alms, no. Or they give [money] for the band to play [at a party]. Okay. The little community house, perfect. ... So they are client networks, of course. Throw them some corn so the chickens are happily eating. ...in this country, it's not just that Pachakutik has cultivated this. ... all of the political parties have cultivated some

¹³¹ Fieldnote from January 2005.

¹³² Amauta Jatari is an evangelical Christian indigenous political movement that was established in 1999. Although its strongest bases are in the Amazonian region, the Amautas have had limited success elsewhere, including one city council member in Saquisilí elected in 2004. For an insider's view of the history of the indigenous Evangelical social movement that created Amauta, see Guaman 2006.

¹³³ Electoral decisions are sometimes made by the collective. For example, a community might decide that they will all support the Pachakutik candidate. By making their support known, the community might expect some favor in return. The same principle applies in the voting that takes place in the indigenous organizations. A community or organization might have 10 votes but they are all cast together as a unit.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Interview with Diego in January 2006.

excessive electoral clientelism. All of them have entered into the logic of cultivating the electoral clientele.¹³⁶

The strength of a political party is related to the strength of its patron-client network, and participatory democratic reforms have not been able to change this.

The ALG officials and indigenous leaders appealed to the people to limit the influence of political clientelism and orient project proposals towards strategic development goals. In budget planning meetings at the Jatarishun, leaders begged participants to not ask for “little things” like cemetery walls but rather to request something that can “really change lives, that can really improve lives and keep people in the communities.”¹³⁷ “Maybe you came today thinking of a small project like a classroom or a community house. But there are things with higher priority. So maybe you won’t ask for a community house...”¹³⁸ However, the leadership’s attempts at orienting community requests have been largely unsuccessful. In the 2005 assembly, nineteen of the thirty-four education projects requested by Jatarishun member communities were for school fences, classrooms, or community centers, and twenty-five of the thirty-four projects were entirely devoted to basic physical infrastructure. Although there may have been a lack of basic infrastructure in the communities, the failure to orient requests toward long-term goals was also an effect of the enduring clientelistic political culture, in which small public works are valued more highly.

A deeper look in to the actions of leaders and elected officials reveals that, despite their orienting rhetoric, they too operated by established patron-client practices. Officials felt impelled to distribute resources as widely as possible in an effort both to keep current

¹³⁶ Interview with Victor on Feb. 20, 2006.

¹³⁷ Fieldnote entry on December 8, 2004.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

supporters and to limit future opposition. As the mayor of another ALG in Ecuador told me:

Doing the participatory budget is a double-edged sword. One thinks that the opinion of the citizenry is good but ... everyone wants to take advantage, everyone wants, but with the small resources that the municipality has one cannot attend to all of the needs of the people. ...right now we are ending up dividing ourselves between the people who get something and the people who don't.¹³⁹

In other words, for a mayor to avoid being challenged she or he must provide at least some material support to as many different constituent groups as possible. This imperative means that it was more important for officials to give away small amounts of money than to comply with the budget priorities established at the assembly.

There were examples of the budget in Saquisilí being used to provide material support to the greatest possible number of constituents. On January 4, 2006 local officials and Jatarishun leaders visited two communities, both of which had received plastic chairs from the municipal government. In one of these communities an ALG leader addressed the people assembled, saying:

At least now there are some chairs that you can sit on. Maybe next year we will be able to give some small public work or something. This is from the Pachakutik political movement, fruit of our struggle, fruit of our sacrifices.¹⁴⁰

The representative from the Jatarishun followed up on this statement. "The important thing is that the people here keep meeting. You are legally recognized as a sector [of a community] and so the most important thing is that you always keep having meetings."¹⁴¹

The municipal government funded the chairs as part of a \$20,000 budget earmarked for "training center equipment"¹⁴² under the strategic area of education. At the

¹³⁹ Interview with Patricio on May 31, 2006.

¹⁴⁰ Fieldnote entry on January 4, 2006.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

2006 assembly it was stated that chairs were given to various communities and urban institutions. The chairs were not, however, a part of larger computer center projects. Neither of the communities we visited that day had requested chairs, let alone computer centers, at the assembly. Nor were chairs the only items funded without the approval of the assembly. In fact, more than one-third (36%) of the participatory budget funds were spent on projects that did not appear on the assembly-approved budget.

There is also evidence that the budget was used to garner support from the urban-mestizo sector. In late 2004 the mayor-elect and his team made several statements promising greater funding for their indigenous supporters. They stated, for example, that “although the discourse is ‘the government for all’ ...this is all fruit of the struggle so the number one priority is the proposals of the Jatarishun organization, the social movement.”¹⁴³ On a separate occasion, the mayor-elect’s team reasoned, “before the budget was 50% urban and 50% rural but why if the population is majority rural.”¹⁴⁴

Such statements would seem to be in line with the type of patron-client relations we have seen so far. Despite making these statements, however, the mayor-elect and his staff later proposed dedicating a full 75% of the participatory budget to the urban sector, exclaiming, “we will transform Saquisilí.”¹⁴⁵ When confronted by their indigenous supporters, the municipal team claimed that urban development would benefit all of the

¹⁴² “Memoria de la asamblea de unidad cantonal 2006” (24).

¹⁴³ Fieldnote entry on November 26, 2004.

¹⁴⁴ Fieldnote entry on December 8, 2004.

¹⁴⁵ Fieldnote entry on November 10, 2004.

people of Saquisilí, and that they needed to show the urban mestizos that the indigenous mayor could get work done.¹⁴⁶

The 2006 budget reflected the mayor's dedication to urban development.¹⁴⁷ Thirty-three percent of the budget was dedicated to urban development, nearly half of which went to "beautification" projects (15% of the total budget). All of the other strategic development areas combined received a mere 25% of the budget, and much of that budget was also spent in the urban center.¹⁴⁸ Although there generally was widespread support for urban beautification projects, it is likely that the mayor's decision to focus on urban development was an effort to gain the confidence and electoral support of the urban sector. In Cotopaxi, bids for re-election by Pachakutik authorities have relied on the votes of the urban sectors. And in Saquisilí, the communities were more divided over electoral politics than ever before. If the mayor were unable to keep the communities together, he would have to rely on urban support for re-election.

In all contemporary politics, alternative and mainstream alike, politicians must consider the costs and benefits, politically, of each action they take. Sousa, in his analysis of the participatory budget process in Porto Alegre, mentioned that the council members preferred to fund quick, low-risk projects because there were limited resources and because the budget was created annually. Under those conditions there was no political benefit to taking on a long-term project (2004b:86). The need to maintain popularity and

¹⁴⁶ Fieldnote entry on September 5, 2005. Although there had already been two terms of an indigenous mayor, Segundo Jami's administration felt this was still an issue because he utilized more markers of indigeneity, such as having long hair and wearing a hat, than did Llumitasig.

¹⁴⁷ Budget information in this section is based on the municipal government's recorded minutes from the 2005 and 2006 assemblies, and concern the spending that was planned for and occurred during the 2006 calendar year.

¹⁴⁸ The share of the budget that went towards new projects was low in this year because the municipal government prioritized paying off debts incurred by the previous administration. In the report given to the Assembly, 20% of the budget went towards debt payment.

limit political opposition was a factor, then, in all of the competitive electoral systems. Despite the commonalities, however, political clientelism did influence how popularity was maintained: by sharing the wealth of the state with as many sectors as possible. In a clientelistic climate, participatory planning may only be a formality, as patrons must be allowed the flexibility to respond to their clients.

Participant Oversight

Transparency and accountability are key elements in the ALG discourse because they are central to the idea of empowered, citizen-led participatory democracy. They also exemplify how citizens became responsible for the state of things through their participation. In Saquisilí, the process of rendering accounts, a basic reporting on the execution of budgeted projects, was an important accountability tool because it verified the extent to which elected officials were doing what the people had ordered them to do. The Mayor of Saquisilí expressed this sentiment in a 2008 interview when asked how he and the City Council made decisions about the budget.

... the only thing that the city council does is to legalize the budget, since the proposals made by the grand assembly are already a mandate for us. Since it is a mandate, well, the municipal government, in this case the mayor and the city council, simply what we do is to go along legalizing the budget proposal...¹⁴⁹

Simply put, the job of elected officials was to realize the decisions made by the people of Saquisilí and to verify they had done so by rendering their accounts to the public.

Account rendering did play a large role in the Saquisilí participatory process. There was an annual formal report, which was one of the two main agenda items at the assembly, in addition to informal reports that were given whenever municipal officials

¹⁴⁹ Interview with Segundo Jami on July 24, 2008.

met with citizens. Informal reports tended to concentrate on the public works of interest to those gathered, and the formal report listed all of the public works funded during the year. The formal report typically included a brief description of the public works executed during the year, the amounts budgeted and spent, and if the work was contracted to a third party or completed directly by the municipality. These elements are illustrated here with a brief excerpt from the 2006 report, as recorded by the municipal government:

In terms of constructions and buildings support and improvement in education for the canton with an initial aid of \$35,000. It is completed, by direct administration, in which not all of the educational institutions have been benefited but only those that had the greatest need... Expansion of the Colegio Nacional Saquisilí snack bar with an initial budget of \$5,000 was done by contract with \$4888 executed and, being the same, 100%.

Despite the focus on transparency that the report was designed to have, the type of information given and the format in which it was delivered limited the meaningfulness of the entire process. To begin with, the type of information given about projects was very limited. The amount of money spent was reported but the details of how the money was spent were only rarely given. Generally there was no way to tell how the funds were used. Although we may presume that an on-budget project made proper use of its funds, there were over-budget projects that were not justified. An example recorded in the assembly minutes of 2006 stated:

Financing and viability study of processing the trash disposed in the dry gulch. We have \$5000. \$7500 has been executed. The municipality has contracted out in order to leave this project completed. The project costs around \$9500. We have 150% executed at the moment.

Even when the discrepancies were addressed, the limited justification provided almost no explanation for how the extra money was spent.

City beautification projects, with an initial support of \$35000 [\$20,000 was the amount requested at the assembly] is directly administered. \$43,671 is executed,

which is to say 125% [218% of the original budget], with all of the requests and small works that were not found in the budget but for their emergency had to be attended.

Limitations of the report content went beyond the lack of specificity regarding spending. There were many discrepancies between the budget that was set at the assembly and the report given the following year. For example, over one-third (at least 36%) of the 2005 participatory budget was spent on projects that were not a part of the assembly's proposed budget. The fact that these projects were added to the budget after the assembly almost always went unrecognized, as demonstrated in the case of an unapproved mining project.

Studies and protection of mines with an initial budget of \$10,000. This was done by contract and it has been completely executed. And, what's more, we already have authorization from the Ministry of Energy and Mines to begin taking advantage of this mine.¹⁵⁰

In addition, the assembly-approved projects that ultimately were not funded were not normally included in the report. In 2006 only two of the 14 approved environmental and productive projects received funding. That year's report did not make mention of the remaining twelve.

In addition to concerns about the content of the report, there were limitations associated with the format in which the report was delivered. In the two years in which I attended the assembly, 2004 and 2005, the report was delivered on the first day of the assembly, after the opening remarks and other perfunctory agenda items. The public works director and finance director delivered the report together on both occasions, by reading through a list of projects, in the same fashion as has been quoted in this section. Participants in the assembly did not receive any written copies or have any other means

¹⁵⁰ Recorded in the minutes of the 2006 municipal assembly.

by which to evaluate the report. Nor did they have ready access to a copy of the budget they approved the prior year.

The discrepancies between the approved and executed budgets point to an unacknowledged stage of decision-making that went on outside of the participatory process. If we recall the Mayor's comment quoted at the beginning of this section, the elected officials were not supposed to be making any decisions about the participatory budget; they were to merely execute the decisions made by the people at the assembly. Nonetheless, it was widely acknowledged that, in practice, the city budget did not reflect the budget approved by the assembly. When I explained to one municipal employee, who wanted to know why I was searching through archived budget documents, that I would compare the budget approved by the assembly with the one reported the following year, he exclaimed that there was no relationship between the two and that "all of that work at the assembly, nothing comes of it."¹⁵¹ Decision-making was occurring outside the parameters of the participatory process, then, and the assembly participants remained a passive audience, receiving the report as given by the government officials.¹⁵² If the content and format of the reports were improved, the people would have a stronger and more effective tool for holding their government accountable. It remains to be seen, however, how much people want such a tool. Researchers working in other ALGs have determined that citizen oversight of or control over contracting and account rendering processes was the most profound change that ALGs can achieve. "The degree of control exerted by citizens in this phase [contract bidding and transparency after the budget is

¹⁵¹ Fieldnote entry on July 24, 2008.

¹⁵² At the 2004 Assembly two participants did complain that it was too difficult to follow along as the directors read through the list of public works but no suggestions for improvement were made and the comments were not addressed by the local government officials.

approved] demonstrates the extent to which power has devolved” (Cabannes, 2004:29). Although account rendering and citizen oversight in contracting may be the most effective way for an ALG to empower its citizens, the people of Saquisilí have neither demanded nor received such control.

The example of public works contracting serves to illustrate this point. There was no citizen oversight on contract bidding, nor was there a discussion at the assembly regarding the decision to contract out or administer a project directly. It is remarkable, in fact, how little attention was paid to the issue of contracting. In nearly two years of fieldwork with ALGs, only two conversations between ALG authorities and citizens about the process of awarding contracts were recorded. In both cases people complained that the contracts were not being awarded to locals and that locals were not always hired for the construction work.¹⁵³ Although the “exaggerated” budgets of the contracts were mentioned, the central concern was employment in the building of public works. In other words, people were concerned about how jobs and other resources were being distributed amongst constituents rather than transparency more generally.

As we saw in an earlier section of the paper, the people of Saquisilí expected to exchange favors with their elected officials and other political leaders. The patron-client arrangement requires some flexibility in spending and, it follows, in the rendering of accounts. The expectations created by a clientelistic political culture may change the very meaning of accountability, as it is expressed in terms of favors and political relations and not transparency and the devolution of power. Empowering citizens is difficult under any circumstances but it may be near impossible in the context of political clientelism.

¹⁵³ Fieldnote entries on November 10, 2004 and May 29, 2006.

Conclusion

Local governance in Saquisilí showed little improvement during its twelve year ALG experiment, with the exception of one small, but significant change. The ALG opened the doors of government to indigenous citizens in unprecedented fashion. With few exceptions interviewees named the ability to approach authorities without fear as one of the top two achievements of the indigenous struggle. Indigenous citizens in Saquisilí felt included in their local government and comfortable speaking with their elected officials. Given the sharp collective memory of abuses that community members suffered at the hands of earlier authorities, accessibility was indeed a major achievement. If a high quality democracy requires that all citizens be and feel actively included (Selverston-Scher 2001), then the ALG in Saquisilí did make an improvement to democracy.

Nevertheless, the extent of improvements made by the ALG were limited because of the primacy of development agents, the pressures of electoral competition, and the continued predominance of political clientelism. Development agents were courted by ALG officials because they provided funds essential to maintaining a client base and winning elections. Therefore, the development agents could push their own agenda over that resulting from the participatory process.

Furthermore, the people of Saquisilí felt an acute need for development projects and so were willing to overlook the discrepancies between their own anti-neoliberal stance and the neoliberal goals of many agents. Development organizations were attracted to the ALG and the indigenous movement organizations more broadly because they fitted the current hegemonic development model of participation. The agents of development themselves were the motor driving the participatory process—through funding and methodological training—at the same time that their primacy limited the

improvements that were theorized to result from coordinated service delivery, citizen-based planning, and processes of accountability and transparency.

Moreover, the continued prominence of political clientelism severely limited the extent to which the ALG could implement the processes that made it alternative in more than name. Transparency, citizen-based planning, and coordinated service delivery all suffered from the expectation that an exchange of favors should take place. The citizens themselves did not demand that their participatory budget be followed, in large part because that would not have fit with the cultural expectations of the political patron-client relationship. The persistence of those clientele relationships may have compounded the limitations to improvement, discussed above, resulting from the primacy of development agents and the pressures of electoral competition. In order for the administration to gain favor with as many clients as possible, and maintain the popular support needed for continued electoral success, development agents had to provide funds to augment paltry municipal budgets. In a culture of clientelism, participatory democracy can become participatory clientelism.

The analysis of the ALG in Saquisilí points to several implications for normative democratic theory, and particularly theories related to institutional reforms. Institutions do not produce social transformation; people do. However, institutions are constitutive of the discursive structures through which people communicate. The discourse of participatory, radical democracy has come to structure democratic institutions, regardless of their actual transformative potential. Actors can, and do, therefore, claim radical democracy as their own, for use with a variety of motivations. By incorporating discourse

and agency into radical democratic theory we come to new understandings about the nature of social transformation.

Participatory democracy has been celebrated as a means of creating fundamentally different kinds of states. In Saquisilí, the twelve-year experiment with an ALG, however, did not alter the state so much as it rerouted clientelist practices, through indigenous authorities, into a form of participatory clientelism. The ALG's dependence on development agents to fund client networks allowed agents to push forward neoliberal ideals, such as privatization, while citizen participation legitimized neoliberal economic practices. As indigenous people, and other citizens, participated they became responsible for the state of things and thus gradually precluded options for extra-institutional social movement activity. Participatory reforms, such as the ALG in Saquisilí, limited the public agenda to development agent priorities, redirected social movement activity toward operation within the spaces of that reduced agenda, and did nothing, on their own, to change either political cultures, racialized social hierarchies, or economic inequalities.

CHAPTER 4

Indigenous and Ecuadorian: Cultural Citizenship, or the Impossible Performance of Indigeneity

During the twentieth century the concept of universal citizenship came under attack; many identity-based social movement organizations demanded, and were granted, the rights of cultural citizenship, defined as the right to belong and still to be different (Rosaldo 2003). Cultural citizenship, which stood in stark contrast to earlier, aggressive assimilation policies, recognized historically marginalized minority ‘Others’ as vital members of the nation. Although the potential benefits of cultural citizenship have been identified, namely encouraging cultural survival and improving the quality of actually existing democracies (Korovkin 2001; Perreault 2002; Yashar 1998), little has been written about how nation-states will operate without the ‘Other’ that has until now defined the nation through its exclusion. What happens when historically excluded populations are incorporated into the social and political life of the nation-state?

To date, empirical analyses of cultural citizenship have tended to focus on the level of formal, political rights of citizenship to the exclusion of social citizenship, as a concept expressing belonging, in everyday interactions (Somers 1994). Much has been made, for example, of recent constitutions granting collective rights to indigenous peoples in Latin America and the growing number of racial, ethnic, and gender minorities winning elections around the world. Citizenship as formal politics, however, fails to capture the ways in which nations and states are constituted through interactions occurring in and out of the formal political context. Belonging is about more than voting.

It is about finding oneself in the history of the nation, in the sense of ‘we’ attached to the nation, and in the everyday experiences that demonstrate acceptance and belonging. The novel rights granted in Latin American constitutions and the experiences of a few minorities elected to office, though remarkable gains in their own right, do not fully or necessarily capture the ways in which the majority of the historically marginalized have experienced their recent political and social incorporation into the nation-state.

This chapter draws on theories of cultural citizenship and the politics of recognition to understand post-cultural rights in nation-states in a manner that incorporates everyday practices. Through an ethnographic examination of both formal and informal citizenship practices in Ecuador, a country that has granted extensive cultural citizenship rights to its indigenous citizens, the analysis shows that indigenous Ecuadorians have been divided into two categories; one worthy of inclusion, the Indigenous Gentleman, and one that continues to fulfill the role of the Indian ‘Other.’ Drawing on the work of Elizabeth Povinelli (2002) and Hale and Millaman (2006), the current study demonstrates that the two categories are defined in ‘cunning’ ways that recognize an identity category that is desirable to the national majority but nearly impossible for excluded groups to occupy. While the inclusion of indigeneity in the civilized national ‘we’ created complex realities in which the expressions of cultural difference were not always stigmatized, pressures to assimilate to the dominant mestizo ‘national’ culture resulted from everyday practices of discrimination and group boundary maintenance (Barth 1969). Cultural citizenship, in practice, was a form of multiculturalism that created limited forms of tenuous inclusion, which masked the continued exclusion of indigenous Ecuadorians.

The chapter begins with a review of the literature on cultural citizenship and the politics of recognition, with an emphasis on how cultural recognition has been theorized as a corrective to ideas of universal citizenship and singular national states and to the limited representative democracies those ideas have produced. Critiques of cultural citizenship are then introduced through a discussion of the politics of recognition and multiculturalism. The next section of the paper introduces the case of indigenous recognition in Ecuador, and the experiences of indigenous Ecuadorians in formal state contexts. Complex consequences flow from the distinction between Indigenous Gentlemen and Indian Others. Cultural citizenship rights have reinforced neoliberal governance by making indigenous Ecuadorians, collectively, strive to be Indigenous Gentlemen, while maintaining economic and social structures of discrimination for individual Indian Others.

Citizenship and Difference

Citizenship, whether defined as status (e.g. Marshall) or process (e.g. Habermas), had been tied to the concept of the universal citizen, with rights and obligations, and equal before the law. However, work by feminist scholars, and others, has drawn attention to the exclusionary nature of universal citizenship and its tendency to reinforce the dominant group's position (Fraser 1996; Young 1998). The tendency, which was in part due to the need to create a single nation to which citizens of a state all belonged, linked cultural and political authority (Brubaker 1994), and promoted the assimilation of ethnic minorities into the dominant culture.

In contrast to universal citizenship, cultural citizenship recognized the multicultural, and potentially multinational, nature of the citizenry, by acknowledging that equality before the law must be combined with the right to be different (Dagnino 1998; Rosaldo 2003). Under universal citizenship, the privileging of the dominant group remains but is less visible. As indigenous intellectual Luis Macas put it, “they make the people believe that we are all equal and so deserve the same rights and obligations; in practice, that is not true because the imposed social relation is based on class differences and racial discrimination” (1992: 26). Cultural citizenship is an effort to ensure effective participation by marginalized groups. But to achieve effective equality they must be able to become protagonists in the nation, rather than its mere subjects (Postero and Zamosc 2005:17-19) and the nation must learn how to incorporate diverse ways of being citizens (Yashar 2005).

Although many people pointed out the potential dangers that could come from recognizing differentiated citizens (see Kymlicka 1998), the majority of scholars working in Latin America came to view the emerging citizenships as a way to deepen the process of democratization already underway. For the followers of Putnam (1993), meeting the demands of indigenous movements could strengthen a democracy by granting the type of inclusion necessary for democratic functioning. Selverston-Scher (2001), for example, asserted that the demands made by indigenous movements could provide the necessary transition from subject to citizen, producing indigenous citizens who saw themselves as such. For theorists operating from a post-liberal stance, cultural citizenship rights served to challenge the limited democracies that had been established and to push for a more

meaningful and participatory form of democratic practice (Frank 1992; Postero and Zamosc 2005; Yashar 2005).

Despite the seeming promise of differentiated citizenships to create new (better) kinds of democratic states, the multicultural ideal on which the recognition of cultural citizens rested has now been identified as possessing limitations related to its role in maintaining neoliberal hegemony (Hale 2002). The inclusion of formerly marginalized groups served to (re)legitimize the neoliberal state through the participation of new citizens (Gustafson 2002; León 1994). Now classic critiques of multiculturalism have pointed out that it has also served to depoliticize issues of race and identity while simultaneously masking the continued racism lying at the foundation of social relations (Bennett 1998; Goldberg 1994; Okin 1999). Multicultural reforms, then, have the potential to make the newly legitimized state appear inclusive by erasing the legal bases for social exclusion; however, achieving inclusivity in practice is another and much more difficult matter.

The limitation, as has been suggested in the Latin American context, is that multicultural reforms have not changed already established structures of power, thus making the exercise of new citizenship rights nearly as difficult as ever. The extreme poverty of most Indigenous Ecuadorians, for example, has so far both limited their ability to exercise the formal rights of citizenship (Bebbington, Delamaza, and Villar 2005) and failed to alter the racialized power hierarchy that functions in everyday social interactions (Perreault 2003a). As Manuel Chiriboga pointed out, interethnic relations in Ecuadorian social institutions, like the market, have not been altered by the mere fact of Indigenous Ecuadorians becoming recognized as fully Ecuadorian (2004). The work of these authors,

and others, has highlighted the importance of studying citizenship as relations embedded in social interactions (Somers 1994), rather than as a simple matter of formal, legal rights.

In addition to the work cited above regarding the failure of cultural rights and formal political inclusion to address social and economic inequalities, the literature on the politics of recognition is useful for understanding *how* cultural citizenship rights operate within the context of nation-states. A growing number of scholars, generally following the work of Foucault, discuss the recognition of an ‘Other’ as an issue of representation because at stake are the meanings of both the ‘Other’ category and the ‘we’ category they help to define. Solomos stated the issue clearly when he said that, “dominant representations of difference may function to exclude and exploit, and to justify unequal access and involvement in specific institutions” (2001:199). Regimes of representation are regimes of power structured through power/knowledge (Solomos 2001; Stoler 1995; Foucault 1980). It is important to clarify, then, what specifically is being recognized within a regime of cultural citizenship rights.

This is precisely where the work of Elizabeth Povinelli was focused. In her book *The Cunning of Recognition* (2002), which dealt with Australian indigenous recognition, she asked what state-granted indigenous rights were recognizing. She presented a situation in which the indigenous category recognized was one that benefited the dominant national narrative, not the indigenous peoples, because the content recognized was based on the desires of the dominant majority. It required indigenous peoples to “Be (not) Real: Be (not) Alterior” (176). That is, Indigenous culture must be “*more or less* different” without being “repugnant” (Ibid.). Indigenous people turn out to be too Indian and yet not Indian enough to fit the national imaginary.

A second line of critique followed in this paper comes through the critique of multiculturalism as the cultural project of neoliberalism (Hale 2002). In particular, the work of Hale and Millaman (2006) is taken as a starting point. These authors, working in the Central American context, have written that multicultural neoliberalism opened up spaces of participation within formal democratic institutions to indigenous people. However, only a particular type of indigenous person, what they label the “authorized Indian (*indio permitido*)” is allowed to participate. As they define it, the authorized Indian is, “...the identity category that results when neoliberal regimes actively recognize and open space *for collective indigenous presence, even agency*” (284, emphasis added). The characteristics and permissible forms of acting of the *indio permitido* are determined within the spaces opened by the recognition of cultural difference. Hale and Millaman contrast the authorized Indian with a category they call the radical ‘Other.’ This radical ‘Other’ is too subversive and contestatory to be included within the neoliberal context because he pushed beyond the parameters of neoliberal spaces.

In this chapter the insights of Povinelli (2002) are combined with those of Hale and Millaman (2006) to develop a conceptual framework that situates cultural recognition within the neoliberal context. The essential task of recognition in the context of neoliberal multiculturalism is to first, recognize a culturally alterior category of citizen and then, second, to delineate which subjects fit that category, and are able to represent that group. That is, in Ecuador the Indian ‘Other’ is split between some who are worthy of inclusion because they embody desirable characteristics of alterity and some who remain excluded because they fail to embody only those desired characteristics. A symbolic role in the nation was created for Indigenous Ecuadorians, and once collectively recognized they

earned the right to be represented by occupying that role. Actually existing indigenous Ecuadorians, however, could always be found wanting and so easily relegated back to the category of 'Other.' The symbolic role effectively maintained the exclusion of indigenous peoples and limited the ability to claim categorical exclusion. According to the dominant sector, the niche existed and indigenous people had only themselves to blame if they were not able to fill it.

Dr. Eugenio Espejo and the Creation of Ecuador

Until the 1990s it was not possible to be considered both Indigenous and Ecuadorian; to be Ecuadorian was to be white-*mestizo*. Furthermore, Indigenous was seen as the antithesis to all that was modern and rational; Indigenous people served as the primitive 'Other' standing in the way of national progress (Appelbaum 2003; Crain 1990; Stutzman 1981). A brief biographical description of one Ecuadorian hero, Dr. Eugenio Espejo, will demonstrate the role of the Indian in the creation of the Ecuadorian nation.

Dr. Francisco Javier Eugenio de Santa Cruz y Espejo (1747-1795) was a medical doctor, researcher, author, and one of the first Ecuadorians to make the call for independence from Spain. His father, Luis Chusig, began life as the indigenous servant of a priest in Riobamba.¹⁵⁴ Through Luis Chusig's service, he demonstrated great ability and eventually became a medical practitioner in Quito. In order to make this move, however, he had to change his last name from the indigenous Chusig to the Spanish name Espejo. To become a man of science and society, and a citizen, Chusig had to exchange his

¹⁵⁴ The biography of Dr. Espejo was drawn from the definitive source, the unpublished manuscript of the Cuban-trained Ecuadorian Doctor, Manuel Ignacio Monteros Valdivieso, "Eugenio Espejo (Chuzhig), El Sabio, Indio Medico Ecuatoriano (Estudio Biografico)" available online at http://bvs.sld.cu/revistas/his/cua_89/hissu8901.htm.

indigenous identity for a *mestizo* one. Luis Espejo married a woman said to be the *mulata* daughter of a Spanish nobleman.

Only because of his father's ability to make the transition and to become *mestizo* and because of his mother's noble last name was Eugenio Espejo allowed entry into the schools and allowed to pursue his own medical and research career. Nevertheless, despite his degrees and publications, some social circles remained closed to Dr. Espejo precisely because he was not from a long-standing white-*mestizo* family. His background was also used by his opponents to detract from his arguments; they referred to him as "Espejo the Indian," using the term with a derogatory connotation.

The transition from Chusig to Espejo is an example of the options open to Indigenous people at that time. The rare few who became formally educated, or in some way advanced socially or economically beyond the standard for indigenous people, were offered entry into the nation through a process of *mestizaje*. There was no space for an Indigenous Gentleman at that time, and one's indigenous roots could be used to imply a sense of not belonging. Furthermore, it was through the denial of indigenous ancestors and the embrace of rational modernity that the Ecuadorian, *mestizo* nation was born. The birth of Eugenio Espejo, with his Indigenous, African, and white ancestry, marked the beginning of the Ecuadorian nation. The Ministry of Cultural Patrimony has referred to Espejo as "one of the creators of the Ecuadorian nationality" precisely because he represented the birth of the *mestizo*.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁵ Ministerio de Coordinación de Patrimonio 2009. "*Biografía de Eugenio Espejo.*" http://www.ministeriopatrimonio.gov.ec/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=348:el-pensamiento-y-obra-de-eugenio-espejo-fueron-declarados-patrimonio-nacional&catid=160:abril-2009&Itemid=278

From Ethnic Administration to Multicultural State

The Indian's standing as 'Other' began to change in June of 1990, when thousands of Indigenous people throughout Ecuador took to the streets and participated in what became known as the First National Indigenous Uprising. Their demands, which included the legal resolution of land conflicts, provision of basic services, and respect for indigenous languages and cultures, demonstrated that the Indigenous wanted to change the way they related to the state. While the indigenous wanted to be fully Ecuadorian, they were no longer willing to surrender their indigenous identity in order to do so. Furthermore, recognizing Ecuador as a multinational state would have changed the way that *all* Ecuadorians related to the state, in theory; becoming multinational would change what it meant to be Ecuadorian, for the indigenous and non-indigenous alike.

To understand the historical significance of this shift, we must analyze both the legal status of indigenous Ecuadorians and their discursive status within the historical narrative of the nation. The work of Andres Guerrero (2000) in this area is highly regarded. Guerrero analyzed the way that Ecuadorians were divided until 1857 into two legal categories: white and tribute-paying Indian. As they were legal categories, legal petitions to change one's classification were not uncommon. Until 1857, when the tribute was abolished, Indian subjects were not equal citizens and could not become so unless they became legally recognized as white. Indigenous people did not gain equality before the law then until 1857. As Guerrero pointed out, however, legal equality presented problems for the rural political and economic system that was structured around the fundamental inequality of Indians, what he called an "ethnic administration" (1993). Guerrero demonstrated that the Indigenous people became invisible within the national discourse and that the administration of their affairs was left to a mostly private and local

lifeworld, dominated by the hacienda, the Catholic Church, and other white Ecuadorians within the small towns.

It was not until the 1970s that the state again began to address the issue of indigenous citizens (Crain 1990; Guerrero 2000). Here the seminal work of Mary Crain explained this shift. Whereas earlier conceptions of the nation utilized the indigenous Other as the primitive contrast to the national subject, beginning in the 1970s the Ecuadorian state began hailing indigenous people as part of a new national identity that, while multiethnic, was based on “invented traditions” (Ibid.). Crain specifically pointed to the Roldos-Hurtado administration’s (1979-1984) portrayal of the fight against the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) as a matter of national sovereignty.¹⁵⁶ Beginning at this time, then, according to Amalia Pallares (2002) a new type of citizenship was offered to indigenous Ecuadorians, based on a new racial formation. It was, however, as Crain claimed, one based on a national vision of ‘our indigenous peoples’ that left more radical Indigenous voices silenced.

The 1970s not only brought the “new Indian” as part of the state’s hegemonic project, but also the first indigenous organizations that, eventually, adopted a position demanding respect for indigenous cultures and limited autonomy (e.g., Ecuarunari and the CONFENAIE). The idea that developed among Indigenous intellectuals was of the need for a plurinational state, stemming from their identification as indigenous nationalities and peoples. Under the plurinational state model, each nationality would be

¹⁵⁶ The Summer Institute of Linguistics has a long, controversial history around the world. It was formed at the same time as the Wycliffe Bible Translators (WBT) organization. The WBT handled the evangelical missionary side of operations while the SIL was contracted to study indigenous languages and teach the dominant national language to Indigenous groups. The SIL in Ecuador was particularly active in the Amazon region, making the first contact with the Huarani nationality. They have also been accused of working for oil companies and even the CIA.

responsible for, as well as autonomous and self-determining in, its own internal affairs. Each nationality would, for example, have its own social and economic organizational style, which would reflect the ‘worldview’ of that particular people. However, while each nationality would have autonomy with regards to its internal affairs, they would also be subject to one legal constitution and one state structure, which would remain the sovereign entity over the entire country. (For a detailed discussion of the plurinational state, see Keating 2001).

As the concept of the plurinational state developed, the CONAIE adopted it as its principal goal. As the organization gained recognition and power throughout the 1990s, it continued to push the plurinational state as a way of developing a new kind of state. Finally, in 1998 the CONAIE won the chance to help write a new constitution for the country. However, the Indigenous block was not strong enough to reach its goal and instead settled for redefining Ecuador as a multicultural and multiethnic state. Thus was born the multicultural state.

Without Taking Our Hats Off

Prior to the legalization of their communities,¹⁵⁷ a process begun in 1937, Indigenous people throughout Ecuador had few interactions with the state apparatus; political parties, schools, and the military were mostly unknown to indigenous people at that time. The only penetration of the state was through the local representative of the

¹⁵⁷ In 1937 the Ecuadorian government instituted the *Ley de Comunas* (Law of Communes), which recognized the legal status of indigenous communities, defined as groups of at least fifty people who agree to govern themselves through an elected council, or *cabildo*. The community became the smallest administrative unit recognized by the state, and for the most part, the vehicle by which indigenous people could lobby the central government. As Becker notes (1999), the law was designed to draw small population centers into the nation-state and to promote the social, economic, intellectual and moral development of Indigenous Peoples (p. 537) through inclusion under a corporatist regime (Yashar 2005).

federal government, known as the *Teniente Politico* (Sheriff). The *Teniente*, the public arm of the local power structure, was one of three main power figures in the rural highlands, along with the landowner and the Catholic priest (Guerrerro 2000; Zamosc 2003). For indigenous Ecuadorians, the *Teniente*'s most notorious job was organizing *mingas* for forced labor on state projects such as roads.¹⁵⁸

Beginning in the mid-twentieth century, indigenous Ecuadorians began to have more interactions with the state. Schools entered some communities, for example, bringing with them the symbols of the Ecuadorian nation.¹⁵⁹ As communities began to organize and gain rights, including universal suffrage in 1979, they also began to seek out services from state agents, such as the Agriculture Ministry, local municipal authorities, and, later, the FODERUMA (Fund for the Development of Marginal Rural Areas).

Although there were some sympathetic state agents, particularly those in Quito, well removed from local power holders, the general experience of dealing with the state was not positive. According to interviews, indigenous community leaders were often unable to see the authorities with whom they had business. Even if they were allowed in, they were often simply told to wait and, then, to come back the next day. Simple documents that citizens needed, such as birth certificates, required payment, even though they were legally supposed to be free services. The inability to access local representatives of the state was still prominent in the collective memory of indigenous Ecuadorians, as evidenced by multiple statements similar to this one:

¹⁵⁸ For a thought-provoking, though highly romanticized, fictional accounting of power relations in rural Ecuador during this time period, see Jorge Icaza's novel, *Huasipungo*.

¹⁵⁹ Radcliffe's paper (1999) discusses earlier research that demonstrated how little the imagery of the nation had penetrated indigenous communities. For example, in the 1960s, more survey respondents defined "*patria*" (homeland) as a long distance bus (it was the name of a bus company) than something to do with Ecuador.

... you had to take a sheep, chicken, or eggs [as a gift] and you had to ask to be seen. It took a long time. You had to take off your hat, and even, they say, from the main front door to crawl in on your knees.¹⁶⁰

The way that indigenous Ecuadorians were treated in government offices demonstrated that they were not only excluded from the national narrative but also physically and literally prevented from exercising their rights as citizens.

The abuses by local authorities discussed above were the central demand, apart from land, in the 1990 Uprising. In Cotopaxi, thousands of indigenous people gathered in one of the principle plazas of Latacunga and called out the local authorities for their mistreatment. As one leader from that day recalled, people did not necessarily have a plan, they just knew that they could not take the abuse anymore. “We just felt that we had to do something, that we were tired, that we couldn’t go on.”¹⁶¹ After some three hours of discourse, the Governor and other authorities signed documents agreeing to the changes proposed by the indigenous multitude that day. “They signed everything that we wanted them to. Things we never had imagined.”¹⁶²

In contemporary Ecuador, the ability to walk into a government office without fear was the biggest achievement of the movement, according to every indigenous organization member in Cotopaxi that was asked during this research.

Today the people are confident about walking in here, to the point that now they don’t even necessarily have to make an effort to speak Spanish because they can simply speak in Kichwa.¹⁶³

Indigenous Ecuadorians now generally feel like they belong and are a part of the nation (Radcliffe 1999). This might be particularly pronounced in Saquisilí and Cotopaxi,

¹⁶⁰ Interview with Jorge on June 25, 2005.

¹⁶¹ Interview with Humberto in October 2006.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Interview with Alejandro Luis in February 2006.

though, because of the success of indigenous candidates in elections and the fact that two Kichwa mayors made the municipality an open space for constituents. During the two terms of Antonio Llunitasig (1996-2004) and the single term of Segundo Jami (2004-2009), the municipal office was open and the public could see the Mayor without an appointment two days per week. Kichwa was spoken freely and both Mayors were able to switch between languages depending on with whom they were speaking. Not only could the people come to the Mayor's office but also the Mayor went to the people, attending functions in rural communities on a regular basis. For people in the communities, it was an unprecedented, historic moment. One community leader welcomed the Governor of Cotopaxi (former Mayor Antonio Llunitasig) with these words:

We, the indigenous people, have wanted [an authority] to come to [our community] at least once. Never before has any governor come here. I congratulate you and thank you and hopefully it will not be just today."¹⁶⁴

Thus we see that within the formal contexts of the local state apparatus, the recognition of indigenous cultural rights has transformed the way that indigenous Ecuadorians related to the state and participated within it.

How is an Indian Going to Rule Us?

In less than 20 years the Indigenous people in Cotopaxi transitioned from a sub-human status, treated as beasts of labor,¹⁶⁵ to the highest authorities in the province.¹⁶⁶ The transition was profound but not without difficulties. For example, some of the urban

¹⁶⁴ Fieldnote from May 13, 2005.

¹⁶⁵ Interview with Sisa on July 4, 2005.

¹⁶⁶ At the time, Indigenous Ecuadorians occupied the positions of: Rural parish council, city council, mayor, provincial council, prefect, governor, and member of national congress.

mestizo sector reacted harshly to the triumph of Llumitasig as the first indigenous mayor, in 1996.

1996 and 1997 were the toughest years of confrontation with the people. First there were something like three uprisings in the urban area. First as if wanting to test the capacity of the *Indio*... One heard terms like ignorant Indian, like savage Indian. I can say that the hardest moments were in terms of hearing these types of insults. But one can also say that they have been spaces of opportunity to demonstrate that the administration that I'm running is with the use of reason. (Antonio Llumitasig, in Larrea and Larrea, cited in Kaltmeier 2008:272)

There was even skepticism on the part of Indigenous Saquisilenses themselves.

In 1996 it was very difficult to raise consciousness among the people because there was, how can I say it, there was no credibility amongst ourselves, among Indigenous people, because there were some who said, 'how is an Indian going to be able to administer a public institution,' they said ... 'only the *mestizos* can do that, we won't be able to do it. (Segundo Jami, cited in Kaltmeier 2008:259)

However, the self-doubt of the Indigenous community continued, and continues even today, with many comments recorded during this research reflecting the need to prove to everyone, including themselves, that Indigenous people are capable and rational: "We thought they were the owners of reason but now we see that we also have reason."¹⁶⁷

Despite the initial backlash, mainstream *mestizo* society has also largely accepted indigenous Ecuadorians as authorities and as people who have a role to play in modern national life.¹⁶⁸

The indigenous-led government in Saquisili did more than merely change the demographic characteristics of authorities, though. Under Llumitasig the municipality instituted a participatory democratic process, including a participatory development budget, as discussed in chapter three. The participatory process was designed to promote

¹⁶⁷ Fieldnote from December 13, 2004.

¹⁶⁸ To the extent that some Indigenous candidates have won re-election based on the support of urban mestizos.

the active inclusion of indigenous Ecuadorians. Participants in the budget assembly, for example, were representatives of each civil society organization, which included indigenous communities. Based on observations made at two budget assemblies, it is even possible that indigenous Ecuadorians outnumbered all other assembly participants.¹⁶⁹

Unfortunately, the participatory budget process demonstrated that *active* inclusion in the democratic process did not necessarily equate to *effective* inclusion. The effectiveness of indigenous participation was limited by two factors. First, given the legacy of abuse by *mestizos*, most Indigenous Ecuadorians in Saquisilí did not seem comfortable speaking in groups where *mestizos* dominated the discussion.¹⁷⁰ Only when an indigenous leader was present in a group did this pattern change. *Mestizos* maintained power through their historically dominant social and economic position, even while Indigenous Ecuadorians served as authorities.

Second, effective participation was limited because group boundaries (Barth 1969) between *mestizo* and indigenous had been maintained, although often expressed as urban/rural in the context of the assembly, and the groups viewed the budgeting process as a zero-sum battle between them. Take, for example, the education budget planning group, observed at the 2005 assembly. The group was led by and composed mostly of urban teachers. Their complaint was that the majority of the education budget had been earmarked for a rural literacy program sponsored by the Cuban government. After questioning the way money had been spent in 2004 and complaining about having

¹⁶⁹ Indigenous Ecuadorians make up the majority in Saquisilí so this is not an over-representation.

¹⁷⁰ One priest who took part in early community organizing efforts discussed the unwillingness of indigenous people to speak up in front of mestizos as one of the largest obstacles to indigenous organizing. Interview with Danilo.

already sacrificed for a year, the lead *mestizo* teachers decided that they would write the budget proposal, giving an equal amount of money for each sector, rural, urban, and suburban, which would have left the literacy program underfunded. Throughout the budget assembly there were examples of *mestizos* expressing the view that additional funds for the rural sector were a direct loss to their own urban budget. Despite an Indigenous mayor and an indigenous majority, the *mestizo* sector retained enough social and economic power to keep the budget squarely under its control, with the majority of public spending going to urban development.

Despite these problems, there have nevertheless been significant benefits for indigenous Ecuadorians resulting from their political incorporation as citizens within formal state institutions. In part, the benefits occurred because of the special emphasis the state has placed on making citizenship multicultural. In the participatory budget process, for example, indigenous participants outnumbered urban *mestizos*. For indigenous communities the state, as represented by local authorities, became accessible in unprecedented fashion with the election, in 1996, of indigenous representatives. During the indigenous-led administrations, indigenous Ecuadorians felt that they were able to exercise their rights as citizens and make themselves heard by their local state administrators. Another benefit to come out of indigenous recognition stemmed from having indigenous people represent, as elected officials, the people of Saquisilí and Cotopaxi; a situation unimaginable a few decades ago. For the indigenous community, it was a great source of pride that they have demonstrated the ability of indigenous Ecuadorians to be modern, professional Ecuadorians capable of administering the state apparatus.

Despite these undeniable gains however, this section of the chapter has begun to show the need to look beyond formal interactions, to investigate how everyday experiences differed from the formal rights that have been established. There continued to be barriers to indigenous Ecuadorians' participation in state institutions. Power continued to be exercised by urban mestizos through interactions that occurred within the context of citizen participation. Likewise, both indigenous and mestizo participants maintained boundaries between the two groups and saw their interests as opposed. In other words, indigenous and mestizo Ecuadorians have not been incorporated, informally, into a singular national 'we.' In the next section of the chapter, an analysis of everyday interactions outside the parameters of the state will be presented.

Everyday Experiences of Indigenous Ecuadorians

Indigenous Ecuadorians have been formally recognized by the state and are now included in the democratic process, both as citizens and as elected officials. However, citizenship, as *belonging*, must be looked at as part of everyday interactions embedded in the institutions of society. In Ecuador, the daily encounters of indigenous and *mestizo* Ecuadorians remained marked by social distance and inequality. Discrimination and the mistreatment of indigenous Ecuadorians remained the status quo, while 'indigenous' remained apart from 'Ecuadorian' in much of the national discourse.

One reason the indigenous movement began, according to interviews and observations, was that the people were tired of being mistreated. The mistreatment extended beyond the state, affecting nearly every interaction with *mestizo* society; landowners, lawyers, employers, bus drivers, and shop owners routinely mistreated

indigenous Ecuadorians. Similar complaints of mistreatment still exist.¹⁷¹ For example, in a series of meetings with Cotopaxi bus operators, members of the Indigenous and Peasant Movement of Cotopaxi (MICC) complained of the following mistreatment on busses: being forced to sit in the back of the bus, seats reserved for *mestizo* patrons, disrespectful language, refusal to stop in indigenous communities, not coming to a complete stop for indigenous patrons to safely exit, overcharging indigenous patrons, and dangerous overcrowding.¹⁷² These were some of the same practices that the 1990 Uprising was meant to resolve. Although indigenous organizations were able to respond, collectively, to abuse on a larger scale, through mechanisms like the bus meetings, it was unclear how much change such interventions affected. In addition, mistreatment in isolated, individualized settings was far more difficult to address.

Not only did mistreatment and discrimination remain common but also many *mestizos* maintained an image of the indigenous person as ‘backwards’ and ‘irrational,’ despite the attempts of indigenous leaders to demonstrate their capabilities. In an informal conversation with one judge in Cotopaxi, for example, he revealed that, in his opinion, indigenous communities were unable to effectively administer their own justice system¹⁷³ because, he stressed repeatedly, they were “ignorant” and “do not have the ability to reason.”¹⁷⁴ There is also a general feeling of superiority among many urban *mestizos*. In the course of research, for example, *mestizos* often commented on how difficult it must be for me to live with Indigenous people because of their supposedly

¹⁷¹ See Fundacion Q'ellkaj 2004 for a national level example of discrimination at polling places.

¹⁷² Fieldnotes from February 2005.

¹⁷³ The right to an indigenous justice system was granted in the 1998 Constitution. See Ilaquiche 2004 for a discussion.

¹⁷⁴ Fieldnote from January 8, 2006.

‘poor hygiene,’ or were shocked when this researcher claimed friendship with a person classified as *Indio* Other.¹⁷⁵

Reconciling the old *Indio* with the new Indigenous Ecuadorian

The official recognition of indigenous Ecuadorians and the acceptance of indigenous professionals and officials stood in stark contrast to the everyday interactions between indigenous and *mestizo* Ecuadorians. On the one hand, mestizos in the urban center supported indigenous Ecuadorians in their bids for re-election. On the other hand, bus drivers forced indigenous Ecuadorians out of seats reserved for their *mestizo* patrons. In Saquisilí, the ability to accept the success of some indigenous Ecuadorians while maintaining the general racialized hierarchy was aided by the creation of two indigenous identity categories, or two ways of being an indigenous Ecuadorian that are here labeled Indigenous Gentleman and Indian (*Indio*) Other.

Indigenous Gentlemen, a type of *indio permitido* (Hale and Millaman 2006), was the term used to describe those Indigenous Ecuadorians who had achieved a higher status position (than many *mestizos*). It was also used as a general term to describe certain Indigenous peoples, such as the Otavalo and Saraguro Kichwa, who had a reputation for economic and educational success. The individuals and groups labeled as Gentlemen were generally respected for their success and for their ability to maintain the indigenous culture. The judge who believed Indigenous people to be incapable of reasoned thought,

¹⁷⁵ This particular incident occurred at a school function for a friend’s son. She was the only indigenous-identified parent at the school and regularly ridiculed and excluded from parent-teacher functions. The teachers and administrators were excited to have a ‘gringa’ at their school but were shocked to find that I was there only to accompany my friend. They insisted that I must be there from some NGO because no other explanation made sense. Fieldnote from February 27, 2006.

for example, expressed his great respect and admiration for Raul Ilaquiche, an indigenous lawyer, scholar, and former member of the National Congress.¹⁷⁶ Mr. Ilaquiche, like all Indigenous Gentlemen, was respected for his accomplishments, “now they have their degrees, their businesses” and especially for his ability to understand authentic indigenous culture, as evidenced by his publication of a book on indigenous justice practices.

In contrast to the respected Indigenous Gentlemen, however, the remaining indigenous Ecuadorians retained their position as the *Indio* Other. The Indian Other was a complicated mix of everything that Indigenous Gentlemen were not. The Indian was uneducated, illiterate, and thought of as “little brothers whom one must take care of so they are not manipulated.”¹⁷⁷ An *Indio* was one that did not know any better. *Indios* were given the characteristics of living in rural communities, speaking predominantly Kichwa or speaking Spanish with a Kichwa accent, drinking excessively, and being easily taken advantage of. The *Indio* Other category was, at its most basic level, the residual category for the stereotypes on which indigenous Ecuadorians have been discriminated against for centuries. That is, the Indian Other is the same Other on which the republic was founded.

There were other, more complex significations for the *Indio* Other, however. There were times when the *Indio* Other was portrayed as being unable or unwilling to become a part of modern society. For example, a 2005 newspaper article lamented that, “despite the formal recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples, these continue to live

¹⁷⁶ Fieldnote from January 8, 2006.

¹⁷⁷ “El pais ya es de todos menos de los indios” by Luis Maldonado Ruiz, October 2, 2009. <http://www.llacta.org/notic/2009/not0019.html>.

in a situation of poverty.”¹⁷⁸ The article then went on to state the dismal education and health standings (years of education and prenatal care) of the indigenous sector, in comparison with the national rates. The article leaves the reader with the impression that despite ‘our’ best efforts, ‘they’ are still inferior and choose not to educate themselves or take care of their children. In 2003, an editorial pondering why the indigenous movement stayed with President Gutierrez even though he showed early signs of betrayal concluded that, “one must understand the old, the millenarian mentality of the Indian people...” to understand why they decided, “to play with rules [of modern democratic elections] that are strangers to them.”¹⁷⁹

Indios were sometimes portrayed as those indigenous Ecuadorians who have been deeply exploited and harshly oppressed, to the point that they no longer understood true indigenous culture. In 2009, this was the dominant discourse around the application of indigenous justice in accord with the 2008 Constitution. There were several cases of accused thieves being lynched, beaten, and even murdered in communities and neighborhoods during 2009. Indigenous leaders made it clear that these were cases of people using indigenous justice as an excuse to commit crimes, not the proper application of their law. Nonetheless, a national editorial stated, “they cannot claim some ancestral customs in order to turn back to barbarity.”¹⁸⁰ In response to the break out of these tragic events, workshops were set up to teach leaders about the proper application of indigenous justice and Indigenous Gentlemen were assigned to evaluate the application in the communities. It might be the fault of *mestizo* domination and indigenous exclusion but,

¹⁷⁸ *El Comercio* August 9, 2005.

¹⁷⁹ Fieldnote from August 14, 2003.

¹⁸⁰ *El Hoy*, April 16, 2009

according to the dominant discourse, only Gentlemen were capable of remembering and understanding ‘authentic’ indigenous culture. The *Indio* Other, then, was both too removed from tradition to claim cultural citizenship and too removed from modernity to claim inclusion in the Ecuadorian nation.

Although it may seem that the categories of Indigenous Gentlemen and Indian Other were discrete, it was common for Indigenous Gentlemen to be relegated back to the Indian Other category within different contexts. The tenuousness of being labeled Gentleman was most clearly seen in the aftermath of President Lucio Gutierrez’s fall, in April 2005. Not long after the new president, Dr. Alfredo Palacios, was sworn in, he appointed Antonio Llumitasig to the governorship.¹⁸¹ What ensued was a horrendous display of racism, in which protests against the governor were couched in the language of *mestizo* superiority. There was a constant stream of callers to a local TV and radio program who complained about Llumitasig’s last name not being good enough or expressed fear that Llumitasig would appoint only indigenous Ecuadorians to positions to the extent that, ‘they are going to rule us.’¹⁸² Llumitasig was labeled uneducated, incapable, and too provincial despite his college degree, eight years of experience as mayor, and the fact that he too had traveled abroad.¹⁸³ The ability to take away the

¹⁸¹ In Ecuadorian provinces there are two principal authorities, the prefect and the governor. The governor is appointed by the president of the republic and serves as his representative in the province. The governor is also responsible for appointing people to other positions in the province, such as the *Teniente Politico*. The prefect, popularly elected, would be equivalent to the governor in the United States’ system.

¹⁸² Fieldnote from April 27, 2005.

¹⁸³ Traveling abroad is one of the markers of an Indigenous Gentlemen. Some callers who rejected Llumitasig expressed hypothetical support for Lourdes Tiban, an Indigenous Lady, stating that her extensive travels made her a better representative of the province. There were some questions about the quality of Llumitasig’s education, and the financial situation of the municipal government under his lead. Irrespective of those questions, however, the tone of the calls was hostile and discriminatory.

Gentlemen label demonstrates that at a certain level it is simply the ‘politically correct’ phrase for the Indian Other, without reflecting a sentiment of inclusion.

Moreover, the transience of the Indigenous Gentlemen label demonstrated that it was a role that no individual could ever possibly and permanently come to embody. All Indigenous Gentleman performances were found wanting because the role itself responded to an impossible balance between authentic, millenarian cultural alterity and modern, recognizable expressions of civility. As the treatment of Llumitasig demonstrated, even the most successful Gentleman performances were easily relegated to the role of Indian Other once again. This means that the symbolic space created for indigenous people within the Ecuadorian nation was not open to actually existing indigenous people. The niche was created but remained impossible to fill.

The imaginary of the indigenous Ecuadorian is singular but the existence of multiple ways of being indigenous made it possible to doubt the authenticity of all indigenous Ecuadorians. The Indigenous Gentlemen, though respected for his ability to understand indigenous culture, occupied positions that were viewed as entirely non-indigenous. A popular complaint was that Gentlemen did not live in rural communities, do agricultural work, or drink and eat culturally appropriate fare. Gentlemen were portrayed as either *mestizos* who had adopted the markers of indigenous culture for personal gain or indigenous people who had become too far removed from their roots by becoming accustomed to urban life.¹⁸⁴ The *Indio* Other continued to live in the community and do agricultural work. However, the *Indio* had been kept in a state of

¹⁸⁴ Having cars, eating the more expensive meats, drinking whiskey, and having homes in the city were all routinely mentioned as markers of Indigenous Gentlemen that removed them from a more Indigenous reality. People also often told stories of Indigenous Gentlemen and Ladies who used to identify as mestizo, or cholo, before adopting the hat and poncho (skirt and shawl for ladies) that marked them as indigenous.

perpetual oppression for so long as to have lost the ability to understand and practice their true culture. Whereas Gentlemen could provide a discourse about the philosophical importance of the Earth in the indigenous worldview, the *Indio* was known, in his ignorance, to destroy natural resources like the *paramo* ecosystem. Generally speaking, the Indian Other failed to take advantage of the opportunities created by formal recognition. Indigenous Gentlemen, on the other hand, unfairly took advantage of special rights they did not need. With two very different ways of being indigenous, neither category was capable of claiming authentic indigeneity.

What are the consequences that flow from splitting the historically marginalized indigenous Ecuadorians into the categories of Indigenous Gentleman and Indian Other? That question will be addressed by reviewing the three arguments made by Hale and Millaman. The analysis then expands on their three arguments. Before addressing their arguments, however, it remains to clarify why this chapter contrasted the authorized Indian (Indigenous Gentleman) with the Indian Other rather than the Radical Other that they identify. Simply put, the categories identified by Hale and Millaman do not apply to the majority of indigenous Ecuadorians. The ‘Radical Other’ implies a level of political consciousness that, while sometimes present in indigenous social movement organizations, does not typify the everyday interactions of indigenous Ecuadorians. This work places the authorized Indian, expressed in the Ecuadorian context as the Indigenous Gentleman, in a dichotomy with the more general Indian Other in order to capture the experiences of a broader range of indigenous Ecuadorians and highlight that, just beneath the surface of multiculturalism, patterns of exclusion and assimilation remain intact.

The first argument of Hale and Millaman was that the category of authorized Indian lent legitimacy to the state. The evidence from this research supports the argument. The inclusion of Indigenous Gentlemen, collectively as the ‘politically correct’ term and individually as authorities, appeared to correct for the characteristics that caused the state to lose legitimacy, or never acquire it in the first place; namely the exclusion of most Ecuadorians from political decision-making. The mere presence of indigenous Ecuadorians, or their allies, in state institutions improved the legitimacy of the state as a whole. The efforts of indigenous-led alternative local governments to institute a new kind of democracy went even further in adding legitimacy to the state.

The newly legitimized status of the state, gained through the active participation and leadership of indigenous Ecuadorians, made it harder for the indigenous social movement to act in opposition to the state. Leaders were aware, for example, of the criticism they faced from throughout Ecuadorian society, including their own communities, for being part of the very government they protested. This was a major consideration in whether or not to support Llumitasig in his role as governor, for example, because “if there were to be another *paquetazo* (package of structural adjustments) the organizations would have to go against the governor.”¹⁸⁵ The existence of the Indigenous Gentlemen role, then, legitimized the state and weakened social protest potential. In this way the Indigenous Gentlemen/authorized Indian category served to strengthen the neoliberal state.

The second argument presented by Hale and Millaman was that the *indio permitido* category effectively demarcated what demands were permissible. In particular,

¹⁸⁵ Fieldnote from April 27, 2005.

only goals that could be expressed within the context of the neoliberal state could be voiced by the *indio permitido*. Hale specifically noted how goals that would affect economic relations would go beyond what was allowed. The evidence from Saquisilí supports this argument and can be summarized in one commonly used phrase: from protest to proposal. Protest had been legitimate, in 1990, because indigenous Ecuadorians were unfairly excluded. Now that they had gained legal recognition, however, they needed to follow the same rules as everyone else. Indigenous Ecuadorians were required to make proposals that fit within the parameters of neoliberalism.

Protest, or outright rejection of the status quo, was cast as juvenile and against national progress. During the campaign to end negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement with the United States, for example, President Palacios accused the CONAIE of protesting merely to destabilize the country.¹⁸⁶ He declared that the purpose of indigenous mobilizations was “to demolish the democratic institutions” while his Secretary of communication recommended that the president, “address the country so that *Ecuadorians* close ranks in favor of democracy.”¹⁸⁷ In that comment, true Ecuadorians were contrasted with the destabilizing, selfish forces of Indian protest and unruliness. Indigenous Ecuadorians have been invited to the table, within legitimate state institutions and spaces of citizen participation, to dialogue but that has also confined them to the table. That is, once space for Indigenous Gentlemen to participate has been created, no other form of political expression was allowed.

The third and final argument made by Hale and Millaman about the *indio permitido* is that it made indigenous culture an asset across the political spectrum. Again

¹⁸⁶ Fieldnote from March 16, 2006.

¹⁸⁷ *El Hoy*, March 16, 2006, emphasis added.

the research presented here supports this argument. There was an imperative for political actors to demonstrate their embrace of cultural diversity. Intercultural expressions, such as the annual Cotopaxi Interculturality parade, became more common and political parties from across the spectrum stood indigenous candidates. The emphasis on indigenous culture, above all else, made indigenous cultural markers a political asset for individual Indigenous Gentlemen, to the point where many were accused of fabricating their cultural difference in order to advance their careers. “After Pachakutik was created, more people wanted to get into office so they dressed as Indians. It was personal ambition and money [that motivated them].”¹⁸⁸ The extent to which this sentiment was expressed in everyday conversations suggested that people generally viewed markers of indigeneity as political assets.

Although Indigenous Gentlemen may experience indigenous culture as a political asset, to leave the argument there, as Hale and Millaman do, would be to deny the continued reality of discrimination faced by most indigenous Ecuadorians. For the majority, indigenous cultural difference was not an asset used for personal gain but rather a social marking that must be overcome. The difference between the ways cultural difference was experienced from within the two categories can be illustrated with the example of language. For indigenous gentlemen, the ability to speak Kichwa (or the native language of their nationality) was a source of pride and authenticity. For the *Indio* Other, however, speaking Kichwa, or even Spanish with the particularities of a native Kichwa speaker, was a source of discrimination.¹⁸⁹ Whereas some Indigenous Gentlemen

¹⁸⁸ Fieldnote from July 7, 2005.

¹⁸⁹ After living in Yacu Chico for many months, I was exposed first hand to the discrimination that Indigenous Ecuadorians were subjected to because of the manner in which they spoke Spanish. On multiple

were inclined to study Kichwa as part of their university training, many people who occupied the *Indio* Other category tried not to speak to their children in their native language, in hopes they would only learn Spanish.¹⁹⁰

Cultural recognition, and the accompanying celebration of multiculturalism, did not end the imperative for minority peoples to assimilate to the dominant culture; it merely changed the source of the imperative. The pressure to become *mestizo* was no longer produced by the state, which had granted the right to belong and to be different. Rather, the pressure came from the everyday lived experiences of exclusion. One has the right to be different but at what cost? For Indigenous Gentlemen, invited in and asked to demonstrate and represent the interculturality of Ecuadorian society, indigenous culture could indeed have been a political asset. For many indigenous Ecuadorians, however, cultural difference is a burden too heavy not to shed.

Thus far my analysis has been a confirmation of the propositions presented by Hale and Millaman. Here I go beyond their argument to discuss other effects of multicultural political incorporation. Ultimately, the additional effects lead to my less optimistic appraisal of continued participation in neoliberal multicultural spaces being. In Saquisilí, cultural citizenship, or the recognition of culturally differentiated citizens, weakened the ability of culturally marginalized communities to effectively collectively organize for change. The creation of a role for individual Indigenous Gentlemen made claims of wholesale exclusion impossible to substantiate and the opportunity for individuals to become Indigenous Gentlemen contributed to a process of aggressive

occasions urban *mestizos* admonished my own Spanish, which by then had taken on the accent and idioms of the community, for being “too *Indio*” and so beneath me, as a white person.

¹⁹⁰ Fieldnote from July 2, 2005.

decommunalization (Sanchez-Parga 2007). At a time when Indigenous Ecuadorians enjoyed more legal recognition than ever before, they were also less able and less willing to claim those rights as a collective entity. Their representation and participation in many of the spaces opened through the mechanisms of neoliberal governance remained collective, however.

The category of incorporation, Indigenous Gentlemen, and its Indian Other were available to (primarily¹⁹¹) *individual* indigenous Ecuadorians. The manner in which individuals from the same community were assigned to both categories demonstrated this. Thus, inclusion in the nation, although granted to indigenous nationalities and peoples collectively, was experienced as individuals. There was a palpable struggle in the communities of Saquisilí to not be classified as the Indian Other because of the discrimination that would result. Everyone strove, then, to become an Indigenous Gentleman or a mestizo. The opportunities to do so were themselves made available to individuals; primarily education, employment, language acquisition, and urban migration. It has been argued that neoliberal multiculturalism has the novel ability to include collective groups as members of the state, so long as they are self-regulating subjects (Hale 2004). Although that does seem to be a possibility, and while it did occur on a legal, formal level, everyday inclusion ultimately rested with individuals. Thus, achieving collective rights individualized the exclusion and (tenuous) inclusion of indigenous Ecuadorians, who had until then been excluded collectively.

¹⁹¹ There are some indigenous groups that are collectively labeled as Indigenous Gentlemen, such as the Otavalo and Salasaka Kichwas. Statements regarding their cultural authenticity, cleanliness, etc. were often used to set these groups apart from the groups labeled Indian Others, such as the Kichwas of Cotopaxi. Certainly individual Otavalos and Salasakas were still treated, however, as Indian Others in their own daily activities.

Not only has the claim to indigeneity been complicated but also, to a certain extent, the very need for an indigenous Ecuadorian struggle has been negated. Interculturality was beginning to be celebrated at every turn in Ecuador, including an annual “Interculturality” parade in Cotopaxi, sponsored by the prefect’s office. Indigenous Ecuadorians had also had most of their demands met; their leaders were now actively engaged in the democratic process and they had legal recognition as nationalities and peoples.¹⁹² In fact, by 2008 nearly all of the demands that had originally been set by the movement had been granted, at least on paper. The movement has been left without a central demand and without a sense of collective membership.

Conclusion

Despite the continued domination of Ecuadorian political and social life by white-*mestizo* citizens, the legal recognition of indigenous Ecuadorians and the opening of symbolic space for their inclusion in the national ‘we’ opened many opportunities for indigenous people to participate in the political, economic, and social life of the nation. Literacy programs and the bilingual education system brought opportunities to indigenous communities on an unprecedented scale. Some of the first students to come out of the bilingual system went on to occupy positions of authority, as was the case of the Prefect of Cotopaxi, Cesar Umajinga. Furthermore, educated indigenous Ecuadorians were able to find employment within the institutional spaces of multiculturalism, where their cultural difference was seen as an asset. The recognition of indigenous Ecuadorians,

¹⁹² The 2008 Constitution, largely the responsibility of President Correa’s party, recognized Ecuador as a plurinational state. The act was not met as a triumph by the Indigenous SMOs, however, because the state’s plurinational status changed very little.

the representation of Indigenous Gentlemen, created a situation in which indigenous cultural difference was celebrated.

The celebration came at a high price, however. Cultural difference became an asset to the indigenous elite but remained an obstacle to acceptance for the vast majority of indigenous Ecuadorians. There are many authors who have pointed to a great schism between the indigenous elite and the average indigenous citizen (Beck and Mijeski 2000; Eguiguren 1995; Lauer 2006; Ospina et al. 2006; Perreault 2003b; Varese 1996). The elite were generally wealthier, more educated, and more urban than the groups that they were asked to speak for, making the elite perhaps more effective citizens but less similar representatives. They also tended to have a greater understanding of the hegemonic discourse of neoliberal multiculturalism and cultural citizenship, along with the attendant discourse of development (Eguiguren 1995). Meanwhile, indigenous Ecuadorians as a larger group continued to have the worst socio-economic indicators within Ecuador and faced severe discrimination on a regular basis. In addition to the differences pointed out by the authors noted above, my argument reveals another division; for the indigenous elite, their cultural difference is an asset and claim for inclusion, while for the general indigenous Ecuadorian population the markers of their difference were experienced as sources of exclusion. The effectiveness of indigenous SMOs has been negatively impacted by the divide inherent in the recognition of the Indigenous Gentlemen and continued rejection of the Indian Other.

What happens when historically marginalized peoples are recognized and incorporated into the nation? The case of Saquisilí demonstrated that formal recognition of cultural citizenship was not enough, in and of itself, to guarantee conditions for

cultural survival. The racialized hierarchy and relations of power remained intact. Indigenous people continued to feel pressure to become *mestizo* despite the state's formal commitment to its multicultural and multiethnic citizenry. The Indigenous Gentlemen, however, served to show that cultural difference was no longer the reason why most indigenous Ecuadorians remained in socially and economically marginalized positions. In effect, cultural citizenship without changes in everyday relations has masked the continued marginalization of indigenous Ecuadorians.

In the context of neoliberal multiculturalism, recognition is a representation of 'we' that adds symbolic value to cultural difference, so long as that difference responds to an idealized alterity that cannot possibly exist. Inclusion is not open to all but rather to a category created by the national imaginary, perfectly balanced between authentic difference and a recognizable, understandable, comfortable difference. The appearance of inclusion was given even though the balance was impossible to maintain. Race became depoliticized and the act of making one 'other' became invisible. The ability to make Othering invisible is what makes cultural recognition a useful governing technique.

CHAPTER 5

Development with Identity: Indigeneity from Above

... the communities continue in the same situation of misery only now, they are subject to a new type of slavery, which is the NGO.¹⁹³

I say that the NGOs, how they manipulate with apparent aid, are castrating the movement and the struggle.¹⁹⁴

In the 1980s the development industry turned its gaze toward indigenous communities throughout the world and, by the late 1990s, was focused on a type of ‘development with identity’ that recognized the need for development plans to incorporate and respond to the culturally specific needs of indigenous communities. This type of development, described in a 2006 speech at the United Nations, respects tradition while achieving the stated humanitarian and economic goals of development.

It is a paradigm with a holistic vision that includes economic growth, sustainable development of the environment and that constantly affirms the social, economic and cultural rights of Indigenous Peoples and other marginalized groups.¹⁹⁵

Development with identity was also supported by indigenous movements like the CONAIE as one of the most promising methods of social change available to them. It both respected indigenous cultures and experiences and stressed the need for indigenous peoples themselves to participate in the development process, through the active inclusion of their own authority structures and organizations in development processes.

¹⁹³ Interview with Jaime on April 26, 2005.

¹⁹⁴ Interview with Humberto in October 2006.

¹⁹⁵ “Indigenous Peoples: Human Rights, Dignity, and Development with Identity.” Speech delivered on August 9, 2006 at the United Nations celebration of International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples by the Assistant President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Roy Phrang.

For SMOs, development with identity was a chance for social and economic progress, in line with traditional cultural values, and in the control of indigenous peoples themselves.

Development with identity failed to make progressive improvements in the lives of indigenous Ecuadorians and, on the contrary, the paradigm, which relied on the romanticized notions of indigeneity held by development agents, contributed to a perpetual under-development in indigenous communities. Rather than a means of social transformation and, as with participatory democracy and cultural citizenship, development with identity in Saquisilí was an element in neoliberal forms of governance, shaping of indigenous Saquisilenses into self-disciplining neoliberal subjects. This development paradigm incorporates the practices of neoliberalism, and eases the social contention that has resulted from earlier structural adjustments. Instead of demanding resources from the neoliberal state, the communities of Saquisilí make proposals and request development projects from non-state actors.

The chapter begins with a brief review of the literature on development, and specifically the relationship between development agents and SMOs. Next, to understand the significance of the development with identity paradigm in the indigenous movement and its affiliated communities, the chapter demonstrates the pervasiveness of development projects in the SMOs and the everyday lives of indigenous peoples. It shows that development projects had more impact on the daily lives of indigenous Ecuadorians in Saquisilí than any other social institution; political, social, and economic relations were dominated by development. Next, the chapter elaborates the ways that indigeneity was actively constructed ‘from above,’ according to the imaginary of development agents, rather than from the input of indigenous community members. Finally, the chapter looks

at how indigeneity from above shaped the way that the indigenous SMOs operated. In Cotopaxi, SMOs were infused with development discourse and practice to the point that they were unable to operate outside of the development with identity paradigm. The result of development with identity has been a perpetual state of under-development for indigenous Ecuadorians, who remain largely in poverty, and the legitimization of the neoliberal mode of governance.

Development Agents and SMOs

The literature on development, particularly as it relates to NGOs, can be divided into two broad camps: those that believe NGOs are agents of “good” (Fisher 1997) and those that see them as obstacles to genuine social transformation. Before looking at each camp, it is important to point out that while most of the development literature focuses on NGOs as a particular type of development agent, they should be considered as part of the same apparatus as other development agents. NGOs do not act alone, are not wholly separate from governments and government funding (Orduna 2004), and were not the only types of development agents encountered by indigenous Ecuadorians. In Saquisilí, development agents included NGOs but they also, perhaps predominantly, included government and trans-governmental development agents. For example, the government of Japan, through its Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has executed several agricultural development projects in Cotopaxi, including Project 2KR, begun in 2007.¹⁹⁶ The European Union also operated a large development program in Cotopaxi,

¹⁹⁶ *La Gaceta*. April 21, 2007. “Cooperación internacional. Japón entregará recursos no reembolsables a Ecuador.” See also *La Gaceta*. October 8, 2009. “Japón y Ecuador. La cooperación es el único camino al

funded with five million Euros, beginning in 2002.¹⁹⁷ The European program, PRODECO (Programa de Desarrollo Rural de Cotoapxi–Cotopaxi Rural Development Program), operated with similar financing schemes as NGOs, requiring co-payments from both the Ecuadorian government and the beneficiary community.¹⁹⁸ It is impractical and analytically unsound, then, to separate NGOs from other types of development agents, including SMOs in certain contexts. All development agencies were referred to as ‘organizations’ or ‘ONGs’ (NGO in Spanish). That is, the beneficiaries viewed all of these organizations as equivalent. Where each type of agent ended and another began was not well delineated. While some might object that NGOs have different goals than governments and SMOs, it is argued here that they all exist within and give strength to the same neoliberal development paradigm. This position recognizes the diversity of actors involved in the development industry while establishing the existence of a general development paradigm in which all agents, regardless of their professed political position, operated.

In terms of the literature, authors interested in demonstrating the good done by NGOs tend to report two positive effects. First, the existence of NGOs and other development agents has allowed marginalized peoples to bypass the state and seek linkages with transnational actors who, in turn, could pressure the local state to improve the lives of marginalized groups or directly provide resources to marginalized peoples. The involvement of international aid and human rights agents in early indigenous organizing was seen as pivotal, to the extent that Alison Brysk described the movement

desarrollo agrícola.” For more information on Japan’s international aid efforts, see the JICA website: <http://www.jica.go.jp/english/>.

¹⁹⁷ *El Hoy*. September 14, 2003. “Coparticipar es clave en Cotopaxi.”

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

as having been “born transnational” (2000). The transnational links provided legitimacy, visibility, and resources to causes that might otherwise have been ignored or repressed by local governments. In fact, the protection offered by transnational agents was great enough to lead one author to speculate on how much better the fate of indigenous groups would have been had NGOs existed in the 16th and 17th centuries (Ramos 2002).¹⁹⁹ In addition, the aid of NGOs meant that services denied by the state, such as water and electricity, were finally made available to marginalized peoples (Ibid.). The work in this vein has helped to explain the explosion onto the world stage of indigenous movements in the late 1990s. It has also illuminated the multi-directionality of globalization processes.

The celebration of transnational linkages overlooked, however, many of the uncelebrated effects on indigenous peoples. Transnational actors have impeded indigenous organizing in many cases. There are examples of pro-oil indigenous organizations being formed and funded by multinational oil companies in order to challenge the legitimacy of already established organizations that sought to restrict oil exploration in indigenous territories (Sawyer 2004). Being transnational has also resulted in a crisis of leadership, as those leaders who can speak for indigenous peoples at the United Nations or in the National Congress do not often have the same characteristics as leaders who have been traditionally recognized by indigenous communities themselves. More importantly, the decision to “bypass the state” is at its core an acceptance of the neoliberal order of things, in which services are privatized and all sectors of society are

¹⁹⁹ I agree with Ramos’ assertion that transnational actors were key actors in the struggle for survival for many indigenous groups, particularly during periods of dictatorship and civil war. In this regard, she is speaking more of “cultural survival” issues rather than development in the broader sense.

invited to participate within the parameters of multiculturalism. When transnational actors brought water to rural Saquisilí, rural actors no longer had a reason to object to the shrinking of the state and the privatization of what had been thought to be public services. When anti-neoliberal indigenous movements come to rely on NGO funds, they come to rely on neoliberalism itself.

The second way that NGOs are thought to ‘do good’ is through their capacity to “thicken civil society” (Fox 1996), by linking local and trans-local processes, which in turn strengthens democracy. In the case of Ecuadorian indigenous SMOs, development agents have helped to create links between local issues and global ones, between local indigenous people and indigenous peoples across the country and around the globe (Perreault 2003a). ‘Multi-scalar’ networks facilitated the generation of the national movement organization and also contributed to strengthening democracy by generating social and human capital within the marginalized indigenous sectors, increasing their ability to participate in democratic processes (Bebbington and Perreault 1999).

Nonetheless, these same authors also point out that SMOs linked to development agents have become nothing more than development coordinators (*gestionadores*), resulting in less contestatory political action (Roper, Perreault and Wilson 2003) and less organizational stability as SMOs became dependent on development project funds (Bebbington 1999). In addition, NGO-funded development schemes lacked a cohesive vision of an alternative society and the structural changes necessary to transform society. Instead, they focused on projects that, according to development scholars, maintained the general social and economic structure. This explains why, for example, “leadership

formation” outcomes were reported more frequently than structural outcomes (Bebbington 1997).

While the above authors presented both positive and negative outcomes from the presence of NGOs and the development paradigm, those authors who do not see potential ‘good’ in the work of development agents have made stronger critiques. The first of two critiques discussed here argues that the presence of development agents effectively prevented a transformational popular struggle from emerging. Martin (2003) and Roper (2003) both demonstrated that indigenous SMOs have been forced to compete among themselves for international development funds. Such competition is thought to render popular organizations powerless while eliminating their ability to form alliances and thus build popular resistance.

The current research supports the assertion that SMOs were competing among themselves for development funds and will link that competition to the more general paradigm of development in which indigenous SMOs currently find themselves. However, the assumption that popular resistance would occur if development were not present remains supported more by ideology than by the ethnographic evidence available. The fact is that the majority of popular organizations under consideration here were themselves designed by NGOs or by would-be beneficiaries anxious to access development project funds. In addition, many of the NGOs that work with indigenous Ecuadorians maintain a radical ideological position and see themselves as transformational social actors. The development paradigm hinders progressive structural transformation, but it cannot be assumed that indigenous organizations would necessarily

have been concerned with structural transformation in the absence of such a paradigm. An inherently anti-systemic nature to indigenous peoples' organizing cannot be assumed.

The final development critique to be discussed here, which I will draw on throughout the chapter, began with James Ferguson's application of Foucaultian theory to the "development apparatus" in Lesotho (1990). His central argument was that development, in effect, served to "depoliticize" the need for development by treating local conditions of poverty as technical problems requiring technical solutions, not structural or political ones (256). Furthermore, the "instrument effects" of development were the reinforcement and expansion of bureaucratic state power under the cover of a neutral, technical mission to which it is impossible to object (256).

Arturo Escobar (1992) expanded on Ferguson's work to discuss the ways in which development created the third world as an object of knowledge for the first world. And, as Orduna pointed out, once the under-development of the third world was 'known,' the right and obligation of the first world to intervene was also established (2004). According to this view, then, the development paradigm made structural conditions appear neutral and the unquestionable need for development made third world peoples the object of greater control by the bureaucratic state and the first world.

Evaluations of development, as practice and discourse, then, tend to establish it as either a source of relief and protection for marginalized peoples or a distraction that stunts the ability of marginalized groups to align together and question the structural inequalities that maintain their marginality. Development projects may provide a means for strengthening democracy by increasing the participation of marginalized groups, but they are also tools of governance used to increase the presence of bureaucratic state

power. The idea of development makes poverty the defining characteristic of much of the world's population and proposes a technical solution, which, in the end, does not raise people out of poverty so much as become "an exercise of power" (Ferguson 1990). Regardless of the 'instrument effects' of development, and problems associated with making poverty a technical problem requiring the will of the first world to change it, there is no doubt that development has been unable to stop the widespread human suffering that continues today, in the form of hunger, malnutrition, and death by preventable and treatable diseases.

With all of these contradictory evaluations of development and its agents, what can we say it is that development does? This research takes a cue from Fisher's call to make use of ethnographic studies that pay attention to the flow of knowledge, ideas, money, and people (1997). In this chapter ethnographic evidence will be used to evaluate what development does in Saquisilí. Although recognizing the complexity of actors and their relationships, in the context of sometimes-desperate conditions of human suffering, support was found for those authors who have argued that development funds have depoliticized SMOs and naturalized the poverty of the global South. In this sense, development forms a particularly necessary element of contemporary neoliberalism as it "enframes" (Slater 1993) the lives and social struggles of marginalized peoples the world over. In short, the discourse and practice of development structure key elements in the neoliberal subject making process through which the marginalized learn what is expected of them and, in turn, what they can expect of development agents and the state.

The Pervasiveness of Development and *Proyectismo*

I believe the whole world got involved in the issue of projects. Of course, before that the term “project” didn’t even exist. Today it’s a part of everyday language.²⁰⁰

[The community member’s] analysis is that you can’t always rely on the community, that doing so will always leave them behind the times, and rather that they should form small associations, and get productive projects for each small group. That is the way to get ahead [according to the community member].²⁰¹

The history of Ecuador’s indigenous social movement organizations would be incomplete if the role of development agents were excluded. As was discussed in chapter two, development agents, including the Ecuadorian state, the Catholic Church, and NGOs of many stripes, sponsored indigenous organizing and offered project funding once organizations were created. Literacy programs and catechist training formed a network of leaders who came together to form the Ecuarrunari. Communities came together to form organizations such as the Jatarishun specifically as a means of capturing development funds. In other cases, one of the first actions taken as an organization in formation was the search for a project. In Saquisilí, as early Jatarishun leaders recalled, the organization began to form in the 1980s, in order to unite the communities, but that almost immediately “we began to look for an institution...and we began the water project [in 1983].”²⁰² From the beginning, then, it has been nearly impossible to meaningfully separate indigenous SMOs and development agents.

Although the recognition of the founding role of development agents in indigenous SMOs has been slow to come, the dominance of development in

²⁰⁰ Interview with Victor on February 20, 2006.

²⁰¹ Fieldnote entry on May 12, 2005.

²⁰² Fieldnote entry on May 13, 2005.

contemporary SMOs was obvious. In communities, the Jatarishun, and the MICC development projects dominated meeting agendas and were often the only items to be discussed. For example, the Yacu Chico assembly of June 2005 had only two agenda items, a livestock project and a computer center project.²⁰³ The following month's Jatarishun assembly included a preliminary report from this dissertation research, a discussion of possible Pachakutik candidates, and information from an environmental conservation project, a children's development project, and an assortment of projects offered by the Cotopaxi provincial government.²⁰⁴ Even a shamanic cleansing ceremony at the bottom of the crater surrounding Quilotoa Lake was interrupted for the purposes of development, as the development agent who had appeared there stopped the ceremony to ask that it be conducted in Spanish.²⁰⁵ When I asked them later, most of the shamans did not know what organization the woman was from, just that she was European and that, hopefully, she would give them some kind of project.

Development projects are not only omnipresent but have also dramatically altered social relations in the communities. Leaders were selected because of their ability to *gestionar* (solicit and administer) projects, determined by language skills, computer knowledge, and social connections. This was in contrast to earlier selection criterion based on age and social ranking. In both the MICC and Jatarishun Congresses of 2005 and 2006, respectively, the statute requiring a presidential nominee to speak Kichwa was removed but the educational requirement was maintained. The ability to speak Spanish well, and so write project proposals and present them to development agents, trumped the

²⁰³ Fieldnote entry on June 27, 2005.

²⁰⁴ Fieldnote entry on July 5, 2006.

²⁰⁵ Fieldnote entry on April 2, 2005. The shaman were unable to conduct their cleansing in Spanish but they briefly explained, in Spanish, the tools they were using and the purpose of the ceremony.

need to retain the Kichwa language. Those chosen as leaders often had ties with several development agents. As an example, former mayor Antonio Llumitasig began his career as an evangelical preacher and project coordinator with World Vision. He went on to be president of his home community, during which time he led the struggle for agrarian reform and several other development projects. Despite his lack of involvement with the Jatarishun,²⁰⁶ Llumitasig was nominated as Pachakutik mayoral candidate because of his connections and skills in the development field.

Moreover, development projects were a dominant force in the daily lives of indigenous Ecuadorians living in rural communities. In the household where this researcher lived, the family's life was organized around various development projects. The children received letters from their Australian World Vision sponsors and often wore t-shirts provided by the organization. The youngest ones attended a community pre-school operated by INFA (Instituto de la Niñez y la Familia—Child and Family Institute) and the older ones helped to care for animals obtained through various livestock projects. The woman of the house was responsible for the animals and most of the farm work that had to be done on the family's share of a large community farm project. She also worked the *mingas* for the community water project and the school lunch project. Considering that most family members were not formally employed (those who were formally employed worked for NGOs), development projects represented the most influential institutional context in this family's life. Because of this pervasiveness of development,

²⁰⁶ Tensions between the Evangelical Christian and Catholic members of communities were extremely high during some of this period. The Jatarishun was born of the Catholic Church and so not originally welcoming to Protestants.

then, it is a matter of importance to understand how development, as both discourse and practice, shaped indigenous organizations and indigenous people's lives.

Indigeneity from Above

On November 26, 2004 leaders of the Jatarishun, municipal authorities, and NGO workers held a workshop with community leaders to work on the organization's proposal for the municipal budget. In their introduction of the day's activities, the NGO employees conducted a lecture comparing Andean and western thoughts about development. During the lecture two ideal type models of society were diagrammed: a pyramid representing a western hierarchical model of state power and a series of interconnected circles representing the Andean view of local empowerment based on sovereignty, autonomy, and participation.

The response to the lecture from the Jatarishun's leadership demonstrated that this 'indigenous' proposal was unknown to the communities. "Nobody supports what they don't know," one leader commented. Another was worried that the budget assembly was about having to go and "compete [for municipal funds], [defending that] we need this, we need that," and that "they [people in the communities] are not going to understand these things [as he pointed to local empowerment diagram]."²⁰⁷ After wondering if they should quickly plan workshops in the community, the NGO representative stepped in to say that "these ideas will be the basis of the work we will present [at the assembly] because this is a longer process" and "you do not convince the communities in two days."²⁰⁸

²⁰⁷ Fieldnote entry on November 26, 2004.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

This was the first of many occasions during the research period when development agents defined the indigenous perspective in a manner that resonated more with romanticized western visions of indigeneity than with local indigenous understandings. There were at least four other times when personnel of development agents lectured on the traditional Andean worldview. In one case, an NGO-sponsored music and theatre performance group received a lecture contrasting the traditional Andean economy with capitalism.²⁰⁹ The intention of the lecturer, an NGO employee, was to teach the group so they could then spread the information in the communities. Thus were ideas of “our economy” taken from a development agent and divulged to the community members.

Moreover, the five development agent-led lectures on the traditional worldview of Andean indigenous peoples constituted the most common discussion of traditional indigenous worldview observed during this research. There were examples of leaders commenting on the principle of reciprocity, and the traditional healers’ association did have a workshop in which they (re)learned the *pachamanka*²¹⁰, a traditional cooking technique.²¹¹ However, development agents were the sponsors of the *pachamanka* and leaders made comments regarding reciprocity primarily in meetings with development agents. There was not a single occasion in which a discussion of traditional Andean culture was observed outside the context of development agent sponsorship.

²⁰⁹ Fieldnote entry on February 15, 2006.

²¹⁰ Pacha means earth and manka is a cooking pot. The *pachamanka* involves digging a large hole in the earth, lining it with paja grass, and burying hot rocks and raw food. The practice of *pachamanka* had been lost in Cotopaxi and the healers’ association learned about it in a regional workshop (Fieldnotes on February 10, 2006).

²¹¹ Fieldnote entry on February 10, 2006.

Moreover, the elements of Andean culture that were stressed by development agents were highly contested in the communities themselves. Development agents tended to stress a view of indigenous peoples as spiritually connected to the Earth through sustainable agricultural practices, socially accountable to each other through the community, and economically linked through barter systems and networks of reciprocity. In contrast, most indigenous community members viewed agriculture as an economic activity that was no longer sustainable, the community as a social and economic burden that no longer served much purpose, and the need to participate in the market economy as overshadowing any potential benefit to non-market based activities.

Two of these contested elements were particularly prominent in the relations between communities and development agents and deserve further analysis. First, development agents and community members alike were interested in projects aimed at increasing agricultural productivity and (re)introducing sustainable practices. Development agents, however, focused their efforts on traditional products and practices and stressed the inherent connection to the land. In contrast, many indigenous people in Saquisilí were actively seeking alternatives to agriculture for their economic activities. Agriculture and livestock were viewed as economic activities, not spiritual ones, and many were convinced that it was no longer possible to support themselves based solely on the land. On many occasions the idea was expressed that the land offered an outdated means to achieve economic independence, one which had been replaced with formal education and employment. I attended a series of high school graduation parties in 2005 in several communities, the sheer number of which demonstrated the changes that were

taking place.²¹² At each party the family and close friends gathered to celebrate the accomplishment of the graduate with cake, presents, and speeches. The common theme among all of the speeches given was that education was the key to the future, not land. One young community leader echoed this theme by saying that the older generations only thought about the land and its value as an inheritance to pass on through the generations but that with the limited market for agricultural lands and the prevalence of new technologies, other kinds of jobs were more promising. Education rather than land, he concluded, was the key to the future. Another young leader commented that it was up to the family to try and support children for as long as possible in the pursuit of their education as this is the only way to get ahead.²¹³

Movement leaders confirmed that community members were turning away from agricultural production and towards other types of jobs.

There is a kind of expectation that the son will be even just a driver, an employee, or something else. Even if he doesn't earn that much but at least with something sure, that covers the monthly expenses, things like that. But this is instead of trying to make money with his sheep, his cows, or his lands. This is the opinion of the people.²¹⁴

The reality is that agricultural inputs have increased in price, the market value of outputs has decreased in the face of competition with cheaper imports, and population increases mean that there is not enough land for each family to dedicate themselves entirely to agriculture. Agriculture has always been a risky business but it has become even riskier now that climate patterns have shifted, water is scarcer, and certain blights have been known to destroy entire fields of staple crops such as potatoes. Nevertheless, despite the

²¹²Yacu Chico community members that I spoke with stressed the fact that there were normally only 1 or 2 graduates a year. In 2005 there were at least 6 graduates in Yacu Chico and possibly more.

²¹³ Fieldnotes recorded in June 2005.

²¹⁴ Interview with Diego in May 2005.

shift away from land-based economic activities, development agents continued to fund land-based projects, which community members reluctantly accepted.

Despite these changes, however, the people of Yacu Chico still identified themselves as agriculturalists. This was obvious during the first few weeks of fieldwork, when nearly every question about life in the U.S. concerned agricultural practices, soil conditions, and grocery prices. But the sad fact was that after years of sacrifice to buy land, people were struggling to make ends meet as they transitioned from subsistence-based to market-based relations. Although community members wanted assistance to improve their agricultural production, restricting them to agriculture was neither culturally appropriate nor genuine ‘bottom-up’ participatory development. Rather, the insistence on agricultural assistance reinforced the perception that there was only one acceptable way to be recognizably indigenous.

The second common disagreement between development agents and indigenous communities in Saquisilí regarded the role of the community. Development agents had a strong preference for implementing projects at the community level. The preference was based on the community’s dual basis of authority, at once a legally recognized administrative unit and a traditional Kichwa structure of authority. Furthermore, development projects were designed as collective community projects, meaning that the responsibility for projects, and potential benefits, fell to the entire community. The communal traditions of the Andes were alive and well, according to development agents.

Community oriented development projects began to proliferate during the 1980s. In many cases it was the NGOs themselves that encouraged communities to pursue legal status. Investment increased dramatically in the years following the 1990 Uprising with

perhaps the largest single investment coming from the World Bank's PRODEPINE program in 2002.²¹⁵ Ultimately, indigenous communities have deemed the great investment in rural Ecuador wasteful, ineffective, and detrimental to the organizing capacity of the indigenous social movement sector more broadly. For communities, a great deal of time and money was wasted on projects that subsequently proved ineffective. For development agents, funds were wasted on projects that communities were not even grateful to have received. And for indigenous organizations, the amount of resources made available ended up corrupting leaders and dividing movement organizations based on who received funds.

The projects are dehumanizing us...we are divided because of projects...we have to analyze more deeply here. Everyone criticizes the Jatarishun [for only being concerned with projects] but then they say, where's the project, where's the money. That is where we are getting stuck, ..., and not getting to deeper ideas.²¹⁶

Development agents continued to insist on collective community projects that corresponded to their imaginary of indigeneity, despite the aversion to such projects that existed in the communities. The proposal for one loan program, for example, suggested that rather than individual fines for non-repayment, traditional community punishments, such as dousing the debtor in cold water and hitting him with the stinging hortiga plant, would be more culturally appropriate. Meanwhile, people in the community had lost faith in the promises of communal projects, at times declaring them 'worthless.' Instead, community members consistently argued for projects to operate on the level of individuals, families, or small groups of interested community members. Although the

²¹⁵The PRODEPINE funds were distributed through the CODENPE. Control of CODENPE and the PRODEPINE funds has been hotly contested, particularly during the period of Lucio Gutierrez's administration. Eventually the second phase of funds were cancelled.

²¹⁶ Comment recorded during a focus group on May 21, 2005.

community was the vehicle through which indigenous people had originally been able to organize and improve their lives, things had changed and the community no longer served the same purpose as before.

That life for the people of Yacu Chico has changed dramatically in the last twenty years becomes evident when comparing everyday experiences today with the realities that forced people to organize collectively in the past. Whereas once people left on foot at two in the morning to labor on distant haciendas, today's weekday mornings are filled with honking horns of trucks picking up school children and urban workers for the morning commute into Saquisilí. Where once local ingredients were cooked at supertime over an open flame, today foods purchased in Saquisilí are heated on a gas stove and eaten before settling in to watch TV. Instead of sneaking off to Quito, by foot, to avoid the opposition of local elites, today's community leaders enter the local government offices with ease, knowing that the authorities are themselves indigenous people from the communities.

Despite the changes, however, development agents continued to insist on communal and agricultural development because those were images of indigeneity that carried weight in the 'donor-driven' development industry. The recognizable, worthy form of indigeneity was communal, spiritually connected to agricultural practices, and driven by economies of reciprocity, not wealth accumulation. It was never clear, during this research, if in a perfect world contemporary indigenous communities in Saquisilí would have chosen communal agricultural life. Given the conditions in which they existed, most community members knew that was not an option. Still, the development

agents insisted on the romanticized image of indigeneity and that indigenous communities act as collectively represented, homogenous communities.

The case of education provides further illustration of how the idea and purpose of the community has changed for community members but not development agents. The community was the organization through which formal education first became a part of the lives of rural Saquisilenses. It was the community that rented out space for classes and the community that purchased land on which to build schools. In contemporary Saquisilí, communities often subsidized their local public schools by paying the salary of extra teaching staff, pursuing projects to add infrastructure to the school, which always entailed a community co-payment, or covering other additional costs that were seen as improving the quality of education children were receiving. The shared community investment in education has recently become more controversial.

In contemporary Yacu Chico many parents have opted not to send their children to the community school or the extension high school. Rather, more parents each year have begun sending their children to school in the urban center of Saquisilí. What started as a few people attending the regular high school in Saquisilí has now turned into a general community expectation that, if you can afford it, you should send your child to school, even pre-school, in Saquisilí. In these terms, then, the only children left at the community's school and the extension high school are those whose families cannot afford anything better.²¹⁷ As a result, as more families have paid to educate their children outside of the community, they have also become more reluctant to subsidize the community

²¹⁷ Although in most cases the schools in Saquisilí are part of the country's free public education system, there are many costs associated with sending children to school, such as books, uniforms, and other supplies. The costs associated with the urban schools are much higher than those in the community school and distance high school, particularly when you add the cost of daily transportation to and from the city.

school. The shift from communal to individual access to and benefit from education epitomized the wider processes of decommunalization and individualization that had been occurring.

The above discussion of education highlights how neoliberal governance grants collective rights to culturally delineated groups but opportunities created through those rights, and the market economy itself, accrue to individuals. The collective right to pursue bilingual education became insignificant once individual families began to send children to schools outside of their home communities. Development projects that were designed to improve community schools, the only aim deemed culturally appropriate, did not address the challenges faced by poor families struggling to pay for better educations, either. Those individuals, heads of households, were left on their own to navigate opportunities while social, cultural, and political rights and courses of action remain collectivized.

To summarize, many authors have discussed how indigenous identity has been shaped through interactions with transnational actors. Likewise, the explosion in the 1990s of development agents working exclusively with indigenous peoples demonstrated that indigeneity, properly performed, was attractive to the development world. The research presented here pushes that analysis in a new direction by demonstrating that indigenous peoples only needed possess a *potential indigeneity* in order to attract development agents. Development personnel were well versed in the Andean worldview and they were happy to teach it to subjects who could become (again) appropriately indigenous. Agents could also add in elements of Andean tradition to projects and proposals made by indigenous community members. In the course of writing the

Jatarishun's strategic plan, discussed in great detail in the following section, the sponsors of the plan added ideas that were deemed, by them, to be important for indigenous peoples. The phrase "in harmony with nature" was added to the mission statement of the Jatarishun, for example, despite its not appearing in any of the community-written versions of the statement.²¹⁸

The insistence by development agents that communities operate according to the principles assigned to traditional culture denied indigenous peoples the right to discuss how they wanted their communities to be. This pigeonholed them into permissible ways of being. The challenge of the capitalist economy for rural community members today is to realize and acknowledge that they cannot support themselves on agriculture alone. They also want urban educations for their children. Rural agricultural communities face a crisis in which their old ways are no longer serving them but the only people offering help insist that they sustain those same ways. Thus, the communities continued to accept community-based projects and, on the insistence of development agents, approach the development world as collective, communal actors.

Confining Indigenous SMOs to the Development Agenda

The close relationship between indigenous SMOs and their development agent partners has been widely documented. As discussed in chapter two, many of the SMOs in Ecuador were formed directly by development agents or indirectly with the intention of accessing development funds once formed. Although development had been a major motivating factor in Ecuadorian indigenous organizing, development agents came to

²¹⁸ "Plan Estratégico Jatarishun 2005'2010" (5).

dominate the agenda of the SMOs with which they partnered, shaping them to fit the agent's understanding of indigeneity and the neoliberal mode of governance, and excluding more contestatory political actions, even when the development agents considered themselves part of the struggle against neoliberalism. More specifically, Indigenous SMOs were restricted by development agents to goals and agendas that stressed institutionalized, project-oriented, and generalizable approaches to social change, that contained elements of what I have called indigeneity from above, and that required participation within formal democratic spaces. Furthermore, indigenous peoples have generally accepted these parameters and the fact that private rather than public agents should supply the services they seek. These restrictions confine indigenous SMO agendas squarely within the neoliberal order and restrict the possibilities of social contestation.

To support this argument, an in-depth analysis of the Jatarishun's 2005-2010 strategic plan, which identified the objectives on which the organization would work during that time period, is presented here. The writing process was particularly demonstrative of the way that development agents shape the agendas of their partner SMOs, because it was a case in which the agents *literally* wrote the future plans of the organization; the plan's final drafting was left to the development agents who funded it,²¹⁹ although the process was lauded as participatory because there were many workshops in which community members and leaders contributed their ideas for the plan. This analysis compares data from workshops with community members with the final draft of the plan.²²⁰

²¹⁹ The strategic plan writing process was funded by a NGO and by the municipal government of Saquisli.

²²⁰ The process began with a weekend retreat for Jatarishun leaders, held in April 2005. I did not attend this retreat but have a copy of the official minutes. Then, seven workshops were conducted in the communities,

The Jatarishun's strategic plan was designed as a tool for guiding its work over the subsequent five years. Many constituents felt that the organization had become weak and suffered from a lack of unity among the communities and leaders. That is why most participants welcomed the chance to reflect on "who we are," and "what we want the organization to be in 2010," two of the guiding questions of the strategic plan. In addition, there were five strategic areas that were identified by community members as the most important areas of work for the Jatarishun: organization, education, health, economy, and environment.²²¹ The analysis presented here focuses on the areas of education, a hallmark struggle of indigenous movements, and organization, a central theme of this dissertation and the most urgent issue identified by workshop participants.

In the area of education, the principle problems identified by community member participants were the devaluing of bilingual education, EIB, by parents, leaders, and teachers, and the low quality of education provided in the EIB system.²²² In addition, participants also discussed contextual factors that impeded education. Participants identified concrete solutions for each of the problems that they identified. They thought that EIB could be improved by arranging for a sufficient number of teachers in each school²²³ and that those teachers receive proper pedagogical training, be evaluated

with 5-8 individuals from each community sector participating. I was asked to facilitate three of these workshops and so was able to record audio at the workshops. I was also asked to synthesize the material from all seven workshops, so I have the written record from those as well. All of the community workshops occurred in May 2005. A second retreat with leaders was then held in June 2005 and a final document was presented for approval at the Jatarishun's Congress in May 2006. I attended both the June retreat and the Congress.

²²¹ Gender and transportation infrastructure were also identified as strategic areas in one workshop each. The final version of the plan contains a sixth area, basic infrastructure, which was a concern of participants but not identified as its own area.

²²² Details from the workshops were combined in order to present an analysis to the Jatarishun. This section draws on the combined notes from all workshops.

²²³ Many rural schools have only one teacher.

regularly, and be sanctioned for not meeting the minimum hours of instruction.²²⁴ In addition, the need for basic infrastructure, such as classrooms and libraries, was also noted. To improve how people viewed EIB, participants suggested workshops on the history of the EIB and changing the Jatarishun Secretary of Education's bylaws to allow for better relations among parents, teachers, and the organization.

In the final version of the plan, the single challenge identified in the area of “education, culture and identity” was “to reach a point where bilingual education is high quality, strengthening cultural displays and the indigenous worldview.”²²⁵ Five separate strategies were then identified. First, a high quality bilingual education was to be achieved by applying MOSEIB (EIB System Model), which would achieve the specific objectives of getting people to value the EIB and increasing the participation of the community in the education process. At first glance, the objectives of this strategy seem to have fallen in line with those presented by the communities. The MOSEIB did address many of the issues that community members raised regarding the quality of education and the level of community participation. However, the solution was impractical because the entire EIB system had failed to implement the MOSEIB successfully. A plan for implementing the model was only finalized in January 2010, the year to which the Jatarishun's plan was supposed to be effective. Rather than two concrete, local actions, history workshops and changing the Jatarishun's regulations, the final version of the Jatarishun's plan recommended the application of a model which itself required years of strategic planning meetings.

²²⁴ A common complaint was that rural students did not receive the complete hours of instruction because their teachers arrived late and left early.

²²⁵ “Plan Estratégico Jatarishun, 2005-2010” (13).

Another strategy proposed in the final plan was the coordination of the Jatarishun with the provincial director of EIB, and other institutions working in the area of education.²²⁶ The Jatarishun was also to pressure the state to improve rural education. This strategy did closely match the solutions proposed by participants, who wanted to negotiate infrastructure, training, and the number of teachers with various state institutions. However, once again the specific objectives of more and better-trained teachers in better-equipped schools were replaced with the broad objective of “promoting the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of bilingual education” and “support the improvement of bilingual education.”²²⁷ The specific ideas of the community were lost and the general solutions of the plan replaced them.

The last area of concern expressed by participants was the array of contextual factors that were known to impede education. For example, malnutrition was cited as a problem, the proposed solutions for which were school food programs and nutrition workshops for parents. Another concern was that poverty kept students from staying in school. The community members recognized that the root causes of their educational problems were the social and economic inequalities present in society. Other issues raised were abandoned and orphaned children and child abuse.

The only strategy identified in the final version of the plan to deal with the contextual conditions was the implementation of a scholarship program for children with limited economic resources.²²⁸ Such a program would fail to recognize, and attempt to address, the structural conditions of poverty faced in the communities. Instead, it would

²²⁶ Ibid.: 13.

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ “Plan Estratégico Jatarishun, 2005-2010” (14).

make communities dependent upon whatever organization funded the scholarships. Addressing contextual factors more broadly would have also reached the many children who are not a part of the EIB system. Even though a scholarship program would be welcome in the communities, and would alleviate problems for those students who received scholarships, it was a different solution than what was proposed by people in the communities. The specific solutions proposed by the bases were generally excluded from the final plan.

The final version of the plan included two other strategies that did not directly relate to the concerns expressed in the communities. The first of these two called for the creation of a network linking all of the EIB education centers. In Saquisilí the EIB centers already belonged to two networks, the Red Bajío and the Red Monseñor Leonidas Proaño. Educators, however, did want to improve the coordination between themselves and the Jatarishun, according to comments made at the final retreat. The second of the added strategies was the “promotion of cultural displays and ancestral knowledge.”²²⁹ Even though the communities did not suggest them, these additions resonated more strongly with indigeneity from above rather than below; such promotion could lead to greater value being placed on bilingual education.

The analysis of the education problems and solutions presented here illuminates some of the principal ways that development agents re-shape indigenous SMO agendas. First, elements of indigeneity from above were detected in the final version of the plan. The name of the substantive area was changed from simply education to “education, culture, and identity.” At the final retreat the NGO representative announced this change

²²⁹ “Plan Estratégico Jatarishun, 2005-2010” (14).

and gave the brief explanation that identity meant feeling like part of the organization, so that one is not embarrassed to say they are an indigenous person. Similarly, the phrase “strengthening cultural displays and the indigenous worldview”²³⁰ was also added to the main objective of improving the quality of bilingual education. As has been demonstrated, development agents communicated what it meant to be both recognizably, authentically different and understandably civilized (Indigenous Gentlemen, collectively).

Second, the plan replaced concrete and locally specific solutions with more abstract language that could be applied across organizations. For example, the idea of changing the Jatarishun’s education bylaws was replaced with the application of the MOSEIB, a system-wide model that has not yet been implemented. The Jatarishun’s plan was most likely based on other strategic plans that the NGO had previously written. The listed proposal to create networks among EIB schools could have been a part of another plan that was simply overlooked, since such networks already existed. In several places the name of organizations other than the Jatarishun appeared in the plan, suggesting that this plan was copied from previous work with other organizations. The objectives of each organization were kept general, then, so that they could be applied in other locations as well. That is, the technical and bureaucratic solutions proposed by the development paradigm were made generalizable, to fit the practices of projectism.

Finally, the discrepancies between the proposals made in the communities and the plan as written by the development agents reflected the emphasis on project-oriented changes within the development paradigm. This focus shifted the agenda from a

²³⁰ Ibid.:14.

discussion of the structural and economic factors limiting education in the communities to a more narrow, technical, and bureaucratic agenda of model implementation and scholarships, leaving other concerns like child abuse in the shadows. Although there were many discussions among Jatarishun's members about the problems caused by only thinking about projects, the plan was written in such a way as to keep projects as the central focus and erase the objections expressed almost unanimously.

A detailed analysis of the strategic plan's treatment of the organization revealed similar patterns as the education area analysis. In terms of strengthening the organization, community participants identified three sources of problems: leaders, communities, and elections. The problems and solutions showed almost no variation across the workshops, suggesting widespread agreement and concern. The main problems associated with leaders were the lack of communication with the bases, disrespect for the organizational process, the pursuit of personal gain, the unwillingness to include others in the process, and a general lack of political and leadership training. To resolve these problems, it was suggested that leaders regularly visit the communities, transparently show their accounting records, be constantly evaluated, actively include all sectors of the communities, attend workshops on the history of the organization in order to develop respect for the organizational process, and be trained in a "leadership formation school."

The final version of the plan did address most of the problems and solutions discussed in the communities with regards to leadership. Whereas community members asked that catechists, EIB teachers, and community leaders be given more opportunities to participate in the organization, the final plan strove for "active, ideologically consistent

(*coherente*) participation” and to “strengthen existing organized groups.”²³¹ Participants were concerned about communication with the Jatarishun leaders and the leaders visiting the communities and this was reflected in the final plan as, “constant involvement of the Jatarishun’s leaders in the life and development processes of the base organizations”²³² and “agile mechanisms of communication and coordination.”²³³

There were several ideas put forward by the community members that did not make it into the final document or that were included but heavily altered. First, the community members suggested implementing a leader evaluation process. The final draft of the plan excluded the possibility of evaluation, however. Instead, the plan included a restructuring of the organization and periodic evaluation of the new structure, rather than the individual leaders.²³⁴ Second, community members identified the need to train leaders, particularly in relation to the organizational process. The final document does identify the training of “human resources” as a key challenge, and identifies one strategy as “the elaboration of a plan for the integrated training of human resources.”²³⁵ However, the concern in the final plan seems to be the technical skills of human resources, especially their administrative capabilities, rather than the ideological formation of leaders, as had been stressed in community workshops.

The most commonly cited problem, related to both leaders and communities, was what the community members called the “organizational process.” The organizational process referred to a particular way of making decisions for the leaders and members of

²³¹ “Plan Estratégico Jatarishun, 2005-2010” (10).

²³² Ibid.:9.

²³³ Ibid.:11.

²³⁴ Ibid.:12.

²³⁵ Ibid.:10.

an organization, which was common throughout the indigenous SMOs in Ecuador. First and foremost, the process required that leaders have ‘consulted with the bases’ before making any type of decision because the bases were the source of the leaderships’ authority. Although consensus in the strictest sense was not required, unity was. This meant that once a decision was reached, everyone had to accept it as his or her own. Leaders were expected to work with a ‘good heart’ and a humble attitude of service while communities were to actively participate in making decisions and have respect for their leaders. In one workshop, a group was specifically asked “what does ‘organizational process’ mean. Their responses included the following: “meetings, complete participation, our own thought and language, everyone together (men and women), and making the organization grow by everyone being united.”

In every community workshop there was concern that no one was respecting ‘the process’ and that this was a major cause of disorganization. Community members suggested workshops “to deeply analyze [*profundizar*] the history of the organization” as well as training in the organizational process for younger leaders and non-leader community members. The need to analyze the history of the organization and the importance of its specific organizational process, along with holding leaders accountable to the process, was one of the most common, urgent tasks identified in the community workshops. Participants repeatedly commented that the organization was in danger of disappearing and that without the organization life would be much more difficult. “For the poor the organization is the fundamental base. Without the organization, we can’t achieve anything.”²³⁶

²³⁶ Interview with Joaquin on Feb 11, 2005.

Despite the urgency noted in the community workshops, the final plan document did not contain a single reference to the ‘organizational process’ nor did it identify analysis of the organization’s history as a strategy to be pursued. There were several strategies identified that could be read as part of the organizational process, such as a “change in attitude” for the leaders, who should “respond to the prioritized needs” of the communities.²³⁷ Perhaps the most equivalent item in the final version of the plan was one strategy to “strengthen social relations between communities and the organization, based especially in mutual care [*cuidado mutuo*] with the purpose of diminishing external dependence.”²³⁸ This was another example of imposing indigeneity from above in that “mutual care,” more often referred to as “reciprocity,” was identified as a key aspect of authentic indigenous culture.

The disappearance of the organizational process, and its replacement with the value of mutual care demonstrated that this document was not designed for use by the Jatarishun and its bases but rather was created for external consumption, by agents of development with identity. People in the communities understood the term ‘organizational process.’ It was meaningful to them and reflected something that belonged uniquely to them. The language selected by development agents for the final plan did not reflect the understandings of the people in the communities but rather was the language attractive to development agents. Members of the Jatarishun felt that their organization was in crisis and that the organizational process, to be regained through analysis of their own history, was the key to restoring their strength but the plan did not reflect their ideas.

²³⁷ Ibid.:10.

²³⁸ Ibid.

The organizational process was not the only urgent, unanimous concern of the bases that was edited out of the final plan. In every community workshop, electoral politics was identified as the key factor that had weakened the organization and in every workshop it was suggested that serious evaluation of participation in elections take place. It was time to take a step back and see what benefits had come from participation, at what cost, and if continued participation was warranted. The weakening of the organization as a direct result of the decision to participate in elections as Pachakutik, beginning in 1996, was accepted as a fact among community members and leaders. In one community it was put this way: “In 1990 we were united. When the Jatarishun began to participate in elections was when the organization became unorganized.”²³⁹ This analysis was present not only in the strategic plan workshops but also as a part of the general discourse regarding the organization.

The final plan completely disregarded the analysis of community members regarding the need to analyze the outcomes from electoral politics. At the beginning of the “organization strengthening” section of the plan, the following statement was written:

The participation of the Jatarishun in local popular election spaces, with its own candidates through the Pachakutik political movement, is an ever growing responsibility, such that this participation should each day turn more reflexive, being sensitive to the proposals made from the bases.²⁴⁰

Although the statement mentions reflection and the ideas of the community members, it takes participation in the electoral process as a requirement. There is no possibility, within the final plan, of deciding that the cost of electoral participation has been too high. Likewise, in the organization section, the third challenge listed is “to achieve a

²³⁹ Fieldnote entry on May 13, 2005.

²⁴⁰ “Plan Estratégico Jatarishun, 2005-2010” (7).

responsible and conscious political participation in popular elections and spaces of citizen participation.”²⁴¹ Again, this challenge took for granted that participation in those spaces and elections was the best course of action for the communities of the Jatarishun, even though the community members’ criteria was to reflect on participation itself.

Development agents identified the proper course of action for the Jatarishun and its member communities as participation in the formal democratic elections and in the new spaces opened by participatory democracy. It was given as indisputable that the indigenous SMOs participate in those spaces. However, as was demonstrated earlier (in chapter three), those spaces too have resulted in the strengthening of neoliberalism. The state pressured indigenous organizations to participate in those spaces, calling them foolish agents of destabilization if they did not, and now we see that development agents also pressured for participation by assuming for the SMO that this is the path that it must follow.

Elections were not the only element of neoliberal governance that the plan identified as being necessarily good. In the beginning of the final plan document, there was a section written regarding the “current context,” which stated:

...the organizational dynamic developed by the Jatarishun has made it possible for indigenous representatives to occupy, for three consecutive periods, the mayorship of the canton; likewise, its organizational growth and its development of management [*gestion*] capabilities have allowed it to execute productive programs and projects for natural resource use, for organizational strengthening, which constitute the mechanisms of resistance and alternatives to construct a more autonomous and sustainable development of its communities.²⁴²

In the communities’ analysis of the current context, however, it was stated that leaders get into the organization for personal gain, that there was no unity because of elections

²⁴¹ Ibid.:11.

²⁴² Ibid.:2.

and development projects, and that projects had not always done good things for the communities. Once again, the plan, as written by development agents, did not allow for the questioning of development and participation. The work of development agents, most prominently development NGOs and institutionalized spaces of participation within the state, was to confine indigenous peoples and their SMOs to an agenda that ultimately strengthened the hegemonic position of neoliberalism.

In conclusion, the analysis of the Jatarishun strategic plan writing process demonstrated that development agents actively shaped the agenda of the Jatarishun in ways that confined it to activities that were permissible within the neoliberal order of things. In particular, the Jatarishun's activities had to fit the indigenous identity that was recognizable, and marketable, to development agents (reciprocity, culture and identity), to recognize institutionalized spaces as the proper arena of action (MOSEIB, elections). They could only pursue project-oriented solutions that were generalizable to other organizations (school networks), and to leave unquestioned the goodness of participating in the formal spaces of the state instead of pursuing extra-institutional measures of protest (elections).

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated how development, as both discourse and practice, shaped indigenous peoples into neoliberal subjects, with the cultural identity specifically desired by agents of development, and confined indigenous SMOs to modes of operation within the confines of the neoliberal mode of governance. Development was the most prominent institutional context in the lives of rural indigenous Ecuadorians in Saquisilí

and the focal point of most SMO activities. Development agents consistently imposed their own visions of indigenous identity onto the members of the Jatarishun, substituting locally meaningful concepts, like the “organizational process,” with concepts more attractive to agents. Finally, it was shown that development agents confined the Jatarishun to activities and ways of being that kept the organization participating in the institutions that promoted neoliberal modes of governance. While community members expressed the need to evaluate their participation in state spaces and development projects, the development agents sponsoring the strategic plan edited out those ideas. Given the economic realities of rural Ecuador, it is doubtful that organizations will soon be able to get out from under the development paradigm.

What does ‘development with identity’ do? Does it thicken civil society and directly provide services to populations that have been ignored, or worse, by their own governments? Or does it depoliticize the extreme social and economic inequality that marks the capitalist system? In this chapter it was demonstrated that the ability of development processes to strengthen democracy was limited because it was development agents, rather than multiscalar networks of citizens, who determined the direction of development proposals. If the ability of citizens to organize is taken as a sign of democratic strength, then the onslaught of development funds in Ecuador has weakened the democratic potential of the indigenous SMOs. The persistence of poor social indicators, and the emphasis on non-economic projects, also make it difficult to conclude that development projects have dramatically improved the lives of marginalized peoples. Rather, the evidence presented here supports the idea that development discourse and

practice naturalized the poverty of the global south and depoliticized the conditions of life in the South.

This research shows, moreover, that the paradigm of development with identity goes beyond depoliticizing social and economic conditions to promoting the neoliberal project and producing neoliberal subjectivities. Projects from within this paradigm have a veiled relationship with the neoliberal project, easing the tensions against neoliberalism and reducing the contestatory power of social movement actors. Development agents played a key role in the formation of neoliberal subjects in Ecuador, much as they have throughout the 'under-developed' world. Through development the citizens accepted the privatization of services and the shrinking of the state. They accepted that the only change possible was change that could be wrought through development projects. When attention is given to the flow of ideas, as Fisher suggested, it becomes clear that the development paradigm dams the flow of ideas 'from below' in favor of the neoliberal project 'from above.'

CHAPTER 6

Conclusion

“As if the fall of “walls” or the “successes” of neoliberalism were able to make one forget fundamental truths. As if it were possible “to modernize” social injustice and make the poor and despised of the world disappear. As if it were possible to “privatize” the hope of the people and make them fall into the hypnosis of conformism. But no, it is not possible. Reality imposes itself and makes us embrace fundamental truths again.”²⁴³

The puzzle driving this dissertation has been the perplexing failure of the indigenous movement in Ecuador to produce more significant social transformations, even though it has been successful in getting its demands met. Most, if not all, of the CONAIE’s original demands have been met, and yet twenty years after its rise the movement’s organizations were weak, and indigenous Ecuadorians remained at the bottom of Ecuadorian society, with dismal socioeconomic indicators.²⁴⁴ The indigenous movement in Ecuador was strong, united, popularly supported, well funded, and successful in all its endeavors. Why, then, have indigenous peoples’ life conditions remained poor, and their organizations lost legitimacy as a social interlocutor?

What happened to the indigenous movement in Ecuador has implications that extend far beyond the Andes. After the fall of socialism and the end of the traditional left,

²⁴³ “Parentesco y poder local en Cotopaxi: Breve ensayo de interpretación.” The essay was written by Edison Cajas in the unpublished pamphlet titled “Parentesco y poder político en Cotopaxi.”

²⁴⁴ According to two recent reports produced by the World Bank, indigenous peoples around the world have not seen improvements to their life conditions, even after more than a decade of aggressive development investments. The reports are a draft manuscript from April 2010 by Hall and Patrinos, “Indigenous Peoples, Poverty, and Development” and their published World Bank report (2006).

social movements in the 1990s largely shifted toward what were labeled identity-based or ‘new’ social movements. Social change after the Cold War was to happen through these movements’ demands for inclusion rather than the overthrow of capitalism or the capture of state power. Even though attention shifted, in the 2000s, in Latin America to Evo Morales’s Bolivia, and to the apparent rise of religious extremism, globally, it was the COANIE of Ecuador that was regarded as the strongest, most powerful, and most promising agent of social change in Latin America during the 1990s. The fate of the CONAIE, and the lessons to be learned from its fate, shed light, as argued in this dissertation, on the larger global social and economic context and the possibilities of social transformation in that context.

One way of thinking about both what happened to the CONAIE and its larger implications for social change has been offered by anthropologist Charles Hale (2004). Reflecting on indigenous organizing in Central America, Hale noted the disappointing outcomes of what had promised to be major social transformations. He called for a pause to “take stock of the limits and the political menace inherent in these very achievements” (2004:16). The aim of this dissertation has been to answer that call by providing an analysis of the gains and losses resulting from the CONAIE’s struggles. The evaluation of gains and losses has two purposes. First, it is intended as a tool of reflection and dialogue for interested indigenous communities and organizations in Ecuador. Second, it illustrates the influence of neoliberal forms of governance on social movement struggles.

Outcomes of Indigenous Peoples' Struggles

The first gain made by the indigenous movement, and the focus of chapter two, was the recognition of indigenous Ecuadorians, and specifically the CONAIE, as a valid, commanding sector of national society. Respect and acknowledgement were consistently cited, in interviews and informal conversations, as the most important outcomes of indigenous struggle. It took the massive, yet peaceful, actions of the 1990 Uprising for the dominant mestizo sector of Ecuadorian society to see indigenous people in a new light; in the estimation of participants, it was through the Uprising that they became visible, significant, and humanized. Indigenous Ecuadorians continued to feel that the results of the Uprising—respect and acknowledgement of indigenous belonging—were overwhelmingly positive and significant. The legacy of 1990 continues to shape intergroup relations twenty years later and represents the most influential and lasting gain that the indigenous struggle has produced.

A corresponding loss was of the diversity of indigenous organizing that went in to the Uprising and pre-1990 indigenous organizing. In particular, the history and voice of the radical left was lost as a result of the legitimization of the CONAIE. The Uprising was a sea change in Ecuadorian history, and the CONAIE was constructed as the promise of a new era, even though it was a group of indigenous intellectuals largely unknown to the indigenous masses who mobilized and founded it. Unfortunately, the CONAIE's collective membership structure and open, additive platform proved a weak foundation for living up to the promise. The influence of conservative indigenous sectors and NGOs led the CONAIE to maintain a more moderate position, which included pursuing change through participatory democracy, cultural citizenship, and development with identity. The

radical left sectors, which were subsumed under the post-90 CONAIE, have been slowly expunged from the indigenous movement.

The second gain to result from indigenous organizing has been the inclusion of indigenous peoples in electoral politics and the running of state institutions. Considering that literacy and language restrictions prevented the majority of indigenous Ecuadorians from voting prior to 1979, their ability to occupy many of the highest offices a mere 15 years later is nothing short of a monumental change. Through their participation in elections and state institutions indigenous Ecuadorians have been able to insure greater access to state resources, fairer treatment of ethnic minorities by state agents, and the establishment of laws that protect the rights of indigenous peoples.

There have also been significant losses stemming from participation in elections. The biggest loss has been to the organizational unity and perceived social legitimacy of the indigenous movement organizations at the local and provincial levels. The consensus among community members and leaders is that the organizations have been severely undermined as a result of electoral competition. Elections created competition within the indigenous movement for leadership positions that could lead to lucrative state jobs and thus encouraged new people to join the organizations in search of personal gain, not collective struggle. Ambitious members who did not directly benefit by becoming candidates or state employees were easily recruited to rival political parties, resulting in divided communities and organizations. Moreover, community members complained that, aside from personal enrichment of the individuals chosen as candidates, all of these costs came with very little benefit.

Despite the significant costs of electoral competition, the ability to elect indigenous people is considered a measure of the success of indigenous movements in Latin America. The movement in Bolivia is currently regarded as having been more successful than its Ecuadorian counterpart, despite its weak status in the 1990s, primarily because of Evo Morales's election as president (Lucero 2008:119). Nevertheless, although potential negative consequences are often acknowledged, when assessing outcomes most observers agree that elections have been worth the price paid. As Yashar aptly stated: "the counterfactual must be posed: would indigenous movements be more effective in promoting the post-liberal challenge absent an effort to engage directly with political parties, to take part in the legislature, and the like? The educated guess is *no*" (2005:307, emphasis in the original).

That indigenous Ecuadorians can and do successfully compete in popular elections is a major milestone for Ecuadorian society. Whether or not the movement could have been more effective had it not formed Pachakutik is a separate and important, though moot, issue. By all accounts, there was pressure from indigenous elites as early as 1990 for the CONAIE to participate in elections, and if Pachakutik had not been formed it is likely that those elites would have left and joined other parties.²⁴⁵ It is also widely accepted that the ability to act as a social movement organization, that is to say extra-institutionally, has been severely undermined since Pachakutik was formed. More importantly, it is difficult to see how Pachakutik's success at the polls translated into concrete progress towards the indigenous movement's goals. A founding member of

²⁴⁵ Several pre-Pachakutik indigenous candidates were mentioned in interviews and conversations.

Pachakutik put it simply. When asked what achievements the movement had made through Pachakutik, the answer was, “I don’t really see any.”²⁴⁶

Next, the recognition of the right to retain indigenous culture, which includes constitutionally recognized collective rights to bilingual education and indigenous justice systems, has been lauded as another of the movement’s major achievements. Though the recognition might provide prestige for the movement organizations, little concrete benefit has accrued to indigenous Ecuadorians. Bilingual education, for example, exists and has provided educational and employment opportunities for indigenous Ecuadorians. However, the low quality and limited courses of study (typically agriculture-related) meant that bilingual education was only pursued as a last resort. Leaders fought to maintain control over bilingual education institutions at the same time that they refused to send their children to EIB schools. The establishment of EIB has, in many ways then, contributed to the marginalization of indigenous Ecuadorians. Rather than offering a quality education or making multicultural reforms to the general educational system, EIB has ghettoized indigenous schools and promoted acculturation as parents do all they can to get their children a Hispanic education.²⁴⁷ Other cultural citizenship rights have produced similar results, as demonstrated in chapter four.

Finally, the last achievement of the indigenous struggle analyzed here is the greater provision of services and basic infrastructure, or, in other words, development. In the last twenty years more homes were supplied with water and electricity, rural communities enjoyed better roads for transporting agricultural goods, and fewer families suffered through infant and child deaths from preventable diseases. The countryside was

²⁴⁶ Interview with Marisol in February of 2006.

²⁴⁷ The mainstream education system is known as the Hispanic system.

untouched, in terms of service and infrastructure, before the indigenous peoples stood up to demand attention and international development agents responded. According to community members, basic services and infrastructure were two main motivators for organizing in the 1980s. Compared to earlier times, when water was carried from rivers and no roads or bridges connected the communities furthest from the city, the increased infrastructure has significantly improved the lives of indigenous community members.

Although basic infrastructure provision has dramatically altered the rural landscape and made the provision of basic needs more manageable, community development initiatives have failed to live up to the expectations they created and conditions in the rural communities remain dismal. Health centers were built but lacked staff and supplies. Agricultural production suffered from poor soil conditions and a lack of irrigation. Indigenous children were still less likely to finish elementary school and more likely to suffer from chronic malnutrition, compared to the national average. Poverty remained highly concentrated in the rural indigenous sector. Major investments in development projects have had little positive impact on indigenous Ecuadorians. Furthermore, the focus on development projects took attention away from larger political issues and validated neoliberal principles regarding privatized services.

The evaluation of outcomes, presented above, reveals that even though most, if not all, movement demands were met, the concrete benefits to indigenous Ecuadorians have been disappointing to many. During informal conversations many participants expressed frustration that so little had come out of so much sacrifice as well as anger that the legitimacy and momentum of 1990 had been squandered on elections and unfruitful development projects. There are, of course, some simple explanations for the

disappointing outcomes. Several indigenous leaders have been accused of corruption and putting their personal interests ahead of the collective good. There were also numerous attempts to sabotage the movement's capacity to mobilize and maintain unity throughout the indigenous sector; enemies of the movement set up and funded rival organizations, creating patron-client ties that lured many communities away. These were important factors in the undermining of the CONAIE and should be considered carefully. They do not, however, explain why there have not been more positive results when the movement has reached so many of its goals. To understand the limitations, we must understand the larger neoliberal context in which the movement has operated.

Neoliberal Governance

This research has argued that in order to understand the possibilities of social transformation in the neoliberal era one must first understand neoliberalism as much more than an economic philosophy. Instead, neoliberalism is best understood as a constellation of processes through which the conduct of the world's population has been shaped. In other words, neoliberalism is a mode of governance. Just as important as neoliberal economic principles are the disciplining techniques and resistances to those techniques, through which this mode of governance produces subjectivities and rationalities. The purpose of governance is to produce populations that are disciplined and that operate in ways that are amenable to hegemonic economic and social arrangements. Governance thus structures the field of possibilities for social action. However, pinpointing modes of governance can be difficult because they operate through

a variety of structures, including institutions, discourses, and identities (Ferguson and Gupta 2002:989).

In order to grasp neoliberal governance, I have followed the suggestion made by Rose (1999) to pursue an analytic of governance. If governance is about shaping subjects and the ‘conduct of conduct,’ then it is possible to expose governance modes by identifying and analyzing when, where, and by whom elements of conduct become problematized. In Rose’s words, such an analytic is concerned with “what conduct has come to be problematized at specific historical moments, the objects and concerns that appear here, and the forces, events, or authorities that have rendered them problematic” (1999:21). To perform an analysis of neoliberalism, then, requires first identifying the conduct that came to be problematized during the neoliberal era and second, identifying the mechanisms through which subjectivities and rationales were produced regarding the problematized conduct.

The “return of the Indian” problem in Latin America, and the rise of identity-based social movements around the world indicate several elements of conduct that were problematized during the neoliberal era. Identity-based movements protested the exclusion of minorities and assimilation policies that recognized only one dominant ‘national’ culture. Activists, scholars, states, and intergovernmental organizations questioned the naturalized hyphen between nation and state. Multiculturalism, diversity, and cultural citizenship rights became legitimate concerns around the world. The underdevelopment of much of the world’s population, and particularly of ethnic minorities, also became a focus of attention during this period. As Escobar elaborated, underdevelopment and poverty became the characteristics that defined the third world

(1995:24). Finally, the limitations of representative democracy also became the focus of social change efforts around the world, with the advent of efforts to democratize democracy.

As under-development, minority exclusion, and elite-dominated representative democracy became problematized, progressive movements around the world shifted their foci to three means of social transformation: participatory democracy, cultural citizenship, and development with identity. These became the core of progressive, multicultural thinking in the 1990s. It has to be noted, however, that progressive social movements were not the only actors involved in this problematization. Democratic reforms, multicultural initiatives, and new approaches to development aid were often added to national and international agendas by organizations such as the World Bank and other members of the global elite. In an analytic of governance the convergence of progressive and elite thought points to the need to recognize participatory democracy, cultural citizenship, and development with identity as mechanisms of neoliberal governmentality.

Alternative Local Government

The first mechanism of neoliberal governmentality studied here was participatory democracy, which emerged out of critiques of representative democracy and the idea that it would be better to radically transform the state from within than to ‘smash’ it. Attempts to create a new kind of state and to radicalize democracy produced, in practice, participatory democratic reforms and alternative local governments, such as in the case of Porto Alegre, Brazil’s participatory budget and, later, the Pachakutik-led ALG in

Saquisilí. The appeal of participatory reforms was their ability to create better and more effective democracies, ones that gave voice to all their members and so would create more just societies. Participatory democracies were also seen as desirable because citizen-based planning and oversight theoretically should increase the effectiveness of public spending and state efficiency.

As detailed in chapter 3, participatory reforms in Saquisilí did not lead to the founding of a new kind of municipal government. Rather, the ALG provided a forum in which the development dollars of neoliberal agents were allowed to dominate the public agenda. The indigenous communities in Saquisilí were vehemently opposed to water privatization and in desperate need of more water and sanitation infrastructure, for example. They signed on to the World Bank's PRAGUAS program because it offered financing for expensive water and sanitation projects, even though PRAGUAS also opened up the municipal water supply to privatization in the future. The participatory budget assembly's process allowed PRAGUAS to enter the communities without having to discuss its long-term goals, making it the most successful attempt to privatize water in Saquisilí's history.

Nor did participatory reforms meet the more moderate goal of improving government efficiency and the effectiveness of public investments. The persistence of political clientelism, which merely adapted itself to the participatory reforms, precluded gains in efficiency and effectiveness. The people of Saquisilí maintained the expectations established by a clientelistic political culture. In order to attract support from development agents, however, the Pachakutik officials had to appear as an ALG. Thus, they emphasized a discourse of citizen participation, oversight, and strategic planning. In

order to maintain support locally, officials had to act as patrons; to be considered a good elected official, one had to provide material resources to as many constituent groups as possible. Thus, the ALG officials asked their clients to participate in planning assemblies and used the practice of account rendering to appear transparent. They then used municipal funds in unplanned and unapproved ways, like the spending in 2006 of \$20,000 on plastic chairs, to fulfill their patron obligations as widely as possible. Participatory democratic reforms did not affect progressive social change in Saquisilí because they did nothing to change the political culture and the long-standing social and economic inequalities between the urban mestizo and rural indigenous sectors.

Participatory democracy is a mechanism of neoliberal governance that restricts the conduct of people and protects hegemonic political and economic relations. When social movement organizations undertake participatory democratic reforms, the focus of their actions becomes redirected toward working within state institutions. What is more, the only acceptable political activity becomes that which takes place inside the state. Protest is only legitimate if the political system is exclusionary or controlled by elites. To protest against a participatory state, however, becomes portrayed as selfish, counterproductive, and anti-democratic. Such was the case in 2006, for example, when the CONAIE's base took to the streets to block the FTA. The general population objected to the mobilizations and pointed out that the administration who began negotiations, led by President Lucio Gutierrez, had obtained power precisely through the CONAIE.²⁴⁸ The option of extra-institutional change is lost, then, even when participatory reforms may not have necessarily altered existing political and economic relations. In fact, because the

²⁴⁸ Mobilizations affect the daily life of most people because they shut down the Pan-American Highway, disrupting travel and the transportation of basic supplies.

participatory spaces have restricted agendas, they cannot take into account the larger structures of economic inequality and social hierarchies, often racialized, that shape the exercise of power and the ability to effectively participate within institutionalized state spaces.

Cultural Citizenship: On being Indigenous and Ecuadorian

The second mechanism of neoliberal governmentality is cultural citizenship. The right to belong to the nation-state and yet be different than the dominant ‘national’ culture was principally what this era’s NSMs were thought to be after (Alvarez et al. 1998; Melucci 1980, 1994). Progressive sectors challenged the heretofore-naturalized equation of a single nation with its corresponding state while identity-based movements demanded that they be given the right to meaningfully participate in their societies without having to lose their cultural differences. Theoretically, cultural citizenship rights, such as the collective rights granted to indigenous peoples in Ecuador and throughout Latin America, had the potential to deepen democracy and thicken civil society, thereby resulting in qualitatively different, more just societies and states. In practice, however, this did not seem to happen.

As discussed in chapter four, the indigenous movement in Ecuador, like other identity-based movements, fought for the right to be recognized as culturally differentiated citizens, to be indigenous and Ecuadorian. Though distinctive, these citizens wanted to be acknowledged as integral parts of the nation-states to which they belonged. In Ecuador, this has meant re-writing national history to include indigenous Ecuadorians and to express interculturality, understood as communicative processes

through which diverse cultures come to know, understand, and interact with each other. Major cultural citizenship rights in Ecuador also included the right to bilingual education, which, more than native languages, is to incorporate indigenous conceptions of teaching and learning,²⁴⁹ and the right to administer an autonomous indigenous justice system.

In Saquisilí, and Cotopaxi more broadly, indigenous Ecuadorians have been widely accepted by the dominant mestizo society. Indigenous Gentlemen were elected to the highest offices in the province and re-elected with the support of urban mestizos. The same society that voted for a Kichwa prefect, however, actively and openly discriminated against the broader group of indigenous Ecuadorians, maintaining the extant racialized social hierarchy and “ethnic boundaries” (Barth 1969). Despite the promise of cultural citizenship to transform societies by giving the historically marginalized meaningful ways to shape them, social hierarchies and discrimination persistently kept the indigenous majority from effectively shifting the flow of power.

What cultural citizenship has done is create a symbolic role for the ‘Other’ within the nation. A form of ‘Other’ is incorporated into the civilized, modern construction of the nation through the recognition of cultural citizenship rights. The ‘Other’ that becomes recognized, however, is not recognized on terms of its own choosing but rather, in a cunning twist, the recognized ‘Other’ affirms the dominant national culture (Povinelli 2002). In the case of Ecuador, the role belongs to the Indigenous Gentleman, a person who is both authentically indigenous and recognizably civilized. The role makes alterior identity a political asset for certain gentlemen, as Hale and Millaman (2006) argued regarding indigenous identity in Latin America, but the capital required to be constructed

²⁴⁹ Article 57.14 of the 2008 Constitution states that the bilingual education system is designed “...for the care and preservation of the identities in consonance with their methodologies of teaching and learning.”

as a Gentleman remains out of reach for most. Furthermore, even those who occupy the role do so at the pleasure of the dominant society, because the definition of an Indigenous Gentleman depends entirely on its construction and control by members of the dominant social group. Former Saquisilí mayor Antonio Llumitasig, for example, had his Gentleman status taken away through a racialized discourse of mestizo national ‘we’-ness when he was appointed governor of Cotopaxi.

Perhaps most importantly, the symbolic role of Indigenous Gentleman makes invisible the exclusion, or continued Othering, of culturally differentiated citizens. To begin, it is impossible for any actually existing ‘Other’ to fill the Indigenous Gentleman role because of the balance required between authentic alterity and recognizable civility, between the belief that authentic indigeneity requires a spiritual connection to the land through agricultural work, for example, and the requirement that gentlemen be formally educated urban professionals. In addition, those that do fill the role do so only tenuously and temporarily. Regardless of how tenuous or unattainable the Indigenous Gentleman status is, the existence of such a category is sufficient to claim that the ‘Other’ has become a part of the ‘we.’ Thus, the ‘Other’ that remains, in Latin America the Indian Other, is rendered invisible by the recognition of an identity that no one can occupy and which indigenous peoples have no part in defining.

Cultural citizenship has been an effective means of limiting the political conduct of neoliberal subjects to restricted, permissible ways of being, what in the broader Latin American context has been called the “authorized Indian” (Hale and Millaman 2006). ‘Others’ who are invited to the table are required and pressured to act in ways particular and permissible to their identity, if they want to take advantage of the opportunities

presented by neoliberal spaces. For indigenous Ecuadorians cultural citizenship limits their involvement to institutional spaces related to education, culture, and the environment, for example. Within those institutional spaces Indigenous Gentlemen have the cultural authority to propose projects that may benefit indigenous Ecuadorians but that do not threaten the economic regime. To move beyond the permissible boundaries would turn the “authorized Indian” into its illegitimate counterpart, the “radical Other” (Hale and Millaman 2006).

Development with Identity: Indigeneity from Below

The third mechanism of neoliberal governmentality is the development paradigm known as development with identity. Progressives began to turn their attention to this type of development and form NGOs to promote it because of its promise to empower historically marginalized communities while improving life conditions. Development with identity was a way to provide services to populations that had long been neglected by state elites. The development with identity paradigm also intended to promote traditional cultures and define development according to local worldviews instead of to a single western, capitalist standard. The goal was to improve on social indicators while creating the conditions necessary for non-hegemonic cultures to survive. For development with identity to work it was especially important that the beneficiary population have a role in selecting, executing, and evaluating development efforts. If development efforts did not respond to local conditions, desires, and expectations, then they would not be effective.

In Saquisilí, the development with identity paradigm was a dominant force in the lives of indigenous Ecuadorians. Rural life was centered on development projects, all of which maintained a justification of how the project was culturally appropriate. The failed projects in Saquisilí discussed in chapter five were mostly related to traditional Andean crops and livestock, such as the loans for guinea pigs in which most participants lost money. The influence that development agents had on the Jatarishun was profound. Agents imposed a particular understanding of the Kichwa worldview on indigenous Saquisilenses, designing projects to incorporate communal modes of production and accountability. Chapter five also demonstrated how development agents literally re-wrote the organization's 'participatory' five-year plan to stress romanticized notions of indigeneity that had been absent from the Jatarishun bases' rendering of the plan. Indigenous people were often frustrated with agents' insistence on community-based collective productive projects and with agricultural projects that did not respond to the contemporary economic realities of communities. Nevertheless, despite their frustrations, the Jatarishun and its member communities continued to solicit projects, focusing their energies on the types of projects likely to receive support from development agents.

The case of Saquisilí demonstrates how development with identity contributes to neoliberal subject formation. First, development agents impose an identity, with corresponding appropriate development goals, onto the groups with whom they work. In the case of indigenous peoples, it is a romanticized notion of indigeneity that denies contemporary indigenous realities and which, consequently, maintains a perpetual under-development. To illustrate, a 2004 World Bank newsletter detailing an Andean indigenous leadership-training program stated that individual economic initiatives and the

accumulation of wealth were not culturally appropriate for Andean indigenous peoples, who valued equality, solidarity, and an exchange economy based on redistribution.²⁵⁰ Whether or not indigenous peoples continued to maintain these values,²⁵¹ the World Bank statement made it clear that it would be inappropriate for any development project benefiting Andean indigenous peoples to have the goals of economic wealth and individual achievement. Nor could indigenous peoples attempt to modify or transform the capitalist system, which, it is implied, matches non-indigenous global culture. According to the World Bank, programs that are appropriate for indigenous peoples, then, should reduce poverty while also keeping indigenous peoples tied to what is perceived as their traditional social, political, and economic arrangements.

Second, the under-developed become self-governing, which is to say self-restricting, such that they are pressured to comply with the imposed ideas of identity and development. It is not that individuals ‘buy in’ to the identity imposed on them but rather that they end up reproducing that identity in a manner that fits within the context of development projects. They thus limit their development expectations and organizational activities to those deemed appropriate and, so, worthy of funding. More broadly speaking, they have accepted that their defining characteristic is being under-developed and that the only way to overcome their state is by competing for development project funds.

Finally, the development with identity paradigm has a more general effect of limiting contestation over neoliberal economic policies by easing the consequences of

²⁵⁰ “Indigenous Peoples Leadership Capacity Building Program for the Andean Countries” Newsletter No. 3 (September 2004). wwwds.worldbank.org/.../42050optmzd0LA11Sept12004101PUBLIC1.pdf

²⁵¹ In Saquisilí most indigenous Ecuadorians did subscribe to ideas about individual initiative, or at least family-based rather than community-based initiative.

limited state responsibility and by promoting the privatization of human and social development needs. Instead of pressuring states to provide services, communities petition organizations for development projects. The municipal government in Saquisilí was one of many organizations that community leaders solicited for projects. When proposals were turned down, usually due to a lack of funds, the community simply turned to other organizations for possible funds. To accept that social problems belong in the private sector is to accept neoliberal economic principles. Furthermore, development in neoliberal governance plays on the good intentions of progressives and the desperation of the impoverished in the most cynical way. By helping and being helped, anti-neoliberal development agents and beneficiaries end up, to a large extent, reinforcing the neoliberal project they oppose. Such was the case of many committed, hard working, and extremely progressive individuals that worked with the Jatarishun. And yet, to not 'do' development is to ignore that there are funds available for alleviating the anguishes of extreme poverty.

The Project of Neoliberal Governmentality

The central concern of this dissertation has been to demonstrate that three shibboleths of progressive thought in the post-Cold War era-participatory democracy, cultural citizenship, and development with identity-have been mechanisms of neoliberal governmentality. With that goal in mind, it was useful to treat each mechanism as analytically separate. In practice, however, the three mechanisms were combined and worked together as a larger project of neoliberal governmentality. As an example of how intertwined the mechanisms were, the ALG spaces of participatory democracy depended

on development with identity agents, for funding and methodological training, and on notions of cultural citizenship, to justify legitimate participation of indigenous Ecuadorians through the traditional *cabildo* system. To close, the dissertation argues that the larger neoliberal governmentality project was introduced through the spaces of opportunity created through each of the three mechanisms and that neoliberal governmentality has structured the field of social change in such a way as to make fundamental social transformation in Ecuador extremely difficult.

Neoliberal governance created opportunities for indigenous movements like the CONAIE to interact with states and transnational actors in forums that provided real opportunities for social change. These opportunities were unprecedented in that they allowed culturally recognized citizens to participate in making decisions about their future and the future direction of the larger polities in which they lived. In Ecuador, these spaces included government agencies created specifically for indigenous Ecuadorians, such as DINEIB and CODENPE. In addition, the mainstream institutions of the state were reformed to be multicultural and encourage the participation and acceptance of indigenous Ecuadorians.

As was demonstrated in chapter two, members of indigenous communities in Cotopaxi did not begin their struggles with participatory democracy, cultural citizenship, and development with identity in mind. Rather, their struggles for the end of racialized discrimination, greater provision of infrastructure, and improved economic possibilities through land reforms and education, were translated into the mechanisms of neoliberal governmentality. The translation came about through the selection of the CONAIE as the legitimate representative of all indigenous peoples. The CONAIE's legitimization led to

the marginalization of radical left sectors within the indigenous movement, making only those sectors willing to operate within the institutionalized spaces of the state and development viable.

As Charles R. Hale has argued, neoliberalism opened these unprecedented spaces but, as has come to be realized since, those spaces had built-in limits (2002:490). That is, real social change was possible but only to a certain point. Societies could be transformed but the transformations had to leave intact the regime of production and general balance of power. In other cases, authors have argued that indigenous movement actors have been able to subvert the limits of those spaces. Sawyer, speaking of the Ecuadorian Amazon region, states, for example, that the indigenous movement “...produced disruptive and defiant subjects” (2004:93). Likewise, Postero argues that in Bolivia the rationalities of neoliberalism have been subverted and surpassed by indigenous actors who “posed important challenges to the workings of global capitalism” (2007:220). The analysis leads Postero to speak of a post-multicultural Bolivia, implying that the built-in limits have not only been subverted but that the entire mode of neoliberal governmentality has been surpassed, in part by utilizing the very rationalities of neoliberalism, for example.

The evidence from Saquisilí, however, demonstrates an outcome far from the post-multicultural (Ibid.) and post-liberal (Yashar 2005) interpretations of other scholars. In Saquisilí, and throughout Ecuador, the neoliberal project has been reinforced, the scope of change that can be legitimately pursued has been drastically reduced, and the indigenous movement has been demobilized. That is not to say that the Ecuadorian movement has not been able to subvert the limits established by neoliberal governance.

On the contrary, there are examples of the indigenous sector pushing beyond the intended boundaries of neoliberalism; their putting a stop to the FTAA and FTA was most certainly against the economic interests of neoliberal capitalism.

However, through the mechanisms of participatory democracy, cultural citizenship, and development with identity, neoliberal governance has produced a context in which social transformation that would challenge neoliberalism has become extremely difficult. First, through the mechanisms of neoliberal governance current economic and political structures have been legitimized. The legitimization occurred because citizens, and in a particular manner, historically excluded indigenous Ecuadorians, have begun to participate in national life and decision-making processes. Citizen participation, stressed by all three mechanisms, makes power appear to rest with the people, who have the right and responsibility to make decisions about the future of their states and economies. Nancy Postero has referred to this as the “reorganization of responsibility” (2007:16), whereby responsibility for the state of things is passed to the public. The ability of people to make decisions, coupled with the unprecedented availability of projects for improving the conditions of society, have given legitimacy to the neoliberal state and economy.

Neoliberal political and economic arrangements have been legitimized by citizen participation but the scope of social change that can be legitimately pursued by citizen participants from within neoliberal spaces has been restricted by the conditions of participation. As Charles Hale put it, indigenous participation has been restricted to permissible ways of being, the “authorized indian” and “if well-connected and well-behaved, they are invited to an endless flow of workshops [and] spaces of political

participation...” (2004:18). In the case of indigenous Ecuadorians, appropriate behavior means making proposals that fit decentralized, bureaucratic state and development institutions and that can be constructed as culturally appropriate. The restrictions on acceptable proposals effectively preclude working towards systemic transformations. Rather, proposals must be short-term projects that pertain to a single social group and that do not threaten the general economic order.

Finally, neoliberal governmentality has effectively demobilized anti-neoliberal social movements. As the state and economic system were legitimized and the scope of change restricted, extra-institutional actors like social movements lost legitimacy and support. The radical sectors of the CONAIE, those who did not want to participate in the spaces provided by the neoliberal state, for example, were marginalized from within the organizations. The remaining sectors of the movement shifted their attention toward state and development spaces, which encouraged competition among indigenous organizations based on representativity. The result was SMOs, like the Jatarishun, that began to resemble NGOs and political parties. The CONAIE and its affiliates have lost legitimacy in the eyes of the general public and their own base communities. The organization’s leaders continue to struggle but their capacity to mobilize has been greatly reduced by the project of neoliberal governmentality.

Development with identity, cultural citizenship, and participatory democracy have been celebrated as new routes to social transformation. But in Saquisilí they have been, on the contrary, mechanisms of the neoliberal form of governmentality, inhibiting rather than encouraging resistance. Participatory democracy has emerged as a new form of participatory clientelism, cultural citizenship as another version of the authorized Indian,

and development with identity as a perpetuation of underdevelopment based on a romanticized notion of indigeneity. In all three cases, the neoliberal project of governmentality has legitimized existing political and economic structures, restricted the scope of possible change, and demobilized social movements. Radical social change in Saquisilí, and elsewhere, will require a consideration of changes beyond the scope of neoliberal governmentality, in the state and organization of capitalist society, like those emphasized by the now marginal left and marginalized by the discourse of neoliberal governmentality.

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