In Pursuit of Better Livelihoods:

Indigenous Development and Institution-Building in Highland Ecuador

By

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Contents

Contents

Figures

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Introduction

Part of the so-called "Pink Tide" of populist-leftist political movements in Latin America, the election of Rafael Correa to the Ecuadorian presidency in 2006 promised to usher in a new era of progress, inclusion, and participatory democracy. Having declared that the "long night of neoliberalism" had come to an end, one of Correa's first acts in office was to make good on a campaign promise to convene a constituent assembly, which his government tasked with drafting a new constitution. The resultant charter took effect in 2008 following its approval by the electorate and has been hailed as one of the “the hitherto most radical constitutions of the world” (Lalander 2014: 150), because it grants legal rights to nature, characterizes the Ecuadorian state as intercultural and plurinational, and establishes holistic wellbeing (*buen vivir* in Spanish or *sumak kawsay* in Kichwa) as the founding principle upon which to develop Ecuadorian society. At the same time, the Correa administration launched an ambitious program of infrastructural development and proposed an innovative approach to environmental protection by soliciting donations from the international community in exchange for not exploiting the oil reserves in Yasuní National Park.

Many of the standard indicators suggest that Correa’s ambitious program paid off. By the end of his tenure in 2017, Ecuador’s poverty rate had declined, its rate of inequality had decreased, governmental social spending had increased, and the country had witnessed expanded access at all levels of education (Weisbrot, Johnston and Merling 2017: 2). However, the new society that Correa's election had seemed to herald did not take root. Many improvements in standard of living that Ecuadorians experienced during Correa's presidency were carried out in ways that were neither environmentally sustainable nor social equitable. Not only was the Yasuní Fund scrapped when international donations to the Yasuní Fund did not meet goals, the

environmental health of many of Ecuador's most vulnerable communities was threatened by the large-scale exploitation of natural resource reserves in order to finance infrastructure projects and social spending. When confronted by the indigenous organizations and environmental activists over mineral extraction, Correa liked to say, "We cannot be beggars sitting on a sack of gold" (de la Torre 2014: 460). Consequently, many of Correa's critics regard his "progressive" and "green" rhetoric as little more than a means of generating political capital (Davidov 2013). Moreover, his brash rhetoric and the aggressive style of his "permanent campaign" (Conaghan and de la Torre 2008) deliberately undermined both the freedom of the press and the political power of rival sectors of civil society. In the first quarter of 2018, as Correa feuds with his successor and former vicepresident Lenin Moreno, the "Citizens' Revolution" promised by Correa's movement-party Alianza PaÍs seems to have faltered.

Yet the promise of political and economic inclusion in Ecuador never rested solely with Correa. For several generations, indigenous politicians, activists, and intellectuals have pursued these objectives on behalf of one of the most chronically excluded segments of Ecuadorian society. A 2002 painting by Fausto Toaquiza, a Kichwa artist from Tigua in the highlands of Cotopaxi Province, provides a clear vision of the power that indigenous people have generated through the pursuit of full and culturally meaningful participation in the political-economic structures that predominate in Ecuador. Displayed in the foyer of a private museum in Cuenca, the painting depicts the ouster of President Jamil Mahuad in 2000. At the center of the action is the so-called "government of national salvation," consisting of Lucio Gutierrez, Antonio Vargas, and Carlos Solórzano. Gutierréz, the non-indigenous army colonel who would later be elected president, appears to be in charge because he is holding the microphone, but the Amazonian and Tsachila shamans in the crowd below and the pre-colonial indigenous leader who appears in the

clouds above are all directing their power toward Vargas, the president of the Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador (CONAIE, the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador), the largest and most influential organization in Ecuador's national indigenous movement. Throngs of indigenous people from all over the country march proudly into the action carrying banners featuring indigenous political slogans while the president and his cronies make a hasty escape with a suitcase marked with a dollar sign.

Figure 1: Ouster of Jamil Mahuad. Painting by Fausto Toaquiza.

Perhaps most significantly, the presidential palace, the national bank, and the iconic religious statue that stands over Quito have all been transported to the countryside near Tigua. Thus, the painting depicts a vision of Ecuadorian society in which the institutions and individuals

at the center of mainstream Ecuadorian society are subordinated to indigenous authority. In short, this is a scene of indigenous political empowerment, not a mere political protest.

The power displayed in this scene results from the efforts of several generations of indigenous leaders to build institutions at local, regional, national, and international levels. The best known and most researched of these institutions are *comunas* (legally recognized indigenous communities) and the organizations that compose Ecuador's multi-tiered indigenous political movement. Like their counterparts throughout the region, these institutions mediate indigenous citizenship (Lazar 2008). Less researched are the institutions devoted primarily to mediating indigenous economic participation; they are the focus of this dissertation. Inspired by Colloredo-Mansfeld's (2007; 2009) discussion of the tools of vernacular statecraft, I explore how these institutions foster indigenous vernacular development through the collective application of such tools to the pursuit of community advancement and improved livelihood opportunities.

In some senses, vernacular development is a markedly local phenomenon. The tools of management that characterize the phenomenon are highly tailored to local circumstances, they are understood through local culture and shaped by local histories, and they are deployed by institutions dedicated to local concerns. However, vernacular development is also deeply embedded in the global flow of people and ideas. As I show in the chapters to follow, Kichwa institutions borrow their management tools from multiple levels of national and international governance that have been deployed in the Ecuadorian Andes over the course of many generations. That is, Kichwa institutions vernacularize development by putting widely-circulating tools of government to use in the service of local agendas.

Such borrowing is reminiscent of Andean peoples' ancestral livelihood practices, which depended on the mustering of resources drawn from widely distributed ecological niches. Life in

any one place required the appropriation of resources from other places. As I explore in chapters 1, 2 and 6, this ancient approach to provisioning has taken new forms under the political economy of the late 20th century and early 21st century. As I explore in chapters 3 and 7, it has also been applied to the creation of institutions—the organizational manifestations of "the sets of working rules that are used to determine who is eligible to make decisions in some arena, what actions are allowed or constrained, what aggregation rules will be used, what procedures must be followed, what information must or must not be provided, and what payoffs will be assigned to individuals dependent on their actions" (Ostrom 1990: 51).

Such borrowing is also characteristic of local people's encounters with national and transnational systems of economy and governance in other parts of the world. As Sahlins writes, "The first commercial impulse of the local people is not to become just like us, but more like themselves," an impulse which they often pursue through the diversion of new things toward old purposes (1992: 13). Sahlins labels this phenomenon "develop-man," a term inspired by his mishearing of a conversation among New Guinean university students, which he describes as "*development* from the perspective of the people concerned: their own culture on a bigger and better scale than they ever had it (ibid.; emphasis in original). The principle difference between Sahlins's discussion and mine is the underlying understanding of indigenous perspectives on good living. Sahlins is concerned to explore how indigenous people redouble their commitment to existing cultural practices through the appropriation of foreign goods "so long as their own relations and ideas of the good life are intact" (ibid.). Contrariwise, many of my Kichwa interlocutors worry that their culture is at risk of liquidation if not already lost.

Those who engage in vernacular development undertake their task with the goal of building a good life in the future, shaped by principles and practices borrowed from the past and

from national and international systems of economy and government, in order to oppose the bad life of the present. Their efforts are summed up in the title of a document released by the Amazonian Kichwa community of Sarayaku in 2003: "Sarayaku sumak kawsayta ñawpakma katina killka," which roughly translates as "Document of the pursuit of future good living in Sarayaku." I discuss the significance of that document in greater detail in Chapter 4. I have also borrowed a version of Sarayaku's declaration of purpose for the title of this dissertation.

The chapters that follow aim to explain how and why Kichwa vernacular developmentalism has emerged. I begin in the next section with a discussion of the theoretical and methodological foundations upon which my research has been based. Then, I devote a contextualizing chapter to the historical and geographic aspects of contemporary Kichwa livelihoods. I go on to devote the next three chapters to the reinvention of indigenous livelihoods through discussions of individual work histories, collective efforts to build institutions that support revitalized indigenous livelihoods, and indigenous critiques of the political-economic status quo. These three chapters are largely focused on highland Kichwa people's experiences of the structures that have defined Ecuador's national political economy over the past half-century. The next three chapters explore Kichwa people's engagements with the global economy and financial landscape. Finally, I return in the conclusion to a discussion of Kichwa institution building and vernacular development in the pursuit of decolonized modes of participation in national and international structures of political economy.

Orientations: From Culturalism to Interculturalism

Despite the apotheosis of rationality under twentieth-century modernism, the world was more cultural than ever at the beginning of the twenty-first century. This is not to say that there

was *quantitatively* more culture in the way that a cab driver in the Ecuadorian city of Cuenca once told me that there is more culture for anthropologists to study in neighboring Peru than there is in his own country. Rather, scholars, activists, marketers, and policy-makers have come to understand the world in *qualitatively* more cultural terms than did their 20th-century predecessors.

Arjun Appadurai coined the term 'culturalism' to describe this qualitative shift. Having reverse-engineered it from a suite of terms with "certain prefixes like bi, *multi*, and *inter*, to name the most prominent," Appadurai uses the word culturalism "to designate a feature of movements involving identities consciously in the making" (1996: 15). He associates culturalism with "identity politics mobilized at the level of the nation-state" (ibid.), but this scalar restriction is not necessary. Culturalism is also a key strategy for movements that seek to achieve the "'boomerang' effect, which curves around local state indifference and repression to put foreign pressure on local policy elites" (Keck and Sikkink 1998: 200). Thus, in the mode that Appadurai invokes the term, culturalism "is the conscious mobilization of cultural differences in the service of a larger national or transnational politics" (Appadurai 1996: 15).

Ecuador has been the site of a great deal of culturalism, particularly in the realms of politics and civil society. Most prominently, the national indigenous movement took on a culturalist character in the late 20th century, launching the first national-level mobilization of indigenous people *qua* indigenous people in 1990. As José Antonio Lucero writes, the event "marked the dramatic reentrance of indigenous people to the national stage of politics" (2008: 106; see also Becker 2011: 22). Two years later, indigenous people marched from the Amazonian city of Puyo to the national capital of Quito in order to celebrate "'500 years of indigenous resistance and survival,' in opposition to the Ecuadorian and Spanish governments'

celebration of an 'encounter of two worlds'" (Meisch 1992: 55). Whitten, Whitten, and Chango report that as a consequence of such actions, "The symbolic power of the Ecuadorian indigenous movement gained strength that transformed it from a ritual drama to an active force for genuine change" (1997: 382). Soon, the movement became a major player in national politics. It was a key player in the election of some presidents and the ouster of others. As the new century approached, a newspaper poll found that the CONAIE "was placed third among institutions trusted by the public, after the Church and military, the but well above political parties, the government, and the congress" (Andolina 2003: 731).

Latin American governments, too, have participated in the culturalist moment through their embrace of what Charles Hale (2002; 2004; 2005) terms "neoliberal multiculturalism." Hale explains that this orientation to policy-making "has come about in part as a response to demands for rights by the culturally oppressed and excluded," and he indicates that "it opens new political space, offers significant concessions, which in a previous moment would have remained clearly beyond reach" (2002: 490). However, "powerful political and economic actors use neoliberal multiculturalism to affirm cultural difference, while retaining the prerogative to discern between cultural rights consistent with the ideal of liberal, democratic pluralism, and cultural rights inimical to that ideal" (2002: 491). In other words, neoliberal multiculturalist governments open up opportunities for people to act culturally, but they also constrain and domesticate the spaces within which to act. The consequence for indigenous people is the invention of the *indio permitido*, the permitted Indian, who "has passed the test of modernity, substituted 'protest' with 'proposal,' and learned to be both authentic and fully conversant with the dominant milieu" (2004: 19).

Indigenous politicians and intellectuals in Andean countries respond to neoliberal multiculturalism with a discourse of plurinationalism and interculturalism. The former concept "imagines a state that merges constitutive sovereignty rooted in the national people (*pueblo*) and indigenous plurality and self-determination" (Gustafson 2009). The latter concept "stresses a movement from one cultural system to another, with the explicit purpose of understanding other ways of thought and action" (Whitten 2004: 440; see also Walsh 2008: 141). These concepts are enshrined in Ecuador's current constitution, the product of Correa's campaign to "refound" the nation.

As Michael Wroblewski indicates, "Constitutional plurinationality–interculturality theoretically opens the door to profound decolonization of national politics, economics, territory, and cultural expression by historically marginalized groups, particularly indigenous citizens" (2014: 66). However, Carmen Martínez-Novo (2014) argues that the so-called post-neoliberal government of Rafael Correa continued the neoliberal multiculturalist practice of extending only conditional recognition to indigenous people. For instance, the 2011 Organic Law of Intercultural Education "recognizes [indigenous people's] political project but appropriates it for the state and for mestizo society because of the alleged inability of indigenous professionals to carry it out efficiently. Indigenous peoples are recipients and not shapers of intercultural policies" (Martínez-Novo 2014: 117). Worse, dissention and critique of government policy were not tolerated under the Correa administration and its "postneoliberal multiculturalism [did] not promote the kinds of tolerance that permeated earlier neoliberal attitudes" (2014: 121).

Increasingly, culturalism has also become an aspect of global consumerism. Cultural tourism is a prime example. When anthropologists first began to think about the commodification of culture that this trend entails, they typically critiqued it on the grounds that it

causes culture to be performed for the consumption of others rather than the enjoyment of its practitioners (e.g. Greenwood 1989). However, subsequent research has shown that tourist-oriented cultural performers are adept at withholding sensitive elements of the traditions that they reinvent for the consumption of spectators (Nesper 2003), that staged culture provides performers with an opportunity to challenge stereotypes (Condevaux 2009), and that cultural performances oriented to outsiders can prompt the performers to explore their own identities (Peers 2007). Moreover, Kathleen Adams (1997) shows that tourist-oriented "self-conscious cultural (re)formulation does not necessarily imply a collapse in meaning or emotive power" (318); rather, it can offer savvy locals an opportunity to reinvent their own roles in society. Finally, it should be noted that those who sell their culture are not bothered by its commodification: Aragon and Leach "found Indonesian artists and communities notably unconcerned about potential misuse of their works when presented to distant outsiders. … Such use, some said, would be a matter for the foreigners' own ancestors or gods to judge" (2008: 610).

The international trade in culturally marked commodities provides another example of market culturalism. For instance, the promotional blurbs found on boxes and bags of quinoa in global supermarkets encourage cosmopolitan consumers to purchase an affective connection to indigenous and traditional producers. International fair trade circuits rely heavily on the appeal of such affective ties and promote them heavily. They invite consumers to establish relationships with people whose culturally marked personal and community stories imbue fairly traded products with non-monetary value. Yet, in the end, "fair trade creates an 'imaginary community' that unevenly unites producers and consumers and is nurtured by advertising and the fair-trade mirror in which consumers' fantasies about producers' lives are reflected back to them in their

coffee cups" (Lyon 2011: 181). Of Course, producers "have a more chary view of the economies of cutting out middlemen. They know that even 'direct' relationships are mediated by a series of buying, marketing, shipping, warehousing, and contracting agents that move coffee from field to roasting location" (Doane 2010: 237).

Most troublingly, culturalism has emerged as a framework for diagnosing "underdevelopment." For instance, culturalist logic asserts that "there is something fundamentally wrong with 'Arab culture,' a fatal flaw that is holding the region back" (Sukarieh 2012: 122). Once again, culture is consciously invoked as a basis upon which to conduct exercises in national and international politics. However, Mayssoun Sukarieh shows that culturalism in this mode "leaves out the complex history of colonialism and neocolonialism, military occupation, regional conflict, and foreign interventions. Further, the sweeping invocation of gaps, lacks, and deficits between Arab and Western worlds both perpetuates ungrounded Orientalist stereotypes of the region and misrepresents the degree to which concerns of women's empowerment, freedom, and knowledge deficits remain as pressing in the West as they do in Arab countries" (2012: 125).

Sukarieh identifies two key assumptions that characterize culturalism. Culture tends to be "homogenized and essentialized" and it is "held to be foundational for understanding society, politics, and the economy" (2012: 120). At root, these assumptions are anthropological, even if the first assumption offends contemporary anthropological sensibilities. As Salazar writes in the context of cultural tourism, "while anthropology has undergone significant shifts in thinking since it arose as a discipline, ideas of old-style ethnology—objectifying, reifying, homogenizing, and naturalizing peoples—are widely used" by those who would invoke culture outside of the academy (2013: 672).

Since it is my contention in this dissertation that there has emerged a uniquely Kichwa mode of practicing development, I find the culturalist perspective appealing. However, Sukarieh's critique of cultural essentialism is very apt. Thus, I have opted to theorize Kichwa developmentalism from an interculturalist perspective. This approach requires that we see the Kichwa-ness of development as an emergent historical phenomenon that has arisen out of the continual exchange of ideas between Kichwa people and the many non-Kichwa people with whom they regularly interact. This makes essentialism a non-starter, because interculturalist theory understands that cultures are not discrete or homogenous entities, and it is more concerned with exchange than authenticity

The discourse of *sumak kawsay*, a Kichwa political-moral philosophy of good living that I discuss in Chapter 4, is the pinnacle of interculturalism inasmuch as its adherents consciously evoke indigenous ancestral principles and practices in support of their call to reform Ecuadorian society as a whole. Indeed, they claim that only by reorganizing the plurinational state on the basis of those cultural principles and practices can indigenous people truly prosper. The institutions I discuss in Chapters 3 and 7 are also culturalist, to a degree: the members of the Green Lake Quilotoa Center for Community Tourism sell artistic representations of Kichwa culture to national and international tourists, while Kichwa-run savings and credit cooperatives make use of overt cultural signs to attract Kichwa customers.

All of these political and economic projects are ultimately rooted in a far more mundane and pragmatic struggle to establish better lives, the subject of Chapters 2 and 3. This struggle unfolds in the context of social and cultural principles that shape its trajectory, but these principles do not rise to the level of conscious mobilization. Thus, my objective in this dissertation is to reveal how the people and organizations that I describe conduct

developmentalism in modes that are uniquely Kichwa, and to do so without resorting to culturalism as an explanation. That is, I aim to show that indigenous development in highland Ecuador is indigenous because of the context in which it has emerged, not because of the cultural essences that are sometimes evoked in the course of its practice.

To my mind, intercultural research begins with the realist's response to Malinowski's well-known statement that the purpose of ethnography is "to grasp the native's point of view, his relation to life, to realise *his* vision of *his* world" (1984: 25). It is taken for granted in contemporary perspectives on the practice of ethnography that, given the cultural and psychological baggage that ethnographers bring with them to the sites of their research, full immersion in the "native's point of view" is an impossibility. Indeed, even those who might be called "native" anthropologists are shaped and reshaped by multiple lines of identification that both blur the insider/outsider distinction and complicate the notion that these is a singular native point of view to grasp (Narayan 1993). These complications to Malinowski's otherwise compellingly straightforward statement of purpose have caused a great deal of consternation among anthropologists.

The realist response to this disquiet reasons that if perfect knowledge of the native's point of view is not possible, perhaps the purpose of ethnography is not to *achieve* the insider's perspective but to *pursue* it. As Rabinow reflects, this is an undertaking plagued by "interruptions and eruptions" in cross-cultural exchange, "ruptures of communication" that the fieldworker ultimately learns to identify as opportunities rather than hindrances (1977: 154). The products of such a pursuit are twofold: they include knowledge of the other that is inflected by one's own experience as well as knowledge of the self that is inflected by experience of the other. This is the very definition of interculturalism, which "implies a dialogue between equals, a

mutual accommodation of diverse life-worlds" (Aparicio and Blaser 2008: 79), and posits that "one cannot understand one's own people's perception without understanding something of the lifeways and thought processes of other peoples" (Whitten and Whitten 2015: 196).

I practice theoretical interculturalism in this dissertation by incorporating Kichwa concepts into my own—decidedly outsider—explanations of how Kichwa people understand and pursue economic development. I have learned not to attempt reconciliation of the plurality of the things that one encounters in ruptures of cross-cultural communication. Instead, I endeavor to derive insight from the unresolved tension. As a nod to this effort, I have given each chapter of this dissertation a bilingual title. The Kichwa term in each title names a point of departure; the English subtitle describes the general trajectory of my efforts to reconnoiter the rupture.

Methods

I have practiced methodological interculturalism by engaging my Kichwa interlocutors in wide-ranging conversations about their visions of their world and by reflecting critically on what I might learn from the "friction" that characterizes "zones of awkward engagement, where words mean something different across a divide even as people agree to speak" (Tsing 2005: xi). During our exchanges, my Kichwa interlocutors and I have done our best to reduce friction.

As I endeavor to elaborate the insights that these exchanges generated, I find myself returning time and again to the "interruptions and eruptions" in meaning that shaped our interactions. In many respects, the chapters that follow are meditations on those ruptures. My efforts to derive insight from those ruptures are informed by a lesson learned through an exchange with Klever Latacunga, a painter from Quilotoa who became a valued friend and interlocutor. Klever had shown an appreciation for the photos I took during the 2014 celebration

of Corpus Christi in the parish seat of Zumbahua (the predominantly Kichwa parish where Quilotoa is located high in the Andes of Cotopaxi Province), so I had a few of my favorite photos developed during an excursion to the provincial capital and I delivered them to his workshop upon returning to Quilotoa. I also commissioned him to paint a scene from one of my photos.

Figure 2: 2014 Corpus Christi bullfight in Zumbahua. Photo by Joe Quick.

The original photo captures a moment from the bullfights that are held each afternoon during the two-week celebration of Corpus Christi. A bull has just been released from a large truck-cum-bullpen at one corner of the spacious temporary ring constructed for the festival. The slipknot that attaches a rope to one of its horns is about to pull loose as the animal charges into the ring. On its back, the bull wears a *colcha*, a small banner stitched or screen-printed with the name of that day's fiesta sponsor. In a moment, the young men of the parish will clamber over

the fence and into the ring in order to prove their bravery by attempting to snatch the *colcha.* However, in this moment, a single man faces the bull. Dressed in plastic potato sacks stuffed with hay and another empty sack that he will use like a Spanish matador's cape, this is one of the primary festival characters associated with Corpus Christi in Zumbahua. Spectators watch the action from atop the viewing areas constructed along the edge of the ring. In the background behind the town of Zumbahua are the high grasslands where the parish's watershed originates.

Figure 3: Painting by Klever Latacunga, based on Figure 1.

Klever made several noteworthy adjustments to the photographed scene. He manipulated perspective so that the town center of Zumbahua is more visible. He also dressed fiesta attendees in more traditional clothes than Zumbahuans typically wear. Having noticed that the photograph did not include the *guaricha* (a female Corpus Christi character played by a cross-dressing man), Klever added her to the bottom right corner of the scene, next to her companion the *hombre gordo*. Klever also added a depiction of two supernatural entities in the sky above. The larger, transparent figure is an anthropomorphic manifestation of the *pachamama*, an Andean concpet that names what English speakers might call "mother nature." In Klever's painting, a cord around the *pachamama's* neck supports a large bowl full of grains at her bosom. The second character is *tayta inti*—the sun—who shines through the bowl, imbuing the grains with his energy as he shines on the festival below.

Drawing on Colloredo-Mansfeld's (2011) exchanges with painters from nearby Tigua, we can infer that Klever made these changes to the original scene because elements of the original composition fail to communicate the stories unfolding in the scene. For instance, it made no sense for the *hombre gordo* to appear without the *guaricha*. Similarly, the presence of supernatural entities must be understood as more than mere embellishment. Indeed, Klever chose these characters with intention: as he was working on the painting, he commented that he first thought to fill this space with a hummingbird but then decided that the *pachamama* was more appropriate to the scene. Their presence in the painting is very much in line with the logic of the fiesta, because the natural and supernatural forces that they embody contribute to the agricultural bounty that the Corpus Christi fiesta celebrates.

I composed the photo according to Western aesthetic principles such as the rule of thirds and my understanding of how lines of action draw the eye across the scene. Klever composed his

painting according to Kichwa aesthetic principles that privilege story lines. We both appreciated the scene, and we both expressed appreciation upon viewing the other's composition, a testament to our efforts to minimize friction in our exchanges. Yet by juxtaposing our compositions, significant ruptures are apparent. Indeed, I equivocate in my above statement that the *pachamama* is akin to mother nature, because these concepts index two vastly different understandings of a putatively singular entity. Pachamama-mother-nature is, in Marilyn Strathern's (2004) compelling phrase, "more than one but less than many" (see also de la Cadena 2015; Blaser 2016).

My engagement with the Kichwa interlocutors whom I describe in this dissertation seeks to capitalize on the equivocations generated by our interactions. I have learned to dwell upon "interruptions and eruptions" in cross-cultural exchange (Rabinow 1977: 154), not only in my own engagements with the indigenous people with whom I have lived and learned during my fieldwork, but also in the fabric of the plural world in which contemporary Kichwa society exists. Many of the chapters in this dissertation may be read as explorations of those ruptures: Chapter 2 explores Kichwa livelihoods in the context of a national economy that does not make space for indigenous people; Chapter 4 explores how indigenous political philosophy is misrecognized and misconstrued in non-indigenous political rhetoric; Chapter 5 explores the many regimes of cultural value in which quinoa circulates; Chapter 6 explores the welcoming and unwelcoming spaces of commerce and finance that contemporary Kichwa people navigate; and Chapter 7 explores how indigenous financial institutions exist at the historical and governmental nexus of many different influences. Together, these many topics chart the political-economic topography of contemporary indigenous development in highland Ecuador.

To study each of these topics, I have used the ethnographic tools of long-term participant observation, life history interviews, and institutional history interviews. Where possible, I have also invited Kichwa artists to help me envision their own perspectives. In all, I have spent approximately 15 months in highland Ecuador since I first undertook this project. In 2011, I carried out a 6-week survey of potential research sites under the incomparable guidance of Frank Salomon. In the summer of 2012, I conducted a 7-week pre-dissertation study of the Green Lake Quilotoa Center of Community Tourism in rural Cotopaxi Province. Then, in 2014-15, I spent a full year living in Quilotoa. I participated fully in communal life, and conducted wide-ranging life history interviews with members of the organization. Throughout the 2014-15 year, I also made frequent trips to Latacunga, the provincial capital of Cotopaxi, where I conducted interviews with the founders and employees of Kichwa-run savings and credit cooperatives.

My engagement with the community-based tourism organization in Quilotoa was quite different in style from my engagement with the savings and credit cooperatives in Latacunga. While my research in Quilotoa was very intensive, my research in Latacunga was much more extensive. The difference resulted from the institutional character of these organizations. As a communal organization, the CTC Quilotoa offered many opportunities to generate fieldnotes through participant observation in institutional and family life. My efforts to engage with the members of savings and credit cooperatives were stymied by business practices that protect the privacy of banking customers and by the rarity and erratic scheduling of events that bring members together in social settings. I overcame this difficulty by casting a wide net in my study of savings and credit cooperatives. Thus, whereas the arguments I make regarding the origins and operations of the CTC Quilotoa (Chapters 2 and 3) explore themes and trends within the

organization, the arguments I make regarding savings and credit cooperatives (Chapter 7) identify themes and trends across many institutions.

Envisioning Kichwa Society

As Macas, Belote and Belote (2003) argue by drawing on the metaphor of braided hairstyles preferred by Saraguro Kichwas, "indigenous communities in Ecuador exist in a global context and comprise human and cultural strands that are braided together in ever changing ways, always with the potential of death or renewal" (236). Indeed, the braid is much more than a metaphor; Macas, Belote and Belote argue, "The braid is a living metaphor for [Kichwa] identity, for who they are in the world" (ibid.)

Andean storytelling styles similarly interweave storylines representing distinct temporalities and orders of being, the most foreign of which bring both danger and fertile new possibilities (Allen 2011). As Colloredo-Mansfeld (2011) discovered through his work in Tigua and as I discuss in greater detail in Chapter 4, the scenes painted by the artists of Tigua and Quilotoa are also composed in this manner. That is, scenes are constructed through the inclusion of many storylines that intersect in such a way as to reveal multiple facets or aspects of the central subject. Often, these storylines will unfold according to distinct temporalities and geographies of movement. In tourist-oriented paintings (the vast majority of instances of the genre; see Chapter 2), the usual subject is "slice of life" (Whitten 2003; 2011), and the storylines range widely to incorporate the agrarian, pastoral, craft, and festival activities that breathe life into Kichwa communities. However, in the case of paintings that are focused on more narrowly defined subjects, the storylines weave together into a tighter knit. Thus, Fausto Toaquiza's painting of indigenous empowerment during the ouster of Jamil Mahuad includes the blessings

of shamans from different regions and different historical periods, indigenous marchers from different parts of the country, and even a folkloric story of community origin that ties the action to the particular area of the indigenous countryside to which symbols of centralized power have been dislocated. Similarly, in Klever Toaquiza's painting of Corpus Christi, the revitalization of community is communicated through the historic dress of onlookers, the agricultural calendar represented by Tayta Inti as he shines through a bowl of grains, and the metaphysical temporality in which the Pachamama exists.

I have attempted to construct my account of contemporary Kichwa society in the same way. Thus, while I have organized the six chapters that form the main body of this dissertation into an order that seems best fit to guide the reader along a sensible trajectory through Kichwa society, they need not be read in the order that I have included them. Each chapter attends to a distinct storyline that is identified in the title. Each of these storylines begins somewhere — usually a point of rupture. It then traverses a course that winds through the storylines that unfold in other chapters. And — like the characters of Andean folklore — it eventually returns to its own point of origin, having been transformed somewhat during its journey. For those who find themselves irritated or lost along the winding paths that these chapters traverse, the concluding chapter ties these storylines back together into a more traditional academic account of Kichwa developmentalism.

1. Pacha: The Order of Things in the Ecuadorian Andes

From an Andean perspective, history unfolds in a series of *pachakuna* or epochs. Each *pacha* is defined by a constellation of predominant social, political, and economic relations that distinguishes it from other *pachakuna*. The temporal end of a *pacha* is marked by the cataclysmic collapse or destruction of the order of people and things that defines it; this is called a *pachakutik*, a world-turning event or series of event. Thus, the order of people and things that defined the time of the Incas was violently undone by the Spanish conquest, which brought forth a new social world through the imposition of a colonial order of people and things. Similarly, the legal undoing of the hacienda period in Ecuador in the mid-20th century upended the social order of the highlands, creating for indigenous people both the need and the opportunity to create the institutions I discuss in this dissertation.

Each *pacha* also has spatial extension. This is most clearly evident when the term is used to distinguish between the human world of everyday experience and other orders of existence. For instance, in sermons and materials prepared by Catholic and Protestant churches, *hawa pacha* refers to the world above, or heaven. The *hawa pacha* stands in contrast to the *uku pacha*, the "inner" world where humans live, inasmuch as it is governed by different rules and relations between people and things. Similarly, folklore traditions found throughout the Andes portray the rugged grasslands and rocky peaks above the reach of human habitation as another social world, where another order of relations prevails. The spatial boundaries of a *pacha* are generally understood to be permeable and uncertain: humans and other beings originating in one pacha interact with those of another *pacha* in zones of contact and exchange that are both productive

and dangerous due to the unpredictability of what rules will govern any given interaction (see Allen 2011).

Within each grand-scale *pacha* are smaller extensions of time and space that are also distinguishable from one another due to the unique order of things that defines each of them. Thus, the socio-natural world of a community during a particular period is simultaneously embedded in the more expansive socio-natural world of a region during the same period and in the encompassing socio-natural order governing the same place over the long duree. The most encompassing *pacha* is the *pachamama*: often equated with the Western idea of Mother Nature, this concept evokes the sum total of all socio-natural relations among humans and non-humans across all of time and space.

In the rest of this chapter, I invoke the temporal aspect of *pacha* in order to discuss the past century in the Ecuadorian highlands as a period of reworlding during which indigenous people have endeavored to shape the order of things that will come to govern their lives. As a historical process, this reworlding has reorganized the socio-natural order of things in ways that are of great consequence to indigenous people. It is the historical framework in which we must understand the indigenous developmentalism that I explore in subsequent chapters.

Patrones Timpu

During the *patrones timpu*[1] (the time of the landowners) in highland Ecuador, the hacienda was a totalizing institution. Víctor Bretón de Zaldívar describes the hacienda regime as thoroughly hegemonic, writing that "up until the mid-twentieth century, a world

[1] In Ecuadorian Kichwa, '*timpu'* has largely replaced '*pacha.'* It is derived from the Spanish '*tiempo'*, a cognate of the English 'time.' However, *timpu* rarely refers to undifferentiated time as the English and Spanish terms do. Rather, it is used to refer to an era, as in the time of the

without haciendas or masters was unimaginable for the ordinary Andean peasantry, for whom this constituted the 'natural order of things', one that had been known 'forever'. To fight against the hacienda as a concept at that time was beyond the pragmatic universe of common sense" (2015a: 94). Bretón's assertion is clearly an overstatement: Tanya Korovkin (2000) shows that indigenous hacienda workers only reluctantly acknowledged the dominance of the *hacendados*, regularly challenged them when they overstepped their authority, and reminded them of their responsibilities through ritualized shows of disobedience. Moreover, Williams writes that in the northern Ecuadorian Andes "many Indian peons were able to work the system of debt peonage to their advantage, freely moving from hacienda to hacienda in search of better working conditions" (2007: 42). Yet Korovkin and Williams would agree with Bretón and other scholars that the hacienda anchored rural society in the Andes from its inception in the sixteenth century until its demise in the twentieth century.

Patricia de la Torre (1989) explains that the hacienda as a productive form was largely "autonomous in the sense that it does not depend on another productive unit and the work force that it possesses is sufficient to satisfy its labor demands" (27). It was also very hierarchical. As Bretón writes, "all parts [of the hacienda hierarchy] were intertwined by ties of mutual dependence." (2015a: 99). However, the hacendados and the laborers who worked for him received quite different benefits from their interdependence.

The hacendado received labor. This included a range of paid workers who "performed activities that required specialization, such as builders, carpenters, weavers, mechanics, tractor drivers, sheep shearers, and wood cutters" (de la Torre 1989: 30). However, most of the labor performed on the hacienda was done by unpaid indigenous workers: "In addition to agricultural and pastoral tasks, workers provided *huasicamia* (domestic labor in the hacienda residence or in

the patron's urban home), *chagracama* (guarding the fields), *cracama* (harvesting), *cuentayo* (care of the flocks in *páramos*, the high Andean meadows), and *faena* (additional tasks performed before the day's regular duties)" (Waters 2007: 122-123). The completion of these tasks was carefully recorded in the hacienda's ledger with a mark called a *raya*.

The labor relations entailed in the management of these tasks were mediated by foremen, called *mayordomos*, who oversaw the day to day work of the hacienda. These foremen were usually mestizos and lived in parish or hacienda centers apart from the indigenous workers whom they oversaw. A second level of intermediaries, called *jipus*,[2] were selected by the hacendado from among the *huasipungueros*, but according to one of Luís Tuaza's informants, "not just anyone could become a jipu, it was a young man, strong, capable of making others obey, feared and respected" (Tuaza 2014: 195):

> The jipu assumed responsibility from the hacendado for overseeing the indigenous working population, made [workers] complete farming tasks, tried to avoid conflicts within the group, walked Indians' plots taking a hat, poncho or any other property in order to demand free labor on the hacienda, he reported to the mayordomo the indigenous people who had disobeyed orders, looked after the moral life of other indigenous people and solved problems related to the abuse of women, domestic disputes and theft. He also appointed the priostes of the festival and San Pedro and strongly defended the interests of the hacendado. In exchange for his work he received a symbolic salary and two horses, had four cattle together with the landowner's cattle and could have up to seventy sheep on the páramo.

Conciertos were indigenous laborers who were tied to the haciendas by "a system of debt peonage in which [they] agreed, supposedly of their own free will, to work on a given hacienda. Their nominal choice was generally constrained by debts, either their own or those their ancestors had contracted" (Albó 1999: 772). In 1918, the *Reforma de la Ley de Jornaleros* (Reform of the Day Laborer Law) officially abolished debt peonage in Ecuador by eliminating

[2] Tuaza (2014) calls them *jipus*, while Bretón (2015) calls them *kipus*. These are Hispanicizations of Kichwa. Guerrero (1991) names them in Spanish: *mayorales*.

heritable debt and debt imprisonment. Albó notes that "With the threat of imprisonment lifted, many Indians ran away from haciendas and plantations to which they owed insoluble debts" (1999: 784), but the law achieved little more than "a rhetorical modernization of Indian exploitation" (1999: 783). As Becker indicates, "the labor relations underlying concertaje continued with the name simply changed to *huasipungo*" (2008: 9). Waters provides a succinct summary of what these indebted laborers received from the hacendado (2007: 123; see also Brown, Brea and Goetz 1988: 150; Guerrero Arias 1993: 39):

> [T]he household received usufruct to a small parcel of usually marginal land sufficient for a small house and subsistence farming. The hacienda's productive resources, including pastures, water, and firewood, were also available, and the household received a nominal wage (in most cases, pennies per day), which was often deducted from outstanding debts or simply not paid at all.

Yanaperos were indigenous workers from neighboring communities who were tied to the haciendas through their work. Politically, these workers were independent from the hacienda regime. Korovkin writes that "they continued to live in their communities, conducting their usual activities and obeying their communal authorities—rather than hacienda managers—for most of the time" (2000: 8; see also Becker 2007: 169). Nonetheless, *yanaperos* relied on the haciendas for pasturage, water, and other natural resources. Like *huasipungueros*, they received access to these resources as a perquisite of their labor on the haciendas.

Huasipungueros and *yanaperos* also received financial support in the form of loans and gifts from the hacendados. *Socorros* (aid or relief) were given out on festival occasions as a demonstration of the hacendado's generosity and care for the workers. These generally consisted of necessities like clothing, agricultural inputs, and perhaps food. *Suplidos* were advances of cash or goods that workers requested from the hacendado in times of need. Patricia de la Torre reports that on the Deán hacienda in Pichincha supplicants generally petitioned for cash rather than

goods, because their work was remunerated in goods; they requested cash "to buy clothing and food; pay debts; pay healers; buy medicine; pay for burials; finance religious festivities like marriages, baptisms and *priostazgos*; and transportation to Quito" (1989: 64). She explains that "when the requested *suplidos* in kind it was to pay healers and the parish priest, for food for the family, and also for seeds" (ibid.); such loans in kind were also accounted for in monetary terms. Ferraro (2006: 32) explains how these loans created the heritable debt that kept indigenous laborers tied to the hacienda:

> Resident peons had personal accounts with the landlord, through which money and goods were given against services and labor, all to be balanced at the end of the year. Rarely was the balance in favor of the peon, who was thus bound to the hacienda until his debt was paid in full. Since wages did not cover basic needs, he was obliged to borrow repeatedly. The spiral of indebtedness did not end with the peon's death, as the debt was inherited by the debtor's family.

Andrés Guerrero (1991: 85) sums up the debt-based labor relations in which indigenous laborers were trapped by the hacienda regime:

> Indigenous people "compromise" to work; they receive an "advance" in money or products and the "*amo*" opens them an "account" in the book of *rayas*; finally, in order to resolve a series of domestic and ritual expenses they make a solicitation and the "caring owner" gives them money or products that are added to their account; wages don't cover balances and, thus, they become perennial debtors.

Thus, under the hacienda regime, labor completed and debts incurred were two faces of the same relationship. This was literally true in the book of *rayas*, as Guerrero points out: "on one sheet distributions are noted and, on the opposite, the work days fulfilled. Both sides record the two essential flows of exchange that define, in economic terms, relations between *conciertos* and the *patrón*" (1991: 216). The expression of labor and debt relations in monetary terms served instrumental purposes: Guerrero indicates that the hacienda's account book was "an instrument

for the maintenance of labor discipline," "an instrument of control of the so-called servants," and "a document recognized by the juridical codes of the state" (1991: 102).

20th-Century Reforms

In 1908, properties held by Catholic religious orders were expropriated by the Ecuadorian state and transferred to Asistencia Social, a public institution created to finance services to the urban poor (Becker 2007: 162; Martínez Novo 2004: 243-244; Weismantel 1998: 62-65). Asistencia Social rented the haciendas it controlled to absentee landlords who left the responsibilities of day to day management to heavy-handed mestizo mayordomos with a "desire to raise their class standing through rigorous implementation of their employers' desires" (Becker 2007: 162). Consequently, Baltazar Umajinga concludes, "The transfer [of authority] to Asistencia Social did not yield any benefit to the poor community, which simply had been calmed down, so that it continues worse than before" (1995: 253). Martínez Novo concurs that "labor conditions were often harsher on public haciendas" (2013: 175), presumably because workers did not feel obliged by custom to provide unpaid services to renter hacendados and were therefore exploited by harsher means (see Becker 2007: 168-169). "Weapons of the weak" (Scott 1985) were regularly deployed against the hacienda regime, but Tanya Korovkin (2000) points out that they remained largely hidden.

Formally organized indigenous resistance, assisted by non-indigenous organizations, began to mount throughout the Ecuadorian Andes in the 1920s (Becker 2008; 2012). This period saw the rapid development of indigenous people's collective legal savvy. Sattar (2007: 23) writes:

> A close reading of archival documents reveals that even as Indians embraced their colonial-appointed identity as the "miserable race" and legal minors, they were actually

> far from minors in their shrewd use of state laws and legislative procedures. They exploited the state's fragmentation and internal contradictions and often successfully used the gaps between the local and central instances of the state in their struggles to defend their lands, their communities, and their vision of Indian-state relations.

The *Ley de Comunas*, passed in 1937, "opened the possibility for a new degree of political and economic autonomy to free indigenous communities, albeit within an emerging corporatist state structure" (Lucero 2008: 70). This law allowed communities of 50 or more people to establish legally recognized *comunas*, which are led by elected councils (called *cabildos* or *juntas comunales*), and are empowered to manage collective resources. Lucero shows that in enacting the law, "the state did not intend to provide a permanent legal basis for indigenous community building" but rather to draw free indigenous communities into the state by setting them "on the path to the more rational form of organization and production, the cooperative" (Lucero 2008: 70). Indeed, Becker argues that leaders in Cayambe chose not to form *comunas* because they "understood the law's intent to extend state structures into traditional communities with an ultimate goal of paternalistically manipulating local affairs" (1999: 535). However, Zamosc (1995) shows that the *comuna* was the preferred form for new organizations in predominantly indigenous regions of Ecuador from the 1950s until the mid-1980s.

Around mid-century, the "banana boom" created increased demand for labor on Ecuador's coastal plantations, while the increasing modernization of production on highland haciendas decreased the demand for labor in that region (Weiss 1985). Indeed, Jorge Trujillo (1986) argues that the modernization of production "was the fundamental factor that ultimately determined the processes of abolition of traditional forms of payment in work, mainly the '*concertaje*'" (153). In the process of reducing their conscripted workforces, modernizing hacendados began to transfer plots to former *huasipungueros*, but like the landholdings of already-existing yanaperos, these plots were insufficient to support large families without access

to the additional resources that the hacienda regime had provided to workers. Having lost such access, highland indigenous households began to send young men to work seasonally on coastal plantations, such that "wage-based and traditional agrarian systems not only coexisted at that time, they also 'articulated' in a variety of ways through their productive and reproductive structures" (Weiss 1985: 481).

The huasipungo system that underwrote the hacienda regime was formally abolished by the 1964 Agrarian Reform Law, but the law was slow to take effect and regularly circumvented by large land holders who avoided expropriation "by improving production techniques, cultivating more land, and abolishing feudalistic tenancy systems; but some simply divided land among family members to achieve holding levels below that requiring expropriation" (Brown, Brea and Goetz 1988: 151). Former huasipungueros who received land titles under the reform fared no better than those who had received lands previously, because they were generally allotted only small plots of undesirable and unproductive land.

Ultimately, agrarian reform actually made life harder for many who had previously been tied to the haciendas. Brown, Brea and Goetz (1988: 152) explain:

> More generally, agrarian reform worsened the position of peasant agriculturalists in several ways. First, abolition of the huasipungo voided their right to gather wood and graze cattle on haciendas, and landowners were no longer compelled to assist in times of need. Second, many peasants were given land less fertile than that they previously cultivated. Third, minifundios became even smaller, decreasing on average from 1.61 hectares in 1954 to 1.45 in 1974. Fourth, productivity of small farms stagnated or declined due to increasing population pressure, deteriorating soil quality, and macroeconomic/policy conditions that adversely affected domestic agriculturalists.

Former hacienda laborers also lost access to the *suplidos* and *socorros* that they had received from the hacendado. Gabriel Many writes that in Salasaca "from 1955 to 1980, moneylenders were almost the only sources of credit available and those who took out loans had to have a mestizo acquaintance from neighboring towns in order to request money" (2012: 63). Mary Weismantel (1998: 74) sums up the

situation:

> The death of the hacienda brought an end to many of the structures that had enabled hacienda peons to satisfy their needs without cash. Yet they were also left without the wherewithal to enter the cash economy fully. They have neither capital to invest nor a market for their goods that would enable them to turn a profit from their labor.

In the end, according to Leon Zamosc, while the reform "eliminate[d] precapitalist relations of production" it also "left most of the Sierra peasants in conditions of economic insufficiency, leading to their need to seek supplementary incomes in the wage-labor market" (1989: 23). In fact, Veronica Davidov notes of the Intag valley in northern Ecuador, "the reform aggravated existing inequalities in the region. Few in the area were educated about the reform's consequent entitlements, and many indigenous farmers and poor *colonos* either did not receive lands at all, or only received small patches of land without access to water" (2013: 495).

Yet according to Meisch, "Even if the land reform was imperfect, the law gave people important freedom. Abolishing *huasipungo* meant that people had the freedom to farm their own land, or sell it or rent it out and try life in the city, as well as freedom to go to school, to open a small shop in the front of the house, to become an artisan, to get an education, and to travel" (1992: 56-57). What is certain is that indigenous people found themselves facing an unfamiliar socio-economic reality.

The Post-Reform Social World

With the end of the *patrones timpu*, indigenous people in highland Ecuador found themselves navigating a socioeconomic system that made little space for them. Land scarcity has caused very many families throughout the region to send one or more members of their households to look for wage labor away from home. Vintimilla and Ruiz Ballestros (2009: 8) write:

> What happened is that the peasants had to develop subsistence strategies that combined agriculture in the small family plot and household craftwork with the migratory wage labor of some family members in urban centers — mainly in activities like construction, domestic service, itinerant sales — or as seasonal migrants on sugar, coffee or cacao plantations on the coast.

As Weiss (1985) observed, rural-to-urban migrants are typically young, unmarried males (but see Swanson [2010]). Bretón writes that "the come and go nature of these migratory flows facilitated the maintenance of ties (affective, social, symbolic and economic) with communities of origin, elements which, in turn, fed back into the base of local identities" (2012: 98). As an adaptive economic strategy, the exploitation of farflung economic niches in order to maintain rural communities echoes very old Andean livelihood patterns, but this continuity alone was not enough to counteract the pernicious individual and collective consequences of economic marginalization (Colloredo-Mansfeld 2003). Weismantel (1998) documents the substantial stress that migration put on the social fabric of indigenous communities, and Sanchez Parga (2013) identifies a process of 'de-communalization' and a surge of individualism in indigenous communities.

In the southern provinces of Azuay and Cañar, many households now send migrant workers to the United States (Kyle 2000; Miles 2004; Pribilsky 2007). Otavaleño Kichwas from Imbabura Province in the north have created an international network of handicraft salesmen and folkloric musicians (Atienza de Frutos 2009; Meisch 2002). These international flows have even more profound economic and social consequences (both positive and negative) for indigenous migrant-sending communities.

Indigenous people have responded to their economic dislocation in the post-reform era with concerted, long-term efforts to create individual opportunities for themselves and to collectively influence the terms by which the emerging order of things would be organized. As

Baltazar Umajinga writes, “Our families fought hard to liberate themselves from the hacienda, desiring independence from the *patrones* in order to choose their own destiny” (1995: 255).

Chapter 2 explores how individual efforts to pursue post-agrarian livelihoods are frustrated by Kichwa people’s ongoing marginalization and precarity within the national economy. This frustration has prompted many groups of young laborers to band together in an effort to improve their lot through the collective creation and management of shared economic resources. Key to their efforts was the creation of *asociaciones*, which became the preferred form of indigenous institution in the 1980s (Zamosc 1995). Like *comunas*, legally-recognized peasant communities, *asociaciones* mediate their members’ citizenship by providing a means to access agents and institutions of the state and by performing certain functions that the state fails to perform itself (compare Lazar 2008). However, as Colloredo-Mansfeld indicates, “Forming associations—becoming *socios* (partners) rather than *comuneros* (peasant community members)—did not require shared land holdings and afforded more flexibility” (2009: 84). As such, associations have provided a means of pursuing culturally-meaningful, locally-responsive community development in indigenous communities.

In many communities, associations exist alongside *comunas*. Both institutional forms employ many of the same tools of governance and resource management that were deployed by hacendados during the *patrones timpu*. In particular, they exert authority by developing and maintaining resources to which their members gain access by completing *rayas*. However, within these new institutions the administrator and beneficiary of indigenous labor is the same collective of indigenous workers who perform the labor. The development of one such institution is the subject of chapter 3.

Associations and related forms of indigenous grassroots institution have sometimes been able to provide limited financial assistance to their members. For instance, the community-based tourism organization discussed in chapter 3 has used revenue from entrance gate fees to provide assistance with school fees and emergency health bills (see also Colloredo, et al. 2018). However, the resources available to such organizations are rarely plentiful enough or stable enough to respond to all of the financial needs of their members.

Ferraro (2004; 2006) reports that in the parish of Olmedo (Pichincha Province), milk buyers grant *suplidos* to their suppliers. Interestingly, she also found that "the money they have to pay back in this transaction is never defined as a *deuda* [debt]" (2004: 82). Several characteristics distinguish *deudas* from *suplidos*. First, "*deuda*" always refers to a loan in money, not in kind. Further, *deudas* carry interest. Most significantly, "unlike other more 'traditional' loans of money usually take place with formal outside institutions that belong to the sphere of the state. These are institutions that have a legal apparatus that regulates both the transactions and the relationship between the borrower and the lender" (2004: 83).

What Ferraro's informants call *deudas* have been made available to indigenous people by a variety of governmental and non-governmental institutions. However, as Gabriel Many writes, "These days, the State and international institutions proclaim that the private sector, through microfinance, is the solution for reducing poverty and rousing hope in people who have lost" (2012: 12). In recent years, a surge in indigenous savings and credit cooperatives has flooded into this niche; they are the subject of chapter 7.

Pachakutik?

Indigenous institutions have stepped in to meet many of the needs that the dissolution of

the hacienda regime produced. *Comunas* and associations redirect indigenous labor toward the collective development of common resources, while savings and credit cooperatives extend financial services to "unbanked" indigenous people. Their efforts have provided a basis upon which to envision how Ecuadorian society might be re-founded through a recommitment to ancestral principles and practices, the subject of chapter 4. In the process, they have sought to sow the seeds of a new order of things with the potential to define the here and now of an emergent *pacha* such that indigenous people and indigenous practices find a place at the center of Ecuadorian society.

2. Llankana: Inventing Kichwa Livelihoods

The emerald-green lake that glitters serenely within the caldera of the volcano Quilotoa is one of the crown jewels of Ecuador's tourist circuit. On a typical day during during my fieldwork in the Kichwa settlement of Quilotoa (so-named because it is perched atop the western slope of the volcano), a few dozen national and international tourists would visit in order to enjoy the lake and perhaps hike the 15 kilometer trail around the rim of the caldera. On national holidays, many hundreds of Ecuadorian urbanite day-trippers flooded past the tollbooth at the edge of the community. Altogether, some 90,000 tourists passed through Quilotoa in 2014.

Tourists' access to the lake and locals' access to tourists are both mediated by the Centro de Turismo Comunitario Laguna Verde Quilotoa (CTC Quilotoa — Green Lake Quilotoa Center for Community Tourism). The CTC Quilotoa manages upkeep of the communal parking lot, the public outlook area, the path to the lake, and a handicrafts gallery where tourists may buy souvenirs of their visit. It provides information services at a booth adjacent to the path, charges admission at a gateway that crosses the road entering the community, rents kayaks to tourists who wish to go out for a paddle on the lake, and oversees the sale of horse rides from the lakeshore up the steep path out of the caldera. It also manages ventures that compete directly with the private businesses of its own members: a communal restaurant and two communal hotels. Over the years, the CTC Quilotoa has attracted millions of dollars worth of administrative, technical, and infrastructural assistance from both governmental and non-governmental agencies.

Yet it was not always so. A generation ago, the site was no more than a communal sheep pasture. "It was all grass," Agustín Vega told me, recalling that he used to walk through the area

to get to school when he was a child. He explained that there weren't may people living nearby, because the strong wind and frequent cold rain made the area inhospitable. For those same reasons, only the most adventuresome tourists visited the lake. Agustín recalled that in the winter the packed-dirt road used to get so bad that the few tourists who reached the site would get their cars buried in mud.

To make matters worse for the tourists, they often did not receive a very warm welcome from local residents. Agustín remembered, "When I saw the tourists I was afraid, because people used to say that the tourists would carry you off and make sausages." Another member of the CTC Quilotoa recalled that the old people used to tell children that the tourists were spirits and that children should hide in the tall grasses if they ever saw a tourist approach. It wasn't just that locals were afraid of strangely attired outsiders; some were openly hostile toward backpackers. One of the first men to welcome the tourists explained to María Belén Noroña (2014: 57):

> At that time it was difficult for 'white' people to enter or pass through indigenous communities. He told about how people feared tall white men with beards. He remembered that 'Whites made the work contracts on the haciendas and mistreated them [the indigenous workers]; so people didn't like anyone to come in [to the community].' For these reasons, the indigenous population showed a lot of hostility to the visitors, throwing rocks at the cars that came near and closing the roads.

Today, the people who live and work in Quilotoa's tourism center are welcoming toward tourists. Parents explicitly instruct their children to be friendly toward tourists. However, they warn backpackers who do not hire a local trail guide that people in neighboring communities may not restrain persistent children who beg for money or aggressive dogs that attack strangers.

Quilotoa's transformation from a physically and socially hostile destination for only the most adventurous trekkers into a buzzing tourist hub that welcomes all comers has been shaped by the continuous interplay between individualistic self-starterism and collective management. The next chapter will discuss the tools of governance and resource management practiced by the

CTC Quilotoa and its previous incarnations. This chapter explores the individual efforts of Quilotoans to find work prior to the formation of the CTC Quilotoa's predecessor institution and the Kichwa individualism that persists within the organization today.

Origins

From the mid-seventeenth century until the mid-twentieth century, the volcano Quilotoa marked the western boundary of the Zumbahua hacienda. The hacienda was owned by the Augustinian order from the 1630s until 1908, when the *Ley de Beneficencia* expropriated it along with other ecclesiastical estates (Weismantel 1998: 62-65). Then, a state agency called Asistencia Social rented Zumbahua to a series of absentee landlords until the 1964 Agrarian Reform, after which the 11,000 hectare hacienda was divided into the *comunas* of Zumbahua and Cocha and its former peons gained control of small private plots. The upper slopes of Quilotoa fell under the communal jurisdiction of Cocha.

In the wake of the agrarian reform, the area faced a severe land shortage. Weismantel reported in the 1980s that "most residents consider the lack of adequate farmland to be one of the most pressing problems they face" (1998: 40). Hess (1997) described a situation that had only worsened by the 1990s, because the small plots granted under the reform had been divided into even smaller units as they were passed down to younger generations and the productivity of the land had been exhausted by intensive cultivation. In his analysis of a national statistical survey carried out in 1995, Sánchez Parga found that the area including Zumbahua and neighboring parishes "constitutes the poorest region in all of the Ecuadorian highlands" (2002: 16). That same year, Baltazar Umajinga wrote,

> Today, the lack of work and the reduction of subsistence sites, among other things, obliges one to leave in search of sources of work, whether as a porter, sweeper, laborer,

> or kitchen worker. It is mainly young people who go to the cities. But when they return to their homes, though they bring some money, they also bring other ideas: they appear to be mestizos, which is a consequence of acculturation.
>
> Migration is caused by the scarcity and low quality of our lands. As an aggravating circumstance, our land is increasingly dying due to the use of chemicals. In addition, our produce (onions, potatoes, etc.) [sell for] extremely low prices, while supplies are ever higher [in price]. That's the reason for our poverty. (1995: 264)

In 2002, a Salesian missionary told Martínez Novo that, given the scarcity of arable land and the quality of what land remained accessible, it was "almost a miracle" that any agriculture was still practiced in the area (2004: 248).

Poverty and landlessness put increasing pressure on young people to leave their communities in search of wage labor in the city or on the coast. Sánchez Parga (2002: 18) identified a marked population decline in the region during the 1980s, and Weismantel (1998) described how young men's absence from their communities during that period contributed to the fraying of social ties.

Given their limited resources, community leaders had few options when they sought to stem the flow of young people out of their natal communities. Thus, in the early 1990s the elected council of Cocha formalized the encroachments onto communal land that had been taking place since the 1980s. Households that had already established a presence along the rim of the Quilotoa volcano were recognized and the remaining pasture was parceled out to recently married couples. The low productivity and small size of these plots forced many of these couples to rent or sell their land in order to pursue their livelihoods elsewhere. However, a few enterprising settlers who had begun to engage the fledgling tourist economy bought up the now-private plots and turned their ownership to their economic advantage by asserting control over the site. Among them were José Guamangate and Humberto Latacunga, whose stories form the backbone of this chapter.

The Innovator

To make sense of the divergent trajectories that José and Humberto have followed in their efforts to create opportunities through tourism, we must first consider the story of Julio Toaquiza of Tigua, for it was his innovative livelihood that made José and Humberto's work possible. Julio is widely credited with inventing a colorful genre of tourist-oriented painting by spearheading the adaptation of traditional materials and styles of folk art in the 1970s (but see Bonaldi 2010: 24-25).

Julio was born on the Rumichaca hacienda (a neighbor of Zumbahua), where he began his working life as a peon when he was 8 years old (Colloredo-Mansfeld 2009: 37). When the Agrarian Reform of 1964 dismantled the hacienda without providing former peons with the resources to create their own rural livelihoods, Julio joined the flow of circular labor migration between rural indigenous communities in the highlands and the cities and plantations of the coast. As he told his story to Colloredo-Mansfeld (2009: 37) some thirty years later, Julio first found work at a sugarcane mill in Quevedo, then he went home to visit his mother for All Souls Day. Next, he went to Guayaquil, where he worked in a Chinese restaurant. Then, "He quit and returned to help his mother in Tigua, planning to get back to Quevedo where he had a lead on a job in a lumberyard" (2009: 37).

"Then I fell in love," Julio told Colloredo-Mansfeld. Julio married Maria Francisca Ugsha when he was fifteen. They planned to farm some land in Tigua owned by their parents, but a crop failure forced them to leave home again. They went to Quevedo, where they opened a restaurant that served other migrant workers. Francisca ran the restaurant while Julio worked in the lumberyard. "At the time, they had one son, Alfredo, who was a year old," Julio told

Colloredo-Mansfeld; “partly out of concern for him, they gave up their work in Quevedo, returned to Tigua, and tried to raise sheep” (2009: 37-38).

As Jean Colvin writes, “During this period, there was a growing interest in ethnographic art” (2004: 25-26). Julio and his brothers began buying items of Kichwa material culture to sell to these dealers. Bonaldi reports that they also formed a band called “Conjunto Quilotoa” (2010: 21). However, “When wool, lambs, and antiques failed to bring a return, Julio returned to Quevedo to work in the lumberyard, stacking heavy poles in the back of the trucks” (Colloredo-Mansfeld 2009: 38). He lost this job after an accident in which he was severely injured, so he returned to Tigua once again.

“Despairing over years of wasted effort and his battered body,” Julio sought out a shaman among the Tsachila, a coastal indigenous group that is renowned among highland healers for their great power (Colloredo-Mansfeld 2009: 38). As he treated him, the shaman prophesized to Julio that “you will have work. Before, you suffered. You will now have your own work. You will not have to go around suffering like you have” (Colloredo-Mansfeld 2009: 38). This new work, the shaman said, would come to Julio in a dream. As Julio later told Colloredo-Mansfeld, “Not long after returning to Tigua he did indeed dream powerfully one night” (2009: 28).

Shortly thereafter, Olga Fisch saw Julio playing a drum during the Corpus Christi celebrations in Pujili and immediately offered to buy it. According to the story that Julio told to Colloredo-Mansfeld (2009: 38-39), he had painted this drum himself after having seen himself do so in his prophetic dream. Bonaldi (2010: 22) has it that Julio had purchased the drum in order to participate in the festivities, and that he was inspired to learn to paint by the interest shown by Fisch and other handicraft traders. In any case, Julio soon shifted his efforts from reselling ethnographic artifacts to creating original artwork: he transformed the circular head of

the traditional Corpus Christi drum into a square canvas and began to elaborate the decorative themes that traditionally decorated the drums. Colvin explains, "There are various versions of how the change from painting on the drum head to a flat frame occurred," yet most of these accounts attribute the shift to a suggestion made to Julio by Olga Fisch (2004: 27).

Julio shared his art with his brothers and then they shared it with other family members. Innovations in the techniques, styles, and subject matter that would come to characterize the genre proliferated as the Toaquiza brothers then shared their art with other Tigua residents. By the close of the 1970s, Julio and his fellow Tigua painters were being featured in exhibitions mounted by collectors and gallery owners in Ecuador and abroad.

Julio never got rich from his artistic innovations. Yet his efforts did allow him to create the sustainable rural life that he wanted for himself and his family. Furthermore, Colloredo-Mansfeld writes, "As he passed on his painting techniques to others, art became a trade and a new reservoir of community wealth" (2009: 32). Yet, as Colvin points out, "Although the Toaquizas were instrumental in promoting art to the benefit of all the artists, they themselves also enjoyed the primary advantages. Not surprisingly, given the already fierce competition, there was considerable envy and resentment among the other artists" (2004: 136). Such envy and resentment have also haunted José Guamangate as he has followed in Julio's footsteps.

The Hustler

José Guamangate was born into a poor family in Ponce, a collection of Kichwa settlements scattered around the southeast side of the Volcano Quilotoa. He worked with his family at agricultural tasks, but he admits that he never gained much skill in such things. In fact, his wife's mother once warned her daughter against marrying him, asking, "How will he live if

he doesn't know how to work in agriculture? He doesn't even know how to load a quintal of potatoes onto a burro."

José was still very young when his father became ill. The family couldn't afford his treatment, so José went to the coast with a friend who sold agricultural products and had a contact that would help them there. José took some onions to sell and then brought his earnings home to his mother. His father had been treated by traditional methods involving guinea pig innards, but he urgently needed medical attention. He got better with medicine purchased in part with the money José had brought home from the coast, but then the older man was caught in the rain and became sick again. So, José returned to the coast. This time, he worked caring for hogs. He ate fish for the first time and had several adventures with snakes. He returned home once again.

Then, José's uncle told him that he would need to learn how to be a porter in the market in Quito. José was wary of this advice: he dreaded that he would get lost in the unfamiliar urban environment. Still, he reluctantly consented and traveled to the city with his uncle. He worked hard but his efforts were largely fruitless. He remembered, "I scarcely found loads [to carry]; all day I would find only enough [to pay] for food."

José disliked working as a porter, so he jumped at the chance to go with a young woman who worked at the hostel where they were staying. The young woman told him, "Let's go so you can look after my mother." José responded, "Okay, I can go." He learned a lot with that family. "I lived with that family a long time. I grew up there," José reflected. The patriarch of the family was a sergeant in the military, who was "very, very rough and very racist." "He didn't mistreat me," José explained, "but he never wanted to talk to me." The sergeant's wife, on the other hand, "was a very, very good person and so was the daughter." They sent him to evening classes at a

school in a southern neighborhood of Quito, where he completed the first four years of basic education. He also gained much practical knowledge: “I learned how to do many things. I learned how to cook, I learned how to iron, I learned how to mop rooms. I also learned how to feed hens and I also got to know the city.” “It was very good,” José said of this experience, but he left after the family’s dog attacked him, sending him to the hospital.

“Then I had to look for another place to work,” José remembered. For 5 years, he worked for a family that owned a fleet of buses. The owners used to tell him that he needed to get stronger so he could lift bus tires. “Get up and fix that tire”, they would command, but he couldn’t do so. “Sometimes I cried,” he said, “and at times I missed my mother a lot and I came back home to spend time with my mother.” However, he couldn’t ask the owners for time off, because they used to discriminate against him, so he had to get the bus driver with whom he was working to lie for him, telling the owners that he was sick. “But I also learned,” José said. He learned how to drive and repair the vehicles and he was able to see much more of the country, but he did not have the opportunity to continue his formal education. “Thanks to God, with my intelligence, I’ve had to self-prepare,” he explained, “I have many experiences, much knowledge from self-preparation and training.”

José was in three accidents while he was working for the bus company. Once, on the trip between Riobamba and Ambato, two people died in an accident. Another time, at about 10 o’clock at night in Ibarra, the bus rolled off the road as the driver was relieving himself and young José was looking for a stone to block the tire. Also in Ibarra, the bus once collided with a car, killing two people. This time, the police wanted to take José to jail, but he told them that he was just the ticket taker, “I don’t have anything to do with it.”

"Then I changed, thanks to God," José recalled. "When I married my wife Maria Delfina Latacunga, we had two children," José told me, "and for painting I had to give away my daughter." It is common for children to circulate among Kichwa households, strengthening the kinship bonds that José required in order to gain access to the techniques developed by the painters of Tigua (see Weismantel 1995). Indeed, several of the youngsters that have grown up in José's own household have come from other families. Nonetheless, he still feels guilty about sending his daughter away.

"So then I learned in Tigua with my brother-in-law Francisco Toaquiza, may he rest in peace," José explained. However, Francisco didn't teach him everything. The artists of Tigua are very secretive, José once told me when I asked him why he had been acting strangely around a prominent Tigua painter. I learned that he had developed the habit of hiding his identity whenever he interacted with a Tigua painter. José reasoned that when Tiguans don't know he is a painter, they are less guarded with information that only a painter would find significant.

In the early days, José and Delfina lived with her parents. Delfina's stepfather Jorge Latacunga had begun working with tourists, offering his services as a trail guide and selling snacks out of a small shop. Working by candlelight, José produced large quantities of paintings and masks to sell to these tourists. Yet there were not many tourists in those days, so José sent his art to galleries in Quito and he would leave for two weeks at a time to seek work in construction.

Then José began working with Humberto Latacunga, who said to him, "Josico, teach me to paint." José remembers that he responded, "Okay, no problem. I can teach you to paint. The two of us will practice together." Then the tourists began to arrive "little by little by little." Soon,

José's brother-in-law Andrés Latacunga (married to Delfina's sister) joined José and Humberto as Quilotoa's third painter.

José built his family a small house on the property he acquired when the *comuna* authorities divided up the land. He remembers that immediately following the designation of plots, artifice proliferated as everyone tried to maximize their advantage. He took part in the chicanery himself, petitioning the *comuna* for more land, getting another man to agree to inaccurate boundaries between their plots, and buying plots on the cheap from those who needed cash more than they needed land.

When tourists arrived, José would hurry up to the rim of the volcano with his paintings and display them in the area where most of the CTC Quilotoa's communal buildings now stand. He also began seeking out contacts with outsiders who could help him financially. For instance, a hotel owner from Otavalo once invited José and Humberto to come and do their painting in the hotel. They earned enough money that they were both able to build new houses. José later secured a similar offer from a hotel owner in Cuenca. Later, he also developed a close relationship with a German tour agency in Quito, which coordinates with him whenever it sends a group to Quilotoa, and which recruited him to be the local contact for a program that gives back by providing supplies to schools in the communities near Quilotoa.

José recalls that this was the point when other people started saying, "No, José shouldn't take advantage [of tourism] alone, he has to share with the community and work with the people." A teacher from Niño Rumi, a nearby school, asked him if he would teach others to paint, but José responded, "No, because this is my profession." The teacher told him that if he didn't want to teach, the school would have to bring in other painters to teach the students.

According to José, the teacher announced, "You stay here, Andrés Latacunga, Humberto Latacunga. Stay here José Guamangate Iza. Stay here, Jorge Latacunga, with your shop."

The students at Niño Rumu did, indeed, develop their own painting skills, but following José's refusal to teach the students himself, he says the people of the community "were left divided." José did teach a few people who approached him individually, saying that his skills were better, but ultimately it was the group that formed at Niño Rumi that established the precursor to the CTC Quilotoa, and it was one of the former students who secured funding to build the first communal meeting hall (see Chapter 3). Before long, José and his small group were absorbed into the organization.

José has worked on behalf of the organization over the years. For instance, he feels that he is ultimately responsible for making possible the close relationship between the people of Quilotoa and the Catholic development organization Maquita Cushunchic—Comercializando como Hermanos (MCCH). However, José has mostly worked for himself and his family, and he believes he is right in doing so. Yet he also believes that his personal efforts have created opportunities for others in the community. "My endeavor has also been to support the *compañeros*, to share painting," he said.

José actively cultivates relationships with foreigners with resources that might help him get ahead, yet his approach to cultivating these relationships has sometimes caused problems with other members of the CTC Quilotoa. I asked him about these experiences one afternoon after observing an uncomfortable interaction with a group of U.S. college students. He told me that these students were from a university that has sent students many times over the years. One of the former groups had offered to trade services for lodging rather than pay for space in one of José's buildings. They were going to paint the building and provide a door for a doorway on the

second floor. He said they were also going to leave a heater and some other things that they had brought. But in the end, José says he received nothing from the deal and lost a lot of money, because the students had not understood what was private property and what was communal; they had contributed to the community but they had not done anything to compensate the services that his family had provided. As far as the students are concerned, the past is the past, José told me. Yet this experience was one of the reasons that he had decided he needed to work for himself and his family rather than for the community.

He went on to tell about three other instances of conflicts he had had with the community. First, José told me about an American man who once came to Quilotoa offering to help the community build a high school. Part of the plan was to build three *albergas*, one of which the American wanted to give to José because he had been so helpful and because he was in so much need. At first, José didn't understand what an *alberga* was, but then he found out that it is a hostel. The people of the community were so outraged by the idea that José would get so much out of the deal that they prevented the plan from happening at all. Two of them went so far as to hire a lawyer and try to get the money from the American even after the project had been abandoned. According to José, the American told the community that he could give his money to whomever he wished, but the project was never completed. José concluded this story by saying that the American continues to help him sell his art in the city of Cuenca, but the American has declared he will never work with the community even though many community members still seek him out to ask for assistance.

Then, José told me about a German man who initially tried to work with a man from Tigua but then decided to work exclusively with José instead. In this case, the foreigner had specific business interests, because he represented a tour agency, so he needed to identify a

reliable person with whom to work directly. However, he also arranged for the company to give back to the community by donating school supplies to students in communities near Quilotoa and by providing a means for university students from Quito to volunteer in the schools. José treats his involvement with the company's charitable activities as a job and feels he should be compensated for his work. However, others in Quilotoa have accused him of benefitting unfairly from activities that ought to be managed by the CTC Quilotoa.

Finally, Jose told me about a project he arranged with a Japanese organization a long time ago when he was serving as an elected leader in the organization. The organization arranged to send large quantities of handicrafts abroad and even mount an exhibition in Japan. José also secured a loan from the organization for agricultural improvements and for a tractor that would be shared by the community. Yet in the end, José explained, they were never able to receive that money because of the jealousies and bickering amongst the people of the organization. José never saw a cent of that money, he said.

Several themes that emerge from these stories shed light on Kichwa individualism. First, foreigners always seem to want to work with the community as a whole, but in José's stories, it always turns out to be impossible to do so. There are those like the American and the German who discover that it is impossible to work with the organization and swear that they never will again, deciding instead to work through an individual like José. And there are those like the American university students who misunderstand and think that they are working with the community as a whole when in fact they are taking advantage of an individual. In other words, foreigners arrive unprepared to recognize or deal with Kichwa individualism.

The second theme is José's cultivation of close relationships with outsiders. The American and the German who appear in these stories are both *padrinos* to José's children (as am

I), and José relies on them to stabilize his financial situation. Ongoing projects are a part of this stability, but José also seeks out his *compadres* when he needs a personal loan. Similar relationships are central to the work histories of Julio Toaquiza and Humberto Latacunga. Indeed, the cultivation of relationships with foreigners is also a key component of Kichwa approaches to collective management, as I explore in the next chapter.

Finally, José's stories illustrate the complicated balance that he maintains between his desire to help his community and his resolve to pursue his own economic interests. In the end, José doesn't see the benefit in working for projects like those mounted by his German and Japanese contacts if he doesn't get anything in return. He feels that he needs to be compensated for his efforts. When he works with volunteers and organizations, he sees it as a kind of investment: he will receive something in the future as a result of being helpful with people now. Yet he still wants to be paid (even if indirectly) for his work.

José Guamangate's approach to work is, in many respects, similar to the attitude embraced by the Martiniquais *débrouillard.* Katherine Browne (2004) explains how this Caribbean figure, often rendered as *débouya* in the French creole of Martinique, differs from the *débrouillard* of metropolitan France. In both contexts, the *débrouillard* is known to be a resourceful self-starter. However, Browne finds that in Martinique, the term labels a person who is crafty, clever, and wily or cunning (2004: 103). As Browne's informants explained, it is a compliment to be called a *débrouillard* in Martinique even though the label implies that the person being labeled is working off the books or conducting business in the black market (2004: 102). Indeed, those who label themselves *débrouillards* in Martinique take pride in their illicit cunning, an attitude that Browne traces back to the survival strategies employed by slaves. To the best of my knowledge, none of the schemes in which José has been involved over the years

have been illegal. However, like the *débrouillard*, he has relied heavily on his cunning to identify and pursue opportunities in Ecuador's informal economy and along the margins of its formal economy.

The Businessman

When Humberto Latacunga and his wife first moved to the upper slopes of the Volcano Quilotoa, they dedicated themselves to agriculture. In 2015, he remembered:

> My wife already had Dorita, who is the oldest daughter. And with her we began to live here. It was sad, no? To come here. And obviously in the evening and the afternoon people came up from further down to play volleyball or do community-type work with horses. In that time there was no painting. And it was very hard to live at this altitude of almost 3,900 meters. And my wife kept crying because high up here there are birds that cry and whistle and it's very sad.

Humberto's first engaged with tourism through José. He explained, "José's wife is my aunt. They helped us and we learned to paint. And then in came Andrés. We were three. And after that we were selling for three or four years just the three of us." Later, Humberto met a Frenchman who was associated with a university in Quito. This man counseled him, "Build yourself a hostel, an inn." Humberto was intrigued. "Then we built it," he told me, "and that was about 20 years ago, something like that, that we started with tourism hospitality."

Today, Humberto owns a large hotel complex and is acknowledged as patriarch of the wealthiest family in Quilotoa. However, the hotel business requires capitalization, and Humberto discovered that "with only one person's work, you can't survive." He and his family have taken out several large loans in order to expand and improve their business, and in order to set up their daughter Dorita with a well-appointed restaurant of her own. When I interviewed Humberto in 2015, he had recently finished a major project to expand his family's hotel complex and was $220,000 in debt.

Humberto had reservations about borrowing so much money, but he explained that "I didn't go into debt for this building in order to play around [*patear*] but rather in order to earn." He reasoned that one does not get ahead if one does not improve and expand the services that one offers, and he critiqued others in the community for not following his example. Indeed, Humberto sees his entrepreneurialism as a resource for the community: the tourists who stay in his hotel also spend money on horse rides and guides. "All of that is of the community, and I am in the community," he said. Contrasting himself with the hoteliers of nearby Chugchilán, whom he characterizes as monopolistic in their control of the tourist trade, Humberto declared, "I am enlarging the community, too."

One might expect a businessman like Humberto to be an ideal client for the Kichwa-run savings and credit cooperatives discussed in chapter 7, but he explains that this is not the case. "Personally, I don't like to work with the cooperatives," he said. In the first place, the cooperatives do not have large enough reserves to lend as much money as Humberto needs to borrow. Furthermore, at the state development bank, "they're forthright and the rates are very low and they lend at 10.7 percent per year. That's very low. However in the cooperative they say like 15 or 16 [percent], but that's not real. They're lending at 20 to 30 [percent per year]."

Like Julio and José, Humberto seeks out contacts with foreigners in order to advance his livelihood. For example, he credits a Frenchman with the idea to build his hotel. However, Humberto generally seeks to draw foreigners into his own plans rather than looking to them for opportunities. For instance, at the end of my first extended stay in Quilotoa in 2012, Humberto offered me the opportunity to invest in the hotel expansions he was then planning. In 2015, he enlisted my help with improving his online presence. I could not invest in the hotel, and I do not know if Humberto found other private investors. However, his online promotion strategy seems

to have worked well: as of early 2017, my English translation of the hotel's private webpage remains accessible, and more than 100,000 people have viewed the photos of the hotel that I posted to Google Maps via the Google's "Local Guides" program.

Humberto's approach to his work is reflective of the entrepreneurialism sought by transnational development agencies (Elyachar 2005) and taught in more and more national school curricula (Honeyman 2016). He is among "the rural poor [who] can better their lives for themselves by relying on their own entrepreneurial skills and not charitable donations" (Schwittay 2011b: S73). Furthermore, Humberto has adopted the "new mental structure" promoted by the Entrepreneurship and Business Development Curriculum that Ecuador's Ministry introduced in 2016 inasmuch as his attitude toward his livelihood "leaves behind old practices and cultivates habits that allow one to see beyond one's own environment, generating favorable and beneficial responses for oneself, one's family, and one's community" (Ministerio de Educación 2016: 4).

Kichwa Individualism

There are many ways to be individualistic in Kichwa communities. As Colloredo-Mansfeld points out in his analysis of Julio Toaquiza's story, "Few individuals create an art form in order to be a peasant" (2009: 41). Humberto Latacunga's entrepreneurship is also rare, because it is only recently that indigenous people have gained meaningful access to mainstream institutions (see chapter 7). José Guamangate's hustle is much more typical of the Kichwa communities where I have conducted my research. These attitudes appear to be passed from one generation to the next: Humberto's eldest daughter runs a well-appointed restaurant attached to her parents' hotel, whereas José's adult sons hustle a living by working odd jobs in tourism.

Whatever approach Tiguans and Quilotoans take to their livelihood pursuits, their individual and household-level strategies to reinvent rural livelihoods butt up against visions of collective resilience in which equity within the community is emphasized over individual gain. As Marygold Walsh-Dilley's (2015) research with quinoa growers in Bolivia demonstrates, this conflict is by no means unique to the Kichwa communities of highland Ecuador. Throughout the Andean region, rural indigenous people experience and discursively frame the apparent surge in individualism as an abandonment of ancestral social norms.

In Quilotoa, José, Humberto, and most other successful tourism entrepreneurs are regularly accused by their neighbors of being *muy personal* — that is, looking out for their own interests first. They generally respond with counteraccusations that their critics are simply harboring *envidia* — envy or jealousy. One local politician even said that he finds it easier to attract support for his plans in neighboring communities where people don't know him very well, because they will not be jealous. Emma Cervone encountered a similar discourse in Chimborazo Province. She writes, "In the functionalist interpretation, envy in the Andean context is understood as a mechanism that dissolves conflict and promotes solidarity by imposing control over scarce resources and their distribution" (2012: 84). Yet the growth of the market economy has undercut this mechanism. Cervone explains:

> In communities today, it is inevitable that some people buy more land than others or acquire their own means of transport or other resources. The control mechanism over scarce resources, activated through envy, is impossible to maintain in this new situation. It is no longer simply a matter of scarcity, but rather of profound changes in the economic structure. … Envy no longer fulfills its role of control and redistribution, but has become symptomatic of a conflict that may eventually lead to breakdown.

As the next chapter discusses in greater detail, the CTC Quilotoa was founded as a means of reigning in the individualism of the early tourism entrepreneurs. Indeed, much of the institution's influence over local affairs is derived from its capacity to turn the individualism of its member

households toward the collective good. Quilotoans recognize the importance of defending the organization's authority over local decisionmaking and quickly form a united front whenever this authority is threatened (Quick and Spartz n.d.). However, many continue to make accusations of selfishness counter-accusations of envy against one another. As José's stories about some of the problems he has had with the community illustrate, rumors of *personalidad* and *envidia* do sometimes get in the way of collective action.

Interestingly, many Quilotoans also refer to themselves as being *muy personal*. In some cases, they do so self-disparagingly, but it is more usual to refer to oneself as *personal* in order to illustrate one's self-starterism. Like the residents of a rural Bolivian Quechua community where Krista Van Vleet (2003) has studied *envidia*, Quilotoans "understand that envy is directed toward people who are able to earn money and buy consumer commodities or who have access to desired relationships that lie beyond the bounds of subsistence agricultural practices and relationships" (506). For many, to be envied by others is a point of pride. For instance, José Guamangate touts his own preference for working *"muy personal"* and feels that it is the best way to avoid the irresponsibility and corruption that he sees in the organization. Humberto Latacunga, too, told me that when it comes to his business, "I need to do it myself."

The tension between positive and negative valuations of individualism extend into the hopes that Quilotoans and their neighbors hold for their children's future livelihood prospects. On one hand, there are those who decry the self-centered attitudes that they observe among young people. Baltazar Umajinga captured this view in his reflections on the emergence of post-Agrarian Reform indigenous identities in Zumbahua, writing in the mid-1990s that out migration and organizational problems plagued efforts to stimulate social renewal in the parish,

> But we have the possibility of staying alive and active, without neglecting our ideals. I believe that encouraging our children, from [the time they are in] school, [to embrace]

> community attitudes and activities, is important to ensure this process into the future. That is where they form their consciousness of the reality in which they live, and in this way, as their sense of individualism and selfishness is broken, we will come to build a community with the capacity to overcome our problems. (1995: 266)

On the other hand, most painters understand their artistic careers in individualized terms. Thus, Colloredo-Mansfeld writes, "Although tourist demand, household demographics, and other factors influenced the profession's growth, the painters' own accounts emphasized that painting more or less afforded a steady income without too much hardship, relative to other work available at the time" (2003: 282). For many, tourism offers opportunities to generate similarly predictable livelihoods in the future. Tourism entrepreneurs in Quilotoa told me during interviews in 2014 and 2015 that they hope their children will complete advanced degrees in professional fields such as gastronomy, accounting and tourism management. Although such career trajectories are *muy personal* in nature, Alfonso Latacunga, a founding member of the CTC Quilotoa, explained in 2015 that leaders of the organization hope that professionalized young Quilotoans will remain dedicated to their community: "Our dream is that our young people who have recently finished studying to be an accountant—with a degree in accounting, a degree in systems, a degree in gastronomy, a degree in tourism—that they are right here."

In other words, leaders seek to tame individual ambition such that it contributes to the collective good. The success of their efforts is reflected in many of the personal work histories that I have collected from Quilotoan self-starters. For instance, Agustín Vega once told me that he works only for himself: "Today I'm going to struggle. I'll work hard and I'm never going to work for the organization. It's for myself." Yet Agustín still participates in the assembly meetings, collective work parties, and other activities of the CTC Quilotoa that turn individual interests toward the collective good. He would not think to do otherwise. For one thing, he would

lose access to much of Quilotoa's tourism infrastructure if he were to abandon the organization. However, Agustín's commitment to the CTC Quilotoa runs much deeper than shallow self-interest. He explained: "I'll never devalue the organization, which is the *matriz* [womb or place of origin], which is developing little by little and has been developing until now."

This gradual development of the CTC Quilotoa as *matriz* has provided a means to pursue individual and household advancement, but it has also provided a basis upon which to build community by taming individualism. The next chapter explores the production of community in Quilotoa through the historical construction of the CTC Quilotoa as an institution.

3. Minga: Kichwa Institution-Building in Quilotoa

Contemporary Kichwa society is dense with institutions dedicated to community development and political action. Local-level *asociaciones* are generally affiliated to "second-tier" organizations that operate at the parish level. As Víctor Bretón de Saldívar notes, these second-tier organizations "play a key role as valid interlocutors of NGOs and other bodies — both national and international — that carry out field projects" (2012: 277; see also Cervone 2012). Second-tier organizations also represent the political interests of their affiliated organizations within "third-tier" organizations that operate at the provincial level. Third-tier institutions are in turn affiliated with regional or national organizations such as the Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador (CONAIE). As one moves up the institutional ladder toward the national level, organizational objectives become increasingly abstract and political; as one moves down the ladder, objectives tend to become much more concrete and more focused on community development (see Perreault 2001).

The Centro de Turismo Comunitario Laguna Verde Quilotoa stands somewhat outside this institutional hierarchy. Many of its members have been active in the second-tier organization Unión de Organizaciones y Comunidades Indígenas de Zumbahua (UNOCIZ, the Union of Indigenous Organizations and Communities of Zumbahua), which is affiliated with the Movimiento Indígena y Campesino de Cotopaxi (MICC, the Indigenous and Peasant Movement of Cotopaxi), one of the most influential political institutions in Ecuador's national-level indigenous movement. A few Quilotoans even fly the CONAIE flag above their homes. The CTC Quilotoa and its predecessor institutions have also benefitted from the material assistance and political support of such institutions. However, the institutions that have governed access and management of tourism resources in Quilotoa have historically found their place in

Ecuador's institutional hierarchy through registration with ministries of the national government and through direct agreements with non-governmental development organizations, especially the Catholic agency Maquita Cushunchic—Comercializando como Hermanos (MCCH, Let's Extend a Hand—Commercializing as Brothers).

Residents of Quilotoa are also *comuneros* (resident subjects) of Ponce, a *comuna* formed in 2000 by the administrative partitioning of Cocha. In theory, this means that households from Quilotoa and other communities within the boundaries of the *comuna* must send representatives to the assembly meetings called by the elected leaders of the *junta comunal*, and that they must participate in the collective work parties—called *mingas*—through which the *comuna* maintains and improves local infrastructure. It is by meeting these obligations (or paying fines for not meeting them) that households gain access to collective resources managed by the *comuna* and make themselves eligible to participate in development projects conducted through the *comuna* by an assortment of governmental agencies and nongovernmental organizations. In practice, many Quilotoans maintain lands within the boundaries of multiple *comunas*, allowing them some flexibility in how they negotiate the benefits and obligations of *comunero* status. This is typical of how communal territory is lived—as opposed to how it is legally designated—in the region (see Sánchez Parga 1985: 97), but territory in Quilotoa has increasingly coalesced around the CTC Quilotoa (Colloredo-Mansfeld, et al. 2018).

The institutionally-dense landscape of Quilotoa is the subject of this chapter. In particular, I chart the emergence and evolution of the artisans' association established by a group of schoolchildren to challenge their exclusion from the tourist economy by their own relatives, the entrepreneurs discussed in the previous chapter. This group was able to absorb their opponents and then cultivate territorial authority over tourism infrastructure and resources. This

institutional authority has grown out of a history of conflicts with rival tourism entrepreneurs and agents of the state (Colloredo-Mansfeld, et al. 2018) and it is rooted in the creation, management, and defense of collective resources. This authority is exercised through the same tools of management formerly deployed on the hacienda and currently deployed by *comuna* authorities; however, the benefits that are created through these tools accrue to the voluntary collective formed by members of the organization.

Comuna and Association in Quilotoa

Quilotoa is administratively subordinate to the *comuna* of Ponce. The *comuna* form of governance was established by the *Ley de Comunas* in 1937. In the central highlands, the *comuna* has served as the primary mediator of indigenous households' relationships with the state and with nongovernmental development agencies. As Iturralde (1980) indicates, the *comuna* fulfills the requirement instituted by post-Agrarian Reform public assistance programs that beneficiaries be governed and represented by an intermediary organization. He explains, "Access to resources that in some measure are controlled by the State—such as water, *páramos*, empty lands and official credit—is conditioned in the same way, as is the possibility of benefitting from some public services" (1980: 18). Furthermore, nongovernmental organizations "demonstrate the same interest in the creation and strengthening of communal forms among campesinos" (1980: 18).

Unlike those who live elsewhere in Ponce, Quilotoans are also obligated to participate in the meetings and *mingas* of the CTC Quilotoa. The rights they secure through their participation in the activities of the CTC Quilotoa are nearly the same as those that they receive through their participation in the *comuna*: they gain access to the infrastructure and other collective resources

that the CTC Quilotoa maintains, and they gain access to the development projects that are conducted through the organization. Since the CTC Quilotoa is better funded than the *comuna* of Ponce, some of the most meaningful elements of citizenship enjoyed by Quilotoans are mediated by the organization.

Thus, the story of Kichwa institution building in Quilotoa is also a story of how Kichwa developmentalism and citizenship are negotiated in parallel to state structures, rather than through them. Indeed, this has been the case in many indigenous communities throughout the Andes, even in urban neighborhoods (Lazar 2008). In Quilotoa, this story begins in the 1980s with the students that José Guamangate refused to teach out of concern for his own economic interests. Since then, Quilotoa's history has unfolded as a continuous struggle to establish collective control of the site, develop touristic infrastructure, defend the organization against outside interests, and tame the self-interests of the organization's individualistic members.

The Founders

The first tourist-oriented organization in Quilotoa was formed in 1988 by a group of students at San Javier de Niño Rumi, a primary school located a short walk downhill from the modern tourist center. Teacher Alfonso Latacunga recalls, "We started talking with the youth who were in class." They said to each other, "Many tourists come and what will we do?" Then someone had an idea, "Why don't we paint?"

Miguel Ángel Jacome was among the group of around 15 students who took up this idea. "First we painted on sheets of paper," he told me in 2014; "Later we started to paint on cloth, and later we started to paint on canvas." The students learned to brush their canvases with a mixture of sheep's milk and flour in order to make their paints stick. They got paintbrushes from a

hardware store but found that these brushes were too large, so they plucked hairs from their own heads to make their own brushes. Ever resourceful, they also developed a technique for painting clouds by scraping a fingernail across the canvas.

The students sold some of their paintings to the backpackers who came to see the lake, but they quickly began to have problems with the painters who were already established along the rim of the volcano. The early residents of the site were "like owners of Quilotoa," recalled Eduardo Latacunga, another member of the original group of students. The students felt they had to respect the owners, who protected their own interests in controlling the touristic trade in handicrafts by shooing students away from the best sales sites and refusing to share their techniques.

"Those *compañeros* belonged to Tigua," said Miguel Ángel, declining to distinguish between the owners of Quilotoa and the Tiguan painters who excluded Quilotoan painters from other touristic sites, such as El Ejido Park in Quito. Yet, while their art may have originated in Tigua, the owners were not strangers. For example, Eduardo is younger brother to Humberto Latacunga. Furthermore, Eduardo explained, "Andrés Latacunga is my uncle and Don José is also uncle of my wife." Thus, the conflict was for Eduardo "within our family itself."

Extensive kinship ties notwithstanding, José Guamangate declined to teach the students of Niño Rumi, so they were forced to look elsewhere for assistance. Their teacher Humberto Umajinga helped them request assistance from the parish priests of Zumbahua, who provided painting supplies and brought art instructors to the school. Eduardo remembers that the teacher's wife was "like a mother to the children." She would bring foods donated by volunteers, and "with that she would help us."

The students made progress in their skills, but in the early days they found it difficult to sell their paintings. Miguel Ángel said, "We went to sell in Puyo, in Mitad del Mundo, in Cuenca. In Cuenca we would sell little. In Puyo we didn't get ahead selling. … We went to Mitad del Mundo and we had a booth there and we sold. Then we were learning little by little."

The young painters' first step toward formalization was the construction of a rough building. Francisco Umajinga, younger brother of the teacher and an early leader among the students, remembers that they retrieved material assistance from several sources. The alcalde of Pujilí provided some cement blocks for the walls, and he let them cut wood on his personal property. Two people from Zumbahua also donated used roofing panels. "With that, we put up a little building of more or less 8 by 5 [meters]," Francisco recalled; "Then we had our meeting place and our refuge from the rain, from the cold, from everything."

Then, they became the "founders" of Quilotoa by creating the site's first formally recognized institution in 1988, when they registered the Association of Painters and Weavers of Quilotoa through the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Aquaculture, and Fisheries. Their institutional presence along the crater rim allowed the "founders" to absorb the "owners" into their own organization. It also provided a means by which the artisans could begin to develop and exert collective control over touristic resources.

In 1996, the Ecuadorian Institute of Forests, Natural Areas and Wildlife (INEFAN) designated the volcano Quilotoa one of the three administrative divisions of the newly formed Illiniza Mountains Ecological Reserve. In the same year, the Association of Painters and Weavers of Quilotoa formally reorganized as the Artisan Center of Ponce-Quilotoa under the Ministry of Foreign Trade, Industrialization, Fisheries and Competitiveness (MICIP). These two efforts to extend authority over the site were fundamentally opposed to one another: INEFAN

insisted that all residents move their homes and businesses at least 500 meters from the rim of the caldera, but Quilotoans insisted that they had a right to stay where they were. The Artisan Center received support from MICC. The conflict came to a head when the state dispatched troops to support INEFAN's attempt at eviction; in response, Quilotoans seized an INEFAN representative. Ultimately, INEFAN withdrew its demands for relocation in exchange for the Artisan Center's commitment to manage conservation efforts within the crater.

In 2000, Quilotoans reorganized once again as the Organization for the Tourist Development of Quilotoa; this time, they registered with the Ministry of Tourism. In April 2007, via an accord with the Consejo de Desarrollo de los Pueblos y Nacionalidades del Ecuador (Development Council of the Indigenous Nationalities and Peoples of Ecuador, CODENPE), the organization registered as the Community Organization for Tourism Development – Green Lake Quilotoa. In 2012, it became the Center for Community Tourism Green Lake Quilotoa.

Building the Commons & Managing Resources

Like other indigenous institutions, the CTC Quilotoa builds and maintains the infrastructure and other resources that it controls through *mingas*, or communal work parties. In the context of *comunas*, these work parties may be understood as a form of local tax paid in labor. In the context of trade associations like the CTC Quilotoa, they might be regarded as organizational dues that are paid in labor. In either case, payment in labor is an obligation of membership and non-participation can result in fines. In trade associations, non-participation may even lead to loss of membership and thus loss of access to the resources managed by the organization.

Mingas in Quilotoa are usually fairly mundane affairs. They are typically scheduled for Monday mornings, a slow time of the week for touristic arrivals. Around breakfast time on the day designated by the organization's elected leaders, a crier is sent about town to remind people that a *minga* has been scheduled. A few hours later, members from each household gather around the designated foreman to respond to roll call, listen to a short description of the construction or maintenance project to which they will be contributing, and to receive instructions for the tasks they will perform. These tasks consist mainly of unskilled manual labor such as digging ditches, carting away debris, carrying building materials, or planting seedlings. If skilled labor is required for a construction project, it will usually be performed by hired workers. The *minga* workers complete their assigned tasks as quickly and efficiently as they can, and then they check with the account-keeper to confirm that their labor contributions have been recorded correctly with a *raya*: a mark in the official ledger. For the first or last *minga* of a major project, or on some other momentous occasions, the organization might then feed the workers a hearty meal, but it is more common for the day to conclude with a few announcements by the organization's president.

Since membership in the CTC Quilotoa is figured in terms of households rather than individuals, and since the *rayas* in the account-keeper's ledger count the number of work units that a household has contributed rather than simply attendance at the event, there is some flexibility in how a member household completes its *minga* obligations. The usual approach is to send one able-bodied member of the household to each *minga*; that person will labor for much of the day, completing the assigned tasks by sometime in the mid- to late afternoon. However, a household is free to send more than one person to a *minga*. It might do so simply to complete the tasks more quickly, or it might do so because it owes more work units than one person can complete in a day. Perhaps on the day of the *minga* all able-bodied members of the household are

gone from the community or otherwise engaged and the household can only spare the labor of children or older adults who will work together to complete the assigned work load. Perhaps the household has incurred a fine that must be paid in additional work units, as occurred during my fieldwork when two women got into a spat in front of tourists in the communal handicrafts gallery and were assigned additional *minga* work units as punishment for their bad behavior. Or perhaps the household did not participate in a previous *minga* and needs to make up for its absence: households that occasionally miss a *minga* are typically pardoned by the organization's elected leaders so long as they have a good excuse and do not miss *mingas* too often, but they must make up for their absence promptly. Households that do not complete their *minga* obligations on the designated day must make up their shortcoming promptly: if there are still materials to carry or ditch sections to dig after the work day has concluded, they can finish these tasks in the following days; if there are no more tasks available, they must contribute additional work units to a future *minga.* If a household cannot muster enough able-bodied workers for a *minga*, it must recruit others to help; thus, one young Quilotoan widow whose children were not old enough to be much help during my fieldwork regularly conscripted me to work on her behalf alongside one of her brothers or other members of her extended kinship network that she recruited for the same purpose.

In return for participation in *mingas*, Quilotoan households gain access to the resources that have been created through past *minga* labor. For instance, each member household of the CTC Quilotoa is allowed to sell horse rides from the lakeshore within the volcanic caldera up the sandy path to the main touristic center. These rides are popular among tourists, because the altitude and the sand make the path difficult to climb. However, as a resource to the members of the organization, this income opportunity is limited: the total number of horse rides sold each

month is limited to the number of tourists who wish to buy a ride. Thus, the organization strictly controls the sale of horse rides by hiring an overseer to stand at the top of the path and manage these sales. He[3] is responsible for making sure that there are enough horses at the lakeshore to meet the probable needs of the tourists currently making their way down the path on foot. He is also responsible for tallying the number of rides that each member household sells each month and for collecting $1 out of every $10 ride (he is paid by the organization out of this cut). Each month, when a household has reached its allotted number of horse rides sales, it must stop selling rides until the beginning of the next month or make a deal to work on behalf of a household that has not yet reached its cap. Households without horses or without enough workers to participate in selling horse rides may allow others within the organization to use their allotted sales in return for a cut of the proceeds so earned; such deals are most often made among adult siblings who belong to the organization through different households or through others in a household's kinship network. If the monthly demand for horse rides outstrips the total rides that have been allotted to participating member households, the CTC Quilotoa will grant additional sales to all households. The strict control that the organization maintains over this income opportunity is made possible because the path along which people and horses travel to and from the lakeshore has been built and maintained through *minga* labor: those who do not contribute to the organization are excluded from the exploiting its resources.

A few other paid jobs are available through the organization. The most prominent of these is overseer of the tollbooth at the entrance to the main tourism center. This job rotates among households each month; it is remunerated both because it requires significant time and energy and because Quilotoans reason that a paid manager is much less likely to steal from the

[3] There is no reason that this person could not be a woman, but it has always been a man during my experience in Quilotoa.

proceeds of the entrance fee charged at this gate. Another rotating, paid position is the attendant of the information booth. Both of these rotating positions may be traded to another member household if the designated household is unable or uninterested in the job. A handful of paid positions are also available as attendant of the large parking lot next to the handicrafts gallery, as trash collectors around the main tourism complex, and as cleaner of horse-droppings along the path to the lakeshore. More permanent positions are available in the communal hotels and restaurant, and more may become available through the new (as of 2015) facilities for kayak rental. All of these opportunities are made possible by ongoing communal work parties, and are thus unavailable to non-members of the organization.

However, most of the livelihood opportunities made available to Quilotoans through tourism—and thus most of the cash earnings of Quilotoan households—are controlled privately within households. They include waiters and cooks at private restaurants, cleaners and managers at private hotels, drivers of privately-owned vehicles used as taxis, trail guides for tourists who wish to hike to neighboring communities, and makers and sellers of souvenir handicrafts. Earnings from these services and sales are subject to market forces—most prominently competition among neighbors within Quilotoa—but they are not governed by the organization. Nonetheless, they rely on collective resources created by the organization, especially touristic infrastructure. Notably, the large indoor handicrafts gallery—built in the early 2010s with substantial support from the Ecuadorian Ministry of Tourism and the Catholic organization MCCH—has limited space, so booths are allocated annually by lottery among Quilotoan households. Even households that do not participate in selling horse rides or managing a booth with the gallery depend on the organization's publicity and facilities to attract increasingly large numbers of domestic tourists each year.

Ultimately, all of these resources depend on *minga* labor, but most have also benefitted to a greater or lesser extent from investments made by outside entities. This has required the founders and leaders of the organization to engage in *proyectismo*, a phenomenon that Víctor Bretón de Saldívar (2012) has called definitive of the post Agrarian Reform era.

Proyectismo

As addressed in the conclusion of the last chapter, Quilotoans complain vociferously about the jealousy and self-interest of their fellow members. The stories that attend these complaints illustrate that development projects do not always result in measurable benefits for the community. Yet Quilotoa has been quite successful in attracting the investments of outside organizations. These investments have been critical to the success of the CTC Quilotoa, to its predecessor institutions, and indeed to all indigenous community development institutions in Ecuador. Indeed, indigenous leaders' active cultivation of such investments is so critical an element of indigenous development in Ecuador that it has been named: *proyectismo* (projectism).

Broadly, the basic model of *proyectismo* is that a funding agency identifies a place with a problem, designs a project to address that problem, and then brings the solution to the community or institution that it deems best suited for resolving the problem. The leaders of the community or institution receive the proposal and present it to the membership of the *comuna* or association during a general assembly meeting, often with the help of a representative of the funding agency. If the assembled membership votes to proceed with the project, the leaders will sign an accord with the funders in which they agree to arrange *mingas* in support of the project and perhaps some funds or a few materials. In return, the funding institution will contribute material, financial, and managerial assistance to the proect.

This arrangement does not give indigenous collectives a great deal of power in determining which projects are made available to them. Most often, the choice presented to an assembly of *comuneros* or *socios* is simply to accept or reject the offer of assistance. Given the poverty and marginalization that color life in many indigenous communities, it is difficult to reject a project. However, institutions that have established authoritative control over the resources they manage are sometimes in a stronger position. Thus, I have witnessed the *socios* of the CTC Quilotoa reject a conservation project of the Ecudaorian Ministry of Environment that they felt was not in their interest (Quick and Spartz n.d.). In another incident, a research associate and I nearly lost our opportunity to interview the members of a successful Quinoa growers' cooperative in Chimborazo province when the Ecuadorian university professors with whom we first visited the cooperative annoyed the institution's elected leaders by fixating on impractical advice about new products the cooperative should bring to market. In other words, the effective cultivation of institutional authority through the techniques discussed above allow leaders and *socios* more latitude to choose projects that are in their own best interest.

That said, leaders' effectiveness is measured in part by their ability to attract project proposals even if those projects ultimately fail to advance the collective best interest of the institutions they lead. Thus, some leaders will pursue projects without regard to their likelihood of success or their ultimate aims; this is the origin of the depreciatory tone with which the word '*proyectismo*' is uttered in some circles. Within institutions, rumors of leaders' selfishness circulate widely as a means of holding them to their responsibilities (cf. Lazar 2008), but as the previous chapter briefly addressed, these rumors can also interfere with the success of a project. The most effective leaders are measured by their ability to mobilize the member households of

their institutions to meet labor inputs through *minga* participation: *mingas* in support of projects that do not appeal to the interests of member households are rarely well attended.

In a few instances, *proyectismo* also operates at the level of households. For instance, when a group of families on the outskirts of Quilotoa petitioned to receive access to electricity from the state in 2015, they were required to mobilize their kin (and one anthropologist) to carry the utility poles that would support the electric cables out to their proper locations along the rim of Quilotoa's caldera. In this case, the households receiving the project banded together temporarily as if they were a collective institution.

In the minds of the original members of the first artisans' association in Quilotoa, it was the organization and execution of a small-scale development project that established their institution as such. Recall Francisco Umajinga's description of how he and his fellows became the "founders" of Quilotoa: they received cement blocks and wood from the Alcalde of Pujilí, they received used roofing panels from donors in Zumbahua, and "With that, we put up a little building of more or less 8 by 5 [meters]." This rough building became their institutional home. Francisco told me, "Then we had our meeting place and our refuge from the rain, from the cold, from everything."

Over the subsequent years, the CTC Quilotoa and its predecessor institutions have received project support from a wide variety of sources. In terms of total investments, the most significant of these have been the Catholic organization Maquita Cushunchic-Comercializando como Hermanos (MCCH) and the Ecuadorian Ministry of Tourism (Minitur). While Quilotoans' relationship with MCCH has been generally positive, their relationship with Minitur has been uneven.

Inspired by the tenets of liberation theology, MCCH emerged out of the ecclesiastical work of Father Graziano Masón, who, when he arrived in Quito Sur in the early 1980s, "found that one of the most felt needs of the population was the ever-increasing difficulty of accessing basic nutrition" (MCCH 1991: 43). The organization began its work in aid and community development in the 1980s, when it established a network of markets and communal shops where peasant organizations could trade agricultural products with one another directly, cutting out middlemen and facilitating more flexible trading practices (MCCH 1991: 54-55). Over time, this network evolved into a broad range of social and economic initiatives, includes an arm dedicated to sustainable community-based tourism in the neighboring sites of Quilotoa and Shalalá in Cotopaxi province and Nariz del Diablo in Chimborazo province in the Andean highlands, Shandia in the Amazonian province of Napo, and Poza Honda and Quinkigua in the coastal province of Manabí. The organization's perspective on the projects it has sponsored in Quilotoa may be traced through a series of articles that have appeared in its newsletter, *Ñucanchic Maquicuna: Nuestras Manos*.

The August 2007 issue of the newsletter featured a story marking a project sponsored by MCCH to bolster tourism infrastructure in Quilotoa through the construction of a restaurant and hostel that would be owned and managed by the CTC Quilotoa. The story explained, "Through this project, with the residents of the area, the intention is to develop responsible tourism by working in turn on cultural production, generation of economic benefits for the communities, and environmental conservation of the [Ilinizas Ecological Reserve]" (MCCH 2007). In the March 2008 issue, another article reported (MCCH 2008):

> We are in the final phase of the implantation of the new community-based tourism project in the Laguna del Quilotoa, during which time we have seen positive change in the men and women members of the Asociación de Desarrollo Turístico Lago Verde Quilotoa, who at first had many doubts about the new focus of sustained and integral

> tourism development proposed by MCCH with the goal of elevating the quality of presentation of touristic services and thus influencing positively in the betterment of their quality of life through the generation of greater economic resources.

Since I was not yet familiar with Quilotoa when these projects were first proposed, it is difficult to diagnose the origins of Quilotoans' "many doubts" about the objectives of this MCCH restaurant and hostel project. However, Quilotoans today treat these installations—along with a newer hotel that was also funded by MCCH—as largely unnecessary. Quilotoans appreciate the investments MCCH has made and they avidly participate in inaugural ceremonies for MCCH-sponsored installations. They have benefitted greatly from the institutional authority that such installations confer on the CTC Quilotoa, and some have benefitted monetarily through the jobs created by these operations. Yet most Quilotoans make most of their money through the operation of private hotels and restaurants. As a consequence, tourists are rarely directed to the communal operations, which nearly always operate well below capacity. In other words, *proyectismo* in collaboration with MCCH has been valuable to the CTC Quilotoa, but the results of specific projects do not necessarily meet local desires.

Over time, MCCH has enlisted the financial support of a variety of other entities. A March 2009 newsletter article about MCCH projects in Quilotoa recognized the contributions of the Foundation for Sustainable Development and the government of the Spanish province of Biscay (MCCH 2009). A May 2015 article added acknowledgements for the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation (Aecid) and Manos Unidas, a Catholic international development agency based in Madrid (MCCH 2015).

Since 2012, Quilotoa has also been a key site of investment for the Ecuadorian government. Perhaps most significantly, the road from Zumbahua to Quilotoa was significantly improved, allowing for a great increase in domestic tourism traffic through the site. Through the

Ministry of Tourism it also invested more than $300,000 in a communal handicrafts gallery that replaced the double row of thatch huts out of which Quilotoans had previously sold souvenir handicrafts, and in a large parking lot adjacent to the new gallery. Another $170,000 supported the construction of a scenic overlook from which tourists can view the lake and watch as their fellow visitors make their way up and down the winding path that leads to the lakeshore. As always, the agreements that launched these projects required Quilotoans to contribute *minga* labor to the construction of the new facilities. However, the state also made two additional demands. First, the existing Community Organization for Tourism Development would reorganize into its current form as a Center of Community Tourism, which formally grants the state authority over final approval of member-nominated institutional leaders. Second, the newly formed CTC would stop collecting entrance fees, a practice that was officially prohibited within the boundaries of national parks and reserves such as Ilinizas Ecological Reserve, but which had been informally allowed in Quilotoa ever since the Ministry of Environment's failed attempt to evict Quilotoans from the site. Quilotoan leaders acquiesced to these demands because the Ministry of Tourism pledged to pay a wage to organizational leaders and maintenance crews. Finally, Minitur indicated its plan to carry out extensive capacity building programs in Quilotoa.

However, Minitur stopped paying wages in 2014. Following discussion during a series of several assembly meetings, Quilotoans decided to reinstate the entrance fee. When confronted on the issue by agents of the state or pressed to explain the decision by a curious ethnographer, Quilotoan leaders explained that the gate charge is not really an entrance fee at all. Rather, it is intended to cover the maintenance costs that the government had failed to address. Besides, informants reminded me, President Rafael Correa himself had once come to Quilotoa and talked about how it was correct to charge $1 for Ecuadorians and $2 for international visitors. Funding

for completion of the handicrafts gallery was interrupted around the same time; the shortfall was covered by MCCH. Once again, and despite being formally subject to state oversight, Quilotoans had turned their institutional authority into a defense of their right to govern the resources they had created through *minga* labor and *proyectismo*.

Managing Membership

Unlike *comuna* membership, which is compulsory for all who reside within the legally designated boundaries of the community, membership in trade organizations such as the CTC Quilotoa is voluntary. This does not mean that Quilotoans are entirely free to decide whether they will participate in the organization, its assembly meetings, or its *mingas*. Like a guild, the CTC Quilotoa controls access to the tourist trade itself. Thus, a Quilotoan household that wishes to participate in the tourist economy must join the CTC Quilotoa, because the organization controls access to infrastructure and other resources that are necessary to such participation. Furthermore, households that join the CTC Quilotoa must participate in the assembly meetings and *mingas* of the organization or risk losing their membership.

As my colleagues and I have reported elsewhere, "As membership in the organization began to confer material rewards, Quilotoans restricted enrollment of new members from outside the community, even as they deepened local participation, especially for women" (Colloredo-Mansfeld, et al. 2018: 447). For example:

> In the 2000s, a man from Quito sought to capitalize on the surge in Quilotoan tourism by buying land just outside the entrance of the community and building a high quality hostel with wood stoves in each room and private bathrooms. After investing his fortune and opening the business, local residents challenged the Quiteño and ultimately forced him to sell his hotel to three private buyers from the community. In the same years, an indigenous artist from neighboring Tigua purchased land in the center of the Quilotoa tourist area. While opposition was not as strong, some members asserted that the artist was an outsider who would limit local opportunities to sell art. The Organization for

> Tourist Development soon bought out the Tiguan and has held the land as communal space.

I observed a more mundane example of the CTC Quilotoa's membership practices in 2014 and 2015. Teresa Toaquiza has lived most of her life away from Quilotoa, but she decided to move back there in 2014 with her husband and three young boys. She knew that it would be impractical to open the cosmetics business that she dreamed of when she was living in Baños, so she decided to open a restaurant instead. Her first step was to secure the support of her maternal grandmother and step-grandfather, who are members of the organization; they agreed to provide space for the restaurant in a building they own in a prime spot just off the main parking lot. Next, Teresa and her husband paid a visit to the household of her mother's sister, also a member household of the organization; the support of Teresa's aunt and uncle was gained through gifts of food and drink, and a very long, very somber discussion about their plans. Then, Teresa and her husband submitted a formal petition to the organization and made an effort to demonstrate their worthiness as the organization considered their application.

The final decision was made via a vote held during a general assembly meeting of the organization. Teresa explained that this collective decision is based on an evaluation of whether the applicant shows that she will be committed to the organization:

> All members decide. That is, they look and see whether the person attends, if she is a collaborator, if she works in [mingas], attends meetings, all the aspects of what they call for one to do. … So one tries to attend all that they say, that they do. So if one continues that way, then the people, the organization, the members see the person and whether she is sociable or hard working and supports the things they do.

The final step for Teresa was to sponsor a fiesta for the community. She and her husband purchased two sheep and donated a quantity of money for additional supplies. This celebration sealed their membership, allowing them to pursue their restaurant plans, giving them access to

the common pool resources that the organization manages, and requiring them to participate in the meetings and *mingas* of the CTC Quilotoa.

Discussion

One of my informants in Quilotoa once told me that there were no *mingas* during the hacienda period in Zumbahua. This statement surprised me, in part because the organization of debt labor on the hacienda not only had its deepest roots in colonial forms of labor tax, it also made use of labor forms that would be hard to distinguish from modern *mingas*. More significantly, the man who had made the statement was old enough to remember the 1980s, during which period Mary Weismantel wrote that in Zumbahua, "The word *minga* itself evokes the forced work parties of the hacienda and the intrusive activities of government and church representatives, instead of being perceived as a tradition rooted in the community itself" (1998: 53). Had this man simply forgotten about the compulsory work parties of the hacienda period? This is unlikely, since he was the same person who once described the hacienda regime to me by comparing the plight of his ancestors to that of the Jews in Egypt.

Rather, the logic of this man's statement seems to be rooted in how the meaning of collective labor parties has been transformed by a structural reorganization of labor exchange: it makes sense to say that there were no *mingas* during the *patrones timpu* because the social organization of labor that defines the contemporary *minga* did not exist within the hacienda regime.

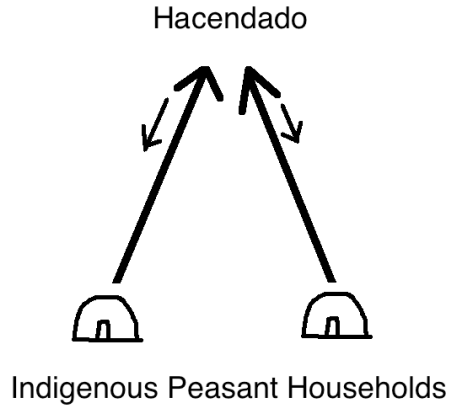

Figure 4: The hacienda regime: pyramid with no base.

As Barry Lyons discusses, the social world of the hacienda regime is often described as if it were a pyramid or triangle with no base: "With the landlord at the top, the vertical legs of the triangle represent his relationship with individual peasants." (2006: 12). Each subordinated indigenous household related directly with the hacienda hierarchy inasmuch as labor was performed for the hacendado in return for privileges and financial assistance that was received from the hacendado. Lyons explains, "The missing base of the triangle represents the absence of horizontal relationships among peasants, both within the estate and beyond its boundaries" (2006: 12). This vision of the hacienda regime was popular among scholars during the mid-twentieth century, because it conjured an image of "social life as emptied and flattened under the weight of landlord domination" (2006: 12), but such a view of the hacienda is incomplete. Lyons is right to critique this model on the grounds that subsequent research demonstrates that there existed "a much more vital, self-assertive, and autonomous social world among hacienda residents" (2006: 14). In reality, a plethora of other relationships constituted a strong social base among indigenous households, despite the exploitation engendered by vertical labor relations.

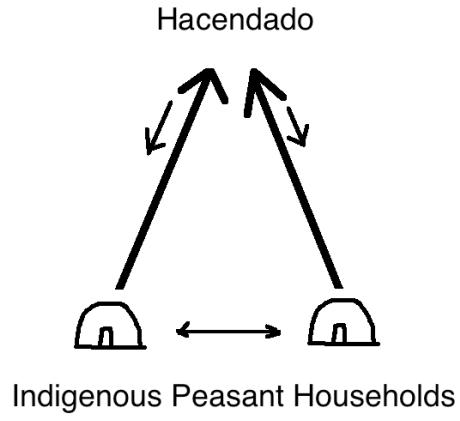

Figure 5: The hacienda regime: pyramid with strong social base.

At the invisible base of the triangle was a web of more-or-less balanced labor exchange relationships. When one household required more labor than it could muster for itself, it would call on other households for assistance. These other households' contributions of labor would be met by an immediate counter-gift of food and drink (and, in the case of a harvest, perhaps a small portion of the fruits of the labor at hand). Some time later, the original receiving household would contribute labor to each of the households that had previously come to its assistance, receiving a small counter-gift in return. These networks of labor exchange persist today.

The contemporary *minga* as it is practiced in the CTC Quilotoa, the *comuna* of Ponce, and other Kichwa communities of the Ecuadorian sierra takes another, different form. Households contribute labor to the *comuna* or association to which they belong in return for access to the resources that the comuna or association controls. Their participation is carefully recorded in a ledger. In this sense, the contemporary *minga* is not unlike the hacienda form of labor. However, whereas the labor performed for the hacienda benefitted the non-indigenous hacendado, the labor performed for the *comuna* or association benefits the indigenous collective

to which the laboring households belong. This dramatically reshapes the significance of the labor performed.

Yet *comunas* and associations rarely have the resources to pursue collective development projects without the support of outside institutions. Thus, they rely on *proyectismo* in order to attract the additional contribution of materials and expertise from governmental and non-governmental development agencies. The resources so created are then managed and defended collectively, and they provide a basis upon which to further develop collective authority.

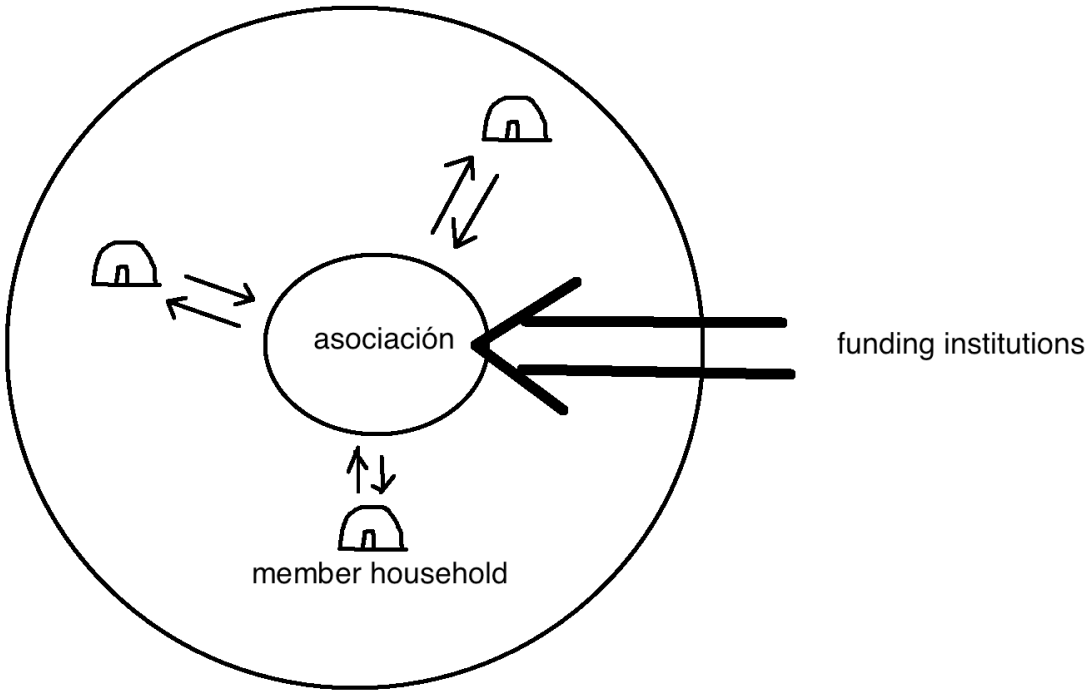

Figure 6: Proyectismo development model.

There is a palpable sense within the CTC Quilotoa that the people of Quilotoa have a right to control these resources as a consequence of having invested their labor in creating them.

Indeed, longtime members sometimes complain that newer members do not appreciate the struggle that they have been through, implying that those who have not labored are less deserving of the benefits they enjoy. In other words, the benefits that the organization offers its members are closely tied to those members' labor for the organization; as in the old hacienda ledgers, labor *rayas* and access to resources are two elements of the same relationship of labor. As Guzmán-Gallegos writes regarding Amazonian Kichwa members of OPIP, "They consider OPIP's efforts to title their lands and secure development projects for their villages a form of recognition for the work members have done for the organization" (2015: 132).

Despite strong personalities and mutual resentments among certain households, the members of the CTC Quilotoa quickly pull together whenever the institution's authority over these resources is threatened. When a representative of an outside institution visits a general assembly meeting in order to present a project or critique the organization, the *socios* who offer their viewpoints present a remarkably similar message, almost as if they had rehearsed beforehand. They have a strong interest in forming such a united front, because their individual livelihoods and their families' wellbeing depends on continued access to the resources that the organization has created.

4. Kawsay: Indigenous Critique of Political Economy

Since the turn of the millennium, as a consequence of international exchanges among indigenous and non-indigenous activists (Altmann 2013; 2014), a suite of new articulations of the good life have coalesced in the decolonial scholarship of Latin American indigenous intellectuals. Advocates of these concepts argue that the vitality of ancestral culture is a condition of possibility for living well in indigenous society. They see the imposition of non-indigenous ideology, social organization, and economic practices as an attack on this condition of possibility, and the history of indigenous resistance to colonialism and its legacies as a defense of indigenous society. Advocates call for national societies to be re-founded on ancestral indigenous principles and practices in order to revitalize indigenous communities. These principles and practices are also offered to the global community as an alternative to capitalism, particularly neoliberalism. The most well-known and influential decolonial articulations of the good life have emerged in Ecuadorian Kichwa as *sumak kawsay* and in Bolivian Aymara as *suma qamaña*.

Another set of interpretations—known in Spanish as *buen vivir* or *vivir bien*—gained prominence in public discourse as a consequence of debates revolving around the drafting of Ecuador's 2008 constitution and Bolivia's 2009 constitution. Widely regarded as "the hitherto most radical constitutions of the world" (Lalander 2014: 150), these national charters identify indigenous conceptualizations of good living as foundational principles upon which to construct plurinational states. In mainstream political and bureaucratic invocations of these principles, buen vivir and vivir bien are regarded as equivalent to the indigenous concepts upon which they are based. The introduction to Ecuador's 2013-2017 National Development Plan is clear on this point: "Ecuador, as an Andean country, constructs human, economic, social, cultural, and

environmental rights upon a concept and worldview born in the ancient societies of the South American Andes region: the Buen Vivir is the Sumak Kawsay" (Senplades 2013: 16). Such pronouncements have led some scholars to assert that "*Buen Vivir* is not a new notion: it has remained active, mainly, in the Ecuadorian indigenous population for centuries" (Barragán-Paladines 2019: 514).

However, as Vanhulst and Beling suggest, the concept of buen vivir is better understood as "an extrapolation" of indigenous concepts and its invocation in mainstream politics is often "necessarily reductive and cannot account for the semantic richness of the original concept" (2014: 56). Viola similarly critiques what he calls the "banalization" of buen vivir in the sympathetic literature, which has tended to take an "abstract and vague view of said concept, more akin to a declaration of principles than a viable political and economic program" (2014: 64). A common shortcoming in this scholarship, he says, is "the lack of contextualization and empirical information on current living conditions of rural indigenous communities" (2014: 64). Indeed, lack of historical contextualization is a persistent problem in programs of development, conservation, and governance that seek to introduce indigenous concepts as alternatives to practice-as-usual (Yates 2014).

Viola argues that since sumak kawsay has emerged only recently as a coherent discourse, "and it is extremely difficult to find references to this concept in the copious ethnographic literature on Andean communities of Peru, Bolivia or Ecuador," we should ask critically "whether this concept has always 'been there', that is, whether its origin is as ancestral as is often assumed" (Viola 2011: 272). He suggests that perhaps sumak kawsay and its cognates are best understood as invented traditions — ideas based on something that existed less centrally and less prominently within indigenous communities in the past — that have only recently been promoted

by “some intellectuals, in order to divulge an idealized version of the worldview and values of Andean cultures and convert it into an alternative to the developmentalist vision (individualist, economistic, ethnocidal, and aggressive toward the environment)” (Viola 2014: 63-64). On these grounds, Sánchez Parga characterizes sumak kawsay as a substanceless opposition to governmental policies and programs, a reactionary utopianism looking to an idealized past for a model of the future that remains blind to contemporary realities and is thus impotent to affect real change (Sánchez Parga 2011). Hidalgo-Capitán, Arias and Ávila (2014: 33) counter these assertions by claiming that just because ethnographers have not documented the phrase sumak kawsay until recently doesn’t mean it hasn’t existed as social practice. “It is no less true,” they argue, “that the sumak kawsay continues to be a social practice that governs the daily life of many communities, especially those that are most isolated” (34).

Where others have seen Viola’s application of the label “invented tradition” as an attack on the authenticity of sumak kawsay as an indigenous concept, we take it as an invitation to respond to his more central critique: that it often remains unclear how the invocations of good living articulated by indigenous intellectuals relate to the day-to-day lived reality of indigenous communities. I cannot respond in full to Viola’s concerns in a single chapter, and I am humbled by the great effort that indigenous scholars have invested in communicating their positions in their own words. I do, however, offer several windows into how indigenous people in Ecuador have engaged with culturally-rooted notions of the good life in theory and practice.

Indigenous Critical Discourse

The Kichwa people with whom I have conducted ethnographic and oral history research in highland Ecuador rarely talk about the sumak kawsay. The phrase makes sense to them, but

the intellectual work of consciously elaborating a named set of ancestral principles and practices is not part of the everyday lives of most Kichwa people. Day-to-day discussions are far more likely to revolve around the conspicuous absence of opportunities to live well. Lyons writes, "Trying to make sense of their continued experience of poverty and racism after the demise of the hacienda, they sometimes say things like, 'We are still oppressed [*llakichishka*]; only now instead of the hacienda, they oppress us through inflation, low prices for our products, bad government, the whole economic system'" (2006: 16). The word '*llakichishka*', which Lyons translates as 'oppressed' literally means 'caused to be sad or miserable.' Thus, in my research in Cotopaxi Province, one man called this state of affairs the *llaki kawsay*, the miserable life. Colloredo-Mansfeld's informants from Imbabura Province call it the *yanka kawsay*, the fruitlessly exhausted life, in which "years of indigenous toil translate into nothing more than tired bodies and a handful of worn possessions" (Colloredo-Mansfeld 1998: 198).

Discussions of the yanka/llaki kawsay often revolve around commentaries on culture loss. Kichwa people bemoan the abandonment by youth of their native language and clothing when they leave their natal communities in pursuit of education and wage labor opportunities. Elders and youths alike talk about how much healthier ancestral foods are than the highly-processed, chemical-laden foods that for economic reasons are now staples of many indigenous peoples' diets. They express frustration with the decline in labor reciprocity within their communities, attributing the decline to labor migration and the increased need for cash within rural economies. The proximate cause of change is usually identified as increased contact with non-indigenous society.

Thus, the actually-existing yanka kawsay may be understood as the antithesis of the indigenous social world that is imagined by the decolonial discourse of sumak kawsay. Or, if one

regards the sumak kawsay as a logic statement, then the yanka kawsay is its contrapositive. That is, if the sumak kawsay proposes that *indigenous people can achieve wellbeing, security, and opportunity by living according to ancestral principles*, then the discourse of yanka kawsay asserts that *by not living according to ancestral principles, indigenous people cannot achieve wellbeing, security, or opportunity*.

Notably, Pribilsky (2016) draws a somewhat different distinction between sumak kawsay and yanka kawsay. For his informants from Cañar Province, sumak kawsay is a social state of being enmeshed in a network of productive reciprocal exchange within the community, while yanka kawsay is a life stage during which elderly people progressively withdraw from such exchanges because of physical or mental inability to reciprocate (2016: 74). To Cañaris, it is a normal and expected part of life to transition from sumak kawsay to yanka kawsay. While this usage differs from the discourse discussed thus far, the relationship between the concepts is essentially the same: sumak kawsay is a matter of productive participation in a social world whereas yanka kawsay is a matter of withdrawal from that social world. The difference is that in the discourse analyzed here (in which Cañari Kichwas also participate, it should be noted), separation from the social world defined by ancestral practice is by no means considered a natural state of being; rather, indigenous people have been compelled by socioeconomic conditions to abandon their culture and communities.

Envisioning the Sumak Kawsay

If, from an economic perspective, the emergence of the Tigua and Quilotoa painting genre has constituted an effort to overcome the yanka kawsay, from a visual arts perspective the genre might be understood as an effort to portray the sumak kawsay. The painting genre predates

the political discourse of sumak kawsay by several decades, so it would be improper to equate them directly, but they parallel one another inasmuch as both envision a socionatural world predicated on Andean conceptions of good living.

The artists of Tigua and Quilotoa are subject to the "tourist gaze" (Urry 2002) and have learned to anticipate what international tourists expect of indigenous culture. As Muratorio writes, "the indigenous people of the highlands have mastered the subtleties of the competitive scene and know exactly who should wear 'typical clothes' and take 'appropriate body attitudes' if they want to legitimize, authenticate, and increase their sales" (2000: 56). Painters have also learned to avoid overtly political themes and to minimize the presence of overtly non-indigenous or non-traditional material culture in the scenes they illustrate (Colloredo-Mansfeld 2011: 19).

Yet artists do not simply paint what the tourists want to see. To the contrary, Dorothea Whitten argues that the artists "paint the nation as they see and experience it" (2003: 247). Several painters from Quilotoa have told me that the vision of Kichwa life that they communicate through their art is shaped by their dreams. One young painter explained:

> For example, I dream of a mountain. On that mountain, what am I doing? Or what are other people doing? What are we going to do? Then the next day I think, "I've dreamed this and I'll put it in my painting in order to sell it." With that dream, I've got my idea. I have dreamed that mountain; I'm hoeing or cultivating or others are planting or harvesting, all that.

Painters eliminate non-indigenous and non-traditional elements from such visions of Kichwa culture and society but not because those non-indigenous things are absent from their lives. Rather, as Colloredo-Mansfeld learned in Tigua, they do so "because, even if [non-indigenous elements] fit into their personal experience, they do not allow those experiences to connect up to a wider indigenous life course" (2011: 20). That is, the non-indigenous cultural goods and practices that the discourse of yanka kawsay identifies as threats are eliminated from the artists'

portrayals of Kichwa society in favor of a vision of indigenous society that perpetuates ancestral culture.

Importantly, some items of material culture with origins in other cultures or other parts of the world are *not* eliminated from the visions of Kichwa society portrayed by the artists of Tigua and Quilotoa. These include items of clothing such as fedoras, ponchos, and shawls as well as agricultural products such as wheat and fava beans. Such items are not eliminated because they have been thoroughly adopted into Kichwa culture. Indeed, many such items are regarded as ancestral. They contribute to the strength of Kichwa cultural identity and the construction of Kichwa community. In other words, these items of foreign provenance have been incorporated into the storylines that compose indigenous lives, both in paintings and in everyday experience.

Alessandro Portelli writes, "The importance of oral testimony may not lie in its adherence to fact, but rather in its departure from it, as imagination, symbolism, and desire emerge" (Portelli 1991: 51). The same is true of Kichwa painting. As Whitten indicates, the painters of Tigua and Quilotoa "reflect a clear sense of alternative modernities" (2011: 146). Touristic sales aside, the value of the genre – like the value that Portelli attributes to oral history – lies not in its adherence to objectivity but in the artists' "effort to make sense of the past and to give a form to their lives" (1991: 52). The painters endeavor to do so by symbolically decolonizing indigenous social worlds: they include only those the storylines that make indigenous life good.

A painting by Klever Latacunga of Quilotoa illustrates how the genre lends itself to imaging and imagining culturally meaningful community development. It was initially prepared in 2014 for a competition sponsored by MCCH to celebrate the inauguration of the new community-run hotel, Hostal Princesa Toa. The scene tells several intersecting stories of Quilotoa's origins as a community, each of which moves according to its own temporality.

Figure 7: Inauguration of the Hostal Princesa Toa. Painting by Klever Latacunga.

In the lower right foreground, a musician plays a drum and cane flute as a Corpus Christi danzante dances in a brightly colored cape and headdress. Corpus Christi marks the climax of Zumbahua's annual cycle of religious-agrarian fiestas, drawing labor migrants back to the parish in order to participate in the celebration of the more-than-human social relationships that compose the community (Weismantel 1997; Quick and Spartz n.d.). The decorated drums played during Corpus Christi provided the material origin out of which this genre emerged, and the celebration of Corpus Christi was the predominant theme of early paintings in the genre. Thus, this storyline tells of the vibrant annual renewal of community in the parish as well as the origins of the artform that first allowed Quilotoans to reinvent rural livelihoods. In the midground, all of

the family-owned homes and businesses in Quilotoa have been left out of the scene in order to emphasize community-managed tourism infrastructure, including the new Hostal Princesa Toa, the Kirutwa restaurant, the elaborate scenic overlook, the thatch-roofed information center, and the water pumping station. Strolling about among the buildings, tourists may be identified by the backpacks that they wear and the white hats that they do not wear. This storyline invokes the history of infrastructural and institutional development that has unfolded in Quilotoa over the last few decades. In the sky above the scene, a condor wears a red poncho. This is the *condor enamorado*, the condor who fell in love with Princesa Toa, who iskneeling in the foreground spinning woolen yarn as she tends her sheep and llamas. As depicted in many paintings and retold during a folkloric dance performed by a troupe of young Quilotoans on the afternoon of the inauguration of the new hotel, this story is both the origin of the name selected for the new hotel and the origin myth of Quilotoa itself.

Figure 8: Folkoric dance telling the story of the condor enamorado and Princesa Toa, 2014.

A painting by Juan César Umajinga of Quilotoa provides another vision of community development in Cotopaxi. The painting shows indigenous people tending animals, sorting potatoes, weaving a poncho, playing panpipes, and conducting a healing ritual. Condors and owls appear in the sky. A personified rock face in the background illustrates the persistence of Andean cosmology in the presence of a Catholic church. In other words, this painting is at first glance a fairly typical example of "slice of life" paintings that typify the tourist-oriented face of the genre (Whitten 2003; 2011). However, when the artist first showed me another version of this scene, he said that it shows the buen vivir.

Figure 9: Buen vivir *as the renewal of Kichwa society. Painting by Juan César Umajinga.*

When asked *how* the painting shows the buen vivir, Juan César pointed out the traditional activities in which the people in the painting are engaged. He left it to me to reflect that many of the elements that he had pointed out are the kind of disappearing ancestral practices lamented in the discourse of yanka kawsay. Yet close attention to the scene reveals that the painting does not show an ancestral community. For instance, the buildings are made of cinder blocks; the most striking sign that this is a future-oriented community is that a woman in the lower left corner is reading a book in Kichwa. Whether by coincidence or by design, the book's title is *Ñuka Kawsay*, which means "My Life." Perhaps the artist was thinking of Ugsha Ilaquichi's 1985 bilingual Spanish-Kichwa picture book *Como Vivimos* ("How We Live") in which the author identifies painting as a way to reinvigorate rural indigenous livelihoods.

Further investigation revealed that Umajinga's painting is a reproduction of a painting by Alfonso Toaquiza of Tigua that appeared on the cover of a manual about capacity building in economic development produced by the Proyecto de Desarrollo Rural en la Provincia de Cotopaxi (PRODECO, the Rural Development Project in Cotopaxi Province). Umajinga decided to copy Toaquiza's painting simply as an exercise in maintaining his skills as a painter during a period in which he needed to devote most of his time and energy to his responsibilities as an elected official in the parish government of Zumbahua. Yet the appearance of the original painting on the cover of a PRODECO publication is nonetheless significant: the scene was first envisioned as a visual summary of the projects that PRODECO had completed in its efforts to revitalize the rural economy in Cotopaxi. Thus, the scene that Umajinga identified as a depiction of the buen vivir illustrates a socioeconomic renewal of Kichwa society that is actively becoming. Toaquiza gave credit to the institutions that had made PRODECO's efforts possible

by including the logos of the European Union and the Development Council of the Nationalities and Peoples of Ecuador (CODENPE).

Tellingly, on another occasion when I asked Umajinga to explain the buen vivir, he mentioned several elements of the lifeworld that appears in the painting:

> The real buen vivir in the community, its fundamental basis, is that there should be unity. There should be mutual respect among the people, and no saying "You don't deserve what you have" or "No one deserves it." That's the foundation of the buen vivir. And also having a source of money, having health, and education. That's plainly the buen vivir: I feel truly good in life.

Indigenous Political Philosophy

Indigenous intellectuals have typically engaged with sumak kawsay as a philosophical project of explicating the moral principles and modes of social relations upon which to build a better society. Their efforts are informed by experience in the local-level institutions that work to overcome the yanka kawsay. Indeed, many of them began their careers as leaders in such organizations and then moved on to local political positions such as that held by Juan César Umajinga before they achieved national prominence as politicians or widespread notoriety as intellectuals. However, the intellectual discussion of sumak kawsay tends to engage with indigenous culture more consciously and more abstractly than is usually required in the everyday politics of local government.

The Amazonian Kichwa community of Sarayaku issued a long-form press release in 2003 that may be read as a segue from grounded critique of the actually-existing yanka kawsay to exegesis of the aspirational sumak kawsay (Sarayaku 2003). Written in a collective voice, the document addresses the community's strong opposition to the expansion of oil extraction within its ancestral territory and frames Kichwa economic practices and ecological understandings as profoundly anti-capitalist and anti-colonial. It describes sumak kawsay as both "fullness of life"

and “life in harmony” while identifying the concept as an ancestral model upon which to challenge the social and environmental destructiveness of neoliberal capitalism as well as a platform for building a better future.

Sarayaku represents itself as existing in a “relation of mutual complementarity” among humans and non-humans. “Despite outside attempts to organize us in other ways,” they say, “we have had to adapt ourselves according to the order and the rules of our own Sacha [forest].” Throughout the document, the Sarayaku authors make strategic use of indigenous vocabulary (e.g. sumak kawsay and *sacha*) in order to communicate authenticity and epistemological difference to non-indigenous readers (Graham 2002), but they do not acquiesce to the “false Western belief” that their homelands are “virgin, savage and empty of civilization.” Rather, they assert, “like ancestral peoples and forest cultures we are just as human as any other human beings. And like them we interact with our environment. Our relationships with the forest are not ‘natural’ as has erroneously been said, but rather fundamentally cultural.” The environmental characteristics of Sarayaku territory, like most of the Amazon, are “the result of centuries of social intervention, just as our societies are the result of centuries of coexistence with the forest.”

The principles of social organization and livelihood practices that lead to the sumak kawsay for the Sarayaku authors result from a centuries-long process of productive exchange with the non-human world. Yet the 2003 document does not claim to have all of the solutions for addressing damages wrought by the extractivist practices that it opposes: “As the people of Sarayaku, we do not offer definitive nor magical answers. We think only that by consolidating our life plan we can contribute to the search for another world, to the construction of another democracy and another economy, based on our principles.”

More recently, Sarayaku has invited non-indigenous people to join its efforts. In a proposal submitted to the 2015 Paris Climate Conference it urged the world community to strive for a fundamental metamorphosis: "We need to shift from a modernizing model of development—a model that treats nature as material resource—to the alternative of *Kawsak Sacha*, which recognizes that forming community with many kinds of selves with whom we share our world is a better way to orient our economic and political activities" (Sarayaku 2015). The document identifies Kawsak Sacha as "the primordial font of sumak kawsay":

> Kawsak Sacha (The Living Forest) is a proposal for living together with the natural world that grows out of the millennial knowledge of the Indigenous Peoples who inhabit the Amazonian rainforest, and it is one that is also buttressed by recent scientific studies. Whereas the western world treats nature as an undemanding source of raw materials destined exclusively for human use, Kawsak Sacha recognizes that the forest is made up entirely of living selves and the communicative relations they have with each other. These selves, from the smallest plants to the supreme beings who protect the forest, are persons (*runa*) who inhabit the waterfalls, lagoons, swamps, mountains, and rivers, and who, in turn, compose the Living Forest as a whole. These persons live together in community (*llakta*) and carry out their lives in a manner that is similar to human beings.

Reflecting broader indigenous political patterns in Ecuador, indigenous intellectuals from the Andean region usually frame their discussion of sumak kawsay in political-economic terms rather than the political-ecological terms favored by the leaders of Sarayaku and other indigenous intellectuals from the Amazon. However, Andean and Amazonian thinkers alike mobilize the concept in order to mount a defense of community, culture, and territory. They agree that ancestral principles and practices are the grounds upon which to contest structural and material violence in the present and to build a better future. Blanca Chancoso, a prominent voice in Ecuador's indigenous movement, puts the matter bluntly:

> When we talk about the Sumak Kawsay, it is not about returning to the past, because we can not say that this has been perfect, but we did have and live the Sumak Kawsay. [Living the sumak kawsay] has allowed us to survive these 518 years of marginalization, discrimination, inequality and racism, because we have lived [with reference to] the collective and the community. We do not have the land as before, because it has been

> divided into the smallholding, but somehow there has [persisted] the solidarity and reciprocity that has allowed us to survive through struggle and resistance. (2017: 278)

Luis Macas, a Kichwa leader from the community of Saraguro in Loja Province, defines the political-economic principles and practices that underlie Andean approaches to sumak kawsay in aspirational terms. Dividing sumak kawsay into its component parts, he explains:

> *Sumak* is plenitude, sublime, excellent, magnificent, beautiful, superior. *Kawsay* is life; it is becoming [*ser estando*]. But it is dynamic, changing; it is not a passive affair.
>
> Therefore, Sumak Kawsay would be the fullness of life. Life in material and spiritual excellence. Magnificence and the sublime are expressed in harmony, in the internal and external equilibrium of a community. Here, the strategic outlook of the community in harmony is to reach the highest level. (2010a: 14)

Macas writes, "The communal system is sustained in the principles of *randi-randi*: the conception and practice of life in reciprocity, redistribution, principles that are managed and are in force in our communities. It is based in the collective vision of the means of production; there is no individual ownership, property is communal" (2010a: 14). He goes on to identify and explain specific types of reciprocity practiced in Andean Kichwa communities and then makes a strong claim that the good life based on the practice of such reciprocity is incompatible with the organization of Western society. For Macas, the discursive purpose of sumak kawsay is to reclaim the narrative, "to recuperate and develop our systems of life, historical institutions and rights, predating the State, in order to decolonize history and thought" (2010a: 16). He proposes it "as an option of life for all," not simply an indigenous idea for indigenous peoples but "for the entire society" (2010a: 16). Indeed, Macas takes the view that the formulation of "proposals from a cultural and political position" has been the most important work of the indigenous movement and that such proposals have the potential to transform "society, the State, and the system in general" (2010b: 14).

Andean and Amazonian perspectives on the sumak kawsay are united in the constitutional proposal prepared in 2007 by the Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador (CONAIE), the most prominent national-level organization in the Ecuadorian indigenous movement. The first paragraph below embodies Andean emphasis on political economy while the second paragraph captures the Amazonian emphasis on political ecology (CONAIE 2007: 21):

> The economy should be based on ancestral principles like the "sumak kawsay," which posits the buen vivir, in the principle of reciprocity fostered by the communities in practices like the minga, the randy randy, the cambia mano or maki mañachi. Principles that radically question economic accumulation as the object of the economy.
>
> The proposed economy should foster the harmonic coexistence of persons and peoples among themselves and with nature. Biodiversity and nature are not another commodity that is bought and sold and that is exploited irrationally, nature is the pachamama, we're part of the same, therefore relationships with the natural environment should be respectful.

Thus, discourses of sumak kawsay may be viewed as grounded in a constellation of overlapping, interconnected, and dynamic social, economic, and ecological principles. They include: (1) the understanding that the social world involves human as well as non-human life, (2) the obligation to engage in reciprocity with others in the social world, (3) the proscription of greediness in the practice of such relationships, and (4) the maintenance of harmony or balance within the social world as a whole. The practice of these principles is taken as inherently political and inherently antithetical to the capitalist ethos rooted in extractivism and oriented toward material accumulation. All of these principles are documented in the ethnographic literature and have long circulated in the discourse of Ecuador's indigenous movement, but only as a result of the political-philosophical elaboration of sumak kawsay have they coalesced into a named model of good living.

This model has begun to appear in the political repertoire of grassroots institutions, where it has taken on multiple valences. Generally, these mobilizations of sumak kawsay are aimed at agents and institutions of the state, either as a means of engaging the interest of those who might undertake infrastructural and economic development projects or as a critique the state's failure to live up to its promises (Lyall, Colloredo-Mansfeld and Rousseau 2018). I other cases, the buen vivir is invoked as a primary objective in locally rooted projects to improve social life in indigenous communities. For instance, a video produced by the United Nations Development Fund for Women explores how a Kichwa women's organization from Imbabura Province has worked to overcome institutionalized violence and discrimination against women (UNIFEM 2011). In a voiceover, Inés Bonilla narrates how women in her community organized a local renaissance of ancestral jurisprudence. In so doing, she says, "we've recovered an important meaning of the sumak kawsay, of the buen vivir." She explains:

> Our rules often impose symbolic sanctions that purify or cause one to reflect, to sanction, and it's the *cabildos*, our indigenous authorities, who put them into practice. With this we've strengthened ancestral justice. Only in very serious cases like rapes do we fall back to the law of the state.

When they invoke the sumak kawsay, local political actors and institutions tend to be more pragmatic than philosophical. They talk about the need to improve livelihoods, infrastructure, and economic prospects within their communities. Thus, when asked to explain the significance of sumak kawsay in the mission statement the Bio Taita Chimborazo Corporation of Organic Producers and Marketers, a long-time member and leader said:

> I think that in order to have the sumak kawsay, we need to be really, really, really well organized in everything: in production, in health, in education. We have to be organized in everything. For example, through production we can have sumak kawsay. That is, through our own crops, we can earn money and with that money we can have education, we can have good health, or we can have goods that we can't have right now; we can get ahead and that's truly the buen vivir and sumak kawsay.

Discussion

Andean utopia is not only an effort to understand the past or to offer an alternative to the present. It is also an attempt to glimpse the future. It has these three dimensions. Within this discourse, it matters as much what has happened as what is going to happen. It announces that some day the time of the mistis *will come to an end and a new age will begin.*
— Alberto Flores Galindo (1988: 78)

The discourse of sumak kawsay must be understood in the context of a centuries-long Andean tradition of looking to the past for an alternative to the llaki kawsay of the present. While the Spanish colony was young and memories of the injustices of Inca rule lingered, followers of the Taqui Onqoy movement looked to an even earlier era; they "predicted the resurrection of the *huacas*, that is, local deities" (Flores Galindo 1988: 50). Later, the Incas came to be remembered as a "counterpoint to the dramatic injustice and imbalances of the present day" (Flores Galindo 1988: 27). Elements of these former memories linger on in modern indigenous Andean thought, providing ancestral models for the future: Inca warriors and huacas both appear in Tigua and Quilotoa paintings as sources of authority and legitimacy for Ecuador's modern indigenous leaders.

In other words, the Tigua-Quilotoa genre of painting and the political discourse of sumak kawsay are manifestations of deep Andean decolonial historiography. As Weismantel indicates, when indigenous Andean thinkers invoke ancestral principles and practices, they "call into being something that does not exist—but could" (2006: 90). There are two different ways to make sense of this decoloniality.

First, one might draw on Joanne Rappaport's work with Nasa intellectuals in Colombia, who give voice to "history *as it should have occurred*" (1998: 205, emphasis in original). As Muratorio writes, "Tigua paintings are visual ethnographies and histories from which

subordinate groups begin to tell their own alternative histories as one of many strategies to assert their identity" (2000: 57). In communicating these alternative histories, "Tigua artists make selective use of the memory of their oral tradition to give new meaning to their daily practices in modern life" (Ibid.) and, as such, demonstrate "their ability to resignify and reformulate the symbols and discourses of the hegemonic culture in order to make them their own" (Muratorio 2000: 58). From this perspective, the genre flips the script on colonial and post-colonial histories of dispossession and subordination by re-centering marginalized indigenous practices and principles.

Alternatively, one might draw on Mark Rifkin's exploration of "Native conceptualizations, articulations, and impressions of time that do not easily fit within the framework explicitly or implicitly oriented around settler needs, claims, and norms" (2017: 4). As Rifkin indicates, colonial understandings of history and society tend to efface indigenous modes of being in the world. Thus, to gain the recognition of non-indigenous society, "indigenous histories, modes of collectivity, and relations to place" must usually be translated into dominant frames (2017: 6). To refuse such translation is inherently political, and to symbolically subordinate non-indigenous frames in indigenous depictions of society and history is to critique dominant frames at the deepest levels. This is precisely what the Kichwa artists of Tigua and Quilotoa do in their paintings.

The latter interpretation of artists' efforts to decolonize history most closely reflects the evolving political-philosophical discourse of sumak kawsay and its engagement of the world through ancestral principles and practices. Indigenous intellectuals are not anti-modern but they recognize that modernism has often been anti-indigenous (Viola 2011; 2014). Recognizing that contemporary Western society disavows a worldview that refuses to separate culture and nature,

in which human and non-human beings are co-participants in the social world (de la Cadena 2015), indigenous intellectuals understand that "the authority of subaltern perspectives remains subject to the epistemic violence associated with colonialism" (Radcliffe 2012: 247). They have accumulated centuries of frustrated experience attempting to articulate these principles and practices in terms that non-indigenous people can understand (Sarayaku 2003). The discourse of sumak kawsay seeks a counter-hegemonic inversion that subverts dominant development narratives by proposing that fulfilling lives may only be achieved by reaffirming and enacting indigenous ancestral principles.

5. Mikuna: Quinoa in Kichwa Society and the Global Market

As Christmas 2014 approached, people in Quilotoa started thinking and talking about *navidades*—small packages of cookies and candies with which godparents, politicians, and NGOs demonstrate their generosity. The two youngest children of my host family took it upon themselves to ensure that they would be receiving plentiful Christmas goodies and decided to call their German godfather. The whole family listened in on the conversation and gave animated advice about what to say as the children handed the phone back and forth between them. The collective effort paid off: the children secured the promise of *canastas navideñas*—whole baskets of treats rather than just small packages. Visibly pleased, the children said goodbye to their godfather with wide grins on their faces that reappeared when he arrived a few days later with large baskets full of treats. The children rummaged through the packages avidly and selected a few items to eat right away, sharing them with the rest of us according to Kichwa custom.

But while the obligation to share often means that *navidades* are completely consumed within a few hours of being given, the contents of these *canastas navideñas* were never completely consumed. The problem was that this German godfather had filled the baskets with what one of the young recipients called *"comida del extranjero"* (foreign food) and no one in the family knew what to do with the food even after I offered advice. Eventually, I was told I should take whatever was left and do whatever I wished with it. I made candies out of some cacao nibs from one of the baskets, but the family left most of them uneaten. Frustrated and a little confused, I gave up and the baskets languished for months as I occasionally helped myself to a snack of puffed quinoa breakfast cereal, quinoa energy bars, amaranth candies, almonds, roasted squash seeds, and the remaining cacao nibs.

It comes as no surprise that a family of Kichwas has different tastes than their German and American fictive kin. After all, taste is learned in the context of social and cultural distinction (Bourdieu 1984). What intrigues me about this case is that foods made of native Andean foodstuffs were perceived as foreign by native Andean people.

Kichwa Social Worlds

The Andean concept of *pacha* provides an initial framework for understanding my hosts' perception that the quinoa products in the *canastas navideñas* were foreign food. When Kichwas refer to foreign foods or other products, I take them to mean that those things originate in an order of things that predominates somewhere else. Such foreign things are often highly coveted, and some are indispensable to the persistence of Kichwa culture. For instance, in the next chapter, I describe how my Kichwa kin sought to purchase clothing items of foreign origin to wear during a wedding that I sponsored. The groom and his father desired "American" jackets to wear during the ceremony while the bride and other women of the wedding party required alpaca wool shawls made in Bolivia in order to keep up with current wedding fashion. All of them wore fedoras imported from Germany.

The items in the *canastas navideñas* seem to have been identified as foreign food because they were perceived to have originated in some other order of things. Yet this insight does not explain how Andean products like quinoa got to be part of a non-Andean order of things. To address this conundrum, this chapter explores the cultural significance of quinoa in Kichwa society, the marketing of quinoa to global consumers, and the mechanisms that allow quinoa to move between semiotic regimes.

Quinoa in Kichwa Society

Quinoa has deep historical roots in the Andean region. Bruno and Whitehead (2003) have shown that near Lake Titicaca, on the border between present-day Bolivia and Peru, the process of human selection began more than 3,500 years ago. Bazile, Fuentes and Mujica (2013) date the earliest cultivation of the crop to more than 5,000 years ago and cite evidence that it was domesticated in different parts of the Andes at different times. By the end of the Inca period, varieties of quinoa were being grown throughout the Andes. The chronicler Garcilaso de la Vega reported that indigenous Andeans and Spaniards alike used the tender leaves of quinoa in their stews "because they are tasty and very healthy," and that native people also used the grain in soups and to brew a drink (2015: 599).

Spanish colonialism had an enduring impact on the role of quinoa in the cultures and economies of the region. As Thierry Saignes writes, "European dominion swiftly transformed material life, starting with diet" (1999: 108). Mary Weismantel explains that "the relations of domination established in the colonial period were represented by the stigmatizing of certain indigenous foods as "Indian," and hence unfit for consumption by non-Indians" (1998: 9). Quinoa was amongst these stigmatized foods. Overall quinoa production declined precipitously during the colonial period, but indigenous agriculturalists continued to grow it for their own consumption and researchers often credit them with the preservation of crop diversity (e.g. Tapia 1994: 127).

Indian Food

In her semiotic study of foodways in Zumbahua, the parish in Cotopaxi Province to which Quilotoa belongs, Weismantel (1998) found that the colonial era stigmatizing of "Indian

foods" has persisted into the modern era. Indeed, such stigma is found throughout the Andean region. For example, Clare Sammells (1998) reports that in the Bolivian city of La Paz llama meat is closely associated with indigenous people and rejected as inedible by non-indigenous people who regard it in the same way they regard the indigenous people with whom it is associated: as dirty, dangerous, and smelly. As Rudi Colloredo-Mansfeld explores, "White-mestizos still use pernicious images of disease, irrationality, and 'dirty Indians' to characterise indigenas and justify their poverty" (Colloredo-Mansfeld 1998: 186).

"More insidiously," writes Colloredo-Mansfeld, "Racial images circulate within indigenous society" (1998: 186). Upwardly-mobile indigenous people invoke these images in order to justify and expand social gaps within their own communities, and "some poorer peasants use pejorative vocabulary self-referentially" (ibid.). As Sammells documents, some indigenous residents of La Paz distance themselves from llama meat "in order to demonstrate that they are in a higher socioeconomic class than their peers" (Sammells 1998: 30). Meanwhile, "Wealth, and especially the possession of cash, is associated with whiteness. Ambitious indigenous people frequently can be identified by their eagerness to master 'white' behavior and dressing [and eating] styles" (Weismantel 1998: 76).

In this context, quinoa remains an "Indian food." This was made clear to me when I first visited the home of a new acquaintance in Guangaje, a neighboring parish to Zumbahua. My arrival was treated as a special occasion for the household and the matriarch of the family had prepared a special meal consisting of quinoa soup and a large helping of boiled potatoes, mellocos, and fava beans. As we sat perched on the edge of a bed in order to eat, the patriarch of the family boasted to me that all the foods we were eating had come from the household's own plots, that they were both worm- and pesticide-free, and that they were better than anything that

one might find in the weekly market. But then when his wife was out of hearing distance, he asked in a whisper whether it all tasted alright. I was effusive in my praise for the meal and he was relieved. He explained that his wife had been nervous about serving me these foods because she was worried that I might not like them. When I asked why anyone would worry that I wouldn't like such good food, he replied matter-of-factly that is was Indian food.

Later that afternoon, my hosts took me to see some of their fields. As we inspected a small plot of quinoa, they told me that their oldest children do not like to eat quinoa. This is part of a larger pattern that is much discussed and lamented in the Kichwa communities where I have conducted my research. Young people, especially young men, are regularly criticized for abandoning the language, clothing styles, foods, and other overt signs of Kichwa ethnicity.

Since the agrarian reforms of the mid-twentieth century, Kichwa people have found it increasingly difficult to maintain rural livelihoods. Some have resolved to move permanently to Ecuadorian cities or even to migrate abroad, but many have found that political-economic conditions require Kichwa households to dispatch their able-bodied males in search of wage-earning opportunities while most women, young children, and the elderly are left in charge of day-to-day agricultural tasks in the countryside. Boys are also sent to urban high schools much more often than are girls. This means that young men are generally much more familiar and comfortable with urban spaces than are their older or female kin.

Urban experience puts a great deal of pressure on indigenous people to assimilate to non-indigenous national culture, and they learn to a greater or lesser extent how to blend in when they are away from their home communities. The success of the national indigenous movement has somewhat lessened the pressure to assimilate, but as Colloredo-Mansfield indicates, "the new ethnic movement has not displaced Ecuador's older racist attitudes" (1998: 186). When migrants

return to help with the harvest, to attend festivities, or to recoup from a setback, many demonstrate a preference for the foods, clothing, and language that they have encountered in culturally non-indigenous urban spaces and a distaste for the things they associate with indigenous rural life. As Weismantel explains, the changes that Kichwa society has undergone since the agrarian reforms of the mid-twentieth century are evident in changing foodways, "and younger people want to eat things their mother never cooked" (1998: 17). Even the temporal rhythms of meals in rural Kichwa communities differs from what migrants learn to expect in urban environments, and "Many young people feel strongly that one 'ought to' eat meals according to the latter pattern" (Weismantel 1998: 178).

Ancestral Food

Kichwa people in highland Ecuador also consider quinoa an ancestral food. This category is similar to the category of "Indian food" in terms of its contents, but it inverts the value assigned to foods. Whereas Indian food is denigrated by non-indigenous people, ancestral food is exalted by indigenous people.

"Ancestral" does not necessarily mean "native" in the ecological sense. And as the opening vignette indicates, foods made of native Andean crops are not always regarded as ancestral. Rather, ancestral foods are those that have been inherited from the ancestors alongside language, dress, market strategies (Scarborough 2010), and other elements of culture that connect people to their forebears. As Weismantel points out, "For the purposes of contemporary Zumbagua discourses, indigenous people have "always" eaten barley, spoken Quichua, and raised llamas and sheep. By reclaiming the remnants of previous conquests, Spanish and Incaic, as native to their own tradition, these people continue to define themselves as the possessors of a

distinctive culture" (1998: 155). Or, as my Kichwa interlocutors are more likely to put it, these are the foods (and other cultural elements) of the grandparents: "*de los abuelos*."

Ancestral foods are generally regarded as strength-giving, often in specific contrast to non-ancestral foods. For instance, a young man from Chimborazo province told me:

> The best food is ours, our food. You have, for example, *máchica* [barley porridge], barley, quinoa. We go out in the morning having eaten a little *champus* [corn porridge]; that keeps you going. We don't need a refreshment. It lasts until lunch. ... Having eaten city food, with that we feel more hunger. By ten o'clock we're already hungry. It doesn't keep you going. It doesn't endure like our products. With *máchica*, pearled barley, that's how you keep going until midday.

Similarly, a Kichwa informant from the Ecuadorian Amazon told Thomas Perreault that "for Indians, without chicha there is no life, because lemonades alone are not enough to stay in the stomach. But chicha stays and allows you to work with greater strength" (Perreault 2001: 402). Colloredo-Mansfeld documents a public speech in Guangaje in which a man spoke to his audience about "the power of their grandparents' grains, their barley and quinoa and potatoes. He reminded them that these gave them force to work all day, not like the rice and candies of the city" (Colloredo-Mansfeld 2009: 155). In the same vein, Andrew Orta reports from Bolivia:

> Aymara I spoke with often asserted their capacities for hard physical work as something that distinguished them from non-indians. This was presented by many as a visceral quality linked to the consumption of ethnically-marked foods such as potatoes or quinoa. Some consultants blamed recent shifts in diet - as more Aymara consumed purchased rice or noodles - for what they saw as the weakness of contemporary Aymaras compared with their elders and ancestors. (Orta 2002: 739)

As in the last example, a perceived lack of vigor in current generations might be blamed on the forsaking of ancestral foods. In Quilotoa, the death of an usually old woman from a neighboring community prompted one man to tell me that people only live to about 70 years old these days, because there are chemicals in all the foods people eat, which come mostly from market vendors rather than from local producers. Older generations used to eat only what comes

from the zone, he explained, and they lived much longer. Similarly, Clare Sammells reports from Bolivia: “Today rural Aymara purchase imported and processed foods, such as cooking oil, rice, bread, and cookies, and often view the cuisine of the past with nostalgia. Many in Tiwanaku agreed that their ancestors’ better health and longer life spans were the result of eating llama and other traditional foods, including chuño" (2010: 116).

Gringo Food

Weismantel explained that in the 1980s the national diversity of Ecuador was reduced in the minds of Zumbahua residents to a strict dichotomy between “Indian” and “White.” The extensive vocabulary for labeling mixed race people that one finds in other parts of the Andes were “words infrequently heard in the parish, and then only to refer to market sellers who come from outside” (1998: 75). There was apparently no such thing as “mestizo food” or “cholo food” in the parish at that time. However, there was a word for people who fell entirely outside the local system of classification: “gringo,” a term used by residents of Zumbahua “to refer to the religious community and the clinic staff” (1998: 75).

Far more gringos pass through the parish these days, a result of the burgeoning tourist economy. This means that the people of Zumbahua encounter gringo food much more often than they used to; this is particularly the case in Quilotoa, the primary destination for most tourists. But the youth of Quilotoa are regularly admonished not to call tourists “gringos” because some of the tourists don’t like that word. So it is possible that the category of “gringo” has simply evolved into the more benign category of “foreign” that members of my host family applied to the contents of the *canastas navideñas* described in the opening vignette.

More to the point, Weismantel indicated that gringos fell outside the local system of social categories because they were understood to be “"foreign" to the parish and so outside its social hierarchy” (1998: 75). Thus, it stands to reason that in order for an Indian or ancestral food like quinoa to become foreign gringo food it would need to be alienated from the indigenous social world. The next section explores how such alienation occurs.

Quinoa in the Global Market

Quinoa enters market via several different channels (cf. Ofstehage 2012). Much of the quinoa that Ecuadorian Kichwa producers do not consume themselves is sold to middlemen who serve the national market (Carimentrand, et al. 2015: 334). Although middlemen who trade in certain other products establish close relationships with producers (Ferraro 2006), quinoa growers from Chimborazo speak of their experiences with middlemen in terms of deep racism, systematic abuse, and rigged scales. Furthermore, as the foundation Maquita Cushunchic – Comercializando Como Hermanos (MCCH) has observed, intermediaries “keep for themselves a substantial percentage of the price paid by the final consumer at the expense of the potential income of the peasant producer” (1991: 153). Baltazar Umajinga explained in the mid-1990s that in the Zumbahua market, “What happens is that for every hundredweight they steal 10 or 15 pounds; they pay less to the *compañeros* that don’t know how to count; they insult them when they don’t want to sell” (1995: 259).

Peasant organizations have launched projects to improve their lot. However, according to MCCH (1991: 32),

> Peasants’ experiences in marketing their products are rather frustrating. Several organizations were able to build a storage facility and manage capital. Others attempted to trade products between the highlands and the coast. Few were able to consolidate their business due to the obvious difficulties of the market.

MCCH responded to these difficulties during the 1980s by building a network of markets and communal shops where peasant organizations could trade agricultural products with one another more directly, cutting out middlemen and facilitating more flexible trading practices (MCCH 1991: 54-55). Over time, this network evolved into a broad range of social and economic initiatives that includes an arm dedicated to agricultural exports. Catholic foundations informed by the tenets of liberation theology—including MCCH, Fundo Ecuatoriano Populorum Progressio (FEPP), and Escuelas Radiofonicas Populares del Ecuador (ERPE)—now handle much of the organic and fair trade quinoa produced in Ecuador and figure among the country's largest quinoa exporters (Carimentrand, et al. 2015: 340). MCCH and ERPE also manage large-scale processing plants.

With the construction of its own processing facility, the Corporación de Productores y Comercializadores Orgánicos Bio Taita Chimborazo (COPROBICH) has recently taken a more prominent role in quinoa production. According to its website, the organization "seeks to reduce the exclusion of indigenous Puruhá [Kichwas] from the province of Chimborazo through the valuation of quinoa, wheat, pearled barley and other organic farm products" (COPROBICH n.d.). In its structure and administration, COPROBICH illustrates Colloredo-Mansfeld's (2009) concept of "vernacular statecraft," through which indigenous collectivities in the Ecuadorian Andes have achieved a degree of self-determination in governance and local development. The organization is dedicated in part "to the socio-economic development of its members and of the Province of Chimborazo" (COPROBICH n.d.). It also supports the ideals of fair trade and organic production, both of which movements are dedicated to re-embedding agricultural commodities in their relations of production (Raynolds 2000). COPROBICH offers its members

higher prices than intermediaries offer, but it also requires them to adhere to stricter rules regarding production techniques. Its leaders are themselves quinoa growers who maintain familial, social, ritual, and economic ties to the indigenous communities in which they live.

Industrial Product

Upon its entry into the commodity market, quinoa is quickly alienated from its initial context of production. This was made evident to me during a conversation with a Quito-based businessman whom I'll call Emilio because I do not have his explicit permission to use his real name in print. For Emilio, the cultural value of quinoa is unimportant. Rather, he asserted, "the important thing is that there is a commitment" in which everyone complies with the contracts that have been established. He considers it particularly important that his company's suppliers deliver quinoa of consistent quantity and quality, because the company has legally enforceable contracts with retailers in Ecuador, Chile, and Australia. The company can't meet its obligations to these retailers if the producers of raw materials do not first uphold their deals with the company.

In an effort to ensure a reliable supply of quinoa, Emilio's company has experimented with different styles of production. In the past it worked with ERPE, but Emilio had been unhappy about inconsistencies in the raw material that resulted in unwanted processing complications for the company. So, during a recent season, the company decided to source all of its quinoa from a single operation and set up a project in which the company provided seeds, disease treatments, and technicians in exchange for a promise that the growers would sell exclusively to the company. But the producers sold some of their product to other buyers who offered slightly higher prices, causing new problems for the company. Most recently, Emilio has

concluded that the company needs someone who can sign a formal contract and be held legally responsible for breaches of contract; to his mind, this excludes peasant communities. The company has considered working with a large hacienda or even cultivating quinoa itself. Everyone in his position faces the same problems with unreliable suppliers, Emilio said.

Certain characteristics of agricultural production do matter to Emilio. For instance, he hopes his company will go 100% organic in the near future. This hope is not motivated by a moral concern for the health of producers, consumers, or the environment, but rather by the opportunity to increase profits by meeting new market demands. Currently there is a demand in Ecuador for organic baby foods, which the company already produces, but there is also a growing international demand for organic products of all types. Emilio explained that "the global trend is healthy eating" and that "organic is more generalized; everyone wants it." The company pays more for organic raw materials but also stands to earn more by selling at higher prices in the organic market niche.

According to Emilio, fair trade certification doesn't offer the price boost that organic certification offers, but it does open up additional markets. He explained that fair trade markets don't currently exist in Ecuador, where people don't think about it when they are making their purchases, but they do exist in Europe and the United States. It's like kosher certification, he said, because certain people won't buy unless the product carries the proper label. For his company, the goal of fair trade is to increase profits by reaching these markets.

Clearly, Emilio considers quinoa economically valuable. He also seeks to understand what international consumers value about quinoa, but he cares little about what quinoa growers value. Indeed, he only concerns himself with the conditions of production when they affect the supply of raw materials that his company receives or when they might be harnessed in order to

add economic value to the company's products. In the latter regard, Emilio is like other food industry professionals involved in alternative trade models who "do not have an incentive to discuss everything about their production methods, but only to discuss those aspects of their production methods that distinguish them favorably from conventional producers" in the eyes of consumers (Allen and Kovach 2000: 226).

COPROBICH, which also processes quinoa for sale in the international market, differs from Emilio's company in many respects. Yet the industrial processing methods employed by COPROBICH also alienate quinoa from its producers. When members deliver their quinoa to the processing facility, it is carefully weighed and marked with a tag identifying the producer, the weight, and the date of delivery. Until it is put through the machines that clean and sort it, the quinoa remains associated with its producers via these tags. However, upon being poured into the industrial washer that removes the grains' bitter saponins, quinoa grown by different families in different communities is mixed together into an undifferentiated slurry. It is not until the final stage of processing, when quinoa is measured out into the packages that will appear on the shelves of foreign grocery stores, that it is re-imbued with cultural significance by the promotional blurbs that appear on the back of the packages.

Anna Tsing's (2013, 2015) study the commodity chain along which matsutake mushrooms move from the United States and China to Japan provides a framework for bringing this phenomenon into focus. Tsing shows that in each of the places where matsutakes are harvested, a unique assemblage of human and non-human actors imbues the mushrooms with cultural significance that derives from the encounter between the diverse actors' personal and collective histories. But as the mushrooms enter the global commodity chain, they are torn free of the cultural contexts in which they are harvested, resulting in the erasure of their initial

cultural significance. The matsutakes will later be imbued with new significance as they enter the Japanese market, but during transit and sorting they are merely commodities. Quinoa undergoes a similar process: by the time it reaches the shelves of international grocery stores, the cultural significance of quinoa is no longer defined in Andean terms.

Global Super Food

International researchers generally consider quinoa an underutilized crop (Bhargava and Srivastava 2013) and find that "the value of quinoa lies not only in its adaptability to high altitudes but also in its nutritive value" (Eiselen 1956: 331). Marketing campaigns aimed at global consumers tout this clinically-confirmed nutritional value, promoting quinoa as a "super food" alongside other faddish health foods like chia seeds and açai berries, but they also promote its association with Andean people of the past and present in an ostensible defetishization of commoditized quinoa.

Joshua Berson (2014) attributes the origin of this pattern in marketing campaigns to David Cusack, a critic of the Green Revolution and a founding member of the U.S.-based Quinoa Corporation in the early 1980s. Indeed, in a few brief lines from a 1984 article, Cusack captured all of the selling points that one typically finds in the international marketing of quinoa today (1984: 22):

> Quinua's nutritional qualities are well-documented. The Incas and their modern descendants honoured it because it gave strength for arduous work at high altitudes. Thanks to a number of nutritional analyses in recent years we now know why.

Commenting on "the hype surrounding Andean superfoods, gluten-free products, heirloom crops and other niches used to push quinoa and its congeners to a broader demographic," Berson concludes that Cusack was prescient in his approach (2014: 126). Indeed, Cusack's words

continue to echo across packages of quinoa products sold in grocery stores all over the world. A package of Bob's Red Mill quinoa found in a U.S. grocery store exalts:

> Lucky for us, these whole grains aren't just ancient history; they're also tasty, nutritious additions to modern meals. Packed with vitamins, minerals, and protein, these "super grains" of the ancient world are wonderfully healthy, and their unique flavors and textures will add a delicious twist to your favorite recipes. They're versatile, too—great for snacks, salads, side dishes, entrees and baked goods.

A package of Ancient Harvest quinoa also found in a U.S. grocery store shifts the focus to contemporary Andean producers:

> Quinoa (keen-wa) known as "The Mother Grain", is now being heralded as the "Supergrain of the Future". Ancient Harvest has worked with local, indigenous farming communities for over 30 years to offer delicious authentic foods you can trust. Our ancient grains descend from farms that span the entire length of the Bolivian "Altiplano" (high plains) at the base of the Andes Mountains. Not only do our products deliver a taste your whole family will love, but they are always gluten free, organic, non-GMO and delicious.

Although the language and images used to market quinoa to international consumers are similar to those that characterize the discourse of ancestral food in Kichwa communities, the products marketed to international consumers are not meant to circulate in Kichwa society. These products are absent from the open-air markets where most Kichwa people buy food and sundries for household consumption. In those markets, quinoa is exclusively sold in bulk, without any associated advertising. These packages do not even appear in the non-elite urban grocery shops where urbanized Kichwas have begun to buy products that their rural kin would regard as White food. A few processed and packaged quinoa products are sold in such stores, but they are promoted only in terms of their health benefits. However, quinoa sold in upscale grocery stores in Ecuador *is* packaged in containers inscribed with such promotions. For instance, a package of Quinotto (quinoa risotto) encountered in a SuperMaxi, which I've translated from Spanish, read:

> Quinoa could be called 'the rice of the Incas'. In point of fact, it was the sustenance of Andean peoples for millennia. It was considered sacred by the Incas and recognized by their people as 'Chisiya mama' or Mother Seed. With the arrival of the Spanish, the cultivation of quinoa was destroyed and replaced with wheat. Today, quinoa is considered a 'perfect food' by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). It has 16 essential amino acids, protein of high biological value and is naturally gluten free.

I have never visited an upscale Ecuadorian grocery with rural Kichwas, but I have occasionally been witness to the profound uneasiness that rural Kichwas experience when they enter the shopping malls where upscale grocery stores are typically found in Ecuador. As I describe in greater detail in the next chapter, the patriarch of my host family once told me that "there is nothing for us [in the mall].” At the time, I took this to be an observation that clothing available at the mall was all too big for small-statured indigenous people, but I later came to see it as a declaration that he and his family felt alienated in this unfamiliar retail space.

Thus we come, finally, to a conclusion about why the contents of the *canastas navideñas* were understood to be foreign food even though many of them were made of native Andean products. Despite the formal similarities between the discourse of ancestral foods that circulates in Kichwa communities and the marketing blurbs that appear on products like those with which the German godfather had filled the baskets, the foods in the *canastas navideñas* did not belong to the sociocultural world of Kichwa communities. Perhaps, like barley and sheep, these products will one day be incorporated into the Kichwa cuisine through upwardly-mobile urban Kichwas, but for now they remain viscerally foreign regardless of their component ingredients.

Quinoa as Intercultural Product

Lest the preceding discussion be taken as a claim of radical difference between Kichwa culture and global consumerism, I wish to reiterate before I conclude the present discussion that

much of what Kichwas today regard as ancestral is the result of exchange. Hence, quinoa-based power bars might one day come to be regarded as ancestral food. Indeed, such a shift in categorization is particularly likely to occur in places like Quilotoa, where Kichwa entrepreneurs interact with international tourists on a daily basis and actively seek out opportunities to establish fictive kinship with German businessmen and American anthropologists.

Kichwa people have engaged in a generations-long struggle to overcome the poverty and exclusion that non-indigenous people still sometimes impute to their Indianness. In reality, of course, these structural conditions are the consequence of racism, not the result of ethnicity. Yet many of those indigenous people who seek opportunities in hostile urban environments still pragmatically learn to downplay overt signs of their ethnicity. In the process, some of them internalize a dislike for "Indian" things. Indigenous intellectuals challenge this state of things through decolonial political discourses such as "sumak kawsay," which calls for Ecuadorian society to be reorganized according to ancestral principles and practices (Quick and Spartz 2018).

Grassroots institutions work to provide their members with livelihoods that do not require them to abandon their culture or communities. As Walsh-Dilley (2013) documents in Bolivia, it is through such institutions that "rural Andean people combine local, non-market and cooperative strategies with increasing integration into global markets to construct feasible livelihoods that are socially and ecologically appropriate" (661-662). In the case of COPROBICH and the community-based tourism center in Quilotoa, this engagement with the foreign has become as an integral tool for revitalizing Kichwa society. Ancestral foods play an important symbolic role in this process of revitalization (cf. Di Giovine 2014).

That quinoa is able to traverse multiple realms of significance is a testament to the crop's intercultural potential. Yet this potential remains unrealized, at least for the time being. Despite remarkable similarities between the discourses of ancestral strength-giving food and global super food, the hype on packages of quinoa risotto does little to de-fetishize the contents of the packages. Or, more precisely, the marketing of quinoa to global consumers tends to supplant the commodity fetish by reifying disenchantment itself (cf. Cook and Crang 1996; Goodman 2004).

Discussion

In Andean storytelling, the intrusion of persons from one *pacha* into another is often a profoundly dangerous event, but the transport of food products from one *pacha* to another tends to play out as a kind of cross-fertilization (Allen 2011). This might be taken as a parable for contemporary globalization, which pollinates the florescence of new cultural practices all over the globe even as brutish Western tourists go around ruining people's lives. Indeed, the stories I have been told about the earliest touristic visitors to Quilotoa often involve references to traditional stories about human monsters that steal children to make sausages and ghosts that return to attack the living.

However, as much as the texts on globally-marketed packages of quinoa might imply that ancient Andean foodstuffs will transport indigenous values into the world market, the supply chain along which the quinoa moves belies such a claim. Just as the global supply chain causes matsutake mushrooms to be first alienated from their original contexts of collection and then re-imbued with cultural significance upon their arrival in consumer markets, quinoa is estranged from its context of production before it is infused with new values in the global market. In the

meantime, another much older structure of economic relations continues to constrain Kichwa people's participation in Ecuador's national economy; this is the subject of the next chapter.

6. Randi: Indigenous Spaces of Commerce and Finance

The exercise of managerial authority over the collective resources created and maintained by the CTC Quilotoa and its predecessor institutions has allowed for the emergence of a socially and politically distinct place—the community of Quilotoa—where there existed only a communal pasture a generation ago. This authority has also provided Quilotoans the basis upon which to develop a sense of responsibility toward the resources they have created, to defend their right to profit from those resources, and to continue to develop those resources as they see fit (see Quick and Spartz n.d.). As my colleagues and I discuss elsewhere (Colloredo-Mansfeld, et al. 2018), Quilotoan territorial authority and coherence has only grown as *socios* of the organization have individually and collectively confronted conflicts with rivals.

All of this has contributed to the emergence of a space of indigenous modernity: a *pacha* of small scale in which the defining order of things is structured by rationalized and institutionalized indigenous approaches to conducting social, economic, and political relations. Quilotoa may be unique in its control over access to a natural wonder, but it is by no means unique in its use of pre-existing tools of governance to pursue local development (see Colloredo-Mansfeld 2007). Ethnographies from elsewhere in the Ecuadorian Andes (e.g. Bretón 2012; Cervone 2012) and the Amazon (e.g. Erazo 2013) show vernacular institution building to be a defining characteristic of contemporary indigenous society throughout the rural regions with the largest indigenous populations.

In urban Ecuador, indigenous spaces are far more likely to remain marginalized within the prevailing order of things. Colloredo-Mansfeld (2009) has documented vernacular institution building among rural-to-urban Kichwa migrants from Tigua to Quito, whose trade associations

have directed their efforts toward the exercise of authority over their places of work, but the neighborhoods of southern Quito where Tiguans live remain marginalized. The case of El Alto in Bolivia, where Sian Lazar (2008) has documented the formation of neighborhood councils that mediate the citizenship of their rural-to-urban indigenous migrant members, suggests that indigenous vernacular institution building in urban Ecuador may be on the horizon. Yet for now the historic marginalization of indigenous people persists in most Ecuadorian cities, except perhaps in the smaller cities of the northern Andes where indigenous people have a strong presence in formal politics.

The burgeoning sector of indigenous-run savings and credit cooperatives in cities of the central Ecuadorian Andes represents a new wave of institution building. The next chapter explores how these cooperatives engage with their Kichwa founders and investors in much the way older rural institutions like the CTC Quilotoa engage with their members, but also how savings and credit cooperatives engage with their indigenous and non-indigenous clients in ways that are more evocative of the global expansion of microfinance. However, this chapter tackles a less daunting task: it explores how the new indigenous financial landscape being produced by these cooperatives has been constructed on top of existing spaces of indigenous commerce in urban Ecuador.

The Plaza in Latin American Urban Spaces

To understand indigenous spaces in Ecuador's urban environments, one must begin with the central plaza, because it is the seat of authority in Latin American urban design. To be close to the plaza is to be at the center of society, geographically and socially. This physical, political, social, and religious centrality is of pre-Columbian origin (Low 1995). However, in 1573 when

the Spanish Crown set out guidelines for urban planning in the region, it drew most directly on the models developed by the Roman architect and engineer Vitruvius (Kinsbruner 2005: 24). Among other things, the *Ordinances for the Discovery, New Settlement, and Pacification of the Indies* dictated (Mundigo and Crouch 1977: 254-255):

> *112. The main plaza is to be the starting point for the town; if the town is situated on the sea coast, it should be placed at the landing place of the port, but inland it should be at the centre of the town. The plaza should be square or rectangular, in which case it should have at least one and a half its width for length inasmuch as this shape is best for fiestas in which horses are used and for any other fiestas that should be held.*
> *...*
>
> *114. From the plaza shall begin four principal streets: One from the middle of each side, and two streets from each corner of the plaza; the four corners of the plaza shall face the four principal winds, because in this manner, the streets running from the plaza will not be exposed to the four principal winds, which would cause much inconvenience.*

The *Ordinances* stipulated that the lots surrounding the plaza were to be the first designated. Furthermore, the crown ordered, "In the plaza, no lots shall be assigned to private individuals; instead, they shall be used for the buildings of the church and royal houses and for city use" (Mundigo and Crouch 1977: 256). This center of governmental and religious authority exerted a kind of centripetal force over private residences. As Germán Trujillo writes, "The distribution of plots signaled, from the beginning, the social hierarchy: closeness to the main plaza was a certain indication of the importance of the resident and this nuclear zone was considered the zone of the conquistadors" (2001: 318). In other words, the plaza was not only at the center of the city, it was the center of power in society. It was also the center of finance, since the Church was the primary lender to the owners of haciendas, plantations, and factories. In large cities, the centripetal arrangement of urban space around the plaza was reproduced in a kind of fractal array: each neighborhood was anchored by its own church and plaza, acting as a

subsidiary geographic and social center to the complex surrounding the main plaza of the city. The few indigenous people who lived near the main plaza were there only to work in the households of wealthy non-indigenous people.

Meanwhile, following his inspection of the colonial Viceroyalty of Peru in 1570 and 1575, Viceroy Alejandro Toledo directed the establishment of *reducciones*, rural settlements to which indigenous Andeans were forcibly resettled in order to manage tribute and assert authority. Each *reducción* was built around a plaza complex. Alejandro Málaga Medina explains: "The streets were laid out in blocks, starting at a main plaza where face-to-face were built the main church and the *cabildo* [governmental complex]. The houses formed homogenous rectangular blocks and were constructed with doors to the streets so that they were visited as much by the priests as by the defenders of Indians and *corregidores* [appointed mayors]" (1979: 172-173). Although this resettlement program was understood by its executors as a form of benevolent paternalism and even seen as an effort to restore Andean life to an imagined pre-Inca state, "The reducción was a project of fundamental change, a violent reorganization of land and life intent on improving what the Spanish perceived as spiritually and racially inferior natives through Christian order and its physical manifestation: Spanish-style villages" (Hirsch 2016: 96). Within the colonial order of Peru, the *reducción* became the principal space of indianness.

Thus, while large cities — oriented around central plazas — functioned as spaces of indigenous social exclusion, rural *reducciones* — similarly oriented around central plazas — functioned as spaces of forced indigenous economic and political inclusion. Both forms marginalized indigenous Andean people within the colonial order, the legacy of which has persisted over time. Thus, following independence in the early 19th century, the social geography of the Republic of Ecuador reproduced this pattern: Ramón Valarezo and Torres

Dávila (2004) write that "the four provincial capitals were towns or cities created by the colonial State as spaces of administration, economic management, and Spanish residence, so they belonged to the sphere of what in the early colony was called the 'Republic of Whites'" (49). On the other hand, they explain, the administrative centers of counties and parishes had resulted from *reducciones*. As Ramón Valarezo and Torres Dávila point out, "These towns were created as part of the Republic of Indians" (2004: 59).

As subsequent sections show, the marginalization produced by this organization of social space persists today in Kichwa people's quotidian engagements with social space: the urban plaza anchors commercial and financial practices that are experienced as both unfamiliar and hostile to indigenous people, while the rural plaza anchors commercial practices that are experienced as familiar if exploitative to indigenous people. While there have emerged urban spaces of commerce and finance that are in many ways analogous to that of the rural plaza, these are found at a remove from the urban central plaza.

Today, it is still commonplace for smaller towns to host weekly markets in their main or secondary plazas, but it has been increasingly common for cities and towns of all sizes to construct permanent indoor markets that may or may not border a public park or plaza. In large population centers, it is common for these permanent markets to be open every day but Sunday. Most recently, the commercial landscape in Ecuador has been transformed by the construction of large shopping malls that house outlets for national and international brands and are most often anchored by a large supermarket.

Recent changes in the commercial terrain notwithstanding, the traditional concentration of power and prestige in the plaza remains very much in evidence in the contemporary Andes. For instance, Hirsch (2016) discusses the lasting influence of the built environment of the

reducción on contemporary life in a community in the Colca Valley of Peru, and notes that a development agency based there conspicuous chose to locate its offices on the town plaza. He writes that the organization is housed "in rented government space next to the Spanish-style municipality building and several meters from the church" (104). Reflecting the neoliberal transfer of the authority to govern to non-governmental organization, this physical positionality reflects social structure. Such situatedness, writes Hirsch, "expresses the institution's importance in community life and its power to define and teach what is locally valuable, a power largely generated by tapping, however inadvertently, into a colonial legacy of deploying space to categorize people as indigenous and to distinguish among them via technologies of conversion and resource extraction" (ibid.).

Martínez Novo (2013) identifies how the same colonial legacy is also found at a slightly larger scale in Ecuador. In the context of a broader rhetorical shift toward the recognition of indigenous people within the Ecuadorian state, the 1998 constitution provided for the establishment of indigenous territories. However, the legal framework that it defined for the creation of such territories was based on existing divisions of the state. As Martínez Novo writes, "The problem with this method is that the current divisions of the state are based on the distribution of mestizo population and not on the distribution of its indigenous inhabitants. Typically, indigenous populations are distributed in the margins of such a division, the center of which is the mestizo town or small city" (2013: 120). Consequently, the historical geographic marginalization of indigenous people continues to reproduce political marginalization.

To challenge such legacies, one must challenge the logic of colonial space. Thus, an informant from Zumbahua told me that when his father sought to undermine his political opponents by organizing his neighbors to form a new *comuna*, he chose to form a Protestant

community. He did not do so because he had been spiritually or emotionally moved to convert from Catholicism. Rather, he chose to form a Protestant community because it would allow him to form a settlement without a traditional power center consisting of Catholic Church and central plaza. His choice allowed him to displace the focus of the newly formed community to a Protestant Church that was supported by an international aid organization with which he felt he had a good relationship. In other words, my informant's father recognized that the plaza is the site of the institutions that have traditionally presided over Latin American society; in order to subvert the authority of those institutions, he felt he needed to eliminate the traditional plaza complex.

Contemporary Spaces of Indigenous Commerce

As discussed in chapters 1, one consequence of Ecuador's mid-20th century agrarian reforms was that many young Kichwa males and some young Kichwa females were compelled to seek wage labor away from the rural communities where they were born. As the Kichwa work histories discussed in chapter 2 illustrate, the search for wage labor often entails repeated moves between rural hometowns, large cities, and coastal plantations. Thus, the urban experience of many Kichwa individuals has been episodic. However, their collective search for wages has resulted in the creation of large, permanent Kichwa neighborhoods on the periphery—that is, far from the central plaza—of cities throughout the country.

The cultural and social spaces that result from this pattern of migration may be traced in many ways, all of which link them back to rural communities. For instance, one might track the flow of urban Kichwas as they travel to rural communities in order to participate in festivals. One might trace the investments that urban Kichwas make in the development projects mounted

by rural communities. Or one might take note of the lasting connections that an urban trade association maintains with the rural community from which its members originate (Colloredo-Mansfeld 2009). Here, I track connections in the opposite direction: rural residents' shopping excursions to urban environments.

I took part in a series of such excursions beginning in late June 2014, when my Quilotoan landlords recruited me to be *padrino* (godfather) to the marriage of their son. By taking on this role, I accepted responsible for some of the expenses of the marriage celebrations. We agreed that I would pay for the band, the couple's clothing, and the sheep and guinea pigs eaten during the fiesta. The parents of the groom would pay for the remainder of the food, disposable utensils with which to serve and eat it, and the cooks hired to manage its preparation. They would also rent a stage for the band, a large canopy to cover the eating area, and plastic chairs for the guests, all of which was to be set up in their family compound.

Having arranged with the parish priest to conduct the ceremony in September, we set about preparing for the fiesta. The largest single expense was the band and the largest total expense was the food. Yet it was clothing for the wedding party that cost us the most time and required the most travel. Over the course of several months, as we shopped and haggled in different commercial settings, a map began to develop in my mind and in my fieldnotes. There emerged a distinct geography of where my shopping companions did or did not feel comfortable with the ways they were expected to behave toward the people from whom we attempted to purchase wedding goods.

Kichwa Taste

Our shopping excursions were informed by evolving cultural expectations about what a prosperous Kichwa couple and their retinue should wear during a wedding celebration. A well-

appointed 21st century Kichwa wedding party requires numerous items of clothing purchased expressly for the wedding. Among these items are underclothes for the bride and groom; blouses, skirts, shawls, shoes, and jewelry for the bride and the *madrina*; shirts, pants, and jackets or ponchos for the groom and *padrino*; and felt hats for the entire wedding party. The clothes worn by the bride and *madrina* should match, as should the clothes worn by the groom and *padrino*, but men do not always match closely while women are nearly always dressed so similarly that they can be difficult to distinguish at a distance.

Our group introduced a few variables to this arrangement. As a non-indigenous foreign *padrino*, I was expected to wear a new suit, which overrode the expectation that I should match the groom. Since I did not have a wife to fill the role of *madrina*, the widow of the groom's elder brother filled in informally. Perhaps as a consequence of my own mismatching, she did not quite match the bride. Instead, the groom's parents dressed to match the young couple.

The wide-ranging trajectory of our shopping excursions was prompted by a desire to acquire a variety of items of foreign provenance. It may be that this desire was prompted by my own foreign origins or by the family's experience of catering for several decades to international tourists, but it also aligns with two historical trends that merit a brief narrative detour: the pre-Hispanic organization of Andean subsistence strategies such that livelihoods depended on diverse products originating in an "archipelago" of distinct ecological niches (Murra 1972), and the foreign origins during the Spanish colonial and post-independence periods of what is now regarded as "traditional" Kichwa attire.

Long before the kind of Kichwa engagements with global consumerism that I witnessed during my shopping excursions with other members of the wedding party, Andean livelihoods depended on the assembly of products from diverse origins. Indeed, this was true even before the

historical emergence of what we now recognize as Kichwa culture in Ecuador. John Murra (1972) explains that, each according to its own principles of social organization, the pre-Inca peoples of the Andes depended on the "vertical control of a maximum of ecological niches" (67). This dependency was prompted by the super diversity of microclimates in the Andean landscape. It was not possible for a population to live well with the products of a single locale, so political or kin-based units were compelled to establish various forms of access to the products of many niches at different altitudes. With the Inca conquest, Murra writes, the verticality of these practices was supplanted by an imperial system in which was established "an archipelago whose constituent 'islands' no longer required any physical proximity" (111). Nevertheless, like the vertical archipelagoes that this imperial system subverted, the Inca empire still depended on the marshaling of resources gathered from many distinct locations.

The Spanish colonial system displaced and immobilized much of the indigenous population of the Andes, though indigenous agriculturalists continued to exploit diverse ecological niches where they could. Indigenous Andeans also found themselves propelled into a new system of long-distance trade and cultural exchange that redefined, among many other elements of indigenous culture, indigenous Andean clothing. Ann Pollard Rowe and colleagues find it notable that Inca styles of clothing were worn in Ecuador until well into the twentieth century (Rowe, ed. 2011). Rowe writes (2011: 309):

> This survival results in part from the fact that the Spanish overlords did not object to it. When they did object to something, such as men's loincloths, it was quickly replaced by Spanish garments. In the colonial period, indigenous garments formed part of the tribute and payment system, which would have reinforced their use, but even after these systems were no longer in effect, people continued to make and wear this clothing. Presumably the fact that this small country had relatively few resources and attracted relatively little outside attention also contributed to the conservatism of the costumes of its indigenous inhabitants.

Nonetheless, a variety of foreign influences worked their way into indigenous dress over time. Many of these influences are now considered key elements of traditional Kichwa garb. For example, the poncho is widely regarded as an indispensable part of Kichwa men's traditional outfit. Indeed, the decline of the poncho's popularity among young men is bemoaned by Kichwa elders as a sign that young people are abandoning their culture. Yet Rowe and her colleagues find that its origins most likely lie among the Mapuches of Chile and its first appearance in Ecuador appears "to coincide with the revolutionary period and independence from Spain in the first quarter of the nineteenth century" (2011: 314). Similarly, the *rebozo* style shawl, an equally central part of Kichwa women's clothing most likely made its way to Ecuador via Mexico in the eighteenth century; Rowe writes, "Its origin and development has proved to be more interesting and complex than has previously been suggested, with even a possible West African influence" (2011: 313).

Thus, I find it entirely within Kichwa cultural logic to desire wedding clothes that are gathered from a diverse array of distant locations or to desire styles that originate abroad. Nonetheless, it required a great deal of time to fulfill these desires. In the months leading up to the wedding, I traveled all over Cotopaxi and Tungurahua provinces with various subsets of the extended family to which I was allying myself. In August, during one particularly long day of shopping, we seemed to visit every possible commercial source of clothing in the capital cities of the two provinces.

Shopping in the City

Our initial destination that day was Ambato, the provincial capital of Tungurahua. Our first stop was the city's *mercado mayorista*, a regional hub for wholesale agricultural goods that

also houses a small covered market containing perhaps a hundred stalls devoted primarily to bolts of fabric and clothing. We browsed the stalls but did not find anything fit for the wedding, so we drove further into the heart of Ambato, where we met up with family members that now live in Baños (a tourist town in Tungurahua) in order to have breakfast at a cafeteria in one of the city's *centros comerciales* (commercial centers).

Then we visited a shop where my compadres had learned we could find German-made felt hats of a slightly different style and somewhat higher quality than the fedoras sold in the weekly outdoor market in Zumbahua. Unfortunately, the shop had sold out of the style that we hoped to purchase. So we decided to try Ambato's large new shopping mall, where we hoped we could find the sneakers and "American" style light coats that the groom and his father wanted to wear for the wedding. However, we couldn't find clothes at the mall that fit them well. To make matters worse, something in the backpack of one of our group set off the theft alarm at the Payless Shoe Source outlet, rattling the collective nerves of the group.

Our shopping trip to Ambato appeared to be a bust. As the group huddled outside the Payless shop discussing the alarm, my *compadre* turned to me and declared that we should leave Ambato and look for clothes in Latacunga. We still had one more floor to explore and I told him that we should look a little more, since we were most likely to find an American-style jacket at the mall. But after the next store also turned up nothing, he said again that we should go somewhere else. “They don't have *runa* clothes here,” he announced, using the Kichwa word that politically-minded Kichwa speakers sometimes use in lieu of “indigenous.” In the moment, I found this statement odd, since we were looking for an “American” jacket, not a “runa” jacket, and I took his statement to mean that he had given up hope of finding clothes that would fit his small-statured kin. In retrospect, I believe he was making a much more pointed statement, the

significance of which was underlined by his use of the term *runa* and his subsequent chatter to an uninterested cab driver about how indigenous people "necesitamos defender," how they need to defend themselves as indigenous people. His statement was a defensive action against the unfamiliar workings of an unfamiliar place.

Defeated in Ambato but still dedicated to our task, we drove back to Cotopaxi and bought most of the clothing the bride and groom would need at the Centro Comercial Popular El Salto in Latacunga. Here, the sizes were appropriate, the styles were familiar, the language of communication between buyer and seller was mostly in Kichwa, and the prices were determined through haggling. We found underclothes for the bride and groom; new sneakers, pants, and a belt for the groom; new heeled shoes, a skirt, a blouse, and a belt for the bride; and fedora-style hats for the whole wedding party.

The primary items left on our shopping list were a suit for me, matching jackets for the groom and his father, matching shawls for the bride and her mother-in-law, and wedding jewelry for the bride and groom. We found a shop across the street from Parque Vicente León, Latacunga's central plaza, and quickly picked out a suit that would fit me. My compadre also found a jacket in the shop that he liked, and told me, "Now we just have to see about a discount." "Not here," I counseled him, but he attempted to negotiate with the clerk on the grounds that the coat we were considering purchasing for his son was really too big. The mestizo clerk flatly rejected his attempt to haggle.

Ultimately, we purchased the groom's jacket, shawls for the bride and her mother-in-law, and wedding jewelry during separate shopping trips. We paid full price for the jacket at a sporting goods store at the Latacunga mall, where attempts to haggle were once again rejected by a mestizo clerk. For the bride and her mother-in-law, we later purchased alpaca wool shawls

from an independent shop near El Salto that imports their products from Bolivia. My companions appeared very much at ease as they joked and haggled with the indigenous shop owner, who endeavored to establish a friendly relationship with them. We haggled for earrings for the bride and rings for the bride and groom back at the Centro Comercial El Salto, and we haggled for the bride's necklace in the weekly market in Pujilí.

The Commercial Terrain of Highland Ecuador

By the time we had collected all of the clothing we needed for the wedding, we had traversed the commercial terrain of two major cities and visited a great diversity of different types of commercial spaces: we visited a weekly open air market, a mercado mayorista, multiple centros comerciales, several independent shops, and two shopping malls. As my companions moved through these spaces, I observed their level of comfort to vary in relation to their familiarity with the code of interaction that was expected within each setting. Let us therefore consider the codes that shape the various types of settings we visited.

The weekly market in Zumbahua's plaza is the source of most of Quilotoans' food, household goods, and clothes. Here, they engage with long-distance traders who make their livings by traveling from market town to market town. As in other rural weekly markets, all prices in the Zumbahua market are negotiable and most prices fluctuate by season. Haggling may be done in Kichwa, Spanish, or a mixed version of the two languages known as *media lengua*. Residents of Zumbahua and neighboring parishes who visit the market establish long-term relations with vendors who cultivate their customers' loyalty and friendship by adding a little extra after weighing out the requested quantity of bread or tomatoes.

The weekly market is also a social space. Friends meet up throughout the day to share a meal at one of the stands serving hot meals in the market or at one of the permanent restaurants located near the market. Alternatively, they might meet up to share a few bottles of beer at a hole in the wall just above the market. Or they might form a team to play Ecuadorian-style volleyball in the courtyard of the church.

Mercados mayoristas are much like rural markets, but on a much bigger scale. They are found only in large cities. They are bigger in the sense that they cover more ground and contain more product, but they are also bigger in the sense that they are primarily devoted to wholesale. Nonetheless, prices are negotiable and fluctuate by season. Long-term relationships are forged among regular buyers and sellers. Negotiations usually take place in Spanish, because buyers and sellers alike often travel great distances from other regions of the country. As in small rural markets, goods of different types are separated into distinct zones.

Centros comerciales are also like rural markets in many ways, except that they are housed in permanent multi-level structures and they operate every day. They are found in cities. Goods of different types are likely to be found on different floors or in different sections of the same floor. Within each section are distinct shops owned and operated by individual families. Prices are always negotiable. The example I know best is located in Latacunga, the provincial capital of Cotopaxi. There, perishable and non-perishable goods are found in separate but adjacent buildings. Perishable goods are sold in the Mercado Cerrado Latacunga while non-perishable goods are sold in the Centro Comercial Popular El Salto. The independent shops clustered nearest to these centers operate according to same logic as those inside the main buildings, but some of the shops just a few blocks away keep their prices fixed.

Shopping malls are a new feature of Ecuador's commercial landscape. They are found only in large cities and have been built only quite recently even in many provincial capitals. Most of the shops they contain are outlets of large corporations, including international brands such as Payless Shoe Source and Hallmark. Indeed, they appear to be based on an international business model, a fact that was underscored for me when I learned that my Kichwa informants refer to these establishments using the English word "mall." Malls in Ecuador are often anchored by large grocery stores carrying brands that are traded internationally, and many contain a food court featuring fast food outlets. Prices are strictly fixed and Spanish predominates. Neither buyers nor the employees of shops at the mall expect to establish long-term relationships through their commercial interactions. As I learned during our shopping expedition to Ambato, my Kichwa companions are deeply uncomfortable at the mall.

Although I did not recognize these distinct commercial spaces as such while I was shopping with my Kichwa companions, I later discovered that they match the spaces of distinct finance that I was mapping in another part of my research.

Spaces of Finance

As my companions and I were preparing for the wedding in Quilotoa, I was also conducting a survey of the indigenous-run savings and credit cooperatives in Latacunga, the subject of the next chapter. One element of this research was to map the financial landscape of Latacunga. As I created my map during the second half of 2014, I encountered all four types of institution that are regulated by Ecuador's Superintendency of Banks (SuperBancos n.d.):

> **Bank:** An institution that, on one hand, is charged with safekeeping the money that is deposited by clients and, on the other hand, utilizes part of the deposited money to give loans, charging an interest rate.

Financial Society: Institution that has as a basic objective to participate in the capital market and to grant credit in order to finance the production, construction, acquisition, and sale of goods at medium and long term.

Savings and Credit Cooperatives: The union of a group of persons that have as a goal to help each other with the goal of achieving their financial needs. The cooperative is not formed by clients but by members, inasmuch as every person has a small stake in it.

Mutualists: The union of persons the have as a goal helping each other in order to solve financial needs. Generally, mutualists invest in the real-estate market. Like savings and credit cooperatives, they are formed by members.

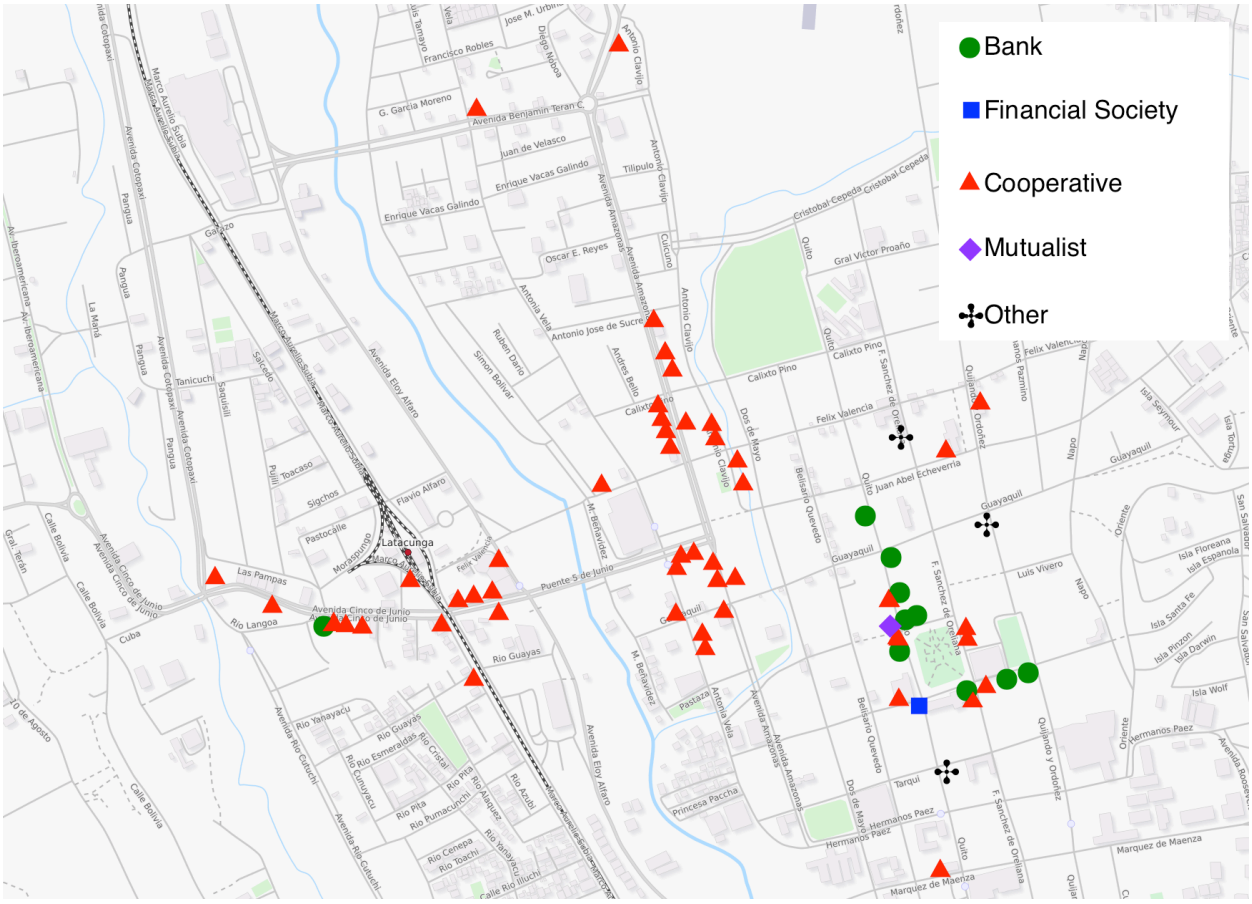

Figure 10: Map of financial institutions in Latacunga, 2014. Base map created by OpenStreetMap contributors, licensed under CC BY-SA.

The vast majority of financial institutions in Latacunga are either banks or savings and credit cooperatives. Of the 63 storefronts I identified in 2014, 9 were banks and 47 were savings and credit cooperatives. There was one mutualist and one financial society (but many

cooperatives began as financial societies). I also found a handful of other institutions such as the Fondo de Desarrollo Microempresarial (Microenterprise Development Fund, FODEMI), which states on its website that it is affiliated with the Christian development organization World Vision and that its work "is focused on serving microentrepreneurs through the provision of financial services (credit) and non-financial services (capacity building and counseling) to those who, for lack of collateral, are not subject to credit within the formal financial system (financial societies, banks, cooperatives" (FODEMI 2009).

Latacunga's banks cluster around the Parque Vicente León in the city's administrative center. On the other hand, savings and credit cooperatives primarily cluster around the Mercado Cerrado Latacunga and the Centro Comercial Popular El Salto. A second cluster of savings and credit cooperatives extends up Avenida 5 de junio, a primary thoroughfare that turns into a major highway as it leaves the city, connecting the highlands to Ecuador's coast. Avenida 5 de julio is the primary conduit between the city and rural indigenous communities.

Not pictured on my map of financial institutions in Latacunga is the city's mall, which had not yet been built when the satellite images on which the map is based were taken. The mall is now located in the large empty lot in the upper left corner of the map. It houses automatic teller machines provided by several of the large banks located on the city's central plaza as well as the distinctly non-indigenous savings and credit cooperative for police. Thus, the mall might be regarded as a kind of outpost for the banking sector.

It is clear that savings and credit cooperative sector operates at a physical remove from the mainstream financial sector is concentrated. Thus, while the emergence of the savings and credit cooperative sector has not supplanted mainstream financial institutions, this new financial sector *does* produce new finance geographies. This is true also in Quito and nearly all of the

other cities of highland Ecuador. I have discovered only one exception: when I mapped financial institutions in the northern city of Otavalo, I did not find the same distinct concentrations of savings and credit cooperatives from banks. The lack of physical separation in Otavalo might be a coincidence or it might be a result of Otavalo's small size in comparison to Quito and Latacunga. However, I suggest that it results from Otavaleño Kichwas' self-assertive presence in all aspects of their urban environment. The entire city of Otavalo has been transformed into an indigenous space through the efforts of several generations of indigenous politicians and entrepreneurs in a way that has not occurred in other urban environments in Ecuador. Thus, the businesses and institutions that serve indigenous people are widely distributed in Otavalo but are concentrated in other cities. This insight leads us toward a conclusion about the social characteristics of indigenous spaces of commerce and finance in highland Ecuador.

Discussion

To understand why savings and credit cooperatives cluster in the same spaces where my Kichwa companions are most comfortable shopping for wedding clothes, we must consider again the social geography of Latin American cities. Indigenous people are no longer excluded from the urban central plaza by any direct exercise of power, but this locus of urban geography and social power remains hostile and unfamiliar to indigenous people. That the attendant in the clothing shop by the Parque Vicente León flatly refused to haggle with my compadre is a reminder that this space is still unwelcoming. That Latacunga's banks cluster in the same space is a reminder that they have tended to exclude indigenous people just as the other institutions of the plaza have done.

The spaces where Kichwa people feel comfortable shopping operate according to the codes that rural people learn to negotiate in the weekly markets held in the plazas of rural towns like Zumbahua. These shopping centers also anchor the indigenous-run savings and cooperative sector. The social and cultural spaces so created have emerged in response to exclusionary frameworks such as the Spanish Crown's 1573 *Ordinances*, but they have also been created through indigenous people's efforts to improve their own communities. As one cooperative manager told me, the parents and grandparents weren't even allowed through the doors of the banks. "They didn't believe in us," he said. "That's why the cooperatives were born," he explained; the cooperatives are a form of rebellion. "We just needed leaders to emerge," he said. "Then some youths said, 'No, let's open a cooperative so that we can have a socioeconomic impact on the country.'" All founders and employees of savings and credit cooperatives are quick to point out that they would never reject a potential customer out of racism. Nonetheless, the physical distance of the cooperative sector from the traditional banking sector and traditional seat of power indicates that it serves a financially and socially excluded segment of the population.

Like the spaces they occupy, the business practices carried out by savings and credit cooperative employees mirror the practices that are characteristic of indigenous commerce. For instance, cooperative employees are flexible about the language they use to interact with customers: they speak Spanish inflected by Kichwa and Kichwa inflected by Spanish, often describing the terms of their services in both languages to ensure comprehension. Cooperative employees are often socially connected to their customers, and while they do not offer better interest rates to their friends in the way that a market vendor would offer better prices to her

long-time customers, cooperative employees take social networks into account when they determine the credit worthiness of applicants.

Cooperatives also take part in the social life of indigenous communities. A Latacunga cooperative founded by migrants from Guangaje parish sponsors a soccer team in their home community and gives out treats there at Christmastime. In Zumbahua, cooperatives based in Ambato and Latacunga sponsor Corpus Christi events and prizes and take part in the grand parade that concludes the celebration. Other cooperatives also seek to sponsor beauty pageants or provide scholarships to students.

The emergence of the shopping mall as a new pole in the commercial and financial landscape of Ecuadorian cities is intriguing, as it represents a site of global capitalism in multiple facets. As a commercial space, the mall is quite evidently an outpost of global consumerism. Ecuadorian malls house outlet shops for international retailers such as Payless Shoe Source. They also tend to be anchored by grocery stores that stock brands labeled in English with food certifications from the likes of Fairtrade International and even the United States Department of Agriculture. Perhaps most significantly, my Kichwa interlocutors use the English word "mall" to distinguish these sites from the more familiar and more comfortable centros comerciales.

As a financial space, the mall seems to be an outpost of the banking sector based around the central plaza, but it must be remembered that the financial sector of the plaza is also an outgrowth of global capitalism. In many respects, it is the child of one man: the "Money Doctor" Edwin Walter Kemmerer, an American economist based at Princeton University, who led a U.S. financial mission to Ecuador in the 1926 and 1927. As Paul Drake sums up (1989: 3):

> Kemmerer introduced monumental innovations in Andean economic regulations, practices, and underpinnings. In his most sweeping renovation he implanted twenty-six new laws and agencies in Ecuador, thoroughly revamping money, banking, government

> budgeting, taxation, customs, credit, public works, and railroads. The institutions he fostered—such as the central bank, the superintendency of banking, and the national comptroller—still dominate the government plazas and policy apparatuses in the Andean countries.

After Kemmerer, structural adjustment programs overseen by transnational entities like the World Bank and the International Monetary Reform would reshape the Latin American economies in the late 20th century. Then, at the turn of the 21st century, contentious monetary policies were implemented that designated the U.S. dollar as the official currency of Ecuador. Most recently, the "Citizens' Revolution" of the Correa administration sought to revamp economic policies once again, declaring the immanence of a more "solidary" economy. Yet the banking infrastructure made possible by the Kemmerer Mission remains, as do the structural conditions that marginalize many indigenous people within Ecuador's national economy. The next chapter explores a corner of the financial sector that seeks to remedy some of the consequences of this ongoing marginalization: the burgeoning sector of indigenous-run savings and credit cooperatives in Ecuador's central Andes.

7. Kullki: Money, Credit, and Indigenous Finance

Although labor and debt were recorded in the hacienda ledgers in monetary terms, cash was scarce in the hacienda economy. Indigenous laborers needed cash in order to make purchases in the market and to pay certain emergency expenses, but most of these costs could be covered by nominal salaries and *suplidos*. Day to day needs were mostly met by exploiting the resources to which laborers gained access as a perquisite of their labor.

The Agrarian Reforms that eliminated the hacienda regime intensified a shift that was already underway in the early twentieth century as modernizing hacendados began to trim their workforces. Former *huasipungueros* gained access to small plots of land but these plots were often among the least productive lands within the former hacienda's boundaries. They also lost access to additional hacienda resources and to the *socorros* and *suplidos* that they had received from the hacendado. This produced a substantially increased need for cash that could only be met through labor migration of the sort described in chapter 2.

In the decades since the agrarian reform laws were passed, *suplidos* have sometimes been extended by market middlemen like the milk buyers studied by Emilia Ferraro (2004; 2006). Some non-governmental organizations also provide loans in the communities where they maintain programs. For instance, Luis Tuaza indicates that the Ecuadorian Red Cross has promoted *cajas comunitarias* (communal chests) for women (2011: 180). These are similar to the rotating savings and credit associations (ROSCAs) that Geertz (1962) once theorized as an intermediate form between traditional and commercial financial institutions and that Wall Street now aims to "scale up" into rationalized microfinance enterprises (Maurer 2013). Vernacular institutions like the CTC Quilotoa discussed in chapter 3 have also provided their members access to common pool resources with which to either meet needs directly or earn cash. Yet there

remains a substantial need for money in Ecuador's highland indigenous communities. As a young woman in Latacunga told me, "Nowadays, if you don't have credit, you don't have anything."

In Tungurahua Province, and particularly in Chibuleo, Kichwa entrepreneurs began to respond to this need in the early 2000s by establishing their own financial institutions following the institutional model of the *cooperativa de ahorro y credito* (COAC, savings and credit cooperative). Some transformed existing community *cajas comunales* while others formed their financial enterprises from scratch. Ambato, the provincial capital of Tungurahua, quickly became a banking hub for indigenous people in Ecuador. Early successes prompted junior partners and employees to strike out on their own, forming new cooperatives. Then, competition in Tungurahua and opportunity in other provinces encouraged the rapid expansion of the sector throughout Ecuador's central Andes. Thus, when I surveyed financial institutions in Latacunga during 2014 (see chapter 6), I identified 55 storefronts belonging to savings and credit cooperatives. In satellite population centers, satellite financial districts have also emerged: thus, a small financial district may also be found in Pujilí, a periurban town close to Latacunga, and single cooperative offices may be found in parish seats throughout the rural highlands of Cotopaxi.

Emergence and Growth of Cooperativism in Ecuador

The cooperative movement in Ecuador has deep historical roots. Indeed, Wilson Miño Grijalva begins his history of the arrival of the movement in Ecuador by noting that "in the aboriginal period of the equatorial Andean world there existed vestiges of practices of cooperation that have survived [the passage of] time" (2013: 24). In a similar vein, Giuseppina

Da Ros (2007) writes, "before and after Inca domination and the Spanish conquest, there existed voluntary forms of cooperation in agrarian collectives in order to carry out works for the benefit of the community or the benefit of the family" (251). Broadly considered, the practices to which these authors refer are the same that composed the base of the "pyramid" of exchange that defined the hacienda period (Lyons 2006: 12; see chapter 3) and the same that continue to link Kichwa households to one another in the highlands of contemporary Ecuador.

However, it behooves us to define cooperativism more carefully than this. Cooperativism is not merely cooperation of coordination of effort. As Da Ros writes,

> Cooperative integration is defined as a *rational system* of organization, of vertical or horizontal type, capable of *overcoming traditional forms of socio-economic integration*, through the creation of *new structures* of production and trade and the use of appropriate technologies, over the base of a new social consciousness. (1991: 11; emphasis added)

In Da Ros's treatment, cooperativism is a form of rationalized institution-building that *displaces* traditional socioeconomic forms. As this chapter illustrates, cooperativism can also grow *through* the rationalization of traditional socioeconomic practices. Indeed, the emergence of indigenous savings and credit cooperatives in the Ecuadorian highlands has been shaped by both processes.

Influenced by cooperativist movements in Europe (Miño 2013: 23), and in reaction to the vicissitudes of North American interventionism (Carillo García 2014: 155-166), Ecuador's earliest agricultural cooperatives emerged in the first part of the 20th century in response to structural and infrastructural changes in the national and international economies (Da Ros 1987: 21-26; 2007: 252). In parallel to the banking reforms prompted by the Kemmerer Mission (see chapter 6), and in an effort to develop the productive forces of the nation, the national congress passed a series of laws that created a legal infrastructure for the growth of the cooperative sector. They began with the Law of Mutual Credit and Agricultural Cooperation in 1923. Then, in 1932, the congress created the Caja de Crédito Agrícola Nacional and the Banco Agrícola e Industrial

Nacional. Da Ros notes that both institutions were formed "with contributions from the State, private individuals and agricultural cooperatives," marking the first time that the Ecuadorian state had directly supported cooperativism (1978: 27). Shortly thereafter, the Law of Cooperatives was passed in 1937. This law specifically "promoted two types of cooperatives: those of production and those of credit; to the latter is assigned the role of financial support of agricultural development" (Da Ros 2007: 254). However, until the second half of the 20th century, the vast majority of cooperative institutions were dedicated to agricultural production.

Agents of the Catholic Church, animated to "improve living conditions in the neediest popular sectors, as much rural as urban" (Da Ros 2007: 255), began to promote cooperativism in the 1950s. Following the Second Vatican Council in 1965, religious organizations influenced by liberation theology took on an increasingly important role in the consolidation of the savings and credit cooperative sector. In particular, Da Ros (1991) notes the formation of the Central Ecuatoriana de Servicios Agrícolas (CESA) in 1967 and the Fondo Ecuatoriano Populorum Progressio (FEPP) in 1970. She also points out the role played by agents of the Church in the creation of the Federación Nacional de Cooperativas de Ahorro y Crédito de Ecuador (FECOAC) and the Banco de Cooperativas. More generally, Catholic clergy and lay persons were active in the formation of institutions that provided credit, technical assistance, and capacity-building to marginalized rural and urban communities, and in the promotion of cooperatives dedicated to issues ranging from agricultural production to conservation to savings and credit.

Out of this ferment, the bishop of Riobamba Monsignor Leonidas Proaño emerged as a prominent leader. Thus, when Father Graziano Masón reflected on his own Catholic-identified organization's effort to address the chronic need for money in rural communities, he recalled

Proaño's pronouncement that "the money of the poor should be in the service of the poor" (MCCH 2005: 81). With this objective in mind, Masón's organization, Maquita Cushunchic – Comercializando como Hermanos, established a "solidary fund" in 1990. A year later, the organization published a book describing its rural development initiatives, identifying this fund as a *caja de ahorros* and indicating that it was dedicated to ensuring:

> that the money of the poor be used in their benefit and in solidary actions instead of going to the private banks. Offering organizations a better interest rate than that of the bank and allowing these funds to serve to expand marketing activities without having to levy products with the inflationary cost that in our country is higher than the bank interest rate. (MCCH 1991: 200)

In the post Vatican II era, the leaders of Catholic organizations such as MCCH largely see their work as an effort to support the existing efforts of the poor to improve their own livelihoods. When they work with indigenous communities, they generally seek to develop what they see as the best aspects of indigenous culture (c.f. Orta 2004). These perspectives helped to set the stage for indigenous-identified savings and credit cooperatives.

However, the emergence in the 1990s of a subsector of savings and credit cooperatives with a distinctly indigenous outward personality seems to result primarily—but indirectly—from a historical shift in gendered approaches to rural ethnodevelopment. Sarah Radcliffe writes that in Ecuador, as elsewhere, "Through the 1970s and 1980s, rural racialized women came to be known as the embodiment of backward-looking, traditional actors who were insufficiently educated to take on the take of modernizing agriculture" (2015: 110). Consequently, rural development programs invested most of their resources in men, despite the increasingly female face of rural communities as men were compelled to leave in search of wage labor. Denied opportunities to access resources, develop skills, or bolster their creditworthiness through development projects, indigenous women found it difficult to secure loans from banks or

development agencies. Naturally, they found this frustrating: "As Andean women consider themselves to be producers and economic agents, they cannot understand these strictures" (2015: 111). "By contrast," Radcliffe (2015: 112) writes,

> Andean women are familiar with informal savings and credit clubs known as *cajas de ahorro* or *cajas solidarias*. These cajas operate as local savings schemes managed by and for women, offering small sums requiring no collateral and paid back through informal economic activities. As a result, cajas are a lifeline for indígenas, especially when they are separated or widowed, as they provide alternatives to development's standard model.

It is unclear what historical relation, if any, these groups might have with the formal *cajas de comunidad* instituted in the 16th century by the Toldean reforms. The colonial era *cajas* were meant to address shortfalls in the tribute obligations levied on indigenous *reducciones*. They were designed to "cover the tribute of Indians who were ill, absent, physically disabled from work and, often, dead" (Málaga Medina 1979: 177). They were supplied by the agricultural products of collectively worked community lands. Thus, colonial and post-colonial *cajas* were similar inasmuch as they provided a kind of financial insurance, but quite different in terms of how funds were collected and to whom those funds were distributed.

By the late 1980s, the influence of Mohammad Yunus was beginning to make its mark on the logic of international development. Yunus had been responsible for the creation in 1983 of the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, through which he sought to address the financial exclusion of women from traditional banks. "The more I got involved," Yunus writes in his autobiography, "the more I realized that credit given to women brought about changes faster than when given to men" (2007: 88). Moreover, it quickly became apparent to development professionals inspired by Grameen's example that women defaulted on microcredit loans less often than men.

Thus, by the 1990s, it was increasingly common in international development organizations to target women for microfinancial services. This trend was reproduced in

Ecuador. For instance, the solidary fund established by MCCH was targeted at women. More significantly, women were again identified as the target beneficiaries when the Indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian Peoples Development Project (PRODEPINE), a program funded by the World Bank, established a project dedicated to the creation of *cajas solidarias.* This was part of its effort to "mainstream" gender in development. In a 2003 report, Annika Törnqvist noted that the *cajas* "[were] being converted to *Bancos Comunitarios* due to their success, with the latter providing loans for larger amounts than the *Cajas Solidarias* to both women and men" (87)

These institutions were registered through the Development Council for the Development of the Nationalities and Peoples of Ecuador (CODENPE), an agency of the Ecuadorian government that was established with World Bank support. CODENPE was unique within the national government inasmuch as it was specifically focused on the development of indigenous people and was managed by indigenous professionals. As many Ecuadorians saw it as an outgrowth of the national indigenous movement under the control of CONAIE, it quickly became an institutional space of perennial political contest (Lucero 2008: 148-151). Nonetheless, its conceptualization of Ecuador in terms of indigenous nationalities and its programs to support the development projects of indigenous people *qua* indigenous people served to establish a political space in which community or collective advancement could be pursued in ethnic terms. Thus, when it created the opportunity for groups of indigenous people to create *cajas solidarias* and *bancos comunitarios*, it also created an impetus to conceptualize those institutions in ethnic terms. Indicative of this ethnic identity, a subset of these institutions formed the umbrella organization Union de Cajas y Bancos Comunales de las Nacionalidades y Pueblos del Ecuador (UCABANPE, the Union of Community Cajas and Banks of the Nationalities and Peoples of Ecuador).

Despite the initial focus of the *caja solidaria* initiative on women, Kate Bedford (2009) found that men received many of the benefits and controlled many of the positions of authority within the institutions. She indicates, "Although men were only 2.1 percent of the members in Cajas Solidarias, they were a far larger percentage of loan beneficiaries" (143). Furthermore, she found that men did most of the speaking in community meetings about the creation of new *cajas*, that men were more active in leadership roles within the organizational structure, and that women often directed her to talk to men when she asked about the initiative. Most significantly, Bedford found that "men were understood to be the major problem to which the loan's gender efforts were directed" (144). Taken together with the widening of the project to include men in *bancos comunitarios,* this helps to explain why the present-day savings and credit cooperatives that have their roots in the PRODEPINE project do not demonstrate a close focus on women.

Following the dollarization of the Ecuadorian economy in December 2000, the financial landscape shifted dramatically: in the following year alone, the participation of savings and credit cooperatives as a portion of the nation financial system more than doubled (Da Ros 2007: 274). When, in what appeared to be a politically motivated move, President Rafael Correa summarily closed CODENPE in 2009, bureaucratic supervision of the *cajas solidarias* and *bancos comunitarios* registered through CODENPE was transferred to the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion (MIES). Then, following its creation in 2012, the Superintendency of Popular and Solidary Economy (SEPS) took on oversight of these and other institutions deemed to be part of the "solidary economy." Under SEPS, "solidary" financial institutions gradually reorganized as savings and credit cooperatives. Regulatory and bureaucratic changes continued apace during my research in 2014-15; while many COAC directors expressed uncertainty about increasingly stringent regulations, others welcomed reform.

Financialization, Indigenization, or Both?

At first glance, the explosion of savings and credit cooperatives in the Ecuadorian highlands appears to entail the indigenization of the financial sector. Many cooperatives are named in Kichwa. Their employees often wear identifiably indigenous fashions and speak in Kichwa to each other and to their clients. Most served poor mestizos as well as indigenous clients, but only a few do not identify themselves in some way with particular rural indigenous communities. As I showed in chapter 6, the savings and credit cooperative sector is also closely associated with urban indigenous spaces. Furthermore, Gabriel Many (2012: 30) writes,

> In provinces like Tungurahua and Chimborazo, there are many cooperatives, like Mushuc Runa, Muchuc Ñan, Kullki Wasi, Inti Pacari and others, that put an emphasis on the indigenous community: almost all of their employees are indigenous and speak Kichwa. Furthermore, these cooperatives make an effort to establish broad relationships with the communities, giving scholarships to students and small gifts to local organizations.

"In theory," Many writes, "one would hope that these institutions are more sensitive to the needs of indigenous people and that they know how to respond to their demands in order to help solve their problems with credit" (2012: 37). However, Many also found that in both of the cooperatives he studied in Salasaca, "in order to continually increase the level of profit it is necessary to go beyond [knowing indigenous culture] and change indigenous people's very mode of thought" (2012: 51). In other words, Kichwa bankers use their cultural capital to help them earn a profit by encouraging their indigenous clients to be more financially-minded, not by making finance more indigenous.

Each cooperative takes a different approach to shaping its clients' attitudes toward their finances. In most cases, cooperative employees' efforts are concentrated on a series of meetings that they conduct with clients leading up to the award of credit. The first task of these meetings is

to determine potential clients' credit worthiness and capacity to repay loans. The second task is to help prospective clients learn how to behave toward the money they receive.

To that end, cooperatives with the resources to do so also hold financial capacity building events for their clients (see Bedford 2009). For instance, the main office of Cooperativa Chibuleo has regularly scheduled courses for its clients while its Latacunga branch arranges monthly "cooperativsim courses" with community leaders of parishes and organizations. Above all, capacity building during these events emphasizes values: valuing money, taking responsibility for debt, being responsible within one's family and community. These values are taught through instruction in how to manage money, in agriculture, and in technical management. Speakers from non-governmental and business sectors are often brought in to impart their knowledge. The goal is to produce groups of leaders who can guide the community, because they are "reliable, capable, and financially fit." As the Latacunga branch manager of Cooperativa Chibuleo told me, his institution does not tell people what to do but rather helps them learn to "realize activities."

Foremost among the changes that cooperative leaders seek to effect amongst their clients is to encourage saving money. This is an institution-building priority, since cooperatives depend on liquid assets in order to issue loans, but it also entails a shift in attitude. According to cooperative founders and directors, indigenous people typically spend whatever they have rather than saving. My own research supports this view. For instance, one senior entrepreneur I interviewed in Quilotoa told me that he preferred to invest money in improvements to his tourism business rather than to save it, because he didn't have a secure place to keep cash safe. He believed that the money he invested would eventually come back to him. In order to combat this tendency and to incentivize saving, cooperatives typically offer larger loans to people with

savings. With the same goal in mind, Cooperativa Kullki Wiñari also offers free savings accounts to high school students in Zumbahua.

The director of a cooperative in Pujilí told me that he thinks the culture of finance is beginning to change due to the influence of institutions like his that have been advertising and encouraging people. Young people, in particular, are saving more than indigenous people used to. This, he said, is because they marry young and need to build houses, so land is their first concern and they take advantage of financial services in order to buy it. Similarly, the son of the tourism entrepreneur mentioned above has been saving money through a cooperative in order to qualify for a loan large enough to buy a car that he can use to earn money by driving tourists between Quilotoa and neighboring communities. Nonetheless, most clients still come to the cooperatives looking for loans rather than to make deposits into savings accounts, so many cooperatives remain chronically undercapitalized.

Such practices raise a question: if a primary goal of COAC directors is to bring their clients' attitudes toward finance more in line with the values advocated by global discourses, are these institutions truly as indigenous as their names and presentation to the public seem to suggest? Gabriel Many answers in the negative: he argues that savings and credit cooperatives "avoid indigenous values and employ 'hispanic' thought" and that they are able to do so because they are not governed by *socios* (2012: 51). To the contrary, Many finds that "personal interests" govern the actions of the cooperatives, writing:

> This is evidenced most clearly in Mushuc Ñan, where it is openly said that the founders are *accionistas* and that only they can participate in the *juntas* [governing boards] and make decisions; moreover is will be them who receive the profits when the cooperative grows. The use of the term '*accionista*' makes it evident that the method of organization is much more similar to that of a bank, but that for legal and financial ease it is officially a cooperative. (2012: 50)

My own research supports the prevalence of "personal interests" in the management of savings and credit cooperatives. Several of my informants in Quilotoa have expressed their disapproval of the *personalidad* or selfishness of cooperative leaders. Indeed, several Kichwa financiers have described themselves to me in the same terms, stating that their primary purpose is to advance their own livelihoods. However, I disagree that this orientation disqualifies them as indigenous institutions. To the contrary, close consideration of the individual and collective histories of COAC institution building reveals an affinity with other indigenous vernacular institutions.

COAC Institution Building

Consider the Cooperativa de Ahorro y Crédito Quilotoa, the main office of which is located a few blocks from the Centro Comercial Popular El Salto in Latacunga.[4] The COAC Quilotoa has no relation to the CTC Quilotoa discussed in chapter 3, except inasmuch as the founders of the COAC Quilotoa initially considered forming a tourism-oriented organization in their home communities in Guangaje parish and then decided against the idea because improvements to the road connecting Quilotoa to the parish seat of Zumbahua had permanently diverted the flow of tourists that used to hike to Quilotoa from Guangaje. In other words, the COAC Quilotoa resulted, in part, from its founders' conclusion that they were not in a strong position to compete with the CTC Quilotoa.

[4] When I first found the COAC Quilotoa, it was located just north of El Salto. In early 2015, it moved to a new location a few blocks south of El Salto. Although its location remained linked to the indigenous financial space anchored by El Salto, the new location was much closer to the Parque Vicente León, the city's main plaza. In other words, even in its move, it illustrated the financial geography discussed in chapter 6.

Figure 7: Julio Tipán poses in front of the offices of the COAC Quilotoa in Latacunga.

Julio Tipán, president of the COAC Quilotoa when we talked in early 2015, told me about his involvement in the foundation of the organization. The general contours of his story were familiar from the life histories I had already collected in Quilotoa. So were the contours of the COAC Quilotoa's institutional history.

Julio was born into a poor Kichwa family in Chilca Anchi, a small settlement of agriculturalists and shepherds in Guangaje parish with a direct view of the Quilotoa volcano across the deep gorge formed by the River Toachi. He left home at about 15 years of age in order to seek wage labor so that he might purchase better clothes for himself. At first he worked as a

porter in the plaza and then learned masonry in Quito. Some time after he married and had his first child, he got together with "a group of youths" and got to thinking, "let's form a group."

> We had already learned to play [instruments], we had already learned to dance, and we learned from all that. Then later, like this, we had been talking, "Let's make a social organization. Social. Let's make a social organization."

Julio and his companions were motivated in their effort by their experience as wage laborers, particularly the mistreatment they had suffered at the hand of the bosses for whom they had worked. "They steal," Julio explained,

> Because in work they sometimes treat one well; sometimes they treat one badly. Sometimes they do not pay; sometimes they pay. Sometimes when there is work, that too [is bad], because there was not enough for us when [at the same time] work is scarce in our families. So we formed a group of young people. And forming a social organization, we started a corporation, a *corporación financiera*. …
>
> It wasn't easy. It was difficult. Difficult to secure money, difficult to complete the documents. And difficult in the communities. The leaders didn't want to work together, because they were saying, "These young people, why do they want to get ahead? Why would we certify them to go ahead?"

Frustrated, Julio and his companions asked themselves, "Why not? We want to get ahead; we don't want to remain behind anymore." They saw that entrepreneurs were arriving in Latacunga from neighboring provinces and forming cooperatives. They saw that some of these new institutions attended well to their clients while others did not. So they asked themselves, "Why don't we form a cooperative? Don't we have the right to have a cooperative? We have the right! We, too, are Ecuadorians, people, human beings!"

They named their new *corporación financiera* "Quilotoa" in recognition of the worldwide fame the lake had gained through tourism. With the bureaucratic changes instituted by the Correa administration, they then reorganized as a *cooperativa de ahorro y crédito.* In the meantime, they also sponsored the formation of a parish soccer league in Guangaje, and

committed themselves to the betterment of life in the rural communities of the parish. Julio explained:

> We're working to work well with the family, [to work] well with the community, and to work to lend [money] for agriculture or for craft production, or for fertilizer or livestock so that people in the community get ahead and have something better in the future.
>
> Personally, I have faith that we will get ahead and continue working, continue to have more community, more growth, and have more capital and have more understanding through experience.

Like other COACs where I have conducted interviews with indigenous staff and directors, the COAC Quilotoa is open to the business of all prospective clients, regardless of their ethnic background, their rural or urban place of birth, their current residency, or their profession. In order to qualify for a loan, *socios* (members) are evaluated for their creditworthiness. Julio and the other founders also hope to develop the institutional capacity to offer financial education courses to their clients, but unlike the membership practices of the CTC Quilotoa as described in chapter 3, *socios* of the COAC Quilotoa are not required to attend regular assembly meetings or contribute to collective work parties.

However, it is important to recognize that Julio, other directors of the COAC Quilotoa, and other indigenous leaders of other savings and credit cooperatives distinguish between *socios* and *fundadores* as different classes of belonging within the institutional structure of the COAC form. Both classes of member benefit from access to the resources created and managed by the institution, but they benefit in very different ways. *Socios* benefit inasmuch as they are encouraged to save money and they gain access to a source of credit with which they can pursue economic advancement in their rural and/or urban livelihoods. *Fundadores* gain their livelihoods directly from the creation of the resources cultivated by the institutions they have founded (or joined) through investment of their own funds; clients are part of the pool of resources from

which *fundadores* (or *accionistas*, as Gabriel Many calls them [2012:50]) draw their livelihoods. In this sense, the *socios* of COACs are equivalent to the tourists that visit the CTC Quilotoa, while the *fundadores* of COACs are equivalent to the *socios* (including founders) of the CTC Quilotoa: the former are a source of livelihood upon which the latter collectively build their livelihoods.

The COAC Quilotoa and other savings and credit cooperatives are similar to the CTC Quilotoa and other rural collective institutions in another way as well. While individual members of these institutions gain access to the resources of the institution through investment (of labor in the case of the CTC Quilotoa and of money in the case of the COAC Quilotoa), the creation of those resources depends to a great degree on large investments of financial resources and technical capacity building by outside institutions. In the early years of indigenous financial institution building, a major motivation to form a new institution was the investment made by CODENPE.[5] During my research in 2014-15, jealous rumors circulated among COAC leaders about the international investments secured by other institutions.

Cultural Resonance and Community Engagement

Not all COAC founders are as civically-minded as Julio Tipán and his companions. Indeed, several leaders of other institutions have told me that they are interested only in building profitable businesses. Consequently, the cultural affiliation of savings and credit cooperatives can be tenuous. For at least one of the Kichwa finance professionals that Many interviewed, "the

[5] A video posted to YouTube by a CODENPE account memorialized one event in which such investments were ceremonially conferred: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p3reeafUXT8 Accessed March 18, 2018.

indigenous aspects of the cooperative are, more than anything else, a kind of brand or advertising for the benefit of its image" (2012: 38).

However, other Kichwa financiers strive to make their institutions catalysts for the revitalization of indigenous society. They explain that elements of indigenous culture also make the cooperatives more welcoming to Kichwa clients: a founder of the Cooperativa Runa Shungu (indigenous heart) told me that when clients see the Kichwa name of the cooperative, they think, "This cooperative can help us, because it is of the indigenous communities."

Figure 12: Cooperativa Ambato participates in the Corpus Christi parade in Zumbahua, 2014.

Furthermore, cooperatives with the resources to do so participate in the same social revitalization of indigenous communities that collective institutions seek to cultivate. Due to limited resources, this contribution rarely amounts to more than a few gifts distributed on festival

occasions. However, my fieldnotes record that Cooperativa Kullki Wiñari sponsored at least one band during Zumbahua's 2014 celebration of Corpus Christi. Cooperativa Ambato marched in Zumbahua's parish parade that same year. As noted above, Cooperativa Quilotoa sponsors a soccer team in Guangaje; its leaders also hope to help foster a community-based tourism initiative there.

It would appear that cooperatives' participation in cultural revitalization is most advanced in Chibuleo, where the cooperative movement began. The Latacunga branch manager of the Cooperativa Chibuleo told me that his institution conducts a variety of "social activities" in the communities that it serves. Indeed, he feels that the cooperative's name is sacred, because it means that the business represents more than itself. Through its work in the community, supporting business plans that are sustainable and will offer a source of employment (such as raising chickens or exporting quinoa), leaders and entrepreneurs have emerged. However, its most important impact has been "cultural rescue." For instance, whereas migration had led to abandoning traditional clothing and other cultural elements in the past, the cooperative's "uniform" is traditional indigenous attire and other people have begun to follow their example and take pride in their clothing. Further, Cooperativa Chibuleo sponsors the *reina indígena* (indigenous queen) competition in Chibuleo, and the manager I talked to hopes that one day the community winner could even go on to win Miss Ecuador. In short, he feels that the cooperative has played a role in encouraging youth to have a positive attitude about indigenous culture.

Discussion

While savings and credit cooperatives in highland Ecuador have sought to change Kichwa attitudes toward money and some leaders describe themselves as being more interested

in increasing their own income than in advancing indigenous struggles, indigenous-run COACs do exhibit affinities with other kinds of indigenous vernacular development organizations. They have their origins in the same frustrations that have prompted Kichwa wage laborers to join together to form other sorts of vernacular institutions. Viewed in terms of how institutional structure, they support their founders' livelihoods in much the same way that other institutions support their members' own efforts to get ahead. Nor should it be discounted that many of the clients of indigenous-run COACs are also indigenous people who do not have access to the mainstream financial sector: although these clients are not empowered as decision makers within the COAC structure, they do gain access to loans with which they can pursue their own livelihood goals.

Conclusion: Development and Decolonization

Indigenous approaches to economic development and social revitalization, like indigenous cultures more generally, are historically emergent phenomena. As Walsh-Dilley (2017) succinctly states, “Along with Andean reciprocity, Andean indigeneity is a lived and negotiated experience and social relation—dynamic, fluid, even multiple—rather than an objective character or essence of a ‘traditional’ culture or people" (532). Andean people’s responses to the structural conditions that they confront emerge out of a confluence of inherited ancestral social forms and philosophical principles, everyday experiences of individuals and groups, and exchanges with a variety of outside forces that operate at multiple scales. As de la Cadena and Starn write in their introduction to a wide-ranging volume about contemporary indigenous experience, the dynamism and diversity of indigenous societies demands nuanced intellectual engagement: “Reckoning with indigeneity demands recognizing it as a relational field of governance, subjectivities, and knowledges that involves us all—indigenous and nonindigenous—in the making and remaking of its structures of power and imagination” (2007: 3).

Considered in this light, the Kichwa community-development practices, individual livelihood strategies and multimodal engagements with global forces discussed in this dissertation defy simplistic notions of indigeneity as rooted in innate or inherent characteristics of aboriginal peoples. To the contrary, the currents of change and continuity in Kichwa society must be understood as indigenous in the nuanced sense that they originate in the particular social-political-historical contexts out of which they have emerged. In this sense, the indigeneity of Kichwa developmentalism must be understood as the product of substantial structural change in the wake of agrarian reform laws passed in Ecuador beginning in the mid-20th century. In the

highlands, the region in which this dissertation has focused, indigenous developmentalism has emerged as a response to the dislocation of agrarian livelihoods in the following the dissolution of the hacienda regime. As such, it is characterized by the formation of institutions that respond to the needs of post-agrarian livelihoods; by the repurposing of management techniques exercised in a previous era within the hacienda regime; by influence from governmental, non-governmental, and supranational development agencies; and by shared desires for the culturally-meaningful revitalization of indigenous communities. As this final chapter shows, the efforts of Kichwa entrepreneurs to improve their livelihoods through engagement with non-indigenous persons, institutions, and ideas are thoroughly—if often mundanely—decolonial, whereas approaches to development that take an essentialist view of indigenous beneficiaries impede decolonization and self-development more often than they advance these goals.

To make this point, I pull the disparate themes of previous chapters together and knit them into an overview of pragmatic indigenous vernacular approaches to development in historical relation to idealistic non-indigenous visions of "alternatives to development" and top-down non-indigenous projects to pursue "ethnodevelopment" or "development with identity." I conclude by deferring to indigenous activists and scholars who call for self-development and I suggest that this call may be understood as part of a much broader decolonial endeavor to achieve what Andean philosophers might regard as a *pachakutik*—a seismic shift in sociopolitical structure that heralds the return of a previous *pacha* or order of things.

Alternative Development or Alternatives to Development?

As Arturo Escobar writes, "From classical political economists to today's neoliberals at the World Bank, economists have monopolized the power of speech" (2012: 100). The

discourses favored by such individuals and institutions have evolved over time, particularly as they regard indigenous people. For instance, around the middle of the twentieth century in Latin America, development rhetoric toward indigenous peoples shifted from *indigenismo* that "glorified indigenous traditions and incorporated them into national symbols and myths" toward a view of "indigenous peoples and cultures as obstacles to development and as a problem to be handled through public administration" (Andolina, Laurie and Radcliffe 2009: 11-12). Then, at the turn of the twenty-first century, transnational institutions shifted their rhetoric again. Just as "Catholic missionaries in the Andes have sought to codify and reinforce indigenous religiosity as part of the church's broader effort to embrace 'local theologies; and 'inculturate itself within specific cultural contexts" (Orta 2004: 105), development institutions such as the World Bank have sought to construct development policy that "builds on the positive qualities of indigenous cultures and societies to promote local employment and growth" (Van Nieuwkoop and Uquillas 2000: 1), while

Rhetorical shifts notwithstanding, indigenous voices have been largely excluded or marginalized within development discourses. This discursive hegemony perpetuates the marginalization of actors such as the Kichwa entrepreneurs I have discussed in this dissertation, because it forecloses opportunities to pursue models of individual, community, or collective advancement that are shaped by those actors' self-understanding. Thus, Escobar argues that the politically proper and ethically just response to development as normal is to take actors' own models into account, seeking "to provide conditions that are more conducive to local and regional experiments based on autonomous (hybrid) models" (2012: 100).

Escobar is not alone in taking the view that the targets of development policy ought to be at the center of development policy discussions. For instance, the participants in a 1988

symposium sponsored by the International Working Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) organized their contributions around the theme of indigenous perspectives on ethno-development. However, as IWGIA chairman Georg Henriksen observed in his introductory remarks to the participants in the symposium, "from your own perspective you would see ethno-development as 'self-development'. What it means is your own control over your own desires and futures" (1989: 14). He went on to explain, "Whereas development from a non-indigenous perspective is defined from the outside and controlled from above, indigenous self-development is defined from the inside and controlled from below. Indigenous self-development is therefore a practical manifestation of self-determination" (ibid).

Upon conclusion of the IWGIA symposium, indigenous participants representing a diversity of experiences and perspectives from throughout the Americas issued a resolution that enumerated what they saw as the most central and most urgent elements of an approach to self-development rooted in self-determination. They resolved to collectively denounce North American imperialism and interventionism, to call for the defense of Mother Earth and denounce ecological destruction, to advance transnational coordination among indigenous organizations, and "to insist that financial support which comes from support agencies ought to be controlled and managed by the indigenous organisations themselves" (IWGIA 1989: 169).

Appreciation for such indigenous perspectives has, indeed, influenced development policy-making. Prominent early examples include the redefinition of policy within bilateral development agencies in the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Britain and the United States in the 1990s, following the codification of culturally appropriate development in the International Labor Organization Convention 169 (Andolina, Laurie and Radcliffe 2009: 34-35). More generally, Escobar writes, "a relatively coherent body of work has emerged which highlights the

role of grassroots movements, local knowledge, and popular power in transforming development" (2012: 215).

Escobar finds that this trend has entailed a shift from "development alternatives" toward "alternatives to development;" that is, away from models that seek to advance the same old development objectives using innovative approaches, toward models of community advancement that redefine objectives in terms of local modes of knowledge and experience. In his 2012 preface to *Encountering Development*, Escobar included the discourse of *buen vivir*/*sumak kawsay* among the most promising examples of this shift. Nonetheless, as Philipp Altmann (2014) argues and as I discussed in chapter 4, the manner in which *buen vivir* has been incorporated into state policies in Ecuador fails to live up to the promise of being an alternative to mainstream development. Rather, it has been used by the state as a slogan to evoke alternative-ness even as traditional approaches to infrastructural and economic development projects are carried out with monies generated by traditional approaches to extractive industries. Indigenous intellectuals and politicians have, indeed, delineated alternatives rooted in indigenous principles and practices, but state development policies allow these alternatives to make no more than a symbolic impact on development practices. Yet it must be kept in mind that alternative indigenous discourses such as *sumak kawsay*/*buen vivir* have emerged out of ongoing intercultural exchanges among indigenous thinkers and a broad spectrum of non-indigenous scholars and activists who work in mainstream organizations.

Moreover, the rank and file members of the institutions I have studied have little interest in being alternative. Their ongoing exclusion from the mainstream institutions of Ecuadorian society is precisely the problem that they seek to overcome. If they have decided to take an alternative approach to economic development and community revitalization, it is because they

endeavor to make good use of the social, political, and managerial forms that are available to them.

At the local level where several decades of institution building has supported the emergence of alternative models, Kichwa leaders are pragmatic about their efforts to get ahead in post-agrarian Ecuadorian society. They seek to fulfill the needs created by agrarian reform laws that eliminated the hacienda regime without providing alternative means to access collective resources or to secure credit. To do so, they mobilize tools of human and resource management deployed during the hacienda era, turning the flow of benefits toward the institution itself. To support their efforts financially and administratively, they depend on the assistance of governmental and non-governmental development agencies with a wide variety of institutional values and objectives.

Thus, while it would be incorrect to dismiss the rhetorical strength or cultural value of *sumak kawsay* or the other indigenous alternatives to mainstream development thinking that have emerged since the 1980s, it is equally incorrect to think of the grassroots institutions out of which these discourses have emerged as apart from the mainstream. They are not alternatives to development. Rather, they are deeply engaged with diverse nodes in national and international networks of development institutions. The notion of "ethno-development," which the indigenous participants of the IWGIA symposium rejected in favor of "self-development," has mediated how they have become integrated into those networks.

Ethno-Development

Ethno-development seeks to identify and promote the "positive qualities" of indigenous cultures and communities. As Van Niewkoop and Uquillas write, "Such qualities include these

peoples' strong sense of ethnic identity, close attachments to ancestral land, and capacity to mobilize labor, capital, and other resources to achieve shared goals. These dynamics are recognized as fundamental to the way in which indigenous peoples define their own processes of development and interactions with other segments of society" (2000: 1).

In international development policy and implementation, these "positive qualities" are distilled into the notion of "social capital," a term adapted from Pierre Bourdieu. For Bourdieu, "social capital was about the 'resources' attached to power, repression and their highly contextually specific forms of reproduction and transformation in classes, and bound to other forms of capital" (Fine 2003: 589). However, for the World Bank and other institutions that have followed its example, Bourdieu's other non-economic forms of capital—symbolic and cultural—are collapsed into social capital, which is then deployed as a catchall term for whatever non-economic resources marginalized communities might possess. Thus, despite Henriksen's (1989: 14) assertion that the "ethno" of ethno-development means respect for culturally distinct approaches to development, in practice the "ethno" of ethno-development has usually meant the assumption that "ethnic" people possess "social capital," which could be treated as "a bundle of factors that can be harnessed to market-led growth" (Andolina, Laurie and Radcliffe 2009: 229).

Ecuador served as an important proving ground for ethno-development in this mode. As Van Nieuwkoop and Uquillas indicate, the Indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian Peoples Development Project (PRODEPINE), established in 1998 following the 1993 launch of the World Bank's broader Indigenous Peoples Development Initiative, was

> the first stand-alone investment operation financed by the World Bank that focuses exclusively on indigenous peoples and other ethnic minorities. It is the first time that Ecuador borrowed resources specifically for investments to benefit its indigenous and Afro-Ecuadoran populations. It is also the first time that indigenous organizations and the Ecuadoran government have joined forces in an effort explicitly based on putting into practice the vision of "development with identity," or "ethnodevelopment." (2000: 1)

Ecuador was selected as a test site because it met several conditions that policymakers at the World Bank considered critical for success: "a) a minority population with distinct characteristics, b) a strong correlation between poverty and ethnicity, c) strong social organizations, d) commitment to finding common ground, and e) an enabling policy environment" (Van Nieuwkoop and Uquillas 2000: 4). The presence of ethnically distinct minority populations was considered an obvious prerequisite for ethno-development, and an equally obvious characteristic of Ecuadorian demographics. Following the logic of "social capital" in the development mode, the finding that poverty correlated with ethnicity in Ecuador was closely linked to the observed presence of strong social organizations: Van Nieuwkoop and Uquillas write, "indigenous peoples in Ecuador suffer from economic deprivation, but are well endowed in social capital (for example, organization, solidarity patterns, and shared social and cultural values)" (2000: 6). The final two conditions were deemed to have been met by changing political and policy environments that may be traced to the expanding influence of the indigenous political movement in the 1990s, though World Bank officials declined to name the indigenous organizations that were at the head of the movement.

In retrospect, PRODEPINE has been justifiably critiqued on the grounds that "despite [its] emphasis on community-directed self-analysis, PRODEPINE staff retained significant control over the course that local development initiatives took" (Viatori 2010: 107). This was true in several respects that Maximialian Viatori (2010) documents in his study of relations between the Zápara Nationality of Ecuador (NAZAE) and transnational institutions such as UNESCO and the World Bank. Most prominently, "The training materials PRODEPINE provided to NAZAE stressed that before local communities or organizations initiated any self-diagnoses or interventions, they should first consult with PRODEPINE staff to define the

objectives of the exercises, identify the participants, and discuss possible incentives for participation" (Viatori 2010: 107). Since the priorities espoused by the World Bank and the staff of PRODEPINE did not always align with local priorities, this oversight tended to exclude projects that would address local concerns in favor of projects that disregarded those concerns. Viatori writes, "What emerges here is a clear paradox: PRODEPINE celebrated Indigenous peoples' 'social capital' but reasoned that local actors could not put it to responsible use without external supervision and funds" (ibid). In other words, the implementation of ethno-development projects among the Zápara communities represented by NAZAE did little to promote the kind of self-development desired by indigenous leaders or the institutions they helm.

In this sense, PRODEPINE represented a curious mix of what Sánchez-Parga (2007) distinguished as the distinct operational characteristics of development approaches favored during the second half of the twentieth century by governmental institutions versus those favored by non-governmental organizations. He writes that while both models sought to integrate rural indigenous people into national society, they engaged beneficiaries in distinct modes. In the state model, beneficiaries were targeted for capacity building, which "consisted of education and the transfer of knowledge, dispositions and conduct" (76). Within this model, "the organizational dynamics had the function of facilitating the implementation of programs and guaranteeing their greatest efficiency and management: organizing the [contribution made by beneficiaries], the interlocutors and their demands" (ibid). The objective of this model was to effect change at a structural level; the participation of indigenous organizations and individuals was treated as a means to achieve such change. On the other hand, non-governmental development organizations sought national integration through efforts to "reinforce indigenous groups' own dynamics and orientations, making manifest their particularities and relative autonomy with respect to national

development and society" (ibid). This model entailed recognition and support of indigenous cultural and social traditions "so that indigenous peoples themselves will not only claim that tradition and culture but also their national recognition and legitimation as an integral part of the national culture and identity" (ibid). As Viatori's account of Zápara experiences illustrate, PRODEPINE was conceived as a scaled-up instance of the non-governmental model, but in practice its engagement with indigenous communities followed the governmental model. Andolina, Laurie and Radcliffe write, "On the one hand, it promoted participatory methods aiming to include and empower indigenous beneficiaries. … On the other hand, PRODEPINE adopted tightly audited and technically defined terms of reference, which ordered otherwise 'free' indigenous participation" (2009: 47).

Nonetheless, indigenous institution building was markedly advanced by PRODEPINE and the Development Council for the Development of the Nationalities and Peoples of Ecuador (CODENPE), the arm of the Ecuadorian government that was established in order to administer PRODEPINE. In the first place, Bretón identifies a marked increase in second-tier organizations in the years immediately following the creation of PRODEPINE; he reasons that "this has acted as stimulus for the appearance of a significant number of new organizations with the expectation to be able to take advantage of the new projectist conjuncture" funded by PRODEPINE (2005: 54). More significantly, registration with CODENPE conferred institutional recognition by the Ecuadorian state and the World Bank. Thus, Viatori notes, although "NAZAE's participation in PRODEPINE yielded only short-term gains for the nationality," its registration through CODENPE "has been an important long-term source of political legitimacy and inclusion within national Indigenous politics" (2010: 106).

In another twist in the meaning of the "ethno" of ethno-development, registration with CODENPE also marked institutions in ethnic terms. This was a consequence of a particular historical conjuncture. When PRODEPINE was first established, it was to be managed by the Consejo Nacional de Planificación de los Pueblos Indígenas y Negros del Ecuador (CONPLADEIN, the National Ecuadorian Indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian Planning Council). As Lucero notes, this Council "was structured to give the six national indigenous organizations and the one Afro-Ecuadorian confederation equal representation on its executive council" (2008: 145). However, leaders of CONAIE, the most powerful national-level organization in the Ecuadorian indigenous movement, were displeased by the prospect of having the same representation as less powerful competitors within the indigenous movement. They insisted on reconstituting CONPLADEIN as a new institution following CONAIE's own "plurinational" structure in which indigenous nationalities and pueblos are equally represented. They succeed in this campaign in 1998, following the election of President Jamil Mahuad. The new institution, CODENPE, thus conferred ethnic identities on each of the organizations upon which it conferred juridical personhood.

In some cases, such as the tourism organization in Quilotoa (see Chapter 3), the ethnic recognition conferred by CODENPE made little difference in outward presentation. When they shifted their registration to CODENPE in 2007, Quilotoans simply appended "Community" in front of their organization's previous designation as an "Organization for Tourist Development." In other cases, the recognition of a specifically ethnic institutional identity made a greater impact. As I noted in Chapter 7, CODENPE oversaw a dramatic expansion of *cajas solidarias* and *bancos comunales* that continue to exhibit an outward ethnic identity even today.

All interpretations of the "ethno" in ethno-development were undermined during the presidency of Rafael Correa. Elected in 2007 with significant support from indigenous political institutions and broad popular support, Correa promised a "Citizens' Revolution" in which neoliberalism would be replaced by economic policies rooted in broad-based solidarity. Within this context, neither development programs that responded to culturally distinct objectives nor those that targeted ethnically-inflected social capital were supported by government policies. Moreover, Correa demonstrated an intolerance for civil society institutions such as those that make up Ecuador's indigenous political movement and its environmental movement (de la Torre 2014; Dosh and Kligerman 2009). He quickly moved to "coopt and divide the social movements, which are disqualified as corporatists and therefore inauthentic" (de la Torre 2013: 36; see also Tuaza 2011: 318). CODENPE soon fell victim to the combative style of Correa's "permanent campaign" (Conaghan and de la Torre 2008): it was shuttered in early 2009 following his public accusation that its executive secretary was misusing funds. Shortly thereafter, the Correa administration subordinated the National Directorate of Intercultural Bilingual Education (DINEIB) to the control of the Ministry of Education. Like CODENPE, DINEIB had been an important state institution within which indigenous professionals had engineered a space to advance ethnically-inflected issues. With the institutions registered by CODENPE ultimately placed under the authority of the Superintendency of Popular and Solidary Economy and DINEIB programs transferred to the Ministry of Education, the "ethno" of ethno-development was rendered mute.

The administration of Lenín Moreno, Correa's successor in the presidency and his former vice president, appears to be more open to the civic participation of indigenous institutions. He is much more supportive of civil society organizations than his predecessor and has moved away

from Correa's combative style. Notably, the newspaper *El Universo* (2017a) reported, "One day after being installed as president, Lenin Moreno announced that he will return intercultural education to indigenous peoples and nationalities so that they define the curriculum." In 2018, much to Correa's annoyance and much to the appreciation of indigenous leaders, Moreno announced that administrative headquarters of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) in the city of Mitad del Mundo would be converted into the Universidad Intercultural de las Nacionalidades y Pueblos Indígenas "Amawtay Wasi" – the Intercultural University of Indigenous Nations and Peoples "House of Sages" (*El Telégrafo* 2018). Moreno has also suspended the granting of new mining concessions at the request of CONAIE (*El Universo* 2017b).

Vernacular Institution-Building

Indigenous institution building depends on "vernacular statecraft," a term coined by Rudi Colloredo-Mansfeld in order to name the "mechanisms of community politics—list making, elected councils, territorial jurisdiction—that have been appropriated from the state to manage internal differences and set the foundation for national political action" (2009: xiii). Colloredo-Mansfeld constrains his definition to practices originating in the state and directed toward political action because the discussion within which he identifies and explains vernacular statecraft is focused on mechanisms derived from provisions of the 1937 Ley de Comunas, which created a state-recognized form of recognition for indigenous communities. However, as I have shown, the tools of Kichwa statecraft and development are borrowed from diverse sources at multiple scales.

Chapter 3 identifies mechanisms borrowed from the hacienda regime and explores how they have been deployed in the creation and management of community-based tourism infrastructure. One of the most critical of these—the minga or collective work party—also numbers among the techniques identified by Colloredo-Mansfeld. Mingas are the primary means for the leaders of indigenous comunas and trade associations to construct and maintain infrastructure and collective resources. Mingas are compulsory: access to the resources that result from collective work is predicated on participation in their creation and maintenance. Nonetheless, leaders often find it difficult to compel their fellows to participate in mingas despite the threat of fines for nonparticipation, because those who feel that they will not gain a clear benefit from a project simply do not show up. Thus, Juliet Erazo reports that in an Amazonian Kichwa community, comuna members lost interest in mingas and assembly meetings after their goal of formalizing collective land title was achieved: "Once the title was settled, there no longer seemed to be an immediate need to demonstrate collective spirit and cooperativism" (2013: 81).

Consequently, the minga ledger is a critical tool of governance. Colloredo-Mansfeld refers to the credit that minga participants earn — the tally marks recorded in the ledger — as "minga points" and describes how they serve as a limited currency within "a distinct sphere of exchange, the peasant comuna [or trade association], where such currency can convert individual resources into shared resources" (2009: 103). Should the value of this currency ever be doubted, one need only recall that Quilotoan leaders sometimes levy fines for misbehavior that are payable in minga points. The assembly meeting attendance rolls kept by the secretaries of Kichwa comunas and associations serve a similar purpose.

As I described in chapter 3, the CTC Quilotoa also maintains a ledger that tracks horserides sold to tourists each month by member households. This ledger creates an even more

clearly defined form of currency inasmuch as a member household may trades its unused allowance of horserides to a kinsman or neighbor in return for a cut of the earnings. As the sale of horserides is strictly limited to members of the organization, the circulation of this currency is highly constrained. Yet its limited circulation plays an undeniable role in girding the local economy and its very restriction creates an institutional resource for the CTC Quilotoa.

Chapter 7 shows that the more recent sector of indigenous-run savings and credit cooperatives borrows its tools of management from transnational microcredit practices. Or, to be precise, it layers those tools on top of established patterns of Kichwa institution building. This is true in both historical and institutional senses. First, the earliest formalized *cajas solidarias* for women were created by development professionals through the transformation of existing *cajas comunales*. Then, over time, the Ecuadorian government has compelled these institutions to restructure their practices and institutional forms in ways that bring them more in line with transnational microfinance and thus make them more legible to the state. Newer COACs that did not begin as *cajas comunales* nevertheless take form in response to this history. Second, "groups of youths" like those who founded the COAC Quilotoa have followed very much in the same path as their neighbors and kin who have formed other kinds of institutions. Indeed, as the history of the COAC Quilotoa illustrates, cooperatives are seen as one of many institutional forms among which groups of contemporary Kichwas choose when they resolve to band together to create better livelihoods for themselves. If indigenous and non-indigenous clients are engaged through tools like credit worthiness analyses and financial capacity building workshops, founders act among themselves much like the *socios* of other institutions; whether this will change as the COAC sector continues to evolve demands ongoing scholarly consideration.

These trends reveal how, just as "the relationship between development and culture has played out through discourses and interactions that both cross scales and reshape them" (Andolina, Laurie and Radcliffe 2009: 232), the historical formation of Kichwa communities and institutions has taken shape in response to pressures and opportunities that unfold at multiple scales. As histories of Kichwa institution building have unfolded, elements borrowed from other places and other eras are re-deployed in response to the challenges of indigenous development in the "here and now" of the contemporary Ecuadorian Andes. Moreover, as interviewees have often told me, the leaders and members of these institutions envision the products of their efforts as a basis for their children's futures. Alfonso Latacunga, a bilingual teacher and a founding member of the CTC Quilotoa, explained in 2015 that the organization aspires to cultivate young professionals who remain dedicated to their community: "Our dream is that our young people who have recently finished studying to be an accountant—with a degree in accounting, a degree in systems, a degree in gastronomy, a degree in tourism—that they are right here."

Decolonization

To evaluate histories of indigenous institution building, one must keep in mind that an institution is not merely an organization or program that can be labeled with an acronym. Rather, as Elinor Ostrom writes, institutions should be understood as "the sets of working rules that are used to determine who is eligible to make decisions in some arena, what actions are allowed or constrained, what aggregation rules will be used, what procedures must be followed, what information must or must not be provided, and what payoffs will be assigned to individuals dependent on their actions" (1990: 51). Such rules are a primary site of decolonization within indigenous self-development.

Decolonization is usually understood in more symbolic terms as the revitalization of ancestral ontologies. As Chapter 4 addresses, the indigenous intellectuals who undertake such work in Ecuador often have roots in the kinds of institutions described in previous chapters. However, ontological decolonization is a project that the leaders of most indigenous institutions outside the national political movement cannot afford to undertake. Their concerns are more immediate and they are more focused on overcoming the actually-existing *llaki kawsay* than in defining the *sumak kawsay*. In part, this is a consequence of limited resources, but it also results from their need to engage productively with national and international funders that subscribe to a view of indigenous people as pre-modern, culture-laden, nature-sensitive, and immobile. As in the transnational environmental movement, indigenous people who wish to engage with transnational development are compelled to present themselves according to particular visual and physical codes (Conklin 1997), speak in particular ways (Graham 2002), and generally engage a field of symbolic politics in which "ideas and images, not common identity or economic interests, mobilize political actions across wide gulfs of distance, language, and culture" (Conklin and Graham 1995: 696). Such symbolic engagements do not foreclose the possibility of ontological decolonization, but neither do they advance such a project.

Rather, the decolonization pursued through Kichwa institution building revolves around the authority to manage resources and make decisions. Such authority rests in the capacity to determine how institutional "working rules" are established. State efforts to exert oversight of indigenous institutions perpetuate or even deepen the colonization of the authority to determine working rules. This pattern is particularly clear in the history of indigenous savings and credit cooperatives. However, Quilotoans' frequent victories in the perennial conflicts between the CTC and various ministries of the Ecuadorian government illustrate that at least partial

decolonization of authority can be achieved through the definition and defense of working rules that produce well-defined collective resources.

Consider what happened during an assembly meeting in late June of 2014, when a delegation from the Ministry of Environment sought to enlist Quilotoans in the Socio Páramo conservation program. The leader of the delegation spoke clearly, but her tone and attitude toward her audience struck me as patronizing. She was stymied in this attitude only once, when she asked whether anyone knew where their drinking and irrigation water comes from and received a nuanced description of local hydrology from the president of the organization. Stumbling for a moment, she said she had asked because sometimes children think water simply comes from the faucet, which isn't true. Then she responded to the mistake she had expected but no one had made. She explained that the páramo acts like a sponge, and regained her composure by asking, “Do you know how a sponge absorbs water?”

The speaker repeatedly told her audience to pay attention and on several occasions asked her listeners if they were thinking about the ongoing Corpus Christi fiesta instead of her presentation. Her patronizing attitude aside, she might have been right in suspecting that the Quilotoans were thinking about Corpus Christi. After all, the other big item on the agenda that morning was to plan for the CTC Quilotoa's participation in the Corpus Christi parade that was scheduled to take place the following weekend in the parish seat of Zumbahua. What the speaker probably did not know is that Corpus Christi in Zumbahua parish is intimately connected to the role that the páramo plays in the hydrology of the area. She did not seem to realize that she was asking her listeners to stop thinking about their annual celebration of the very set of relationships between people and their environment that she believed she was teaching them to understand.

Upon finishing their presentation to the assembled members of the CTC Quilotoa, the delegation from the Ministry of Environment opened up the floor for comments and questions. In response to a question about why the organization cannot plant eucalyptus and pine, the locally-preferred species grown for firewood, the speaker responded that doing so is both short-sighted and illegal, since it is prohibited by the constitution to plant non-native species above a certain altitude. To a question about how the government is going to ensure the participation of everyone, she replied that they can't oblige anyone to participate, but they want to create local jobs like growing the seedlings that are used in the project. However, she said, people without official deeds to their property can be prevented from using their land at all, and those with recently officialized deeds are obliged to comply with the law that says only 40% of lands within the Ilinizas Ecological Reserve can be used for agriculture.

Then, a group of frustrated elderly Quilotoans began to complain loudly that they had suffered under the labor exploitation of the hacienda period and their long struggle to gain control of their land gave them the right to make their own decisions about how to use it. They angrily stormed out. It had become clear that the CTC Quilotoa would not join the Socio Páramo program as an organization, so the president of the organization ended this part of the meeting by telling the ministry delegates that whether the program turns out to be possible or not, “we want to safeguard the protected area.”

A few months later, in early 2015, the leaders of the CTC followed through on this promise by calling a minga to plant seedlings of native páramo species. Like the leaders of other Kichwa institutions I have observed during their interactions with agents of outside institutions (government ministries, universities, etc.), Quilotoans had entertained the MAE delegates for as long as it appeared that the outsiders might help the community to advance its own goals. Like

the leaders of other institutions, they had politely declined to continue the discussion once it became clear that the visitors intended to establish a project that would not advance the local institution's objectives. Then, like the most effective leaders of indigenous institutions, they found another means to acquire the resources they needed to advance those objectives and drawn on vernacular tools of governance to carry out a project that responded to locally-defined needs. In other words, they had decolonized development by mobilizing vernacular development. The CTC Quilotoa is remarkable in its ability to assert such authority, but it is not alone in the ongoing work of decolonizing development.

Figure 13: Minga for páramo conservation in Quilotoa.

Whither Indigenous Development?

As Chapter 5 illustrates, Kichwa cultural values are marginalized in the world market. As Chapter 6 illustrates, Kichwa people are marginalized in Ecuadorian spaces of commerce and finance. As Chapter 4 explores, indigenous political philosophy is marginalized in Ecuadorian governmental discourse. There is much work that remains to be done in Kichwa people's individual and collective pursuit of better livelihoods. However, there is also much to admire in the work that has already been accomplished.

The painting with which I opened the introduction (see pg. 3) illustrates a public uprising that on its face accomplished very little for the advancement of indigenous people in Ecuadorian society. Jamil Mahuad left the presidency, but his vice-president soon stepped into the office and promptly carried out the very policy of dollarization that had generated much of the public outcry that led to Mahuad's ouster. Lucio Gutierrez, the army colonel who helped lead the ouster and commanded the crowds in the painting was later elected to the presidency with substantial support of indigenous leaders, but then he too was forced to leave office prematurely after having abandoned many of his allies in the indigenous movement.

Yet, like all paintings in the Tigua-Quilotoa genre, other stories unfold in the same scene. It is Alberto Vargas, then president of CONAIE, who receives the lines of power directed toward the balcony of the presidential palace by contemporary shamans and historical leaders representing the indigenous people of all regions of Ecuador. Moreover, symbols of Ecuador's centralized political, economic, and religious institutions — the presidential palace, the central bank, and the statue that overlooks the capital city — have all been displaced from the capital city into the indigenous countryside. In other words, mainstream leaders and institutions have been subordinated to indigenous authority in this scene.

In a less spectacular fashion but a no less significant exercise of decolonization, the institutions I discuss in this dissertation engage in mundane activities of governance that redirect labor and resources toward the renaissance of indigenous society. They draw on resources and models that originate in many different places, during many different periods and deploy them at many different scales in order to enact an aspirational order of relations that is not marginalized or subordinated to non-indigenous authority. In other words, they work to achieve a *pachakutik*, a return of indigenous authority that looks to the past in order to build better lives in the future.

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