Storytelling Good Living:

The Politics of Being in Ecuadorian Post-WWII Rural Education

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of

the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

(Curriculum & Instruction)

at the

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

2022

Date of final oral examination: 10/11/2022

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Abstract

This thesis is an intervention in the discussions on the politics of being/knowing in decolonial theory as it overlaps with curriculum studies, comparative education, and Latin American studies. That intervention looks at the places colonialism did not reach, and all the strategies brought about amidst (mis)encounters among cultures, knowledges, and political assertions of ways of living. It also looks at the rich ways in which humanness and good living has been storied in Ancestral Pueblos resistance/re-existance education projects. The work is centered on Ecuadorian history to make visible how the stories thinkers tell about humanness, human living, and societal wellbeing shape curricula and education texts. Simultaneously it is concerned with the descriptive statements texts make available and through which humanness, human living and societal wellbeing is in turn storied. I examine the ideas of "good living" in Fundamental Education programs destined to "better the lives" of rural population in Ecuador in the 1960s and 1970s. The focus is on the challenges peoples narrated as rural posed to such ideas of making "good living". That examination implies an awareness of the description of "rural" as a target of "bettering" which becomes part of the narrations collectively produced by people and texts. In analyzing print writings, drawings and photography related to rural education, the dissertation will highlight how these productions embody languages which narrate genres of lives, people, and lands.

This work argues that producing "good living" is a historical concern which stems from the "problem" of difference and its current articulations are deeply intertwined with post Second

World War (WWII) ideas of "bettering lives" and "inclusion of marginal populations". In that regard the study of the "*rural man [sic] problem*" or "*the campesino/peasant problem*", will make evident that "good living" discourse is not a new phenomenon, but rather a re-articulation of on-going logics and dynamics of inclusion/exclusion which often are deemed solvable through education. These "problems" are interpreted as resulting from both an overrepresentation of the national(ized) values and modes of life as "good living"—which relationally makes Ancestral pueblos' lives located in rural areas *living to be improved—,* and the contestations to projects of "bettering" by targeted peoples.

I explore how education projects and texts narrate Ancestral peoples' values/modes of life with/in their territories (which coincide with parts of the imagined national territory). I draw in Sylvia Wynter's *politics of being*, and the elaborations on that notion which are intertwined with Aimé Cessaire's *science of the word*, and Frantz Fanon's *sociogeny.* I draw as well on Wynter and Katherine McKittrick's dialogues on *being human as praxis* and *demonic grounds* (see section (hi)storytelling lenses).

Through those lenses, the research will unpack the statements and images in education texts, guidelines, reports, newspapers, and documented oral histories that make up the notions "rural", and "rural people" and their lives. The research will also analyze how people categorized in those texts as "rural" has contested the narratives of improvement that turn their lives into a problem.

Acknowledgements

I acknowledge the lands that sustain my life and made this work possible, Quito, Tumbaco and Dejope. I thank the spirits and elders that have and continue to care for them.

Familia, ñaño, mamá, papá, sobrines, Jess, Ron, Jerry, Bonnie, mami Lu, Papo, su apoyo, su abrigo y su energía hicieron posible todo este viaje, investigaciones y escritos. ¡Mil gracias!

Abrazo a mi ayllu sentipensante. I am always in debt to Armando Muyolema for his guidance, friendship, and our thought-provoking conversations. Dichosa y agradecida for our sisterhood with Licho López, for our companionship in life and thoughts and our luchas compartidas. Gratitud profunda y enorme a Edizon León por los andares existenciales con la cabeza y en el bosque.

I am thankful to Tom Popkewitz for his guidance and support, for all our conversations and laughs, and for his confidence in my work, especially when I didn't have it.

My gratitude to Estuardo Gallegos and Homero García for sharing their memories and thoughts with me as well as facilitating my work at the archive of the Centro de Desarrollo de Solidaridad Andina (CEDESA). I am thankful to Nidia Arrobo for her stories about her work with liberation theology in Ecuador.

I acknowledge all the beings, human and more-than-human, whose help, work, fuerza, and knowledge are present and part of this dissertation.

Introduction. A Good Living Debate

This dissertation about narratives of “good living” and “bettering lives” in post WWII, particularly the late 1950s to 1980, rural education in Ecuador opens with weavings of stories in the 1990s and 2000s. Since the late 1990s sumak kawsay in Kichwa or buen vivir in Spanish (both translatable as good living), became one of the most important political discourses in Ecuador. “Good living” spread quickly through public policy, institutions, and opinion, and it continues to have presence in public education through the national curricula. Similar discourses also became part of the “common sense” in the political arena of the neighboring countries of Bolivia and Perú. The Andean region had a groundbreaking proposal to guide national politics. Yet over time “good living” proved to be simultaneously brilliant and very problematic.

In Ecuador until the early 2000s the government, scholars, activists from diverse social movements, and Indigenous leaders embraced “good living” as a revolutionary notion. “Good living” was conceptualized as ancient Andean Indigenous knowledge about living harmoniously among humans and them with nature. This notion would have the potential to transform society and liberate it from strong colonial and economic problems and create a good living for *all*. There was so much hope among intellectual circles and population at large due to the potential of “good living.” However, after its bureaucratization disenchantment spread quickly. Since its inclusion in the 2008 constitution and once “good living” was adopted, translated, and bureaucratized by the government, the presence of the concept extended to every official document, including those related to national education. Population and social movements divided according to their support to the government or lack of it. The wave of critique grew

over time denouncing the government's use of "good living" as a tool to justify extractivism[1] and the regulation of life.[2]

In more recent analysis, which take into account the multiple transformations of "good living," it is interpreted as an invented tradition.[3] However, in contrast to invented traditions, "good living" did not successfully create a social symbolism that would offer a sense of community; nor did it become a 'commonsense' code of beliefs and values. What it did do successfully is to produce a narrative about a possible harmonic society based upon romanticized ideas of who is the Indígena and what is their life like. It wove selections of history and fictions[4] laid over people that are intelligible to the Ecuadorian society. These selective references to history invisibilized the struggles of Indigenous people and their suffering while highlighting essentialized beauty and goodness which reestablished a tacit 'we' and *lo Indígena* as the Other.

It is important as well to notice that this gesture of acknowledging Indigenous knowledge also invisibilized the struggles of Afrodescendant and Montuvio[5] people 'grouped' in

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[1]Alberto Acosta, "El Buen Vivir como alternativa al desarrollo. Algunas reflexiones económicas y no tan económicas," *Política y Sociedad* 52, no2 (2015): 299-330.; Eduardo Gudynas, "Diez Tesis Urgentes Sobre El Nuevo Extractivismo Contextos Y Demandas Bajo El Progresismo Sudamericano Actual," in *Extractivismo, política y sociedad*, eds. Jürgen Schuldt et al (Quito: Centro Andino de Acción Popular (CAAP) - Centro Latinoamericano de Ecología Social (CLAES), 2009), 222.

[2] David Cortez, "'Buen vivir': ¿biopolítica o alternativa?," *Reflexiones sobre los límites al desarrollo* Memorias del Sexto Congreso Iberoamericano sobre Desarrollo y Ambiente VI CISDA (2013), 129-139; Angus Lyall, Rudi Colloredo-Mansfeld, and Malena Rousseau, "Development, Citizenship, and Everyday Appropriations of Buen
Vivir: Ecuadorian Engagement with the Changing Rhetoric of Improvement," *Bulletin of Latin American Research* (2018): 1-14.

[3] Rafael Dominguez, Sara Caria, and Mauricio Leon, "Buen Vivir: Praise, instrumentalization, and reproductive pathways of good living in Ecuador," *Latin American and Caribbean Ethnic Studies,* 12, no 3 (2017): 133-154; Victor Brenton, "Divergent understandings of Buen Vivir in Ecuador," *Latin American and Caribbean Ethnic Studies*, 12, no 3 (2017): 188-198.

[4] Here fictions are thought as categories that "provide a way to talk about and interpret things that are happening in the [ontic] world" (Thomas S. Popkewitz, "The sociology of education as the history of the present: Fabrication, difference and abjection," *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 34, no 3 (July 2013), 440.

[5] Montuvio (also spelled Montubio) is a category of mestizaje which assume a biological and cultural mix. The CODEPMOC (Council for the Development of the Montuvio Community of the Ecuadorian

the past under categories first of “slaves by nature”,[6] and later “rural men”,[7] and “peasants”.[8] Even in this attempt for revendicating “Andean ancestral knowledge”[9] there has been a process of narrating Ancestral peoples out of the “we-self”[10] of the nation. “Good living” gives continuation to the discourses that differentiate the Ancestral peoples self/life from the national self/life and addresses them simultaneously as a resource and an unsolved problem for the nation.

This work does not aim at tracing the origins of “good living”. In that sense, starting the storytelling[11] (see chapter 1) of this work with events and academic perspectives on “good living” from the 1990s on is not an exercise of presenting the research problem. Rather it is contextualizing the events and curiosities that drive this work. This research started considering

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Coast and Subtropical Zones of the Littoral Region) defines the montuvio people as the complex result of historical adaptation and ethnic transformation in the coast of Ecuador where Indigenous, Black and European descendant peoples blended. See more in https://icsh.es/2014/07/31/consejo-de-desarrollo-del-pueblo-montubio-de-la-costa-ecuatoriana-y-zonas-subtropicales-de-la-region-litoral-codepmoc/. Montubio in Ecuadorian society is also linked with economic and social class referring to the coastal mestizo peasant. See more in Daniel E. Bauer. “Emergent Identity, Cultural Heritage, and El Mestizaje: Notes from the Ecuadorian Coast.” Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies 21,1 (2012), 103-121.

[6] de Sepúlveda Juan Ginés, *Tratado Sobre Las Justas Causas De La Guerra Contra Los Indios* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1987), 85.

[7] Ministry of Education, The School of Peasant Cooperation, (Ministry of Education of Ecuador, 1965), 14,15.

[8] Ibid

[9] Secretaria del Buen Vivir, “Saberes Ancestrales: Lo Que Se Sabe y Se Siente Desde Siempre,” Buen Vivir (Secretaria del Buen Vivir, 2016), Recuperado del URL http://www.secretariabuenvivir.gob.ec/saberes-ancestrales-lo-que-se-sabe-y-se-siente-desde-siempre/

[10] In his book “Siam mapped” Thongchai Winichakul proposes we-self to be a historically and culturally constructed sense of belonging often in opposition to *others*. The binary of we-self/otherness articulates an internal/external dichotomy as way of differentiation which can be produced with the borders of nations—we might think of an Ecuadorian we-self confronted to a Peruvian we-self—but because belonging is marked by through values, ideals, politics, and customs evident in the way people live their lives those borders can be and are drawn around populations inside nations as well. Thongchai Winichakul for example asserts, “we may think about all sorts of minorities who are well inside the geo-body [country’s territory and its rules] but are on the edge of Thainess, ethnically, religiously, or ideologically, and are not well accepted into the domain of Thainess.” See Thongchai Winichakul, *Siam mapped: a history of the geo-body of a nation*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, (1994):170.

[11] Storytelling is understood here as narrations with sociogenical potential or the ability to produce social codes that describe what people understands exists in the world. See Chapter 1.

how such a positive idea, like “good living”, can also be a problematic and even violent one. That non-evident light of “good living” led me to the histories I engage with in this study which has to do with the singular ways in which “good living” is often narrated and how those narrations tacitly speak as well of “living to be improved”.

Like a station in a topological map of a bus route, this introduction is not necessarily the beginning of the story, but it is a point of entrance to it. The multiplicity of meanings that “good living” has as connected to the (hi)stories (see chapter 1) of living and improving lives in the Andes, goes beyond what is summarized in this introduction. However, the conversations showed above are some of the most significant and memorable ones in the political scene of the region and of Ecuador in particular in the past 20 years.

As a point of entrance to a complicated story about the history of the ideas of “good living” and “bettering lives” through education in Ecuador, this introduction wants to familiarize the reader with a con-text (see chapter 1) where the study of “good living” stories and the silences in those stories can make sense to recount and start new threads in the larger conversation of the politics of being in Latin America.

Good Living Conversations

What follows is the weaving of two parallel storytelling threads. One about the lingering 2000s “good living” notion and one about the post WWII ideas of “bettering lives”. I see them interconnected and pertaining to the same logics which made possible the 1960s and 1970s rural education projects this dissertation studies.

Imagining new worlds

Amidst the construction of "good living" as a constitutional principle, many scholars writing critiques to development, participated in its conceptualization and promotion. Perhaps the scholars more strongly associated to *Buen Vivir* in that context are Alberto Acosta, Eduardo Gudynas and Boaventura de Souza Santos. All of them participated actively in the conceptualization of "good living" and were present in the meetings held in Montecristi-Ecuador to draft the 2008 constitution in which "good living" was included. Acosta in particular, who was the president of the constitutional assembly at the time. These scholars approached "good living" as a possibility to challenge development as attached to European ideas of progress and, economic growth. [12] Simultaneously, "good living" was an opportunity to "transition from capitalism to socialism and from colonialism to self-determination."[13] They found in "good living," if not a fully formed concept, a rich field of possibilities for collective definition of kinds of lives informed by the cosmovision and life-experience of Andean Indigenous people to "imagine new worlds,"[14] and to create "alternatives to development,"[15] as well as a communitarian model of sovereignty, participation and socioecological rights.[16] These later built on a biocentric vision of the world were humans and non-humans were considered subjects of law entitled to rights.[17] "Good living" from their stand opened the door to a new civilization; one

[12] Alberto Acosta, "Sumak Kawsay: Una oportunidad para imaginar otros mundos," *Revista de Economia Mundial,* 33 (2013), 269-265; Eduardo Gudynas. "Buen Vivir germinando alternativas al desarrollo," *América Latina en Movimiento*, 462 (February 2011), https://www.alainet.org/es/active/48052
[13] Boaventura de Souza Santos, "El socialismo del Buen Vivir," *America Latina en Movimiento*, No.452, (February 2010), 4-7.
[14] Acosta, "imaginar otros mundos," 2013.
[15] Gudynas "germinando alternativas al desarrollo," 2011.
[16] Santos, "El socialismo del Buen Vivir," 2010.
[17] Eduardo Gudynas, "Desarrollo, Derechos De La Naturaleza Y Buen Vivir Después De Montecristi," *Debates sobre cooperación y modelos de desarrollo. Perspectivas desde la sociedad civil en el Ecuador*, ed. Gabriela Weber (Quito: Centro de Investigaciones CIUDAD y Observatorio de la Cooperación al Desarrollo, 2011), 83-102.

which needed a different kind of economy, a different development and a different social organization respectful of nature and all groups of people.

“Good living” initially sustained the hope for thoughts and practices that would undo the social order that modernization theorists had dreamed with the promise of development and the “take off” of “marginal populations”. Modernization theory proposed that “no country could be modern without being economically advanced or progressive. To be advanced economically mean[t] to have an economy based on modern technology, to be industrialized and to have a high standard of living.” Modernity required technical scientific governance that allowed “being western without the onus of following the West.” Being western as equated with being modern meant being cosmopolitan, secular, mobile. It implied for a society to have a complex division of labor. In contrast being traditional implied being superstitious, rooted, and economically simple. All of the countries of Latin America, Asia, and Africa were considered “traditional.” The transformation all these regions needed was hand in hand with the increase of literacy, technology, urbanization, mass media and the embracement of capitalism. That was the meaning of development. Late comers to modernity would have to speed up with the help of the “West” to integrate in the capitalist global economy which would ensure “better living”.

The stages of economic development of Walt Whiteman Rostow—one of the main faces of modernization theory—were the scheme of such integration. Even though his thought does not represent modernization theory as a whole, something Rostow and other modernist theorists agreed on was the obligation to propagate modernity. Between the desire of “better lives” through social scientific rationalization of societies and gaining a geopolitical advantage over communist counter proposals and “deviant kind of modernity”, the discourse of modernization justified the intervention in countries that had not got to the “stage” of “take-off”.

"Good living", came into social sciences with the same optimism of changing the world than modernization theory, but its proponents saw it as a concept that would break the mapping of the world in "developed" and "underdeveloped" inherited from modernization. The hope was to at least change the "common sense" of its epistemological and material implications.

Imagining new worlds through "good living" as a sociopolitical proposal was soon associated with a postdevelopment scholarship which linked "good living" to the deconstruction of underdevelopment as a category. One of the most influential proponents of postdevelopment Arturo Escobar, asserted that postdevelopment was helpful in three ways. First, decentering development as the main way to represent and condition Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Second, opening a space to think in the end of development and find alternatives to development. Third, transforming the politics of knowledge as ordered through the power of the experts in development.[18] Postdevelopment asked, what knowledge could displace capitalism, development, and the state from its discursive and social centrality in organizing life?[19] In the Andean context, the referent became the knowledge, lifestyles, ways of resistance and resilience of Kichwa, Quechua, Achuar, Aymara and other Indigenous and Afrodescendant people. For this reason, postdevelopment scholarship equated "good living" with the Andean Indigenous and Black movements' claims to fight racism, support practices of economic solidarity, uphold land and food sovereignty, respect their knowledge, and care for the environment. "Good living" from a postdevelopment perspective facilitated the theoretical exemplification of alternative ways of ordering society and helped environmentalists and Indigenous activists in advocating for change.

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[18] Arturo Escobar, *La invención del desarrollo* (Popayán: Universidad del Cauca, 2014), 17-20.
[19] Arturo Escobar, "Latin America at a Crossroads: Alternative modernizations, post-liberalism, or post-development?," *Cultural Studies* 24, no 1 (2010), 1-65.

Many postdevelopment studies of “good living” evaluated the success or failure of “good living” to create alternative modernization and decolonization. As Escobar describes them, alternative modernizations shift the dominance of economic growth as the objective of development of a country without leaving however the centrality of European modernity in the paradigms of its government. Decolonization on the other hand, imply a transformation of liberal societies by taking on Indigenous and intercultural (re)conceptualizations and practices.[20] The result of these analysis often pointed out that while “good living” as a constitutional principle was a step towards alternative modernization, the practices claimed by the government to stem from “good living” failed to provide alternatives to development and paths to decolonize society.

For example, in his *Ten Urgent Theses About the New Extractivisms,* Gudynas calls attention over the progressive governments of the “pink tide,”[21] including Ecuador, and their practices for economic development that endangered the environment by fostering an extractivism “obsessed with progress.”[22] In the following years, particularly after the government allowed the exploitation of oil in a sensitive area of the Amazonia within the National Park Yasuní and opened mining on mountain chain El Cóndor, the critiques from scholars and activists increased. Among them Acosta and Gudynas denounced the government for the appropriation of the notion of “good living” and its transformation into an instrument of extractivism to modernize the country which compromised the well-being of nature and of Indigenous communities in the area. These practices showed from the postdevelopment stand

[20] Escobar, *Latin America at a Crossroads,* 11-13.

[21] Pink tide is a term used to describe the apparent turn towards a progressive political left in South America in the late 1990s and 2000s, particularly Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile.

[22] Eduardo Gudynas, “Diez Tesis Urgentes Sobre El Nuevo Extractivismo Contextos Y Demandas Bajo El Progresismo Sudamericano Actual,” *Extractivismo, política y sociedad*, eds. Jürgen Schuldt et al (Quito: Centro Andino de Acción Popular (CAAP) - Centro Latinoamericano de Ecología Social (CLAES), 2009), 222.

that "good living," in its governmental use, had got entangled with the very colonial relations and desires of capitalist modernization that it wanted to undo.

Imagining new worlds through "good living" was precisely an exercise of thinking how the order of things in Ecuador would be different with Andean worldviews as its foundation. Yet the notions of "development" and "rights" did not leave the languaging and later the practices of "good living". This implies that the imagining scholars and policy makers engaged in was also historically and disciplinarily shaped.

"Good living" remained intertwined with a hope to "better lives" by changing them with economic and national and international legal instruments entangled with coloniality. As Nelson Maldonado-Torres has pointed out, human rights discourse has not questioned the "modern/colonial-line responsible for dividing the world in lighter zones, closer to civilization, and darker zones, closer to contexts defined by early death and torture", nor does it attend to the inquiry on the notion of human at its center which is overdetermined by European humanism. In that sense, "good living" new worlds discourse is akin for example with 1960s and 1970s UNESCO's Fundamental Education project that sought to "lighten the dark zones" of the world to civilize them through an education—"guaranteed and assigned by Human Rights" —to achieve a new world order of peace (See Chapter 3 and 4). Human rights might be helpful when used strategically and yet their historical entanglement with neo/colonial reason, as Maldonado-Torres suggests, direction human rights at a triumphalism of "Western"/modern reason and social narration rather than to a new conception of the world. Similarly, Sylvia Wynter has argued that development follows the logics of a color-line division which relies on a des-humanization and less-humanization of certain groups of people on whose stolen or underpaid labor modernization depends. This implies that finding alternative development practices has to

go hand in hand with a critical questioning of the degrees of humanness underlying development and our current understandings of economy.

Posdevelopment opened important spaces to think about how society could be otherwise. However, it conceptualized "good living" either as a transcendental ideal living or a governmental practice. Therefore, little attention was given to how "good living" emerged together with social practices, (con)texts, and discourses amidst coloniality, missing as well the crucial question of what genre of living was assumed referential to future "good living".

Epistemologies from the South

Of the scholars mentioned above, de Souza Santos extended the conversation towards "the abyss" that connected and disconnected Northern and Southern history. He opened his book *Epistemologies from the South* with the manifesto of "good living." An imaginary statement of the epistemologies "born in the struggle against capitalism, colonialism, and patriarchy,"[23] which do not separate inquiry from intervention in the world. Through these manifesto Santos described them thus:

> We [epistemologies from the South] are the dispossessed of the earth because we are considered ignorant, inferior, local, particular, backward, unproductive, or lazy. The immensurable suffering we get from this and the waste of world experience it brings about are unjust, but they are not historical fatalities…What do we want? The world is full of opportunities to live well, both regarding ourselves and mother earth. We want to have the opportunity to take advantage of them… We do not want to be spoken about.

[23] Santos, *Epistemologies of the South*, 238.

> We want to speak for ourselves. We do not want to be seen on the other side of the line. We want to eliminate the line.[24]

These epistemologies, Santos proposes, exceed the paradigm of European modernity, and offer new grammars for narrating society and its transformation. As presented, epistemologies of the South carry a sense of independent agency and (hi)story. That allows Santos to make clearer a contrast between the epistemologies on which he builds his methodology.

Santos proposed to approach the epistemologies form the South, which "good living" exemplified, with the *double transgressive sociology of absences and emergences.* This is a study of society that exercises a "hermeneutics of suspicion"[25] regarding European critical tradition. This is, it counterposes European and non-European epistemologies and discards no understanding or experience of the world. It sustains that any ignorance or knowledge is so in relation to a certain knowledge.

An important tenant of "good living" as a Southern epistemology concept was that it sought "not only social justice but also historical justice."[26] "Good living" sought to revert the prevalent colonial relations within society and uplift the marginalized and oppressed ways of knowing and existing.[27] It was meant to challenge internal and historical colonialism and, transform social relations, culture, and subjectivities by opening a space not defined through the "Northern" and local colonial ways of knowing and being.

"Good living" as an epistemology of the South would go beyond assumptions like those evident in post WWII Latin American social scientist discourses. For example, that kind of

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[24] Ibid, 6.
[25] Santos, *Epistemologies of the South*, 44.
[26] Santos, *El socialismo del Buen Vivir*, 7.
[27] Arturo Escobar. *La invención del desarrollo;* Boaventura de Souza Santos, *Epistemologies of the South. (*2017).

“good living” would be in opposition to the discourses that narrated Indigenous, Afrodescendant, rural, and peasant living and knowing as in need of spaces for “superación” (overcoming/improving themselves) through “scientific” knowledge and grounded on “forces of development” as exemplified in the texts of Ecuadorian UNESCO’s delegate for Fundamental Education and director of the Interamerican Indigenista Institute Gonzalo Rubio Orbe put it (see chapter 2 and chapter 5). This notion of “good living” would also give ground to questioning assumptions like those embraced in writings by Ecuadorian Fundamental Education thinker Hector Burbano that the education of marginal population for the “dignification” of their living by changing their psyche was crucial for the wellbeing of a whole country (see chapter 3). Both kinds of discourses and elaborations on education and on social “inclusion” which drove progressive politics and policies that contributed to what in the 1980s and 1990s became communitarian development and multiculturalism. To a certain extent good living as part of an epistemological turn was a critique to the abjection of the “dispossessed” thought, in Souza Santos words, but also to turning that thought into an important yet insufficient or insularized one.

Nevertheless, as a concept straddling of an abyss, “good living” asserted decolonial potential more than it engaged with Indigenous and Afrodescendant thought and practices of the region. Most “good living” conceptions were not filled with the reasoning of the practices that for centuries allowed for the continuation of life despite coloniality. This lightness of “good living”, which the epistemological approach did not alleviate, sprouted further elaborations some of them grouped as pachamamismo, and the critique of “good living” as an invented tradition.

Pachamamismo and Vitalism

During the 1990s and early 2000s a Kichwa intellectual and leader, Carlos Viteri, critiqued development as a discourse used by the government to destroy the Amazonian forest as well as the Indigenous "good living." In his text *Indigenous view on development* Viteri[28] asserts that development, since its invention after World War II, categorized Indigenous peoples as 'underdeveloped,' 'traditional' and 'the poorest among the poor' people of the Third World. He argues that development allowed the government to intervene in the lives and territories of Indigenous peoples with the justification of taking them out of poverty. The concept of development he states slowly annihilates Indigenous territories and philosophies that arrive at a "good living." He explains:

> [I]n the name of a supposed modernity and welfare based on the accumulation of goods, [development] is undermining the patterns and structural aspects of the social and cultural life of Indigenous societies, by annihilating the bases of subsistence and the knowledge for an autonomous satisfaction of needs… All this implies that the end of the poverty of Indigenous people is possible through access to the 'benefits of modernity', whose path is 'integration into market,' as the path that leads directly to development. For which Indigenous people must stop insisting on their 'unprofitable traditions'… development is a failure. Therefore, it is necessary to eliminate this notion and strengthen the philosophy of Alli Káusai (good living).[29]

Viteri is one of the first Indigenous leaders proposing "good living" as a distinct and separate philosophy stemming from Indigenous knowledge and embedded in Indigenous people's relation to their land. He set the ground for a political critique to modernity, development, and

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[28] Carlos Viteri, "Visión indígena del desarrollo en la Amazonía," *Polis* 3, (2002), https://journals.openedition.org/polis/7678

[29] Ibid, 4.

discrimination of Indigenous people thorough “good living” philosophy. After him several Indigenous intellectuals and social movements expanded on “good living” as the philosophy stemming from a relation to nature or mother earth known as pachamamismo.

In the 2000s pachamamismo emerges as a discourse proposing that Indigenous peoples’ knowledge offers philosophical principles that can produce a harmonic society. The principles offered in “good living” are claimed to be able to guide people towards a more harmonious social paradigm than that offered by thinkers of “Western” modernity since WWII.

Indigenous leaders and intellectuals akin to pachamamismo, like Luis Macas, Nina Pacari, Blanca Chancoso, Atawallpa Oviedo, Carlos Viteri among others, counterpose a “Western” colonial view of life with an Indigenous way of life. Western worldview is assumed to see humans as the owners of nature and its resources allowing them to commercialize nature to achieve economic growth. “Western” efforts to challenge human exceptionalism and posthuman proposals are often not taken into account from this stand. Indigenous worldview on the other hand is described as holding humans to be part of mother nature fostering care for nature and harmonious coexistence among humans and them with nature. Oviedo for example, articulates this binary thus:

> [The rupture] in our current world is between the archetype of the integrative-symbiotic-heterogeneous (vital cultures) and the separatist-reductionist-homogenizing paradigm (rationalist civilization). Between the peoples integrated into nature with their symbiotic life models, and the peoples who dominate nature and their dogmatized laws of the logocratic ego ... Between the developmentalist states exploitative of nature and the human being, and the nations at the service and sustainability of nature and the human being ... We agree, but with the difference that we do not consider civilization as a

> superior or better stage, but rather as the highest stage in the process of devitalization or denaturation reached by the artificial man, on his path to divorce from the laws and principles of natural life.[30]

Oviedo is perhaps the author that pushes the most towards a mystification of Indigeneity, placing the "West" and the Indigenous in two 'world-systems' simultaneously at work. One destructive of life and one assertive of life. Other pachamamist authors build upon this binary but rather focus on the possible conversations between "worlds." Even though pachamamist discourses often fall in essentializations and romantizations, through the concept of "good living" pachamamist authors have made valid critiques to the narratives of modernity, development and universal knowledge which produce Indigenous knowledge and ways of life as backwards.

The intellectuals and political leaders Macas, Pacari and Chancoso—all associated to the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE)—index "good living" with conviviality and interculturalism. They see "good living" pointing to the political will and actions that foster solidarity and reciprocity as the foundation of social life;[31] practices for good governance;[32] and an avenue for dialogue and consensus among different groups of people.[33]

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[30] Atawallpa Oviedo, *Sumak Kawsay Arte De Vivir En Armonía De la Revolución Verde a una Revolución Arcoíris* (Quito: Global Sur Editores, 2007), 17.

[31] Blanca Chancoso, "Sumak Kawsay desde la visión de la mujer," *Sumak Kawsay Yuyay Antología del pensamiento indigenista ecuatoriano sobre Sumak Kawsay,* Eds. Antonio Hidalgo Capitan et al (Huelva, Cuenca: Proyecto de Cooperación Interuniversitaria para el Fortalecimiento institucional de la Universidad de Cuenca en materia de movilidad humana y buen vivir (FIUCUHU), 2014), 221-228.

[32] Nina Pacari, "Sumak Kawsay Para Que Tengamos Vida," *Sumak Kawsay Yuyay Antología del pensamiento indigenista ecuatoriano sobre Sumak Kawsay,* Eds. Antonio Hidalgo Capitan et al, (Huelva, Cuenca: Proyecto de Cooperación Interuniversitaria para el Fortalecimiento institucional de la Universidad de Cuenca en materia de movilidad humana y buen vivir (FIUCUHU), 2014), 343-356.

[33] Luis Macas, "El Sumak Kawsay," *Sumak Kawsay Yuyay Antología del pensamiento indigenista ecuatoriano sobre Sumak Kawsay,* Eds. Antonio Hidalgo Capitan et al, (Huelva, Cuenca: Proyecto de Cooperación Interuniversitaria para el Fortalecimiento institucional de la Universidad de Cuenca en materia de movilidad humana y buen vivir (FIUCUHU), 2014), 177-192.

Sumak Kawsay or "good living," Pacari, Chancoso and Macas agree, supports the two main proposals of CONAIE's political project. First, the plurinational state, which encircles democratization of decision making, horizontalization of power and, a new economic system based upon solidarity, equality and justice. Second, interculturalism, interpreted as respecting the ways of knowing and cultural practices of all the Indigenous nationalities in Ecuador.

Most pachamamist discourses mention reciprocity and complementarity as the key principles that "good living" offers to foster intercultural conviviality. Reciprocity is defined as being attentive to the needs of those who are part of one's community and meeting those needs knowing that others will do the same.

In relation to Ecuador's governance, Pacari asserts, reciprocity is part of the duty of recognition and care of the government to the many nationalities within Ecuador.[34] Complementarity refers to the encounter between different people, genders, directions (geographical) and their knowledge. From encounters communities arise. It is the encounter and dialogue between people of different and often opposing views that allows them to solve problems and coexist. Chancoso asserts that "good living" implies identifying oneself with the pain and the happiness of others and accompany them as they live it. Her interpretation of complementarity is empathy, mutual support and care between people of any age, gender and background. "Good living" from her stand is possible when a collective becomes familiar through empathy and respects the multiple ways of thinking about and living in the world.[35]

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[34] Pacari, Sumak Kawsay Para Que Tengamos Vida, 343-356.

[35] Chancoso "El Sumak Kawsay desde la visión de mujer," *Sumak Kawsay Yuyay Antología del pensamiento indigenista ecuatoriano sobre Sumak Kawsay,* Eds. Antonio Hidalgo Capitán et al, (Huelva, Cuenca: Proyecto de Cooperación Interuniversitaria para el Fortalecimiento institucional de la Universidad de Cuenca en materia de movilidad humana y buen vivir (FIUCUHU), 2014),221-228.

Macas similarly states that the will to care for each other and reach consensus within a nationality and among nationalities can ensure conviviality.

These three leaders propose that reciprocity and complementarity in practice implies fostering policies that recognize diversity and support it.[36] For example, supporting an economy that respects Pachamama (mother earth) through policies that disrupt extractivist tendencies and fighting racism through a judicial system that recognizes plurinationality and respects Indigenous peoples and their territories.[37] In this sense, reciprocity and conviviality can be translated into political practices that foster the flourishing of the many cultures, histories and territories that are part of Ecuador. Pacari, Chancoso, and Macas' proposals center the conversation in dealing with difference in a respectful way thusly challenging the narrations of "rural [hu]men" and Indigenous people as the "problem" and target of local modernization.

While political leaders and intellectuals in their uses of "good living" and Andean cosmovision engage in a romanticization of Indigenous knowledge and lives, dismissing proposals like the exposed above posed by CONAIE's leaders would be an arrogant mistake. The critiques to pachamamismo in Ecuador and Bolivia grew in the late 2010s often ridiculing its proponents and dismissing their thoughts. This text agrees with Anders Burman[38] in that pachamismo is not a homogenous discourse and its interventions need to be problematized according to its non-normative logics rather than by its 'authenticity.' Pachamamismo approach to "good living" is problematic because it draws in totalizing identity tropes that reconstruct the

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[36] Macas, El Sumak Kawsay, 177-192.
[37] Chancoso, El Sumak Kawsay desde la visión de mujer, (2014); Pacari, Sumak Kawsay Para Que Tengamos Vida, 221-228.
[38] Anders Burman, "El ch'aki ontologico y el 'pachamamismo': critica a la critica," *Pensamiento pacha: agenda atawalla 2032: memorias de la 6ta Conferencia Internacional Indio-Tiwanaku: Reconstituyendo el Estado del Tawantinsuyu siglo XXI,* (El Alto, Bolivia: 2016).

Indigenas as the Other of the nation and in so doing narrate their knowledge as mystical and outside of (hi)stories. However, it makes visible the matters of concern in the (hi)stories of practices to fabricate "good living" and in questioning what does it mean to have a good life.

Invented Tradition

After 2010, economists and anthropologists—like Victor Brenton[39] and Rafael Dominguez[40]—pointed to the multiplication of uses and the watering down in meaning of "good living." These scholars proposed that "good living" is an invented tradition used in different ways by different groups of people but with no actual meaning. Brenton asserted that "good living" is an invented tradition because of its deliberate construction by intellectuals to provide alternatives to developmentalism. Dominguez saw the Ecuadorian government as well as scholars and activists constituting "good living" as a set of practices seeking to inculcate values in the population through the fabrication of a line of continuity to an ancestral past. Both approaches implied tracing the transformations of "good living" from the 1990s until 2017 and showing its lack of consistency and rooting in society.

The argument of an invented tradition classified "good living's" narratives in moments of conceptual evolution and understandings during the late 1990s and 2000s. These classifications grouped scholars and intellectuals according to their contributions to invent or critique "good living."

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[39] Victor Brenton, "Three divergent understandings of Buen Vivir in the Ecuador of the Citizens' Revolution," *Latin American and Caribbean Ethnic Studies* (2017), 188-200.
[40] Rafael Dominguez, Sara Caria, and Mauricio Leon, "Buen Vivir: Praise, instrumentalization, and reproductive pathways of good living in Ecuador," *Latin American and Caribbean Ethnic Studies*, (2017), 133-154.

The first moment is that of a definition of "good living" that builds on the romantization and essentialization of Indigenous life to describe "good living" as the harmonious life with oneself, with others and with/in nature. Dominguez argued that such definition mythicized and mystified the life of Indigenous people representing their life as "'uncontaminated' by Western culture."[41] This conceptualization of "good living" narrated a utopia that included the practices that fed the idea of harmony and left aside "patriarchal structures and natural resources depredation" [42] within Indigenous communities. Similarly, Brenton states that one of the meaning-making of "good living" is an essentialist-identity one produced by Indigenous and indigenistas intellectuals opposed to Correa's regime. Brenton critiques the conceptualization of "good living" as animated by vitalist ontologies untouched by "Western culture"[43] and which promote harmonious coexistence among humans and them with nature. He finds particularly problematic Atawallpa Oviedo's argument that opposes the harmonious, "cosmo-scientific"[44] worldview of all the "natural peoples of the world"[45] to the "Western-patriarchal-capitalist"[46] worldview. The construction of binaries ultimately decontextualized "good living" and allowed the government to co-opt it.

The romantization and mystification of "good living," advocates of the invented tradition explanation argue, transformed the notion into an empty signifier[47] which allowed its mobilization by heterogeneous social groups with different agendas. In this second moment, while postdevelopment and pachamamist intellectuals fraughted "good living" as an alternative

[41] Brenton, divergent understandings, 192.
[42] Dominguez et al, Buen Vivir, 136.
[43] Brenton, divergent understandings, 192.
[44] Oviedo in Brenton, divergent understandings, 193.
[45] Brenton, divergent understandings, 193.
[46] Ibid, 193.
[47] Ibid, 134. The authors describe an empty signifier as an object of political identification which totalizes a system of differences and does not belong to any conceptual order.

to capitalism, Rafael Correas' government reshaped it as republican biosocialism.[48] The latter made of "good living" a concept of economic development unfolding in a linear way, upwardly oriented and organized in stages—just like modernization theory. It also promoted the intensification of natural resources extraction as the initial condition to accumulate wealth to support social and solidarity economy projects and increase the possibilities of eudemonia or an Aristotelian contemplation and flourishing. "Good living" became part of technocratic policies fostering capitalism as well as part of the critique to the government, its policies and more broadly capitalism.

The third moment of conceptual development is driven by the internationalization of "good living." The expansion of the notion beyond borders on the one hand, promoted the dialogue of social movements linking them with other systemic alternatives of development like those proposed by the Zapatista and Mapuche movements, the European degrowth and feminist ecologism. For example, "good living" in Argentina facilitated the formation of the movement Indigenous Women Marching for Good Living (MMIBV in Spanish). This movement became an outlet for encounters, discussion and, writing demands and proposals regarding Indigenous female rights and protection of the Indigenous territories.[49] On the other hand, "good living" through governmental and non-governmental organizations became part of the discourses of international development cooperation institutions like the World People's Conference on Climate Change, the United Nations Development Program, and the International Development Committee. Scholars of development studies suggest that "good living" offered opportunities to

[48] Dominguez et al, Buen Vivir, 139.
[49] Carolina Álvarez Ávila, "Movimiento de Mujeres Indígenas por el Buen Vivir: marchando entre la política, lo político y lo ontológicamente diverso en Argentina," *Nuevo Mundo Mundos Nuevos* [On line], (2019). https://journals.openedition.org/nuevomundo/76814

alleviate the tensions between the local and global landscape of policymaking.[50] "Good living" outside of the Andes took even more turns and meanings, more often than not indexed around Indigenous demands and development's localization.

The invented tradition argument has the strength of making visible how nebulous "good living" is and the diverse regimes of truth employed in its conceptualization across heterogenous social groups. Precisely for this reason, thinking of "good living" as an empty signifier seems rather unsatisfactory. The complications of pinning down "good living" are not that it belongs to no conceptual order but rather that it belongs to several and multiplying conceptual orders. The argument also obviates how the notion of invented tradition breaks "good living" into moments and classifies its sensibilities in a way that facilitates the management and policing of those sensibilities which express the discomforts, and non-normative life projects of several social groups and movements. Regarding the concern of this work, the main problem of the invented tradition argument is that it dismisses the entanglements of "good living" with the history of "betterment of lives" which supported development and with the (hi)stories of Indigenous and Afrodescendant contestation to those projects before the 1990s and 2000s in what is now the Andes and particularly Ecuador.

Historizations

In contrast to the thesis that "good living" is a recent invention, historian Aníbal Quijano drawing in Carolina Ortiz's work has suggested a rather long existence of the term that links it to the writings of the Indigenous chronicler Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala.[51] As Ortiz elaborates,

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[50] Salvatore Monni and Massimo Pallottino, "A New Agenda for International Development Cooperation: Lessons learnt from the Buen Vivir experience." *Development* 58, no 1 (2015), 49-57.

[51] Aníbal Quijano, "Bien vivir": entre el "desarrollo" y la des/colonialidad del poder, *Cuestiones y horizontes: de la dependencia histórico-estructural a la colonialidad/descolonialidad del poder* (Buenos

in the early 1600s Guamán Poma's letter to the King Philip III *La Primera Nueva Crónica y El Buen Gobierno* (the first new chronicle and the good government), proposed *bien vivir* (good living) as good government. The chronicler, who was a Quechua noble man fluent in Spanish, writes his letter after traveling around several Andean towns witnessing abuse and exploitation. In his writing he denounces that the colonial authorities have broken the Christian law and the King's law raping Indigenous women, mistreating Indigenous people, and dispossessing them from their land. What Guamán Poma requests is the use of the Spanish law to protect the Indians. Importantly he requests for the education of Indigenous people in their own language and in Spanish so that education can be the foundation of a better government.[52] This is implies Indigenous people would be able to serve in the colonial administration and reach conviviality among all the people in the land. Quijano directs attention to this very early use of "good living" as a political proposal because his argument is that "good living" is a way of resistance to colonial power and its legacy.

In his piece *"good living:" between "development" and de/coloniality of power,* Quijano[53] argues that "good living" is an expression of resistance to the colonial relations persistent in the Andes and globally. Coloniality is the term he coins to express the continuation of such relations after the independence and nation-genesis in colonized territories. Latin American Indigenous peoples, the argument continues, occupy a foundational place in denouncing coloniality because they are one of the first populations indigenized and submitted to

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Aires: CLACSO, 2014); Carolina Ortiz Fernández, "Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala, Clorinda Matto, Trinidad Henríquez y la teoría crítica. Sus legados a la teoría social contemporánea," *YUYAYKUSUN*. Lima: Universidad Ricardo Palma, no 2, (December, 2009).

[52] See Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, *Nueva Crónica y Buen Gobierno*, volumen 2, (Lima: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1615 [2005]).

[53] Anibal Quijano, ""Bien vivir": entre el "desarrollo" y la des/colonialidad del poder," *Cuestiones y horizontes: de la dependencia histórico-estructural a la colonialidad/descolonialidad del poder.* (Buenos Aires: CLACSO, 2014);

settler colonial power. For this reason, these populations play a relevant role in epistemic subversion and proposals of "good living" as an alternative social existence. The indication of a resistance through "good living" as early as the 1600s is thus loosely connected with postwar and contemporary uses of the term regarding the experience of discrimination and violence against Indigenous peoples and their modes of living. This is however a broad stroke argument about the continuation of colonial relations in the present that does not elaborate in the particular practices and local (hi)stories that made "good living" possible in Ecuador.

A work that does attend to those nuances is the genealogical research of the historian Jose Inuca[54] who traces the use of alli kawsay to the schools created by Dolores Cacuango— Indigenous leader from the highlands— and the Indian Federation in the late 1940s and the movement of "liberating education" guided by Freirean pedagogy in the 1960s and 1970s. He argues that Kichwa ideas of "good life" as alli kawsay were present in Kichwa people's political demands from mid XX century on. These expressions were later articulated with other political concerns in the region under "good living" as sumak kawsay. Inuca states that, the first translation of alli kawsay is related to virtue or the attitude of people who lead a good life. He links liberation theology priests and, missionaries from Catholic orders to the alphabetization programs for the Indigenous population that resulted in political organization and the articulation of a meaning on what is a "good life" for Kichwa people.[55] His argument is not that alli kawsay was the origin of sumak kawsay and "good living". Rather it is a call to look at how Indigenous

[54] Jose Inuca, "Genealogia de alli kawsay/sumak kawsay (vida buena/ vida hermosa) de las organizaciones kichwas del Ecuador desde mediados del siglo XX [Genealogy of allí kawsay/sumak kawsay (a good/beautiful life) one of the Kichwa organizations of Ecuador since the middle of the XX century]" *Latin American and Caribbean Ethnic Studies* 12, no 3 (2017), 155-176
[55] Ibid, 158-159.

peoples articulated “good living” as a political educational proposal previous to the 2000s to question the invented tradition argument.

Similarly, theologian Fernando Vega links the proposal of “good living” to liberation theology’s and the Indigenous movement’s contestation of development theories and practices in the rural areas or Ecuador. Liberation Theology emerges in the 1960s linked to the debates on development, the theory of stages of development and the making of underdevelopment, and the counternarrative of dependence theory. In 1968 in the Conference on Chimbote-Peru, the Peruvian priest Gustavo Gutierrez changes the name of his discussion from theology of development to liberation theology and starts a current of theorization in regards of the need of liberation of the poor. In the Andes, liberation theologians saw the Indigenas as constituting “the poor.” In this regard, they focused on the education and development of Indigenous communities. In the bishop assembly in Medellin in 1968 liberating education was one of the main actions decided on to “transform the learner into subject of their own development” linked to the key principle of liberation theology “a fundamental focus on the poor.”[56] Catholic youth movements, priests and nuns localized the Freiran method “see, judge and act” as a method to evaluate social realities and plan demands and resistance. Alphabetization was a way to engage in politics, seek independence and break inner colonial dependency. Liberation theology defined itself from its beginning as a “Theology of Life,” struggling against and offering an alternative to the forces of death unleashed by capitalist greed and cultural imperialism.[57] Education for “good living” from this perspective implied a political engagement in breaking the conditions of dependence to inner colonial relations and their violence.

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[56] Fernando Vega, “Teología de la Liberación y Buen Vivir,” in *Construyendo el Buen Vivir*, eds. Alejandro Guillén y Mauricio Phelan (Cuenca: PYDLOS, 2012), 115-36.
[57] Ibid, 119.

The research of Quijano, Inuca and Vega point towards the entanglement of "good living" with previous and ongoing critiques to colonial relations inside and outside of Ecuador and the Andes. The historizations of "good living" above are the exception to the rule considering that most scholars trace the roots of "good living" to the early 1990s. The research of these authors is a good foundation to look at the stories that narrate into being the "rural men," their lives and the spaces they belong as related to "good living/living to be improved". They signal to theoretical elaborations and events that made possible the reasoning implied in the making of kinds of lives linked to development after WWII. These stories and reasonings take place in and through education.

Chapter 1 Approaches to the Politics of Being of Good Living (Hi)stories

The concern guiding this dissertation is to make visible how the stories thinkers tell about humanness, human living, and societal wellbeing shape curricula and education texts. Simultaneously it is concerned with the biographies[58] of texts and the descriptive statements they make available through which humanness, human living and societal wellbeing is in turn storied. I examine the ideas of "good living" in Fundamental Education programs destined to "better the lives" of rural population in Ecuador in the 1960s and 1970s. The focus is on the challenges peoples narrated as rural posed to such ideas of making "good living". That examination implies an awareness of the description of "rural" as a target of "bettering" which becomes part of the narrations collectively produced by people and texts. In analyzing print writings, drawings and photography related to rural education, the dissertation will highlight how these productions embody languages which narrate genres of lives, people, and lands.

This work argues that producing "good living" is a historical concern which stems from the "problem" of difference and its current articulations are deeply intertwined with post Second World War (WWII) ideas of "bettering lives" and "inclusion of marginal populations". In that regard the study of the "*rural man [sic] problem*" or "*the campesino/peasant problem*", will make evident that "good living" discourse is not a new phenomenon, but rather a re-articulation of on-going logics and dynamics of inclusion/exclusion which often are deemed solvable through education. These "problems" are interpreted as resulting from both an overrepresentation of the national(ized) values and modes of life as "good living"—which relationally makes Ancestral

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[58] See section on (hi)storytelling of this chapter

pueblos' lives located in rural areas *living to be improved—,* and the contestations to projects of "bettering" by targeted peoples.

The problem of "rural men" particularly in regard to the supposed stagnation of development of a nation due to inability of "rural" people to care for themselves and participate in economy—illustrates in Latin America the fears and hopes of "inclusion". The hope that education would make the "reasonable" and "moral" subject involved in modern economy is linked with fears of the dangers and dangerous populations in rural areas which are relationally narrated as unreasonable and immoral. Thomas Popkewitz calls this dynamic double gestures, a notion that points out that the hope to form the "normal" through education produces the "pathological".[59]

An extension of such gesture can be seen in the narrative of the book entitled "The Rural Population of Ecuador", published by the head of the *Indigenista* (Indigenous Studies) Institute of Ecuador in the 1960s, Gonzalo Rubio Orbe. The book legitimized a classification of people living in rural areas —*Indios de la sierra, Indios del Oriente, Negros,* and *Montuvios*—with biological and psychological characteristics, and naturalized "approaches to progress".[60] In that text Indigenous peoples are described as "primitive",[61] and Afrodescendants are described as lazy and "lack[ing] projection to the future".[62] Fundamental Education is put forth in that text as giver of knowledge that would take away the "primitiveness" of "Indios", change the "ill

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[59] Thomas S. Popkewitz, Cosmopolitanism and the Age of School Reform Science, Education, and Making Society by Making the Child, (U.K.: Routledge, 2008); Thomas S. Popkewitz "Reform and Making Human Kinds: The Double Gestures of Inclusion and Exclusion in the Practice of Schooling", Essay In Critical Analyses of Educational Reforms in an Era of Transnational Governance, 133-150, Hultqvist, Elisabeth, Sverker Lindblad, and Thomas S. Popkewitz eds., (Switzerland: Springer, 2018).
[60] Gonzalo Rubio Orbe, *Población Rural del Ecuador,* (Quito: Talleres Gráficos Nacionales, 1966)
[61] Ibid, 30,32.
[62] Ibid, 264

attitudes" of "Negros" towards industriousness, and facilitate the *inclusion* of both groups in the nation and its economy.

Fundamental Education was a program devised by the United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) which would bring people into the rising world order where "full effectiveness of work"[63] in skilled services would give them stability, well-being and "an adequate standard of living".[64] The program was also intertwined with John F. Kennedy's and the Alliance for Progress' call to a "better life"; "the future of liberty in the Americas and in the entire world"[65] depended on it. In Ecuador, intellectuals, and education 'experts' narrated Indigenous, and Afrodescendant lives as the rural lives to be "integrated/bettered" through Fundamental Education (see chapter 2).

Through the *indigenista* views on "ruralness", the "rural man problem" emerges as a racialized question about the production of "good living" in society. The problem of "rural men" in Ecuador (and Latin America) created a descriptive statement about the humanity of Ancestral pueblos that narrated them as the national development problem and what kept the nation in "underdevelopment."

National(ized) public education discourses are linked to the descriptions on "rural population" produced by intellectuals and to the articulation of those narrations with international discourses on "bettering lives". For example, the conclusion section of one of the manuals for rural campesino education published by the Ministry of Education of Ecuador in 1965, shows the construction of the "rural [hu]man" as a problem to the economy and moral life of the country. It asserts:

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[63] UNESCO 1952, 40 in Wodajo 1963, 25
[64] Ibid.
[65] Kennedy in Alliance for Progress 1972, 1

…the collaboration of the mentioned institutions [Agriculture Chamber, National Bank of Progress, Cooperative Services and non-specified international cooperation services] have praised highly the objective of fostering through education the well-being of the man in the fields that lives at the borders of the benefits of civilization and will have the objective of avoiding that his ignorance falls into a series of defects that will translate into collective malaise.

The adoption of the cooperative system will tackle the problem of the ignorance of the man in the fields which implies the healthy conversion of that man to a factor of production and progress of the Homeland (la Patria).

1. There is a need for adopting the cooperative system for the solution of vital problems in the community, which constitute education towards betterment of the life of humanity.

2. The peasant with instruction will contribute to the detachment from primitivism and the archaic procedures in the agricultural job, rising them to the capacity of conscientious productor, greatly important element in the plan of agricultural technification, these results are of incalculable value to the economy of the country

3. The education of the peasant will mold their mind towards the conceptions of a moral life, taking away from vice and delinquency, factors of constant social perturbance for the agriculture businesses.

4. An adequate direction of education will strengthen the spirit of responsibility and industriousness in agriculture, rooting man to land and eliminating, as education progress

advances, the problem of the rural migration to the cities and the abandonment of the fields.

5. The collaboration of the institutions linked to the life of the peasant like the Agriculture Chamber, National Bank of Progress, and Cooperative Services of point IV [non-specified international cooperation services], in the work of dissemination of rural schooling, thought the foundation of the Education Cooperatives, it will be a powerful stimulus for the management of the Ministry of Education whose fruits of undeniable human and patriotic value will translate into the decrease in the percentage of the illiterate in Ecuador.

6. The gradual development of this form of cooperation in education for the rural man, in the future, will allow the Ministry of Education and other institutions that collaborate with it to give more contributions for the solution of other problems of a higher educational and social level that will come up in the rural environment as communities progress.

This text clearly articulates a descriptive statement of the "rural [hu]man", and "the peasant" turning them into a problem. The language in the guidelines narrate people in rural areas as ignorant, with vices, and with a tendency to delinquency and moral malaise. Simultaneously, the "rural [hu]man" is narrated as a useful resource for economic development as potential workforce. Those statements inscribe difference constructing a pathological genre of human and life through economic descriptions (numeral 2). Education is to detach this human from "primitivism," as well as to "mold their minds" towards morality, taking away "vice and delinquency" as problems that impact business and thus the economy. In this way leading a "good life" is equated with a moral life which education must fabricate (numeral 3). Education in

rural areas would as well remove “rural people” from cities to keep them working the land where they would be an element for economic progress. “Industriousness” is as well something claimed absent in the “rural human” related to the morality of productivity in capitalism. Thus, education is to transform the “rural human” into a productive human/element of the system for economic development (numeral 4). Moreover, it is through this kind of moral/economic life produced through education and claimed universal that belonging to the nation is possible (numeral 5). This proposal of the Ministry of Education is a clear example of the overrepresentation of the moral life as a productive life in terms of being functional to “progress/development,” and the need to transform the “rural [hu]man” into human.

The kind of descriptive statements in texts like the one showed in the example above are underpinned by hopes for transforming difference and fear on the failure or impossibility of such transformation. Transformation is worded as “bettering life” economically, intellectually, and morally, which the argument of this dissertation proposes abides in the same realm of the narrative of achieving a “good living” for all. This is to say that the logics of how “good living” discourse in Ecuador has unfolded in current times (see introduction) is similar to post WWII discourse on “bettering lives” because of the historical entanglements they share.

The intention of this work is not to trace origins but to understand the “good living/living to be improved” narrative in Ecuador and its relation to the politics of being and knowing. I will pursue this analysis through the example of “rural education” directed to Indigenous, and Afrodescendant people between the late 1950s and 1980. Both groups at the time were targeted through the “rural [hu]man” problem. As a particular expression of the “problem” of difference and different ways of living within spaces and its imagined borders and communities, the argument will propose, the “rural [hu]man problem” is one that connects deeply with the hopeful

imagining of new worlds that "good living" came to mean in Ecuadorian society *and* with the imperious sustainable development it also came to mean. This is so because most expressions of the discourse of "good living" in education build upon post WWII ideas about addressing difference by "bettering life" or stem from the contestation of those ideas by trying to imagine "better living" beyond modernization.

To build my argument I explore how education projects and texts narrate Ancestral peoples' values/modes of life with/in their territories (which coincide with parts of the imagined national territory). To make this argument I draw in Sylvia Wynter's *politics of being*, and the elaborations on that notion which are intertwined with Aimé Cessaire's *science of the word*, and Frantz Fanon's *sociogeny.* I draw as well on Wynter and Katherine McKittrick's dialogues on *being human as praxis* and *demonic grounds* (see section (hi)storytelling lenses).

Through those lenses, the research will unpack the statements and images in education texts, guidelines, reports, newspapers, and documented oral histories that make up the notions "rural", and "rural people" and their lives. The research will also analyze how people categorized in those texts as "rural" has contested the narratives of improvement that turn their lives into a problem. The concrete questions that guide this project are the following:

- How has 1950s-1980 Ecuadorian social and education intellectuals and texts narrated differences regarding the idea of "good living" and its relational "living to be improved" as it relates to Fundamental Education projects?
- How have 1950s-1980 Indigenous and Afrodescendant federations/movements/communities' education projects contested, appropriated, assimilated or exceeded narratives regarding "good living/living to be improved"?

- What are the epistemic differences/similarities on stories about humanness and its good living offered by national(ized), Indigenous, and Afrodescendant education narratives in the projects and texts analyzed?

These questions will be helpful in pursuing the analysis of historical and textual conversations within education which is particularly important in Ecuador because the (hi)story of "/bettering" the life of people in rural areas has continuation in current "buen vivir/good living" reforms that appropriate decades of labor and sacrifices of Indigenous and Black communities. Several studies, as pointed out in the introduction, have engaged with the idea of "good living" and its use both in development discourses and social movements' aspirations. However, most studies pay little attention to the historical entanglements of "good living" with the hopes and fears of modernization, and the intellectual flows between how "good living" has been narrated, otherwise-narrated, and resisted. Here resistance is not opposition that reifies binaries, but historical practices of negotiation regarding, or refusal to, "inclusion" through projects of "bettering".

The analysis of the (hi)storical flows between "living" and "Other ways of living" embedded in "good living," speaks to the larger narratives on "good living/living to be improved" that after WWII are intertwined with projects of modernization and its promises of well-being through economic development, aid, and rights. A critical look at that larger narrative of "improving lives" through education and the resistance to it will contribute to the discussions within educational studies on the making of self and other and how those ideas impact education theory and practice. This discussion contributes to curriculum studies if we think of curriculum as knowledge that traces a path for being, because the "sociogenic" production of the world and

of good lives/lives to be improved is crucial to make evident the historical emergence of curriculum locales. Importantly, how some locales are legitimized as improving lives and some locales continue to be dismissed as unable to do so yet continue to be the grounds for critical questioning of inter/national narratives of education for “good/better” living.

In an international perspective this study exemplifies the intra-actions[66] between global concerns on “educating” and teaching literacy to rural population during the 1960s with the intention of “lightening the dark zones of the world”,[67] and the strategical acceptance of Europeanized education by people in rural areas for the political assertion of their lives and knowledge. Looking at Ecuador’s history of rural education through Fundamental Education programs, is more than a case study or a local history project. The texts and ideas analyzed in this study are constituted by flows between peoples of different places. Those places could be narrowed and bordered around Europe, North America, and Latin America, and yet both, classifications for “bettering peoples ’lives” and solidarities against those imposed classifications, stretch to Africa, Asia, and Oceania. The point to be made is that the flows of ideas and texts mark understandings about human life, the world, and hopes for living well in it through which people story existence. The tensions among such stories have a global circulation and also historical particularities that pertain, in this case to the Andes and what is now Ecuador.

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[66] Karen Barad explains that the notion of intra-action (in contrast to interaction) does not presumes the prior existence of independent entities or relata. Rather relata and “individuals emerge through and as part of their entangled intra-relating. Which is not to say that emergence happens once and for all, as an event or as a process that takes place according to some external measure of space and of time, but rather that time and space, like matter and meaning, come into existence, are iteratively reconfigured through each intra-action, thereby making it impossible to differentiate in any absolute sense between creation and renewal, beginning and returning, continuity and discontinuity, here and there, past and future.” See Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway,* (Durham, London: Duke University Press, 2007), ix

[67] Julian Huxley. Fifth Session of the Preparatory Commission of Unesco 9th of July of 1946. In Unesco, 1947. Fundamental Education. US: MacMillian, 6.

By engaging with the history of the idea of "good living/living to be improved" in education and its articulation in Ecuador, this study aims at contributing to larger conversations on (de)coloniality by con-textualizing (see section Con-texts) the thought and strategies of Indigenous, and Black pueblos to institute their way of being human and storying good living through education projects. (De)colonial is here understood, like Sylvia Wynter suggests, as the efforts of "unsettling the coloniality of being/power/truth/freedom".[68] That unsettling practice is grounded as Nelson Maldonado-Torres has pointed out, on disrupting the idea that humanity was unevenly divided into groups already fully human and other groups to be elevated into full humanity.[69] The work of decoloniality implies on the one hand epistemic *desprendimiento* or detachment and on the other hand, relinking or re-existing otherwise. In this sense, the work aims at offering Indigenous and Black Andean narrations that have and continue to unsettle normalizations and officializations of "good living" while offering avenues to link thought and narrate existence differently with own and appropriated tools to story a good life.

On (Hi)story-telling

This research approaches history as a social narration or a kind of storytelling which institutes society. Sylvia Wynter proposed the concept "science of the word"[70] as a way of extricating

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[68] Sylvia Wynter, "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation--An Argument," *The New Centennial Review 3*, no 3 (2003):257-337.

[69] Nelson Maldonado-Torres, "Frantz Fanon and the decolonial turn in psychology: from modern/colonial methods to the decolonial attitude", *South African Journal of Psychology* 2017, Vol. 47(4) 432–441; Nelson Maldonado-Torres, "Frantz Fanon, Decoloniality, and the Spirit of Bandung," *Global World Literature*, 13 (2019): 236-252.

[70] Sylvia Wynter, "Unsettling the Coloniality"; Sylvia Wynter, On How We Mistook the Map for the Territory, and Reimprisoned Ourselves in Our Unbearable Wrongness of Being, of Desêtre: Black Studies Toward the Human Project, in Not Only the Master's Tools, Lewis Gordon and Jane Gordon, (Blackwell Publishing, 2006); Sylvia Wynter and Katherine McKittrick, "Unparalleled Catastrophe for Our Species? Or, To Give Humanness a Different Future: Conversations," in Sylvia Wynter: On Being Human as Praxis, ed. Katherine McKittrick (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015),

human from a biocentric evolutionary conceptualization. She argued that humans are both biological and storytelling beings, *bios-mythois*. Following her lead, I propose stories to be understood as the narration of truths from diverse ontological possibilities according to the ways of life and thinking of the people and lands in question. Under this definition history is *a* story, often officialized and singularized under an authoritative figure—regarding public education, often the Ministry of Education. Consequently, throughout the text I talk about (hi)story and (hi)stories. I use (hi)story when talking about an artificially singularized narrative and (hi)stories when talking about the multiple stories that are part of any happening.

Part of Wynter's argument in pointing out the dual *bios-mythos* characteristic of humans is that stories are formative of the possibilities of being and the possibilities of the world we make.[71] Through stories people produce their society and descriptive statements about modes of being human. I want to expand on that argument proposing that more-than-human beings (land, animals, weather, machines) also participate in narrating the world as their (hi)stories and motions intertwine with human lives in multiple ways from supporting our steps, to providing nourishment for our bodies, from healing illness to provoking thought and knowledge, to sharing labor, to making available descriptive statements. The argument I pursue suggests that (human and more-than-human) storytellers collectively narrate society and possibilities of being/living. This makes any genre of human/place/being a fluid story that can, within certain stories by certain storytellers, become constricted to more or less solid categories. Storytellers that through economic, military, and knowledge power overdetermine their genre of being/living as *the* way of being/living relationally construct other genres as a problem to be solved. "Solving" historically has meant acculturating, and forcefully changing or eliminating genres of

[71] Sylvia Wynter and McKittrick, *On Being Human as Praxis,*

being/living. The "rural" is one of such genres which within development, modernization, and *indigenista* stories, especially during the period under study, construed people and places as a problem to be solved.

The texts produced—speeches, textbooks, worksheets, curriculum, education guidelines—in a particular time are seen as the conversation, between the story told, the stories "cleaned out," and the excess of content that gives foundation or makes possible any story. Told and untold stories collectively or relationally produced are part of the spiraling biography of texts. Spiraling here points towards how that biography carries the past(s) and possible future(s) of peoples, lands, and machines intra-acting.[72] This implies that texts hold multiple (hi)stories, temporalities, commitments, and ideas of future(s). The proposition made here thence is that the practice of looking at written and visual stories can account for the exchanges and presences with unshared meanings and diverse political projects. This is particularly important in acknowledging the multiple forms in which othered genres of being engage with practices and knowledges for continuing to live.[73] Those, which refuse descriptions that turn certain people, like "rural [hu]man" and more-than-human beings, like "rural" land, into anachronisms and targets for development into a future where their own desires and/or presences are imagined as absent or non-important.[74]

In this project of historization I follow the flows between ways of reasoning and concerns that allowed for narrations of "good living/living to be improved" and for their housing in education texts (print and verbal). I propose flows to be intra-active[75] (hi)storylines related to the different concerns of different people/beings. Even though these (his)storical flows cannot be

[72] See Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway,* (Durham, London: Duke University Press, 2007), ix
[73] Gerald Robert Vizenor, Survivance: Narratives of Native Presence (Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 2009).
[74] Jason Edward Lewis, Imagining Indians in the 25th Century, PUBLIC: Art, Culture, Ideas 54, (January 201), 36– 49.
[75] Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway,* (Durham, London: Duke University Press, 2007), ix

pinned down, their dynamics leave traces as they utter stories. Here utterances are not the product of a subject but of the enunciation of collective elements enlacing their values. They do not describe content but rather they formulate signs and bodies coming together.[76] This work notices and follows the traces of those (hi)storical flows which are identifiable in the narration of "good living/living to be improved" in educational con-texts.

Con-texts

"Good living/living to be improved" would not be thinkable without flows of ideas and people beyond the borders that have come to give certain shape to Ecuador as a nation. Those borders imply (hi)stories, ethnicity, values, as much as political and physical geography. For this reason, this work sees (hi)stories as made in the movement across con-texts as well as in them.[77] Con-texts are places, images, books or any other territory brought about by a discursive border. Borders result of inscriptions related to a certain order or mapping of the world which make them mobile in space and time.[78] That mobility has no definite moment of change. For this reason, borders are porous and con-texts have no stable shape. The assumption in this work is that in any given con-text or discourse there are flows of ideas that make them possible. Those flows are both across space (physical, epistemological, moral) and across the past-future concerns in the present. Education guidelines, curriculum and textbooks thought as con-texts reflect more than what counts as knowledge for good living in a given time. They rather are unstable condensations in moments of intensity that speak of what does it mean to know and to be human.

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[76] Gilles Deleuze, *Dialogues*, trans. Claire Parnet (London: Athlone Press,1987), 51-71

[77] C.A., Bayly, et al, "AHR Conversation: On Transnational History," *The American Historical Review* 111, no 5 (2006), 1441-1464

[78] Thongchai Winichakul, *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994).

I have separated "con" and "text" with a hyphen to make more evident the textual quality of 'context.' This means that 'context' is not something "out there" pressuring or influencing over people, thought, or education. It is rather a narration. The modernizing argument about context is based on the divide nature/culture, [79] which makes possible to think of geographical and social contexts as simultaneously transcendent and immanent. Transcendence allows for the narration of natural and social laws, against which humans have nothing to do. Immanence, on the other hand, opens unlimited possibilities for using and knowing the natural while being the only and complete free creators of the social.[80] This research works against these assumptions proposing rather that con-text is (hi)storied and narrated in a broad sense which includes human and more-than-human beings. This is a conception borrowed from Kichwa thought where the notion of people encircles all beings who are familiar and pertain to the Kichwa life (which includes for example plants, animals, forests). There are more nuances to the category of people when beings are unfamiliar, but these escape the purpose of this work. What I attempt here is to make clear that storytellers–as what appears in policy, research, and curriculum—generate narratives about what is humans and more-than-human living. Thus, con-text is a discursive production in between and through networks across or despite the nature/culture divide.

Temporal scope

This work sees time, like Edouard Glissant has proposed, as profoundly affected by culture and place.[81] Glissant suggests that the experience of life is what dictates the pulses of the "identity"

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[79] Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993).
[80] Ibid, 35-37.
[81] Edouard Glissant, "History, Histories, Stories", Essay in *Caribbean Discourses*, 61-96, University Press of Virginia, 1989.

of time.[82] In this regard chronology is marked by the affiliation of peoples to ways of measuring time and narrating (hi)stories. A linear chronology that assumes a progression of time that passes evenly with clear distinctions between past, present, and future is thence a narrative choice.[83] That kind of selection deliberatively underplays the dilatations, accelerations, and entanglements of memories and premonitions that peoples live and that might take place differently in different lands according as well to how those places are affected by events. One identity of time in this work is ~~focuses on~~ a time frame after WWII, particularly in the late 1950s until 1980, intrigued by the ideas of "bettering lives" and movements contesting racialization that marked education projects during those decades. That focus, however, has another dimension of time**,** taken as considering the multiplicity of time and its identities, which means remaining aware that the period selected, and the ideas highlighted in it are connected with past and future times in complex and not necessarily linear ways. The narrative of this work is led by an argument which hopefully will suggest complex experiences of living and time even though it makes a linear selection of time. To consider time identity also means remaining mindful that the flow of ideas and the events related to the selected scope were not experienced necessarily in the same way or with the same intensity everywhere. Part of the intention of this work is to make evident the particular ways in which traveling ideas articulated with the (hi)stories and cultures present in what is now Ecuador.

Accordingly, this research looks at narratives and otherwise narratives of "good living/living to be improved" expressed in books, pamphlets, community journals, and textbooks, and in the concerns and intellectual conversations that made those documents possible. The documents of this kind produced by Indigenous federations and movements are

[82] Ibid.
[83] Ibid.

mostly dated from the late 1950s on, and 1970s on in the case of Afrodescendant movements. Those texts and projects are crucial experiences which build upon previous efforts to resist colonial logics governing the life of people in rural areas—like the peasant uprisings and clandestine schools led by Dolores Cacuango in the 1930s and 1940s.[84] Those works and efforts also gave ground to national intercultural education in the 1980s and 1990s and the shift it provoked towards a "common sense" in education which has made of the dialogue among the different cultures present in Ecuador a political "must". That "common sense" is part of current ideas of "good living" in the country even though it continues to be overdetermined by the logics of coloniality and its changing practices.

This dissertation will show how hopes, fears, and contestations related to post WWII narratives of "bettering lives" made available economic, technical tools, and educational spaces which simultaneously gave a platform for Europeanized (see section (Hi)storytelling lesnses) projects of Fundamental Education and for Indigenous and Afrodescendant movements expansion of their own education projects. The latter negotiated and often appropriated the resources, tools, and spaces which among other things made possible the production of the texts to be analyzed in the rest of the chapters. Those texts and (hi)stories are deeply connected to tensions about making social "good living" before and after the timeframe selected.

Sources and Archives

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[84] Inuca, Jose "Genealogia de alli kawsay/sumak kawsay (vida buena/ vida hermosa) de las organizaciones kichwas del Ecuador desde mediados del siglo XX [Genealogy of allí kawsay/sumak kawsay (a good/beautiful life) one of the Kichwa organizations of Ecuador since the middle of the XX century]," Latin American and Caribbean Ethnic Studies, 12 no 3 (2017): 155-176; Marta Rodriguez, Educación Intercultural, (2018).

The sources and archives in this project are not seen as places of "truth." Rather they are participants of loud, suggested and/or untold (hi)stories. Because this research looks for moments of intensity in ways of reasoning and because of practical matters the selected texts do not follow a chronological order nor are they related to a specific school grade or subject. My working ideas on the multiplicity of lives within "good living," the overrepresentation of it, and the flows between these two and the (hi)story of "rural" education helped to create a boundary for the collection of materials. I noticed and looked for books, textbooks, images, etc. related to the general categories of rural education, textbook, civics, the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s and their relation to people and organizations participating in rural education. I met people who themselves or their families were involved in projects of rural/Indigenous education mainly in the 1970s and engaged with them in planned and unplanned conversations, informal interviews, and reflections. During the research I run into many sources looking in stores of old books in Quito's downtown where books were not ordered by codes like in libraries and archives. They were not ordered alphabetically, nor by year of publication. Sometimes they rested on shelves under a loose thematical category, and sometimes they were just piled on the floor with no apparent order. Other sources I borrowed from libraries located in Ecuador and the United States, and from the archives of the Andean Center of Solidarity, the Franciscan and Jesuit orders, the Riobamba's diocesan curia, the Ministry of Culture of Ecuador in Quito and Portoviejo, and the Afro-Andean Collection at the Universidad Andina Simon Bolivar. Some of the archival documents, textbooks, photography, drawings were on boxes filed by year and topic and some mediated through virtual data bases. My encounter with text's signs, sentences and statements related to

my curiosities facilitated the “domiciliation”[85] of these particular texts in the collection destined to this research.

(Hi)storytelling Lenses

Science of the Word and the Politics of Being

To investigate the narration of “good living/living to be improved” I draw on Sylvia Wynter ideas of science of the word and the politics of being. Accordingly, this work sees human beings as a *homos narrata*, a “hybrid-auto-instituting-languaging-storytelling species.”[86] Existence thence is possible biologically but importantly is possible through words and stories. She urges academics to understand the functioning of the world-systemic societal order not as a given but as sociogenic production. That proposition builds on the Fanonian concept of sociogeny, which is a transcultural space that culturally articulates a "sense of self."[87] Seeing sociogeny sets “man” free of universalizing and singularizing descriptive statements and stories of identity on what it means to be human which are traceable to the Renaissance and informed by social Darwinism,[88] as it will be explained below.

The conception of human through “Western” thought, in Wynter’s words, “overrepresents itself as if it were the human itself.”[89] In doing so, the imperative in society is “securing the well-being, and therefore the full cognitive and behavioral autonomy”[90] of that

[85] Jacques Derrida and Eric Prenowitz, “Archive Fever,” *Diacritics* 25, no 2 (1995), 9-63.
[86] Sylvia Wynter and McKittrick, *On Being Human as Praxis,* 25
[87] Sylvia Wynter, “Towards the Sociogenic Principle: Fanon, Identity, the Puzzle of Conscious Experience and What It Is Like to be “Black,”” in *National Identities and Sociopolitical Changes in Latin America, e*ds Mercedes Duran-Cogan and Antonio Gomex-Moriana (New York: Routledge, 2001):34.
[88] Sylvia Wynter, “Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation--An Argument,” *The New Centennial Review* 3, no 3 (2003), 257-337.
[89] Ibid, 260.
[90] Ibid, 260

human as if it represented the well-being of the human species itself/ourselves. This work interprets "overrepresentation" not as *the representation* of human but rather as the singularization and westernization of (hi)stories about human living.

Singularization and "westernization" are thought together with Glissant and Wynter's ideas on the matter. Glissant asserts that *History,* as a singular authoritative universal narrative, is relational "to the histories of those peoples once reputed to be without history"[91] and as such functional to the "West" "originating at precisely the time when it alone 'made' the history of the World".[92] Wynter explains that such (hi)story is product of the expansion of the "West" which was possible by means of two important events. First, the re-invention of humanity beyond the *sinner-by-nature* theocentric descriptive statement, as *Man*. This is a cognitively emancipatory descriptive statement on being human produced in the Renaissance which asserted the possibility of *men* knowing the world, and its reformation in the nineteenth century of *men* as political subjects.[93] Second, the projection of a hierarchical differentiation to the who and what we are as humanity underpinned by the narration of uninhabitability for *Man* in lands outside Europe. Westernization is thus synonym for Europeanization, understanding Europe as a myth about a promised land, unified in identity by its privileged human reason able to produce *History* and knowledge.

The uninhabitable is a crucial concept in thinking about Europeanization. Uninhabitable is a story of geographical and human borders projected over Indigenous peoples and their lands for centuries. In *1492: A New World View* Wynter, as part of her analysis, explores the different worlds created through the colonial encounter in Abiayala, a place often called The Americas.

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[91] Glissant, "History, Histories, Stories", 64.
[92] Ibid.
[93] Sylvia Wynter, "Unsettling Coloniality".

The 1492 encounter, she proposes, broke geographical borders that moved to become social ones. She looks at the order of knowledge Christopher Columbus had to wrestle with to even make his voyage. In medieval Latin-Christian Europe, Columbus' trip was widely perceived as impossible and heretic. For the space beyond the "boundary markers, Cape Bojador (or the torrid zone) and the Straits of Gibraltar"[94] were outside God's grace and therefore "uninhabitable." The great flood had covered lands beyond the horizon. Additionally, the cold far to the North and the heat of the tropics kept Adam's descendants from living in other lands. Only Europe had divinely been made habitable for mankind.[95] Columbus, however, storied himself as receiver of divine knowledge hidden to the learned and challenged the habitable/uninhabitable geographical dichotomy.[96] The encounter in 1492 of Europeans with peoples in Abiayala produced new metaphysically-ordered social categories in European thought. To the caste-based, Christian, feudal justification of the non-homogeneity of the human, a concept of race was added which marked Indigenous and Caribbean peoples as naturally different. The classification then mapped onto human variations and cultures paralleled the one mapped onto the tropical zones before the voyage.[97] A nature uninhabitable to Mankind. The opposition of uninhabitable/inhabitable as places of non/existence underlie the coloniality of being and knowing which grounds the assumption of Europeanization of living through education as a logical production of "better" living and knowing.

Politics of being are noticeable in the episteme shifts which produce non/existence. For example the shift from classical to modern and current episteme, which turns people colonially

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[94] Sylvia Wynter, "1492: A New World", Essay in *Race, Discourse, and the Origin of the Americas: A New World View,* edited by Vera Lawrence Hyatt and Rex Nettleford, (NY: Smithsonian Press, 1995).
[95] Ibid
[96] Ibid
[97] Ibid

narrated as "by-nature" non-rational and sinful into the "underdeveloped." In this way a descriptive statement of who a human is becomes possible to be thought in terms of the mythical relation European/Other. For the people of Abya-Yala (the Americas), the encounter with people of the Spanish Kingdom produced an order which classified them as *Indios* and *Negros*, "savages" and "subrational" in relation to Spaniards. That relation was constituted in imagining that the people of the "New World" were soulless beings and "slaves-by-nature" as Wynter shows through 16th century discussions by Ginés de Sepúlveda.[98] Such order of existence produced the "untrue" Christian, the "subrational" Black, and the "savage" Indio and Native as not *Man* and in need to become *Man*.[99] This is a logic attached to the Greek view of degrees of perfection ordering the world from the apex of heavens as the place of truth to the dependent an imperfect plane of earth which was carried over into medieval European Christian order of the world. Christian spiritual degrees of perfection speak of a certain evolution which in the Renaissance are transformed into degrees of rationality with what Foucault calls the invention of *Man*.[100] Moreover, as Wynter proposes, the political dynamic underpinning Darwinian revolution made it possible to deconstruct the Christian descriptive statement of human and biologize it. Malthus drawing on Darwin's evolutionism redefined original sin and irrationality through overpopulation and Natural Scarcity. Nature weeds out "the poor" and "salvation" is posited in economic terms. The production of poverty was/is overlooked, and it was/is rather attributed to the bio-evolutionary incapacity of certain people to do otherwise. After WWII the non-*Man*, is described as the "underdeveloped" who needs to gain the status of *Man* by turning themselves into a bio-economic subject. These shifts are the politics of being: shifts on the

[98] Wynter, *Unsettling coloniality*, 264.
[99] Ibid, 296.
[100] See Michelle Foucault, *The Order of Things, An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, (London, New York: Routledge, 1966).

politics over the descriptive statement of each genre of human. What were soulless or sinful beings in the fifteenth century become later, the poor and underdeveloped, still in need of "salvation."

Unsettling the overrepresentation of the Europeanized human as human and their life—on basis of which modernity was brought about—as *the* good life thus amounts to disrupting the coloniality of (hi)story and its narrations about ways of making a good human life. An analysis of (hi)stories beyond that overrepresentation opens paths to discuss humanness and good living from logics that both make evident violent processes of narration of current education (hi)story, and productive thought spaces for respecting otherwise (hi)stories and lives.

Sociogenic Leaps

Following Wynter's ideas on science of the word, one of the arguments this work makes is that "rural" is a genre and practice of being/existing entangled with a materiality that surpasses any geographic, economic, educational, and political singularizing story. As Afro-Canadian geographer Katherine McKittrick points out, "[t]he double-entwined assertion that we are, simultaneously, scientific (biologic) beings and narrative (storytelling) beings provides a rhythmic framework that refuses the linear teleology of 'evolution, 'which hierarchically organizes—and evaluates—humans according to phenotype".[101] In this case, the framework of *bios-mythois* escapes the borders made by phenotypes, maps, and subject categories. In their *Conversations*, Wynter and McKittrick discuss that human is a verb, a praxis. Both thinkers engage with humanness more than with humanity as a singular noun.[102] The practice of being

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[101] Katherine McKittrick, Frances H. O'Shaughnessy, and Kendall Witaszek, "Rhythm, or On Sylvia Wynter's Science of the Word", *American Quarterly*, 70, no 4 (December 2018): 867-874.
[102] Sylvia Wynter and McKittrick, "On Being Human as Praxis", 2015.

human is linked to narration through humanness as a category of *bios/mythois* or *homo narrans* built on relationality.

In this sense, science of the word makes possible rethinking genres of humanness, as to challenge any genre-specific universalization of what human living means. This work engages with ruralness as a possibility of humanness which exists, is practiced, and storied, in the instances of the groups and examples this dissertation engages with, and with their land, ancestors and spirits. The challenges to universal genres and stories of being are considered here to be creative sociogenic leaps, those rich life-embracing ways in which people narrate themselves outside of hostile descriptions or overdetermining stories about their/our humanness.

In *Black Skin, White Masks* Frantz Fanon briefly presents the concept of sociogeny asserting that "society, unlike biochemical processes, cannot escape human influences. Man [sic] is what brings society into being." He proposes sociogeny as a more decisive way to analyze how society comes into being than phylogeny and ontogeny—the evolutionary diversification and, the development of anatomical or behavioral features of humans as a species. What society will become, Fanon argues, depends on people willingness to question, and change the ways of thinking that make possible discrimination and alienation of certain groups of people like Black people.

Building on Fanon, Wynter argues that sociogeny is a transcultural space in so far as it separates particularistic points of view from different cultures about what it is like to be human. The sociogenic principle is not centered in a biological or genetical approach to humanity; rather it is a culturally articulated "sense of self." Thus, Wynter proposes that descriptions of what counts as human is what links the sociogenic principle with a transcultural space to "set man free." These relations are the production of differences and the self/other. Wynter proposes that

sociogeny implies the creation of statements by people narrated as "Others" to describe being human otherwise. Sociogeny comes through a "space of transculture," or a space to narrate human and human life with sensibilities different than or that do not align with the normalized cultural particularities of the tacit "we" in stories and texts. In this research the concept is helpful to identify con-textual spaces and efforts dedicated to sociogeny regardless of to what extent they succeed in their intentions.

The sociogenic principle is linked as well to Fanon's idea of leap which "consists in introducing invention into existence".[103] Wynter proposes this principle to acknowledge languaging or narrating as part of the making of society and to assert the ceaseless making of (hi)stories. That ceaseless languaging and (hi)storying implies the possibility of narrating counter/otherwise stories as an act of self-creation that challenges supremacist claims, effects, and teleologies in (hi)story.[104]

For this research, the sociogenic principle is helpful to disrupt the biological and historical linearity projected over the description" rural." This occurs by recognizing stories about what rural might mean that spring from the relationships that people living in what is called rural have with that space and the beings, spirits and ancestors sustained by it. The leaps on those stories are examined as moments of invention of existence that disrupt overdetermining meanings of ruralness as a space and place of belonging for people "in need" of "bettering"

Territories 'codes and Maps 'functions

In her 2006 piece entitled *On How We Mistook the Map for the Territory, and*

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[103] Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks,* (London: Pluto Press, 1986), 179.
[104] David Marriot, "Inventions of Existence: Sylvia Wynter, Frantz Fanon, Sociogeny, and "the Damned"." The New Centennial Review. 11, no 3 (winter 2011): 45-89.

Reimprisoned Ourselves in Our Unbearable Wrongness of Being, of Desêtre: Black Studies Toward the Human Project, Sylvia Wynter proposes territory as a governing sociogenic code of a human genre.[105] In this sense, territory is a tapestry woven with the principles that sustain the social composition of a given meaning of being human and having a human (good) life. Maps on the other hand, she suggests, are just a function related to territories. That is, a map speaks of a territory and is possible only because of a territory. In the case of the meaning of having a human life or being human, a map is an enactment and a description possible only with the logics embedded in principles which allow a social composition of a given human life. Particularly, Wynter points at how the sociogenic code or territory, that overdetermines *Man* as human itself, also allows for the enactment or map of Black alienation and devalorization.[106] In that case, a map is a presentation of existence which follows the code of *Man* and thus does not and cannot describe the territory of a Black genre of human—being, existence and praxis—, different than *Man*.

With this reflection Wynter allows us to think about the difference between narrations and practices that disrupt the territory that institutes humanness and human life, and narrations that attempt to valorize or include maps, which nevertheless are not territory. For example, there is a difference between practicing literacy to "include" Indigenous people in a territory which institutes human good life as a Europeanized life and where Indigenous life need to be "elevated" to count as human—therefore a map towards Europeanized humanness—, and practicing literacy to have the tools to describe a territory of Indigenous human life in a language

[105] Sylvia Wynter, On How We Mistook the Map for the Territory, and Reimprisoned Ourselves in Our Unbearable Wrongness of Being, of Desêtre: Black Studies Toward the Human Project, in Not Only the Master's Tools, Lewis Gordon and Jane Gordon, Blackwell Publishing, 2006: 117.
[106] Ibid.

and form understandable in other territories and to critique des/less-humanization of all non-Europeanized or less Europeanized lives. This differentiation is crucial to understand education textbooks and literacy as sources and practices entangled with the politics of being.

In Abiayala (Americas), des/less-humanization happens through the mapping of Abiayalan Indigenous, Afro-Indigenous and Afrodescendant peoples into Europeanized territories of existence by placing the existence of the first in function of the sociogenic codes of the latter. Wynter points out the logics, based upon Aristotle's *Politics,* through which Spaniards narrated Indigenous, Afrodescendants and Afro-Indigenous peoples as naturally irrational/ less rational and therefore natural slaves.[107] Meanwhile, with the same logics narrated themselves as natural masters due to their 'higher degrees of rationality'. Those logics allowed Spaniards to claim not only the government of the lives and territories of Abiayala people and people forcefully brought to Abiayala from Africa, but also the mandate to teach them to be "more human".[108] This implies that the very humanity, knowledge, and way of life of the Others to the human instituted through Europeanized (hi)story was to be entrusted to the Spaniards for governing others, "elevating" others, changing others to their own *image*.

That kind of mapping of existence, however, has not gone unchallenged nor can it be assumed to have reached every corner of peoples 'living. The proposal here is that where the making of territories of existence—built in encounters, relationally, and thusly not fixed—or sociogenic codes takes place are precisely the "uninhabitable" spaces she calls "demonic grounds."

[107] Sylvia Wynter, On How We Mistook the Map for the Territory, (2006): 138.
[108] Ibid.

Uninhabitable Demonic Grounds: Places and Thought Housing *Lo Propio* (the own)

Katherine McKittrick in her book "Demonic Grounds: Black Women and the Cartographies of Struggle" shows how Wynter's notions of *uninhabitable* and *demonic grounds* overlap in being a space beyond what is produced as "normal" through the Europeanized order of knowledge. The uninhabitable is a geography of Otherness where lives discursively opposed to the "normal way of life" take place. The uninhabitable is thus a produced geography of Ontological Lack in terms of the normalized political subject embodied by *Man*. This could be thought as well as the pathologizing of certain lives and spaces for living which double gestures of inclusion/exclusion speak of in terms of the projection of abject categories of being over people to be "included", and which sometimes are appropriated for resistance. Because, the "overrepresented spaces of Man disclose that space is socially constituted—and that historical epochs are underwritten by differential encounters with geography",[109] uninhabitable geographies are spaces, physically and existentially, beyond *Man*. Similarly, Wynter defines "demonic grounds" as the places of truths discursively located outside human-ist mode of being/feeling/knowing, which present the possibility of a vantage point from empirical differences in social reality, and political human life beyond the privileged text of hu*Man* discourse.[110] . The uninhabitable and demonic grounds share a location of distinct landscape for the creation of sociogenic codes beyond Europeanized (hi)stories which is nevertheless interconnected to the historical and geographical con-texts of Europeanized human lives overrepresented as "normal".

McKittrick's argument makes evident that uninhabitable spaces and demonic grounds are not only places of resistance, but also of poetics precisely because they are socially and

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[109] Katherine McKittrick, "Demonic Grounds: Black Women and the Cartographies of Struggle", University of Minnesota Press, 2006: 132-133.

[110] Sylvia Wynter, "Beyond Miranda's Meanings: Un/silencing the 'Demonic Ground' of Caliban's Woman'"

historically constituted geographies of Otherness. Poetics here is a practice of autopoiesis, the self-production of the self, which Wynter proposes as a fundamental characteristic of humans as *homo narrata*, beings who narrate themselves into existence.[111] It is also, as Édouard Glissant's poetics of landscape proposes, a narration that creates space and belongness, in this case, the land and (hi)stories of a community.[112] The declamation, writing, and learning of poetry and poetic narrations are understood in this work as practices that institute the self—individual, collective, relational—, and a community's land and (hi)stories. With that premise, poetics form what could be called *lo propio*, in words of Afroecuadorian thinker Juan García (see chapter 5), or ones' *own* territory of existence and sociogenic codes. Following this reasoning the geography of Otherness while discursively constituted as such from the stand of dominant discourse, also has a materiality in terms of place with dynamics, rules, logics, and sources of knowing that produce otherwise stories. Uninhabitable and demonic grounds house the poetics that create descriptive statements about being human from spaces interrelated but not overdetermined by, in the case of Abiayala, Europeanized (hi)story, and logics of good living.

Topology of the dissertation

In (hi)storytelling the idea "good living/living to be improved" this text focuses on the flows between texts produced by Fundamental Education intellectuals and texts produced by targeted communities in post WWII times. Returning to the idea of the topological map of a bus route (see introduction), where no given station is necessarily a beginning or an end, the chapters that follow are stations in the conversations in which this work intervenes.

[111] Sylvia Wynter, "Towards the Sociogenic Principle: Fanon, Identity, the Puzzle of Conscious Experience". National Identities and Socio-Political Changes in Latin America, Antonio Gomez-Moriana y Mercedes F. Duran-Cogan (eds.), Nueva York, Routledge, 2001, pp. 30-66
[112] McKittrick, "Demonic Grounds"; Glissant, "Caribbean Discourse".

The (hi)stories of "good living" the chapters engage with are important and significant historically but do not represent all the possible ways in which Ancestral pueblos in what is now Ecuador could narrate "good living" or permutations of the logics of the concept. The assumption made is that Ancestral people—the living, the dead, the young, the elderly, with different gender identities, of different communities, living with/in different lands, organized in different social and political movements—could narrate "good living" differently. However, the (hi)stories this work attends to do make evident how groups of Ancestral people have narrated their lives in ways that challenged national and international descriptions that turn their living in "living to be improved" because difference assumed as a determinant factor for the "need" of transformation.

The four chapters that follow look at the storying of "rural" as a genre of being/existing in rural education; radiophonic school's writing spaces housing otherwise narratives about rural life from Kichwa Central Highlands territory; literacy textbooks as sites for storying and appropriating education tools in the creation of sociogenic codes in Amazonian Shuar territory; and Poetics of resistance to inclusion in adult literacy textbooks in Afroecuadorian Coastal territory.

Chapter 2 "The Rural" genre of being in Fundamental Education: Regional and National(ized) Stories of lives to be "improved"

This chapter explores the (hi)storying of "the rural" as a genre of being/living supposedly in need of "improvement/bettering" through education. The main source analyzed is Rubio Orbe's 1966 "The rural Population of Ecuador" and the categories it built for people through images and text which were taken to be ontologies to be managed and improved by the

government. Those same categories have been also taken by social movements to reclaim spaces of autonomy and respect to difference from the national government.

Chapter 3 Transculturally rural: challenging convivial imaginations of "bettering" life in Ecuador

During the 1960s-1970s in Ecuador, Indigenous and peasant movements challenged the descriptions of rural life in government education programs while offering a space of transculture. Such space allows people to narrate human life with sensibilities different than, or non-aligned with, normalized cultural particularities of the ideal tacit "we" in national(ized) stories and texts. In the case studied, radiophonic schools, and community newspapers were spaces that challenged the project of "integration" of the "peasant" and "rural" lives into the nation.

This chapter will focus on how otherwise-narratives resisted and made visible the history-telling that hides mechanisms of overrepresentation of the Ecuadorian Europeanized ideals of life as being a "better life." The chapter will examine the poem *The Bread of Life* as an otherwise-narrative and leap of invention of a rural self and discusses the storying of rural existence in relation to the national projects of "integration of peasants".

Chapter 4 Facing the Nation: Appropriation of literacy to question the territory of good living

The Shuar (Indigenous nation) Federation produced since 1972 books to study literacy and culture called Shuara Antukta (Shuar awake, listen) and supported bicultural radio education. The chapter will analyze the textbooks and radio education through which the Shuar Federation appropriated national(ized) fundamental education and literacy campaigns in their territories as well as historically European tools and forms of education (greco-roman alphabet, Spanish

language, books, class periods) to invigorate Shuar knowledge and question the relation of the Shuar Indigenous nation with the Ecuadorian nation-state. The practices around education served to interrogate what Sylvia Wynter calls a territory, in particular the territory of human life. In this case the Shuar Federation questioned the territory of human life, particularly of a good life, that instituted the national(ized) ideal of human/Ecuadorian citizen and its lifestyle. In doing so the Shuar Federation opened the meaning of what might mean to be human and to be a citizen in what is now known as Ecuador.

Chapter 5 Recited Curriculum: Afroecuadorian sown life-paths through music, poetry, and oral tradition

Afroecuadorian thinkers, artists and elders started to gestate in the 1970s what would be known from 1979 as Etnoeducación (Afrocentric education). The Afroesmeraldeñan thinker, Juan Garcia, was one of the main proponents of unlearning Europeanized knowledge about, and categorization of Afroecuadorians while “sowing” the knowledge of Afrodescendant elders as a way of asserting Afrodescendant ways of living and existing. His compilation of Afroecuadorian music, poetry, stories, and other mostly orally passed-on knowledge in the Afroecuadorian Notebooks became the referent for the development of Etnoeducation and Ecuadorian Maroon Pedagogy. This chapter looks at the Afroecuadorian Notebooks as a source of “demonic” sociogenic codes and curricula to support a shift in the politics of being.

Chapter 6 Closing Thoughts

The closing chapter discusses how this dissertation intervenes in the conversations on “good living” and post WWII logics and stories on “bettering lives”, which includes how people targeted for “bettering” have strategically pursued the continuation of their livingness as “good living”. It presents the contributions the dissertation makes to (de)colonial studies and

curriculum studies through using (hi)storytelling as method and engaging demonic grounds in educational inquiry.

The method of (hi)storytelling proposes storytellers, *homo narrata* among them, as the drivers of history. It is grounded in Caribbean thought to support investigations on the dimensions of human living. The method accounts for the possibilities that languaging, and wording bring to challenge the violence of the hierarchization of human, the invention of degrees of humanness, and the historical overrepresentation of *Man* as human.

Engaging with demonic grounds in education is a practice, already proposed through different avenues by Ancestral pueblos, which might be a way of reading/approaching the thought that institute human praxes. An approach that does not seek to discipline demonic thought but to respect it. This would sustain an inter and intra-action with the discipline of education towards more and more respectful transcultural spaces for learning.

Chapter 2. "The Rural" genre of being in Fundamental Education: Regional and National(ized) Stories of lives to be "improved"

"Fundamental Education" was presented at the Conference of UNESCO's Preparatory Commission as a condition to maintain international peace and alleviate poverty after World War II.[113] The assumption being that many countries were "faced with large masses of human beings living in conditions not only of poverty but of ignorance, and removable ignorance"[114] and that "education inequality between nations represents a danger to the peace of the world which cannot become one if half of it remains illiterate."[115] The Commission proposed "the attack on illiteracy…in view of our general principle that the lightening of the 'dark zones' of the world must claim a major share of our efforts in all fields."[116] Reading and writing was considered a "prerequisite for scientific and technical advance and for better health, more efficient agriculture, and more productive industry; for full intellectual awareness and mental development."[117] However, in words of Julian Huxley, director of UNESCO's Preparatory Commission, "[n]azi Germany demonstrated all too clearly"[118] that literate population could still be "led into false ways and undemocratic developments."[119] Thus the attack on illiteracy was part of a broader project, Fundamental Education, which would bring people into the rising world order where

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[113] Charles Dorn and Kristen Ghodsee. "The Cold War Politicization of Literacy: Communism, UNESCO, and the World Bank." Diplomatic History, Vol. 36, No. 2 (April 2012): 373-398; Mulugeta Wodajo, An Analysis of UNESCO's Concept and Program of Fundamental Education: A Report of a Type C Project (Ed. D. dissertation, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1963), 2, 9, 12.
[114] Unesco, Prepratory Comission. 1946. Fundamental Education: Common Ground for All Peoples, Paris: Unesco, 1 in Wodajo (1963). *An Analysis of Fundamental Education*, 12.
[115] Unesco Preparatory Commission. 1946. Report of the Program of Unesco, Paris: Unesco, 39-40 in Wodajo (1963). *An Analysis of Fundamental Education*, 12.
[116] Julian Huxley. Fifth Session of the Preparatory Commission of Unesco 9th of July of 1946. In Unesco, 1947. Fundamental Education. US:MacMillian, 6.
[117] Ibid, 6,7.
[118] Ibid, 9
[119] Ibid, 9

"full effectiveness of work"[120] in skilled services would give them stability, well-being and "an adequate standard of living."[121] As such literacy was part of Fundamental Education and it in turn was part of a larger project for economic and social 'progress' built upon a notion of what "adequate living" should look like.

In Latin America broadly and Ecuador specifically, "adequate living" was narrated by intellectuals, government, and international institutions as in contrast to life in rural areas. "The rural" peoples and spaces were a central concern, a problem to solve (see chapter 1) with the implementation of Fundamental Education. The chapter speaks to the stories in texts produced by intellectuals of Ecuador and the region on the "improvement" of "rural" people through education as a way to change the humanness—the praxis of being human—in order to "include" them in the nation. That "inclusion" carried double gestures (see chapter 1) which first marked targeted people as not fully human and their life as endangering of the desired modernity Fundamental Education looked for.

This chapter argues that " rural" is a genre of human described as in need of "improvement/bettering" through education, particularly Fundamental Education, in relation to Europeanized living in the region and therefore it overlaps with a story of difference reserved for Indigenous, Afrodescendant, and Montuvio people "Rural" thence is not simply a geographical space away from cities but rather a cultural construction of a way of existing in the world. That existence is narrated in rural education projects, like Fundamental Education, as different from the "civilized", which is in turn narrated as pertaining to the "urban" Europeanized people, lifestyle, and space. In this sense, the binary rural/urban is symbolic of a fluid story to distribute

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[120] Unesco, 1952. *A Definition of Fundamental Education*, Paris: Unesco, 1952. Mimeographed. (Document Unesco/ED04 (rev.)) 40 in Wodajo (1963). An Analysis of Fundamental Education, 25.
[121] Ibid.

difference entangled with global and regional (hi)stories. An extension of that fluidity is that in other parts of the world, like the United States or Turkey, that binary is inverted in its meaning with the "urban" associated to the person/place in need of "inclusion" to the ideal kind of living of the nation.[122] Its symbolic quality is evident in Ecuador, where the binary is not always explicitly stated. This is, the "rural" in Ecuador is not always opposed to the "urban" but it is opposed to a "civilized", "reasonable", and "productive" existence that belongs to the nation. In this sense not everyone living in rural areas would have been described as rural, landowners for example were not the target of rural education or Fundamental education. "Rural", storied as a differentiated existence, was a descriptive statement for peoples imagined outside of the "we-self" of the nation. This is, a historically and culturally constructed sense of belonging often in opposition to "others" which relies in borders marked by values, ideals, politics, and customs evident in the way people live their lives.[123] Those borders might be national and set around a country, but often are set around groups of people within a country which live their lives differently. In Latin America, and Ecuador particularly, "rural" implied a border drawn within the geography of the nation and outside national(ized) ideas of "good living" deeply shaped by its colonial history. "Rural" is thus a genre of people and of place storied as not holding the right values, ideals, politics, and customs and therefore in need to be educated and acquire those values as to "improve" or "better" their condition of existence in order to belong or be included in the nation.

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[122] See Popkewitz, Thomas S. *Cosmopolitanism and the Age of School Reform: Science, Education, and Making Society by Making the Child.* New York: Routledge, 2008; Darıcı, Haydar. "'Adults See Politics as a Game': Politics of Kurdish Children in Urban Turkey.*" International Journal of Middle East Studies* 45, no. 4 (2013): 775–90.

[123] Thongchai Winichakul, Siam mapped: a history of the geo-body of a nation, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, (1994):170.

Fundamental Education articulated international and national ideas about “bettering” the lives of “rural” people, which implied a change as well in “rural” places. As the following sections will show, intellectuals produced stories about how “rural” space did not contribute but rather challenged the ability of people to live well, or even to be fully human. Here humanness is a praxis, one overdetermined by Europeanized living and modernity in the narratives crafted by intellectuals intervening in Fundamental Education or cited by them.

To explore the nuances of the stories of “rural” people and places in education and social sciences texts, it is relevant to have in mind the “alliances” between storytellers that made such texts possible. This implies an awareness of the biographies of texts, the discourses they make available the descriptive statements through which people narrate humans and society into existence (see chapter 1). It also implies awareness of the selections this study makes in terms of the stories and storytellers it explores. The chapter sees the description of “the rural” as part of the narrations collectively produced and passed on in alliance with machines (cameras, type-writers, scanners) and texts (passbooks, books, drawings, photos). In analyzing print writings, drawings and photography, the chapter engages with images (including letters on a page) “as complex iconic productions that combine available technologies, visual languages or genres, and contexts of production and reception” (Dussel, 2013:32). I want to highlight particularly that these productions embody languages which narrate genres of lives and people. Images in this study are not taken as a 'truth claim' of the already 'real' but as product of stories and storytellers themselves affected by political, aesthetical, ethical and epistemological elements.[124] The analysis questions print texts and images as pedagogical devices describing how to look and know “the rural.” It interrogates

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[124] Dussel pp39

them as part of the story they were summoned to tell within the arguments intellectuals put forth about "the rural" and also in the possible stories untold by these intellectuals.

The following pages analyze the narration into being of "the rural." The sections flow from the ideas about humanity and adequate living underpinning Fundamental Education in Latin America broadly towards the specific genres of being/existing storied in Ecuador. The last sections explore how these genres articulate with colonial administrative and moral ideas about what counts as living well for people and the nation.

Foundations for being human

"Fundamental Education" was not a project concerned with an idea of a minimum required of knowledge. Rather it was concerned with the foundations of being human. The Latin American Regional Center of Fundamental Education (CREFAL), established in 1951 in collaboration with the Mexican government, articulated Fundamental Education in its ideology, principles, and methodology manual as "not something minimal or incomplete; but rather, a conception of universal scope, of constant and perennial action"[125] tapping into "the elements inherent to man, the qualities of the general human [lo general humano]."[126] In this regard, the contents of Fundamental Education would bring about the universal human out of people through an education that would meet them at whatever "stage" they might be of understanding the world. Or in words of Gabriel Anzola Gómez, Colombian education scholar associated to CREFAL, Fundamental Education would help people "understand the problems posed by their environment

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[125] CREFAL. 1952. Educación Fundamental. Ideario, principios orientaciones metodológicas. Pátzcuaro: CREFAL.
[126] Ibid.

and achieve the best possible solutions, according to their possibilities, using their own material, human and cultural resources, with the firm intention of improving the conditions of their life and achieving their integration into the national community and the larger human family."[127] The constant action of Fundamental Education thus describes *the* human and it is a path for people to create the kind of life that matches the foundation of that humanity. In that sense their lives are not already human.

The same manual asserts that following the thought of Argentinian education scholar Luis Reissig, Fundamental Education "is interested in man as it finds him."[128] This male-centered assertion claims that Fundamental Education does not have a human archetype towards which the learner shall come closer. Rather Fundamental Education "works on living beings to improve them as much as possible, taking into account their current and immediate conditions of existence."[129] 'Improving,' however implies a change towards something better which as mentioned above has to do with the assumed general and inherent characteristics of humanity learned from the environment. In Reissig's words:

> Man is not born but made. What is born is a biological structure in an environment but at that moment "man" is yet to be made; it is from that moment [of birth] on that new interactions come into play. The human ones per se are those which constitute their history, for there are also other interactions, biological ones, in their intrauterine gestation. […] "The function of the environment is to provoke a change of attitude in man. A change in attitude is an essential part of the educational process. Learning

[127] Gabriel Anzola Gómez. 1962. Como llegar hasta los campesinos por medio de la educación. Resultados de una experiencia en el CREFAL. Colombia: Imprenta Nacional.
[128] CREFAL. 1952. Educación Fundamental. Ideario, principios orientaciones metodológicas, 36.
[129] CREFAL. 1952. Educación Fundamental. Ideario, principios orientaciones metodológicas, 36.

> something without changing behavior, attitude, is just instruction; achieving a change in attitudes is to get education."[130]

Humanity therefore is something to be achieved. The way of living and the education someone has (or not) shapes them into human. As such "improving" is indeed an approximation to what counts as human, or a particular definition of what does it mean to be human conceived as common sensical. Fundamental Education thus is interested in the person in whatever "degree" of humanness they are to push them "further" along the path of a particular story of humanity.

Reissig proposed the "spirit of enterprise" to be the foundation of the [hu]man as a being made, shaped, and with history. In his words "[t]he existence or not of the 'spirit of enterprise' is the touchstone to know if the individual lacks something to be truly a man with history, which is like saying to be a man."[131] He described the spirit of enterprise as "not the narrow spirit of profit, of selfishness [and], of sordid ambition,"[132] but rather "a broad and high conception of life, of dedication [and], of sacrifice."[133] Conceiving the social, economic and technical as values in themselves and manifestations of life,[134] he argued that education should prepare people for a "specific social, economic and technical field"[135] as a way to develop the spirit of enterprise. The [hu]man with history through these descriptive statements is defined as a worker who embraces a certain socioeconomic place. Work is at the center of the moral life and simultaneously is not necessarily related to the "improvement" of the individual but of the nation. "Improvement" is thus entangled with the promise of modernity that technification and industrialization would

[130] Ibid.
[131] Luis Reissig, "La vida nacional: la enseñanza y la educación [national life: teaching and education]." *Cursos y Conferencias*. 47,1955: 422.
[132] Ibid.
[133] Ibid.
[134] Ibid.
[135] Ibid.

bring to nations sovereignty and wellbeing in the form of democracy and a strong economy. Luis Reissig even asserts that education must form generations that oppose the violation of "a democratic ideology (which is not more, in substance, than an economic ideology)".[136] He states this following the logic that the "political sense" of schooling is to be aware of the social interests of a nation which in Latin America at the time was to "teach the masses to obtain from them technicians to improve its [the state's] structure, specially the economic structure".[137] Similarly, knowledge and effort are not destined to accumulate wealth and show the own righteousness, as the protestant ethics arguments holds. This ethic rather proposes dedication to achieve "high life" and sacrifice for the nation to, in so doing, 'rise' to the state of actual [hu]manhood. In this sense, the "spirit of enterprise" defines political knowing and existing as possible through the involvement in the economy as a worker. Humanness emerges as a bio-economic subjectivity shaped by the hopes of modernization that economic augmentation would lead to "good living".

The ideas of economy as provider of social order and the skillful worker as an emblem of worthy living were present in and also surpassed Reissig's narrative. Economy is historically braided with political philosophy, in how ideas about the organization of life make possible practices that attribute value to people and places.[138] The "spirit of enterprise" has the quality of what Luc Boltanski and Thévenot Laurent call *industrial worth*, a story—brewing in Europe since the XIX century with philosophers like Henri Saint-Paul— where productivity attributes worth to people and distributes in society justice and wellbeing through money-driven

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[136] Luis Reissig, Proposiciones de Orientación y de Medios para una Educación Nacional. *Anales de la Universidad de Chile*, No. 47-48, (1942), 494.
[137] Ibid, 498.
[138] Luc Boltanski and Thévenot Laurent, On Justification: Economies of Worth (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).

prosperity.[139] This organization of life "outlines a hierarchy of stages of worth defined by unequal degrees of social utility"[140], which contrasts the idle with the productive. The main characters of productivity are experts in any given field, from the scientific observational expert to the trained and precise hand-labor expert.[141] This *characterization* of people in a con-text of coloniality does not end at productivity as a justification of the fabrication of human worth unevenness. Rather the possibility of productivity and worth is deeply linked with ideas about humanness, and what lives are "fully human", where stages of worth are also stages of becoming hu*Man*—precisely a political and bioeconomic subject.

Dedication to "high life" is *a* relationship with knowledge, culture, economy, society assumed to be fundamental to becoming, more than being, human, precisely because it embraces a bioeconomical story of humanness. As Reissig proposed it, Fundamental Education "should give the foundations of a civilized life, of basic cultural development."[142] That civilized life is described as taking place in cities because "high life" can thrive or decline according to the environment a person lives in which makes of rural areas and the people in them the *natural* targets for "improvement." That is, the idea of "high life" is embedded in the colonial project of distinguishing *the* human from nature to be able to know it, use it, and "improve" it.[143] Fundamental Education intervention is to mold the *nature* of people and rural areas as able to sustain "high life." That intention builds upon a narration of "the rural" as the decadent past of

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[139] Ibid
[140] Ibid, 123
[141] Boltanski and Laurent, On Justification.
[142] Luis Reissig. "La educación, primer problema nacional e internacional [Education, the first national and international problem]." Cursos y Conferencias. 37, 1950: 349.
[143] Yuderkys Espinosa; Santiago Castro Gomez; Bruno Latour

"high life" and "high-life-lings" to justify "civilizing." This project is evident in Reissig's description of rural life:

> "Rural life as a way of life—and partly as a means of life—is irremissibly decadent. Most people prefer to live in cities or towns that have all the advantages of cities. They are attracted to higher levels of civilization and culture. It is a futile task to strive to put fences on the emigration from the countryside to the city because the latter is more attractive as a place for living. It is desirable for rural populations to be urbanized, not the opposite (…) Therefore, typical rural education is as decadent as the rural crisis it serves. The way to the solution is: to industrialize the rural economy, to advance its livestock agricultural base, to urbanize rural populations and consequently to make common education typically rural an industrial-rural education.[144]

Reissig constructs the rural as a place of decadence that can be cured through industrialization and urbanization. That change in the environment and in the way of living of people is in turn necessary to cure the nation. The narrative of a lost or never fully developed spirit of enterprise needed by the nation deems the rural as inadequate. Decadence in the interior of the country—in this case Argentina even though Reissig claims this is rather a common situation in Latin America, Asia and Africa—, stories the rural as an id-entity of crisis and in need of improvement, the kind of improvement that depends on the modern hopes placed on liberal economies for grounding social and political wellbeing.

The change that Fundamental Education seeks to provoke is thus not over an abstract notion of environment but rather over the "rural" as a particular deteriorated part of the geo-body

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[144] Luis Reissig, "La vida nacional: la enseñanza y la educación [national life: teaching and education]." *Cursos y Conferencias*. 47,1955: 414-439

of the nation. As a category, “rural” classifies certain lands and people as lacking, enforces over them a relationship of belonging conditional to transformation, and stories them as inside of the nation but at the edge of nationhood. That conditional belonging is related importantly to the economic participation remarked in the spirit of enterprise which is shaped by hopes on modernization. It is no surprise hence that Fundamental Education was concerned mainly with grown people living in rural areas. According to CREFAL, the “most immediate object [of Fundamental Education] is the adult, as the builder of today's world."[145] That world was, however, a promise to be achieved by solving the problem that “rural life” represented for “national progress.” As articulated in CREFAL’s ideology manual, “[t]o develop rural life is to develop the life of every country in Latin America. Fundamental education is an integral part of the development of the rural community here [in Latin America].[146] The peasant community is therefore at the heart of the problem and in its solution lies the future of America.”[147] That solution was thought simultaneously with development as put forth in international discourses of modernization where technical aid and training, which scholars of CREFAL embodied, would allow for economic well-being and stronger democratic institutions.[148] The reterritorilization of

[145] CREFAL, Educación Fundamental. Ideario, principios orientaciones metodológicas, 1952, 36.
[146] Even though the manual focuses on Latin America, it makes a comparison with China rural development, mentioning the work Y.C. James Yen, and claiming rural areas around the world are greatly homogenous. This remark shows the attachment of Fundamental Education to the widespread conception of degrees of social development which simultaneously creates global social hierarchies while narrating a commonality of the “third world” and its potentialities. It is important to link these stories to the political and ideological tensions of the time between capitalism, socialism, and non-aligned countries.
[147] CREFAL, Educación Fundamental. Ideario, principios orientaciones metodológicas, 1952, 24.
[148] CREFAL was funded by international organizations like the UNESCO, UN, OAS and also by local governments. However, the logic of development they embraced was not far from Rockefeller Foundation and the Ford Foundation ideas of development. Both Foundations saw themselves as driving something similar to the Marshal Plan in Europe where their economic and technical aid directed to “backward” countries, would help them “acquire a level of economic well-being that would allow the development of democratic institutions,
thereby effectively eliminating the threat and the appeal of Communism” and alleviate “poverty and disease” as well as the tensions due to “political oppression and conflicting social theories and beliefs.”

those discourses were articulated following ideas of the “great continental thinkers: [Eugenio Maria de] Hostos, [Andres] Bello, Justo Sierra, [Domingo Faustino] Sarmiento and others.”[149] One of the main ideas these thinkers of late XIX and early XX century share is that education is a civilizing instrument which develops morality and national spirit and a sense of unity under the nation to achieve the goal of national progress.[150] This civilizational impetus was similar to modernization urge to developing “backward” countries. In this sense the “integration” carried a doble gesture of exclusion as the project inscribed in education a function of “integrating” people in rural areas to the spirit and economy of the nation therefore discursively placing them outside of it while remaining well-inside of its geography. In the region in particular and because “rural” was/is a highly racialized category, the discursive “integration” of a dangerously “backward” other was storied with modern language even though it continued also colonial distributions of difference.

The “integration” of “the rural” in Latin America

In following the objective of “integrating” people in rural areas Fundamental Education projects produced programs and cartillas (passbooks) destined to educate peasants. The Biblioteca Popular Latinoamericana (Latin American Popular Library), funded by the Pan American Union based in Washington, published seven series[151] of passbooks for Fundamental

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See: Gilman, Nils. *Mandarins of the Future: Modernization Theory in Cold War America*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004, 46.

[149] Ibid, 24.

[150] Ibid, 117.

[151] The titles in the seven series are: civicism (titles: Artigas, Abraham Lincoln, You Are Free, Franklin, Jose Bonifacio, Jose de San Martin, La Patria, Marti, Morelos, Friend Nations, Simon Bolivar); health (titles: Pure Water, Be Careful with the Milk!, Take care of your Children, the Health House, Tuberculosis, Smallpox, Healthy Soil); agriculture (titles: Agricultural Fertilizers, Defend the Forest,

Education programs. The series subjects were civism, health, agriculture, economy and social matters, basic knowledge, entertainment, and pedagogy. The passbooks were intended as an aid to influence the conduct of people in changing their environment and their occupations with "concrete works carried out on health, conservation of natural resources, credits, etc"[152] and organized with the support of rural schools or local official institutions. The manual explained that knowledge had to have a concrete purpose related to work and everyday life and it would be better understood if taught in the Indigenous language of the place. "Knowledge by knowledge itself is not justified in Fundamental Education. It must enter as support of the life of man and the group to solve their needs, guide their behavior and interpret, depurate, complement and expand their experience of things."[153] Here it is evident that knowledge is a social practice.[154] In the case of Fundamental Education knowing a relation to a reality to be shaped by modernization as attached to the production of the nation and of a national worker. This implied as well that knowledge would be valuable insofar as it would develop a practical skill for people to do a particular job. That implication is evident in the quote where the assumption is that there is knowledge which simply arrives at legitimizations of what is, or speculations of what is, and knowledge that shapes the world. Interestingly, only literacy and mathematical basic operations were provided systematically in short periods, which makes sense under the logics that the

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Defend your Soil, Better the Corn Seed, Home Orchard, Corn Worms), economy and social matters (titles: Help Your People, Good and Cheap, Agricultural Credit, The Rural House, Let's Work Together), basic knowledge (titles: Something About America, Learn How to Write, Learn how to Measure, Learn How to Read, Something on Geography, Some Inventions, Earth and the Planets, The Continents, Ancient People of America); entertainment (titles: Riddles, Fables in Prose, Fables in Verse, Quetzacotl, San Francisco de Asis, Let's Read); and pedagogy (titles: The Popular Library, The Library of Fundamental Education a work guide).

[152] CREFAL. 1952. Educación Fundamental. Ideario, principios orientaciones metodológicas, 117.

[153] CREFAL. 1952. Educación Fundamental. Ideario, principios orientaciones metodológicas, 117

[154] Thomas Popkewitz, *Educational Knowledge Changing Relationships between the State, Civil Society, and the Educational Community, (*State University of New York Press, 2006).

communication of desired results in the making of economy and progress would not be possible without a good grasp of the official national(ized) language and the use of simple mathematical operations Some of Fundamental Education classes would have been taught in Indigenous language for better understanding of certain concepts to then "develop and facilitate the oral expression in Spanish and teach to read and write it."[155] The production of cartillas and the classes were attached to knowing as a practice for social engagement mediated by the assumption of a "rural" humanness indisposed to do so. The "depuration" of life and "expansion" of experiences implied narrating modern education as the means to obtain valuable knowledge and people in rural areas, particularly Indigenous people, not only as lacking fundamental valuable knowledge but also as stained or obstructed by backwardness and strained by little engagement with society. "Depuration" and "expansion" thence are suggestive of the kind of salvation or emancipation Fundamental Education assumed natural in "practical" knowledge.

The passbooks built upon these two assumptions which can be exemplified in the following. The image below comes from a passbook in the series of economy and social matters entitled: Agricultural Credit, the story of two peasants. The passbook narrates the story of Pedro who borrowed money from a lender and was not able to pay his debt, and the story of Juan who borrowed from the bank and successfully paid his interest and loan. The passbook asks the reader to reflect on when it is necessary to ask for credits, what are interests, and reasons why the banking system is better than the informal moneylending one. It makes a claim that knowledge about when, how and with who borrow money is fundamental. This is a claim of a hierarchy of what counts as economy and as a proper way to engage with it. The passbook puts forward

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[155] Ibid, 119.

capitalism as the only valid economic system and upholds its morality linked to the use of money. Statements like, “from who am I going to borrow money? A loaner or the Agricultural Credit Bank?” are descriptive of the proposed “inclusion” of campesinos by Fundamental Education programs. Namely, as an economic subject functionally literate. The particular visualities of the passbook configure certain lifestyles as an issue to be addressed and solved through education. They also make descriptive statements about a genre of people-land that embodies the problem to be solved and the ignorance of “fundamental” economic knowledge.

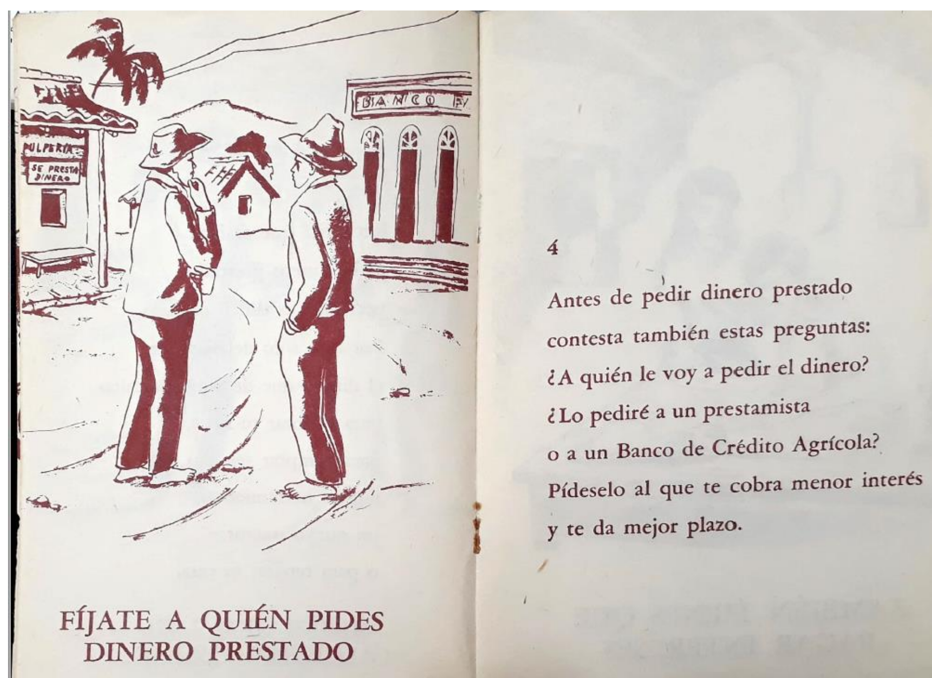

Figure 1 “Be aware of who you ask money from.”[156]

The main characters in the image are two bare-foot sombrero-wearing men standing on a dirt road. The lack of shoes and clothing are two important visual descriptions that Latin American governments and *indigenistas* at the time indexed with Indigeneity. As Ligia López López has

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[156] Passbook located at the Archive of the Ministry of Culture of Ecuador. Union Panaméricana, 1956. “Crédito agrícola. Historia de dos campesinos [Agricultural credit. History of two peasants],” Washington: Biblioteca Latinoamericana de Educación Fundamental, 4.

shown through her analysis of Guatemalan education, these characteristics were part of the descriptive statements by *indigenistas* that storied Indigenous people campesinxs (peasants) as innocent, dirty, in need, and a problem.[157] These descriptions of Indigenous peoples campesinxs and their environment narrate difference in opposition to a tacit overdetermined "normal" *we* that places lo *indígena* "in a stage prior, in need of development, evolution, progress, and transition"[158] and at distance with the present.

López discusses the "photographing of the 'Indian' and the 'rural,' among other things (and other binaries, perhaps), [which] highlighted the 'Indian's' anthropological distance from the 'non-Indian.'" That distance, she proposes is a temporal one created through the gaze of anthropology which creates borders that separate the 'primitive' from the 'civilized' and a condition of "'backwardness,' 'underdevelopment,' and 'mental death'." López exemplifies these visual narratives with the photographical work of Alberto G. Valdeavellano on "'Indians' in rural life", and of Tomás Zanotti on "'Maya-K'iches' from Quetzaltenango" associated with Miguel Ángel Asturias, writer and founder of the Universidad del Popular which was dedicated to "eradicate" illiteracy. The images re-present precisely barefoot children, one of them a boy with a hat, standing on a dirt road. The visual plays an important role in continuing the making up of the Indigenous and the rural. The photos just as the passbook image above evoke that anthropological distance and its evolutionist temporality which described the *indígena* as locked in a decadent past marked by the misery inflicted by colonization.[159] This kind of temporality is the framework for the narrations of the *indígena* as a rural, ignorant, dirty being, lacking the

[157] Ligia (Licho) López López, *The Making of Indigeneity*, Curriculum History, and the Limits of Diversity (New York: Routledge, 2017).
[158] Ibid, 115.
[159] Ibid

spirit of the nation and who was a national problem to be solved through education in order to progress and modernize.

Ecuadorian stories of rural genres

Similarly, in Ecuador, since the 1920s, *indigenistas* (mostly anthropologists, physicians, psychologists, and sociologists), narrated the *indígena* as someone intertwined with the rural and agricultural land and as backward. Connected to Fundamental Education in particular, Gonzalo Rubio Orbe—delegate for UNESCO for Fundamental Education and director of the Interamerican Indigenista Institute—wrote influential books, reports and essays that narrated *lo indígena*, *lo rural* and *lo campesino* [relative to the peasant] as intertwined and interchangeable. For example, in his book *La Población Rural del Ecuador* [The Ecuadorian Rural Population],[160] he classifies visually and descriptively the population of Ecuador as types of Indigenous peoples linked to three kinds of rural areas, coast, highlands and orient (Amazonia), and describes their "peculiarities" and common problems in terms of their "primitivism" and "backwardness." This classification, he proposes, is a necessary contribution of sociology and anthropology as a technical foundation upon which build the criteria and actions for the economic and cultural integration of the Indigenous population;[161] which he estimates constitutes the 70-80% of the peasant population, especially in the highlands.[162]

Although Rubio Orbe asserts that Indigenous peoples constituted the majority of the rural [hu]men, through geography and territory ordering he describes other five genres of rural [hu]men. Together with ordering the land into Sierra (Highlands), Litoral (Coast) and Oriente

[160] Gonzalo Rubio Orbe. 1966. Población Rural Ecuatoriana. Quito: Talleres Gráficos Nacionales.
[161] Ibid, 30,32.
[162] Ibid, 11

(Orient/Amazonia), land tenancy and use, particularly after the agrarian reform, became part of the descriptive statements about humanity.[163] Orbe Rubio proposes a human stratification based upon the amount of territory a person owned and the way they used it in addition to an anthropological description. According to geography and anthropological descriptions he classifies people into *indígenas, rural mestizos, montubios, cholos, negros* and jungle *indígenas*. According to land tenancy he classifies and characterizes rural [hu]man as follows: Low Class, if they have less than 5 hectares and have little income from the land. "[T]o this group correspond to the peculiarities described for the *indigenas* and poor mestizos and those cut out of fortune."[164] Rural Middle Class, if they have more than 5 and less than a 100 hectares, "even though, to tell the truth, the material and spiritual realities of these groups not always correspond to what this class should be; less so in terms of the dynamic, impulse and force for the evolution and progress that should characterize an actual Middle Class".[165] Lastly, Rural Higher Class, if they have more than a 100 hectares not including moorland and "sterile lands."[166]. That land tenancy attached to "quality" of that land based on fertility is telling, as the Agrarian Reforms distributed land in such a way that moorland and "sterile lands" was given precisely to Indigenous peoples and Ancestral Pueblos.[167] Rubio Orbe's proposed classification mapped the landscape through capitalism lenses where the meaning and value of land is posed in terms of production, and peoples' identity is attached to workforce. Further, the double entwined race and class

[163] There were three agrarian reforms in Ecuador whose objective was the liberation of labor, redistribution of lands and abolition of huasipungos and arrimados. See Pierre Gondard, Hubert Mazurek, "30 Años De Reforma Agraria y Colonización en el Ecuador (1964-1994): dinámicas espaciales" *Dinámicas territoriales: Ecuador, Bolivia, Perú, Venezuela, Estudios de Geoqrafía.* vol. 10. (Quito: Colegio deGeografos delEcuador, CGE / Corporacion Editora Nacional, CEN / Institut deRecherche pour Ie Developpernent. IRD / Pontificia Universidad Catolica delEcuador, PUCE), 2001, pp. 15·40
[164] Ibid, 196
[165] Ibid, 196
[166] Ibid, 197
[167] Add reference

classification narrated degrees of humanness as defined by the spirit of the nation and modernization's progress.

Rubio Orbe, following an evolutionist perspective, proposes that people coexist within rural areas in different stages of development, especially cultural,—from the "primitive," "tribal," *indígena* to the "more advanced" "rural" mestizo and the white-mestizo hacienda owners[168]—and describes the processes of "detribalization" in the three regions. In the coast he sees important "change in the human type and cultural inhabitant, the peasant; in the interior of the region the primitive Indigenous groups have evolved into the *montubio* and in the ports and fishing villages into the *cholo*."[169] Only "five tribes of the jungle type"[170] remain with very small isolated populations, that maintain the "traditional characteristics of these groups' Physical and Cultural Anthropological type."[171] In the Amazonia Rubio Orbe locates the "most primitive Aboriginal groups"[172] who "remain mostly unchanged or without major acculturation processes in their primitive configuration"[173] due to limited contact and communication with other groups

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[168] Ibid, 9-24, 34
[169] Ibid, 9
Montubio and cholo are two categories of mestizaje which assume a biological and cultural mix. The CODEPMOC (Council for the Development of the Montubio Community of the Ecuadorian Coast and Subtropical Zones of the Littoral Region) defines the montubio people as the complex result of historical adaptation and ethnic transformation in the coast of Ecuador where Indigenous, Black and European descendant peoples blended. See more in https://icsh.es/2014/07/31/consejo-de-desarrollo-del-pueblo-montubio-de-la-costa-ecuatoriana-y-zonas-subtropicales-de-la-region-litoral-codepmoc/. Montubio in Ecuadorian society is also linked with economic and social class referring to the coastal mestizo peasant. See more in Daniel E. Bauer. "Emergent Identity, Cultural Heritage, and El Mestizaje: Notes from the Ecuadorian Coast." *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies* 21,1 (2012): 103-121. Similarly, cholo, in colonial times, was a term used to refer to the offspring of Black and Indigenous people. Cholo has taken different connotations within Ecuadorian and Andean nations. A common association with the term cholo is that of illegitimacy, poorly educated, pretender and arriviste. See more in Santiago Rubio Casanova. "Los cholos-perros: lo grotesco en los cuentos cholos de Ecuador [The cholo-dogs: the grotesque in the cholo stories of Ecuador]." *Kipus revista de letras andinas*. (2017):56-76.
[170] Ibid, 9
[171] Ibid, 9
[172] Ibid, 11
[173] Ibid, 11

of people. He recommends incorporation of the amazon lands to “help give progressive steps towards a native acculturation and human integration of the oriental [amazon] peasant into the life of the nation and its progress.”[174] The Indigenous Community in the highlands, Rubio Orbe asserts, “maintains certain cultural elements and social forces of the tribal stage; but it has also been incorporated into it elements of acculturation, coming from the white-mestizo group”.[175] Several groups, he says, live “encysted” in their own ways and are easier to identify. In other cases where people have gone through stronger acculturation processes, “*lo indio*” is identifiable by “language, dress, link to the group and group consciousness, and spiritual peculiarities.”[176] Rubio Orbe stories the population through that anthropological distance López remarks, drawing porous borders around groups of people which are fixed in their categorization function yet permeable enough to promise “integration.” Moreover, that evolutionist perspective draws a timeline which feeds into the logics of progress. The objective of “acculturation" is crucial to the economic-driven classification of peoples into workers with a spirit of progress which turn “acculturation” as “evolution” into an aspect of modernization.

Capturing difference: photos and captions storying “rural”

Rubio Orbe’s photographs, make visual and worded descriptive statements of the *indigena* as a “well defined type.”[177] His statements narrate into existence anthropological types and discrete categories within “*lo indio*.” The caption is the description of a genre of *indigena*. It states the location (Loja, province in the South of Ecuador) and the dress of a person suggesting these characteristics to be constitutive of the person’s identity.

[174] Ibid, 22
[175] Ibid, 10
[176] Ibid, 14.
[177] Ibid

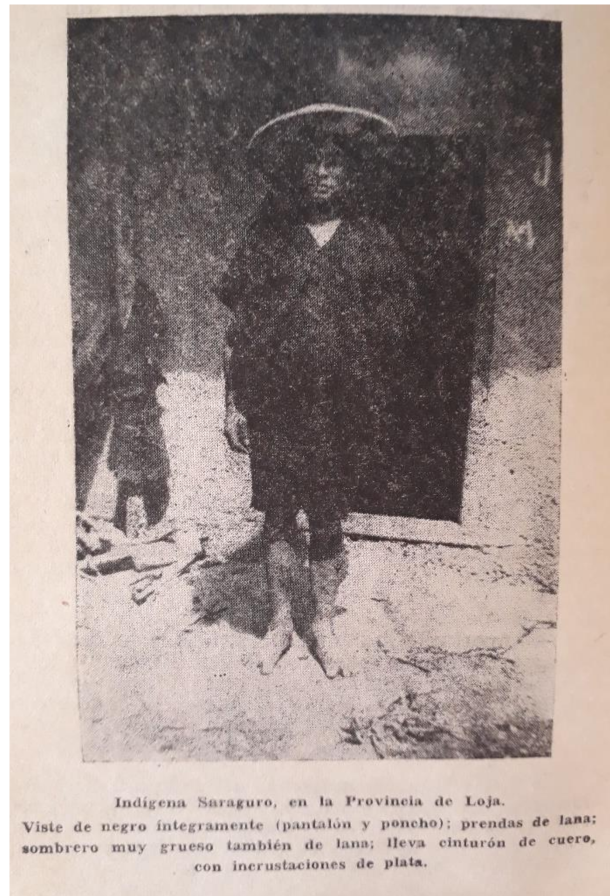

Figure 2 "Indigena Saraguro, in the Province of Loja. Dresses completely in black (trousers and poncho): woolen clothing; thick hat also made out of woolen; leather belt with silver inlays."[178]

The visual codes are similar to those of the passbook: sombrero, bare-feet, dirt floor, and are presented as marks of Indigeneity, more precisely in Rubio Orbe's narrations, they are marks of "primitiveness" and "tribalism." Throughout the book the photos and captions on their own tell an evolutionary story relying on anthropological techniques of classification and re-presentation of people. Between camara, print photo and ideas about who is a [hu]Man, Rubio Orbe articulates "the rural" as having, in his words, "peculiarities" in their ways of existing which sets

[178] Gonzalo Rubio Orbe. 1966. Población Rural Ecuatoriana. Quito: Talleres Gráficos Nacionales, 112.

them apart and makes them the “(s)object”[179] of Fundamental education. He produces a genre of human, the “rural” human as different and backward. The camara acts as a time machine to represent previous stages of humanness, cultural expressions, and economic practices. In this way he establishes an arch in time and the anthropological separations López discusses while proposing them as lax enough for “betterment” through changes in dress, habits, ways of knowing, and participation in trainings and events. That is, through learning the fundamentals of being [hu]Man as defined by Europeanizing ideals of modern humanness and their national(ized) hues where white-mestizos represent the desired “impulse for progress” necessary to make future

Beyond Rubio Orbe’s intention however the image above brings the presence of a person, their house and the land that hosts them. Andean scholar Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, reflecting over oral histories questions “what role does our listening play? How much can listening alter, from its different locale, the voice that is listened to? And how much the subject does not invade in turn the person who is listening?”[180] These questions are important too in thinking about photography. The moment of looking, being looked at or being in presence of each other can mutually invade all the present ‘lookers.’ The photos in this chapter are analyzed in few aspects of their biographies but are invited to *invade* the reader in multiple others. In terms of the argument that this study wants to make, what is important to notice is that the biographies of the images surpass the intentions and assumptions of the text they appear in. They surpass the intention of creating anthropological evidence as statements in a story that normalizes difference. They surpass the assumptions of a transactional money-driven order rooted in capitalist

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[179] Ligia López López, *The Making of Indigeneity, Curriculum History, and the Limits of Diversity* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2018).
[180] Silvia, Rivera Cusicanqui, "Experiencias de montaje creativo: de la historia oral a la imagen en movimiento ¿Quién escribe la historia oral?" *Chasqui. Revista Latinoamericana de Comunicación*, No. 120 (2012):14-18.

economic knowledge and practices as giver of worth to living The dispositions of bodies, landscapes and buildings have their own (hi)stories and politics. One of such stories could be the set-in motion of the creation of a Saraguro identity in the sixteenth century among mitimaes and local Indigenous groups to care for each other in the face of colonial overtake of space and social organization of life.[181] The creation of a common front of people allowed them to jointly fight and establish negotiations with colonial authorities to remain in some of the lands they inhabited[182]— the same lands the man in the photo stands on hundreds of years later perhaps as a testimony of rejection to "acculturation". [183]

Continuing with Rubio Orbe's stories about "the rural", through the photos below and their captions, as does the whole book in question, Rubio Orbe claims a progressive development where "acculturation" is a desirable and necessary path to modernity and national integration. His text aided with the camara produce mechanical memories as stories of progression into a different and "more desirable" subjectivity where isolated "Indigenous markers"—hat, poncho, etc.—are indexed with past and "acculturation markers"—shoes, school, etc.—are indexed with present and future.

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[181] Dennis E. Ogburn, "Becoming Saraguro: Ethnogenesis in the Context of Inca and Spanish Colonialism", *Ethnohistory* No.55, 2 (Spring 2008):287-319.
[182] Ibid.
[183] The relation of Indigenous groups and the colonial state as well as later the republican state was not homogenous. There was a portion of the population called "free" because they were not attached to haciendas, who rather worked as artisans, or by salary. There were also Indigenous peoples called "forasteros" or foreigners who lived unattached to a community or land. Some of these were relations Indigenous people could adopt as strategies to distance themselves from the action of the colonial state over their lives and which sometimes implied "assimilation". All of the kinds of relations still took place amidst Spanish colonial rule demands of economic tribute for Indigenous peoples to remain in their own land and establishment of hierarchical categories of difference that sustained violence and discrimination which perdures until the present. See more in Ramón Valarezo, Galo. "La visión andina sobre el Estado colonial (Estudios)." *Ecuador Debate*, 12 (1986.):79-100.

Figure 3 [left] “Indigenas group in frank process of ethnic and cultural mestizaje. Their dress almost is identifiable as that of the poor mestizo of the Ecuadorian highland”[184]

Figure 4 [right] “Indigenas group attending the 5th Interamerican Indigenista Congress. They are strongly acculturated and among them there are promoters of the Community Development and Nursing Assistants of the Andean Mission.”[185]

The sombrero de paño (cloth hat) is a symbol of transition. The “gradual substitution”[186] of the hand-crafted sombrero for the “sombrero de paño, short and similar to the one used by whites and mestizos”,[187] as well as the acceptance of clothing “fabricated by the mechanized industry”[188] is interpreted as a sign of “detribalization” through inclusion in the market economy. Here the line of evolution assumed again intertwines ways of living (dressing preferences, modalities of economy, participation in particular markets) with race and “modernity” as an objective. In Rubio Orbe’s words:

[184] Gonzalo Rubio Orbe. 1966. Población Rural Ecuatoriana. Quito: Talleres Gráficos Nacionales, 107.
[185] Ibid, 84
[186] Ibid, 42
[187] Ibid, 42
[188] Ibid, 42

> There is no way to stop these processes [acculturation, weakening of Indigenous communities, integration to the nation], because Ecuador needs to modernize and rationalize its social forms, and production and exploitation systems. A law of progress imposes it, in favor of the majority, even if this affects the interests of the minorities. What matters in these changes is to care of the forms, mediums and methods employed with the Indigenous people, to avoid clashes, impositions and ways that drift away from the scientific, technical, and cultural.[189]

Here we see the production of primitivism and the desire of "saving" Indigenous people by pushing them to gain the status of [hu]Man as bio-economic subject. In this sense salvation is rather an emancipation of the self as Other, which is discursive and yet embodies desires of particular genres of people with a modern "good living" in a modern society.[190] The politics of being this text express corresponds with describing Indigenous people as unavoidably having to change because their lives are not in accordance with the "law of progress." The universalization of progress detaches it from its colonial history and singularizes its expression. While the image of Figure 3 is used as evidence of an already existing staged transformation other possible stories lie untold in the texts. The colonial densities of the produced "evidence" obviate the long history of long-distance circulation of goods produced with the input of Indigenous knowledge, technologies, and labor, as well as the experiences of organized rebellions and protests against overweighing taxation, poor work conditions and straight up stolen lands and labor[191] which are

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[189] Ibid, 92

[190] See more on salvation and redemprion themes in education as making kinds of peoples and societies in Popkewitz, Thomas S. "Salvation, redemption & desire in the making of the nation" In *Wissen in der Transnationalisierung: Zur Ubiquität und Krise der Übersetzung*, 55-80. Bielefeld: transcript Verlag, 2020.

[191] Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, "Ch'ixinakax utxiwa: A Reflection on the Practices and Discourses of Decolonization." *South Atlantic Quarterly.* 111,1 (2012), 96.

an important part of the history of all the "social forms and production and exploitation systems" during and before republican times.

The photo of the attendants in the conference room in Figure 4 alludes to the call for "a policy of inclusion, convincement, and directed assimilation"[192] moved by education in schools and "progress agencies" like the Andean Mission, UNESCO, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and technical assistance by member governments of the UN. The image portrays *men* without their hat, some in front of a desk, sat in lined chairs closer to the supposedly desired Europeanized life dressing shoes and also ponchos. They sit closer to "being western without the onus of following the West", as expressed by Edward Shills in defining social modernity.[193] The image is a representation of a staged development. The characters of the image are attired with the right clothes, tools, and knowledge to carry-on on their path to being modern men who participate of the national newly capitalist economy. The intention of the education offered was to provide progress towards an enlightened education and national identity coterminous with "*superación*" ("improvement") of self and life. People narrated as backward and at the border of the spirit of the nation supposedly needed opportunities to *superarse* (improve themselves). Schools were the place "*superación"* and progress towards modernity was to be fraught The hope inscribed in such schooling stories points at the embracement of ideals where knowledge was provided by science, and the cultivation and application of *huMan* will and reason would improve people's lives and modernize the nation. This is evident in Rubio Orbe's words:

> The school for [I]ndigenous groups need a special orientation; demands indispensable means and it is urgent to print a very particular direction in its social, cultural function

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[192] Ibid, 108
[193] Edward A. Shils, draft to "Political Development in the New States" (c. 1958) in Gilman, Mandarins of the Future, 2004, 2.

> and in the practices that must be put on track for more real and effective work with the lives of [I]ndigenous groups; it should contribute to the search and formation of values, strengths, and [A]boriginal elements that can contribute to the national life and progress. Let us not forget that in the remote areas where [I]ndigenous groups live, there is a lack of development stimuli and forces, agents and agencies of progress; only the school and the teacher are the best mentors and inspirers of change, integration and *superación*.[194]

The life and being of Indigenous peoples are narrated as in urgent need of overcoming and imagined inadequacy. Their own values and ways of engaging with society are assumed to be lacking and out of line with national life. To integrate to the nation is equated with a *superación*, an overcoming the own self and its "inadequacy" for progress. These re-presentations again obviate the definitive and historical contribution of Indigenous peoples to national life. It omits any reflection as well on the display of commitment of Indigenous people to explore, own and reinterpret knowledge. Figure 4 rather than storying the attendants as "acculturated" Indigenous people "*superándose*" could very well be storied as an example of Indigenous people committed to the diversification of healthcare practices and community organization.

The *Indigena* life is not only described as inadequate but also used as a point of reference for backwardness of progress potentiality. For example, Rubio Orbe describes mestizos and white-mestizos in rural areas in relation to their closeness to his idea of the *Indigena* way of living and their land tenancy. He asserts that "when they [mestizos] are located among *Indigena* communities or when their families are integrated to those communities, they conserve aboriginal characteristics in their material and spiritual life as well as in their social

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[194] Ibid, 100

organization."[195] For this reason he states is not important to further describe them. He notes that "[e]xcept for small groups of hacienda owners or owners of large amount of lands who have higher living standards […], the vast majority of the white-mestizo peasant population do not respond to a level of vigorous force of progress."[196] He finds them to be "more advanced"[197] than *Indigena* groups but "not to the degree and quality defined as desired for the rhythm and life of national development."[198] With these statements Rubio Orbe makes a double description. On the one hand he characterizes "true" mestizos and white-mestizos as those carrying "vigorous force of progress." On the other he describes Indigenous people as lacking that force. He stories Indigeneity as the site of backwardness in terms of people and culture. In that story thus it is not only the Indigenous person that carries backwardness but also their way of life. Reason why anyone could fall into backwardness by sharing that genre of life.

[195] Gonzalo Rubio Orbe. 1966. Población Rural Ecuatoriana. Quito: Talleres Gráficos Nacionales, 230.
[196] Ibid, 191-192.
[197] Ibid, 191
[198] Ibid, 191-192.

Figure 5 "Highland peasants caring for rabbits; practice spread by the Andean Mission, the Agricultural Extension and by some schools. This labor allows sierra peasants to improve their diet and get additional income amidst the poor economy and even anxiety that characterizes the sierra peasant."[199]

The differentiation in terms of carrying "force of progress" can be seen in the photo and caption in figure 5. The image in figure 5 is descriptive of the expertise of the person rather than a description of a kind of person. The character in the photo is an animal carer. The rabbits occupy most of the scene. They come into the story as the resource, the bodies over which the peasant shows how the Andean Mission helped him improve his life. Nothing is said of his dress. The concern is not over the body and presence of the person, but over his labor. They story the mestizo and white-mestizo peasant as worker and a learner whose education is not a form of acculturation and *superación* as much as an improvement of their economy. The expertise coming from outside "the rural" brings "rational" use of animals, and space to transform "the rural" and establish "better living" even if not "good living". Mestizo and white-mestizo peasants are the only group Rubio Orbe complains about their negative attitude of "annoying conformism and stagnation in their level and ways of living."[200] This annoyance seems to come from the assumption that they *already* have the culture and biological disposition to *live well*. He describes this genre of peasant as not having "inferiority complexes or inhibitions in individual or collective public action."[201] Unlike *indigenas*, no language, dress or education factors places them into "a separate world,"[202] yet "economic, cultural and technical factors" hold back their

[199] Gonzalo Rubio Orbe. 1966. Población Rural Ecuatoriana. Quito: Talleres Gráficos Nacionales, 229.
[200] Ibid, 225.
[201] Ibid, 218-219.
[202] Ibid, 219

impulses and abilities for progress."[203] This is perhaps to what the caption of the picture refers to by the “anxiety that characterizes the sierra peasant.” That is, a projected anxiety that stories the concerns and lifestyles of peasants as conforming with backwardness.

The caption again brings the Andean Mission[204] as an agent of progress to *improve* peoples’ life. The activities of the Mission started precisely in a Sierra province, Chimborazo, and then expanded towards other provinces. With the support of the Ecuadorian government, they became the leaders of the program of “integration of the peasant.” Their main objective as stated in their reports was to “improve the life conditions of the rural inhabitant both in the individual and social order, through the development of economic and human resources.”[205] The premise they followed was that “the majority of the Ecuadorian rural population has the interest and desire of improving their conditions and level of life *but lack the knowledge and resources* to carry out this purpose.”[206] With that statement, Indigenous knowledge is discursively nullified. Indigenous ways of cultivation and the species they cultivate are deemed inadequate. The languaging of addressing difference by “improving” life and knowledge inscribes in the text a colonial quality and double gestures of including people through making “modern good living” and simultanesouly excluding Indigeneity by narrating it as a lack compromising modernity. Is important to notice that the photo corresponds according to the caption to the program of Agricultural Extension, which was partly meant to introduce particular animals and plants, “improved species,” to rural areas and partly an education program. The education program

[203] Ibid, 219.
[204] The Andean Mission came about in 1954 by “the work of the joint mission of the United Nations and the Organizations Specialized on the Study of Indigenous Populations in the Andean Area.” The Andean Program, administrated by the International Labor Organization (ILO) with participation of FAO, UNESCO, World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF, started its activities on 1956 after partnering with the Ecuadorian government.
[205] Andean Mission. 1961. Activity report May 1954-April 1961. Andean Mission: Ecuador, 5.
[206] Ibid, 9. My emphasis in the quote.

concern was that rural inhabitants, particularly *Indigenas*, had rudimentary agricultural practices. As Rubio Orbe reminds constantly throughout his *Población Rural Ecuatoriana*, the sort of agriculture most people sought was self-sustaining. Through the lenses of integrating peasants to national production, those practices were inadequate and lacking. They would not improve the economy of the country. Between the 1950s and 1970s the modernization projects demanded the expansion of the labor force. This implied reaching and training populations that had a different approach to economy. The kind of "integration" the Andean Mission was thus leading was in terms of participation of the national economy as a worker.

A similar concern over economic participation comes up through the discussion Rubio Orbe does of the peasants in the Coast. He describes them as skillful, courageous, hard workers who are nevertheless wasteful and do not support the progress of the nation as needed.[207] Rubio Orbe describes Montuvios, Cholos and Black people as having a similar way of life, practicality being its main characteristic. He asserts that "the toughness in existence and the very limited presence of ideals and principles of a notional and philosophical kind"[208] makes their life so centered in practicality.

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[207] Gonzalo Rubio Orbe. 1966. Población Rural Ecuatoriana. Quito: Talleres Gráficos Nacionales, 264-270
[208] Ibid,

Figure 6 [left] "Young 'montuvia' mestiza from the province of Manabi. She belongs to the ancient community of La Pila. She is a skillful weaver of the famous 'paja toquilla' hats from Montecristi."[209] **Figure 7** [right] "Ecuadorian Litoral peasant type; this is the typical 'cholo aguatero' (watercarrier cholo) from the province of Manabi. […] In the towns and settlements of the Litoral, which do not have drinking water, the work of the watercarriers satisfies this need of first order."[210] **Figure 8** [below] "Black types, know generally as 'morenos' or 'mulatos', from the province of Esmeraldas. They are located

[209] Gonzalo Rubio Orbe. 1966. Población Rural Ecuatoriana. Quito: Talleres Gráficos Nacionales, 262.
[210] Gonzalo Rubio Orbe. 1966. Población Rural Ecuatoriana. Quito: Talleres Gráficos Nacionales, 266.

> along the river Cayapas. The fabrication of canoas is typical of this region. These peasants put effort in the extraction of jungle products; they are skillful workers of the land and determined navigators in broad fluvial communication networks."[211]

The photos and captions narrate a genre of human, the Litoral peasant, who has stronger relation to the nation than Indigenous people through their work. Unlike with most of the photos about Indigeneity in Rubio Orbe's book, the images about Litoral peasants narrate them as active characters producing something for the market and/or satisfying basic local needs. The photos have caught them in the middle of performing their job. The character of Figure 6 smiles as she weaves the *paja toquilla* hats (often called Panama hats) so well received by the national and international markets. Her active hands display her skills, which the caption suggests are ancient and traditional of her province. It is a narration like those in touristic advertisement selling handcrafts. In Figure 7 and 8 the men are shown on their means of transportation as they carry activities which the caption suggests few people take on to do (carrying water to 'remote' areas and extracting products from the 'jungle'). The visualities suggest an appreciation for the bodies as skillful and strong producers, the written con-text however suggests that those attributes are wasted because they are put to use for personal satisfaction rather than meeting the national needs.

Rubio Orbe's descriptive statements story the Litoral peasant as unready to support properly themselves and the country's progress. He says for example, "even though participants of the monetary economy and having remunerated jobs, [Litoral peasants] have no stability due to their lack of projection to the future, to giving little or no attention to 'tomorrow.'"[212] This

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[211] Gonzalo Rubio Orbe. 1966. Población Rural Ecuatoriana. Quito: Talleres Gráficos Nacionales, 229.
[212] Gonzalo Rubio Orbe. 1966. Población Rural Ecuatoriana. Quito: Talleres Gráficos Nacionales, 264.

statement claims that the Litoral peasants are too focused on the immediate enjoyment of the fruits of their work to be able to live well and support the wellbeing of the nation. How could people think of progress or add to national development if they have a "disregard for the future"? The story told about people living in the rural coastal areas is that their bodies and relation to society is "developed enough" to be *useful* for progress. However, their spirits and minds are not. That thought is in line with the morality expected in relation with money and productivity Reissig proposes in his conception of the spirit of enterprise. Namely, (as pointed out in previous sections) a dedication to achieve "high life" as a sacrifice for the wellbeing of the nation to 'rise' to the state of actual [hu]manhood. That story of actual [hu]manhood is demanded as the embodiment of a bio-economic subject whose mode of being is marked by modernity as *the* expression of high life in terms of a liberal economic and technoscientific desired society.

"Adequate" spiritual knowledge is one of the marks of that desired genre of humanity and a concern in relation to the "wasteful" practices of Litoral peasants. Rubio Orbe states that the Montuvio and Cholo are theoretically Catholic in their majority. However, their religion is "disfigured with mixtures, sometimes grotesque and coarse…with superstitions of Indigenous and Black origin."[213] Among the people living in coastal areas, Rubio Orbe's text stories Black people as particularly wasteful, nomadic, and superstitious. Montuvio and cholo people, on the other hand, are storied as affected by the superstitions of *Indigenas* and Black people. According to Rubio Orbe, "the presence of witches, with powers and practices of otherworldly characteristics, the generalized ignorance and the little spirit of reasoning and critique in those fields produce mixed forms and adulterations to the practices of Catholicism."[214] The Catholic

[213] Gonzalo Rubio Orbe. 1966. Población Rural Ecuatoriana. Quito: Talleres Gráficos Nacionales, 265
[214] Ibid, 265.

religion, posed in the book as an agent of progress and enlightenment, is “disfigured” with “rural” thought and religious concepts, therefore its purpose is defeated. Those practices that are meant to save rural people from their “little reasoning” and give them knowledge to add to the nation economy and progress are supposedly corrupted particularly by Indigenous and Black beliefs. Here there is an inscription of a linear temporality placing “rural”—particularly Indigenous and Black—thought in the past and therefore storied as part of a “backward” existence which is to follow the “natural” flow of evolution into modernity as the normalized character of the present and future. Rubio Orbe’s statements make clear the degrees of [hu]manhood projected over people in rural areas, the trajectory imagined towards modernity as “better living” and simultaneously the fragility of any of those states always in danger of “disfigurations.”

In the already bleak picture painted by Rubio Orbe, the influence of the environment of “low cultural levels,”[215] as well as risking life “in the struggle against nature and its dangers”, “geographic and ethical factors”[216] contribute to high “delinquency and criminality.”[217] The indigenist cites a penal study of the Ecuadorian Coast that he claims demonstrate the children of the peasants of the coast “demonstrate the tight relation between the sexual appetite and the red angst for the taste of blood.”[218] Rubio Orbe talks about the environment of the coast as deviant in relation to an ideal of Catholic ethics and enlightened reason. The image he provides of the rural coastal society is, in Reissig’s words, a “decadent” one. Under that reasoning Rubio Orbe suggests that the Litoral peasants need Fundamental Education to reform their way of living, find

[215] Ibid, 265
[216] Ibid, 265
[217] Ibid, 265.
[218] Ibid, 267

stability, stop religious “disfigurations”, cultivate reason, and have a safer society. This concern over the morals and reason of people is a reformulation of the politics of being that Wynter points out were soulless or sinful beings in the fifteenth century become the primitive, underdeveloped, still in need of “salvation.”

These storying Rubio Orbe does of the inhabitants of the coast is possible only in oblivion of the stronghold established by Africans and Indigenous peoples in the North of what is now Ecuador and the survivance of coastal cultures, like Manteño and Huancavilca cultures, in the South. In the North, in words of the Afro-Ecuadorian thinker Juan Montaño Escobar, “the African and coastal Indigenous cultures touched each other and forged a love that extended towards military efforts, they armed maroon armies of resistance to defend freedom.”[219] In the independent republic set by them and recognized by the Spanish crown who could not defeat them, the Zambo republic, the coast saw the emergence of the thought, politics, religiosity and more from the people it hosted. In the South the line of descendants of Indigenous Peoples of the coast never ceased even though they are narrated as extinct and described rather as Montubios.[220] The sociogeny of “Black,” “Montubios” and “Cholos” builds upon the political alliances and marriages in the Zambo republic the marooning processes, the participation in revolutions, the later appropriation of such labels to visibilize their (hi)stories in Ecuadorian republic times, and the continuation of cultural and knowing practices with/in demonic grounds (see chapter 5).

The politics of salvation of people living in rural areas thus builds upon the narration of characters that embody the primitive. The group of people considered the most “primitive” in the

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[219] Juan Montaño Escobar. “El currulao de la aventura: interculturalidad en el Ecuador.” *Universitas* (Quito, Ecuador), 2003 (3), p.179-192

[220] See Kimbra Smith (2015). *Practically invisible: Coastal Ecuador, tourism, and the politics of authenticity*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press; David Barrés. “El cholo costeño más allá de la literatura.” *Kipus* (2020):72-83.

study of the rural population of Ecuador by Rubio Orbe, were the *Indigenas* particularly those living in the Amazonia. He described them as "the primitive jungle tribes, which maintain totally backward characteristics, both in their material and spiritual life."[221] Their economy was to Rubio Orbe "absolutely closed and of simple self-supply" with "crops handled in a totally rudimentary and backward way."[222] He expressed admiration for their knowledge about "the jungle" and its medicinal plants while also stating that they are of "simple thinking, without major ability for reasoning." "Their minds—he sustains—are pressured by ignorance; tyrannized by the unknown […] finding explanations […] in superior forces, malefices and other factors of the magic-fetishist cultures, their totems and taboos."[223] The text recognizes and simultaneously invalidates Amazonian Indigenous knowledge and portrays its holders within the colonial character of the "irrational savage." This is, as Wynter points out in talking about the invention of Rational Man, the character invented for the Indigenous peoples of Abiayala and the Caribbean together with the enslaved peoples of Africa. That character is the physical and cultural referent of the Human Other to the Europeanized descriptive statement of "normal human," Rational Man.[224] Rubio Orbe's text presents several "stages" of rationality showed biologically, culturally and through participation in the national economy. In Rubio Orbe's story the Indigenous people of the Amazonia are that character embodying the earliest stage marker.

The degrees of Humanness in the story of Rational *Man* are the foundation of the idea of "betterment" of lives. Upon the reinvention of *Man* and race in biologized terms, the dark-skinned colonized and enslaved peoples embodied the non-evolved backward Others to various degrees which makes evident the negation of "normal humanness" reserved for the peoples of

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[221] Ibid, 281
[222] Ibid, 281
[223] Ibid, 283
[224] Wynter, unsettling the coloniality of being, 266.

Europe and their descendants in the continent (criollos and blanco-mestizos).[225] This is what makes possible to see the acceptance of, or participation in Europeanized dress, technology, knowledge, economy models, and its Christianity infused morality, as positive "acculturation" and "improvement of life."

The "improvement" imposed as the right human praxis was intertwined with a modernity whose hues are given by the link intellectuals and educators made between scientific reason, liberal economy, and Christian morality. This was a position held in Ecuadorian education during the first half of the XX century, with resonances afterwards, where the embracement of scientific knowledge and technical education had to go hand in hand with the cultivation of morality which was described upon Christian religion and values.[226] After the liberal revolution of 1895 which put forth lay education, among other tenants, the negotiations that followed between different political parties, the opposition to lay education from various sectors of society, and low economic resources made it so that Christian education was to be rather slowly replaced.[227] By the 1950s urban public education was mostly lay and deeply influenced by Herbartian pedagogy.[228] The historical entrust of "rural" education to Christian, most often Catholic, orders by the government to "include" people and territories in the nation and later also

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[225] Wynter, unsettling the coloniality of being, 266.
[226] The first national public system funded by the state was established during the presidency of Gabriel Garcia Moreno, who used religious institutions to build the network of schools and the pedagogy development by religious orders as the national pedagogy—like those of *La Conduit* of the Christian Brothers and the *Ratio Studiorum* of the Jesuits. Importantly, Garcia Moreno used Catholic faith as a national glue in times where there were strong separatist sentiments and intentions among the population, particularly the economically wealthy. This system impregnated with Catholic ideas was the matrix to be reformed later by liberalism with Herbartian pedagogy. See
[227] Rosemarie Teran, "La escolarización de la vida : el esfuerzo de construcción de la modernidad educativa en el Ecuador : (1821-1921)," PhD diss., (Universidad Nacional de Educacion a Distancia, 2015).
[228] Gabriela Osenbach

into a capitalist economy was done at a significant slower pace.[229] This was particularly the case in the Amazonia region where Christian missions are still present and where very active during the 1960s and 1970s. A case to be discussed later in this work is that of Salesian education to the Shuar people (see chapter 4). The logics of the difference between urban and rural education were deeply affected by ideas of race and who counted as a political subject. People living in rural areas where mostly not recognized as citizens but also considered to be at a previous stage of hu*Man*hood. This is evident for example in the speech at the Constitution Assembly of 1944 by Velasco Ibarra, president five times between 1934 and 1972, who asserted:

> The indio must be saved and incorporated to nationhood by technique and hygiene so that they would support and contribute to strengthen the homeland. With great psychological wit, skills, and pedagogical resources we have to little by little, teach the indio what is nature, how to tame nature… later they will discover the sense of general morality and abstract ideals.[230]

This quote shows the generalized approach to an education directed towards racialized people narrated as a problem to solve, which continues narrations that use difference as the metric through which belongness to the nation, and to reasonable, moral and political living is or not recognized. The focus on Indigenous peoples on the quote above shows the imaginary of Indigenous people constituting a great part of the "problematic" population and yet as shown throughout this chapter Indigenous groups were not the only groups of people to be addressed as outside of the nation and a hurdle to the homeland's good living.

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[229] That slow replacement happened without erasing education institutions of a 'mixed' nature which are attached to a religious order and also receive public funds.

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The following picture and caption, are about Shuar people and show a story linking "acculturation," Christian knowledge, the participation in markets and the "life improvement" suggested throughout Rubio Orbe's text—which was in line with other thinkers of the time.

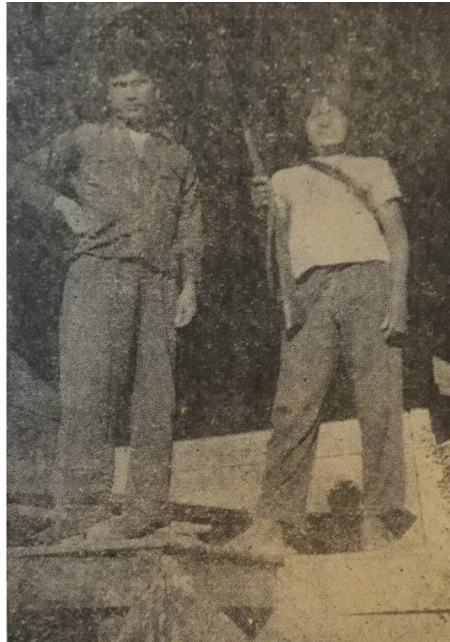

Figure 9 "Two indigenas types of the group 'jibaro', from de areas where the Evangelist Mission of Macuma acts, Morona Santiago province, in the Ecuadorian Orient. The dress shows forms of acculturation. One of the indigenas carries a rifle for hunting. This is an activity that oriental peasants love and thanks to which they get meat for their alimentation and fur to sell at the markets."[231]

The image of these two young men described as "acculturated," because of the way they dress and because one is armed for hunting, is linked through the text to the action of a Christian Mission in their lands. It is important to notice again how particular ways of covering the body, differences in livelihoods and engaging in the economy are narrated as evidence of a better or

[231] Ibid, 299.

worse living. This is, they are described as material points of reference to stages of evolution. The pass through those stages, that logic assumes, can be accelerated and provoked by “better” knowledge and practices like those instructed by Christian Missions in accordance with the desires discursively linked to the economic and political wellbeing of the nation of producing workers and with a sense of belonging to Ecuador

This narrative, particularly in the province of Morona Santiago in the Southeast of Ecuador comes hand in hand with the inclusion of borderlands and people. Salesian and military missions acted collaboratively with the objective of “civilizing” the *indígenas* and ensuring peace[232]. In the context of Ecuadorian and Peruvian conflict and the claims to Amazon lands which both nations imagined as theirs, the “civilization” and “integration” of Indigenous people was meaningful in facing a yet more radical other. In the case of Ecuador that other was the “Peruvian enemy.”[233] As Sinae Hyun, Korean historian, has suggested with her work in border patrol schools in Thailand, education in this area implied the formation of a human border for the nation.[234] That is, to protect the geographical and spiritual border of the nation by, in this case, ecuatorinizing lands-and-people. The production of Ecuadoriannes, and military and literacy training sought to gain allegiance from people otherwise uninvested in that war—though invested in security for themselves and their land. Particularly from the 1920s until the late 1960s the Salesian order had *internados* (boarding schools), that similarly to those in the United States, kidnapped children to make “men.” This “manhood” would be given by the adscription to national(ized) culture, language, and other kinds of knowledge. Similarly, the military looked to

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[232] Cecilia Ortiz. (2006). Indios, Militares, e Imaginarios de Nacion en el Ecuador del siglo XX. Quito: FLACSO-Abya Yala, 110-132.
[233] Ibid,111.
[234] Sinae Hyun, “Building a Human Border: The Thai Border Patrol Police School Project in the Post-Cold War Era” *SOJOURN: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia,* Vol. 29, No. 2 (2014): 332-63

overcome “las taras raciales [the race defects]”[235] standing in the way of the “moral virtues”[236] of men and soldier. “They let the Peruvians insult them, take them as prisoners, thrash them, and kill them.” This could only be solved thus by “regenerating the race”[237] so they can face war. The colonial densities of these narratives obviate the inner and binational war with which Shuar people had to deal with every day. The survivance of their language, culture, and lives, speak on its own of the strength and skillful intelligentsia of the Shuar.

The politics of being which CREFAL, Reissig, Rubio Orbe, the reports of the Andean Mission, and the memoirs and speeches of Salesian and military leaders embrace takes place in narrating the “rural” as a place of moral and physical danger, and the people living in these areas as in constant struggle with those dangers and yet poorly equipped to survive them. Those politics of being imagine people living in rural areas as lacking knowledge and resources to lead their lives. Narrate people who very often, because of the ways of colonial rule and economy, had been working the land for generations as lacking valid agricultural knowledge. Story life in rural areas as led by superstition and inadequate ethics or decadent. The people, place, and life described as rural are (hi)storied as missing not only knowledge and tools but also the spirit necessary to live well. The imperative then is to “improve” the rural people, land, and life, because their transformation into the “reasonable we” overdetermined by national(ized) values is unlikely.

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[235] Lieutenant Leonardo Chiriboga in Cecilia Ortiz. (2006). Indios, Militares, e Imaginarios de Nacion en el Ecuador del siglo XX. Quito: FLACSO-Abya Yala, 112
[236] Ibid, 112
[237] Ibid, 112

A manera de conclusion/ As a way of conclusion

Fundamental Education unfolded as a project for “improving” lives/existences of people and spaces described as “rural” through the action over the knowledge, ways of living and bodies of that same group of people. Amidst growing anxieties over the world order coming into being after WWII, the narration of “rural” people as ignorant rises as a place of threat to peace. This kind of narration into existence of dangerous lives and places to be “bettered” was a description projected over Latin America, Africa and Asia, which became target areas for Fundamental Education. In Latin America, the fear to dangerous lives and places has iterations that are woven into colonial narratives about who embodies ignorance and threat. That fear, as Thomas Popkewitz argues, is relational and entangled with hopes in a double gesture of inclusion and exclusion.[238] In this case, “the rural” lives, Black, Brown(er) and Indigenous lives, are characterized in these stories as the site of problem and in their transformation also as the site of the solution to that threat. Simultaneously the believe also colonial that natural spaces are “uncivilized” and “dangerous” physically and spiritually story rural spaces as sites preventing people to “better” themselves and better the nation/continent. In this regard Fundamental Education continues the colonial project of reaching further into more extensions of land and more groups of people to “civilize” them.

Fundamental Education reformulates older stories about what counts as a “good” life/existence. In that way it taps into concerns that predate WWII but it articulates those concerns with the politics of being of the time. The shift of the politics of being attached to

[238] Thomas Popkewitz (2018). “Reform and making human kinds: The double gestures of inclusion and exclusion in the practice of schooling” In E. Hultqvist, S. Lindblad, & T. S. Popkewitz (Eds.), Critical analyses of educational reforms in an era of transnational governance. Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 133-150.

progress, as Wynter points out, is a transformation of the soulless and sinners into primitive, backward and then underdeveloped. Fundamental Education becomes one space more for people and places to gain the soul of the nation embodied in social, economic, and military ideals. It provides of theories, vocabulary, projects, budgets, and more to describe and narrate into existence a genre of human/life/existence. Once described, painted, drawn, photographed and (hi)storied as not "good" enough they can be "bettered." The politics of being shift makes possible renewed stories of difference where "betterment" expresses unevenness in being human. The action upon people which "betterment" implies is justified through stories of a lack of skills to work, of "force for progress", and of "spirit of enterprise". That lack is narrated as a cultural, biological, and educational problem which historically is possible because of an assumed Ontological Lack of humanness in certain groups of people. Through added geographical nuances to colonial human categorizations targeted people are described as "rural", a discursively fabricated quality of existence with physical anchorage—bodies located outside of cities and places outside of cities—possible because of an indexing of industrial worth with human worth determining human praxis as either "good living" or "living to be improved/bettered".

The intentions of intellectuals, national and international institutions to keep peace and to "improve" lives universalized what counts as good living. That is, historically Europeanized ways of living continued to be narrated in Latin America as "adequate *standard* of living", while other*ed* ways of living were described as inadequate. This is possible under a way of reasoning and telling (hi)story which hides its self-narrated universalization and eludes other*ed* thought, (hi)stories and human praxis. Chapter three will address the questioning to that universalizing

reasoning and (hi)story telling by Indigenous people and people working in closeness with Indigenous movements in Ecuador.

Chapter 3. Transculturally rural: challenging convivial imaginations of "bettering" life

During the 1960s-1970s in Ecuador, Indigenous and peasant movements challenged the descriptions of rural life in government education programs while offering a space of transculture. Such space allows people to narrate human life with sensibilities different than, or non-aligned with, normalized cultural particularities of the ideal tacit "we" in national(ized) stories and texts (see chapter 1). In Wynter's words, it is "a space from which to define the human outside the terms of any one member of the class of such principles, statements and codes,"[239] and thus free people from "subordination to the categories of the single culture through the mediation of which we come to realize experience ourselves as human beings"[240] In the case studied, radiophonic schools,[241] and community newspapers were spaces that challenged the project of "integration" of the "peasant" and "rural" lives into the nation. Radiophonic schools were found most commonly in rural areas. *Campesinos* (rural workers/peasants) would gather in a house and, led by one of the community members trained as teacher assistant, would follow the instructions of a teacher in a city. These schools produced their own education materials—often handmade—and some had their own newspapers. Both, radiophonic schools,

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[239] Wynter Unsettling the Coloniality, 328)

[240] Sylvia, Wynter, "Towards the Sociogenic Principle: Fanon, The Puzzle of Conscious Experience, of "Identity" and What it's Like to be "Black"". Essay drafted to be published in the collection *National Identity and Sociopolitical Change: Latin America Between Marginalization and Integration*, (1999):15.

[241] Education through radio was an important movement in all Latin America at the time. Radiophonic schools were articulated to at least two concerns. First, after WWII communication for development became a field of inquiry and government policy. Radio education was part of the use of mass media to stimulate development and modernization. Second, a vast religious network promoted radio education to impart literacy in the region. Some of the groups embraced development as the objective of education and supported anti-communist propaganda. Others, like liberation theology priests, focused on literacy as a tool to engage in politics. See Anna Cant, ""Vivir Mejor": Radio Education in Rural Colombia (1960–80)". *THE AMERICAS,* 2020, 77(4): 573–600.

and the newspaper produced by them, were spaces associated with the national program of Fundamental Education. Some of the texts produced as part of literacy exercises and published in schools' newspapers embody a conviviality sprouted from the resistance of Indigenous and racialized peoples to living together under the rules of *one* of the many cultures present in Ecuador. This shade of conviviality challenges a living together built with practices that demand the assimilation or erasure of lives differentiated from an overdetermining Europeanized living (see chapters 1 and 2). That challenge however does not renounce to the hope of synergetic actions from different values and worldviews to achieve common goals like building a less violent society. Indigenous campesinos' *luchas* (fights) are in themselves proposals for a less violent conviviality through social change demands.

Integration of *campesinos* to national(ized) lifestyle and economy was a central concern of Fundamental Education. As articulated in the ideology manual of the Regional Center of Fundamental Education for Latin America (CREFAL), "[t]o develop rural life is to develop the life of every country in Latin America. […] The *campesino* community is therefore at the heart of the problem and in its solution lies the future of America"[242] (see chapter 2). As this chapter will show, the program encountered poetic resistance to the overdetermination of "good living" and political living. In alignment with Wynter and Wynter and McKittrick's suggestion that a space of transculture can be formed through self-created descriptive statements,[243] this chapter will engage with the (hi)story of counternarratives to "rural" life as in need of "improvement/bettering" (see chapter 2) put forth by Indigenous and *campesino* groups. In so

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[242] CREFAL, *Educación Fundamental. Ideario, principios orientaciones metodológicas*, (1952): 24.
[243] Wynter, Unsettling the Coloniality; Sylvia Wynter and Katherine McKittrick, "Unparalleled Catastrophe for Our Species? Or, to Give Humanness a Different Future: Conversations." In *Sylvia Wynter. On Being Human as Praxis* edited by Katherine McKittrick, 9-89. (Durham-London: Duke University Press, 2015).

doing it will show conviviality dynamics enacted as "bettering life" and resistance to such projects by targeted people.

The (hi)storical analysis focuses on stories present in the bilingual Kichwa/Spanish newspaper *Jatari Campesino* (Rise Peasant). The newspaper stemmed from the work of radio schools and was published between 1965 and 1984. Both the newspaper and the radiophonic school which started it were supported by Liberation Theology priests, and funded by development agencies, yet they offered narratives that questioned development. Importantly, the school and newspaper became spaces for written sharing which put in question governmental narrations of "the rural". This happened through an appropriation of national(ized) and colonial Spanish language. The students used literacy to create purposeful counternarratives to development and government descriptions of rural life, and to narrate sentiments and stories that escaped the grid of modernization. The poem analyzed is an example of the latter. It narrates rural as "the bread of life",[244] rather than a problematic, backward space and life. This text opens the door to the conversations between the (hi)story told and the excess of content that gives foundation or makes any story possible. The analysis of such conversations is particularly important in Ecuador because the (hi)story of "developing/bettering" the life of people in rural areas has continuation in current "buen vivir/good living" reforms that appropriate decades of labor and sacrifices of Indigenous, and Afrodescendant communities.

This chapter looks at how otherwise-narratives surpassed, resisted, and made visible the (hi)storytelling that hides mechanisms of overrepresentation of the Ecuadorian Europeanized (see chapter 1) ideals of life as being a "better life." As proposed by Wynter, science of the word

[244] Jatari Campesino, "The Bread of Life", November 1965.

brings attention to how the practice of being human is profoundly affected by (hi)storytelling, because as *bios/mythos* beings, humans narrate themselves/ourselves into existence (see chapter 1). Otherwise-narratives are critical stances towards naturalized (hi)stories. Their purposeful critique, or their groundedness in a different reason, disrupts the naturalization of constricting, unhospitable, and violent colonial (hi)storytelling. Otherwise-narratives constitute creative sociogenic leaps (see chapter 1). They make available descriptive statements and stories to institute life and value from a different place, potentially setting humanness free.[245] The exercise of languaging (hi)stories and life is examined through a poem published by *Jatari Campesino*, a newspaper attached to a Radiophonic School in Chimborazo-Ecuador, which narrates affective relationships with ruralness. In order to expand on the leaps of invention, the next section articulates the story of "bettering" which the leaps disrupt and is here referred to as "the uninhabitable rural". Uninhabitability is a way to approach the historical indexing in Latin America of "rural" with lack of political life, and the related and discursively produced unevenness of worth of life and "good living" (see chapter 2).

The uninhabitable rural

Allow a time leap to 2019 and then back to the 1960s and 1970s, the decades of the focus of this article. The change in temporal scenery is to point at tropes about ruralness used to continue to narrate people and places as in need of "bettering" and to belong to the life—the political life, what counts as life, the making of the good life—of the nation. Time traveling here shows resounding beats in the nationalized history(ing) of "rural" in Ecuador.

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[245] This is a reference to the potential of sociogeny described in chapter 1. Also see Wynter, Sylvia. "Towards the Sociogenic Principle: Fanon, The Puzzle of Conscious Experience, of "Identity" and What it's Like to be "Black"". Essay drafted to be published in the collection National Identity and Sociopolitical Change: Latin America Between Marginizalization and Integration, 1999. http://www.coribe.org/pdf/wynter_socio.pdf.

At the start of October 2019, protests erupted across Ecuador. Hundreds of people flooded downtown Quito while hundreds more made their way from the provinces. The Indigenous Movement led the marches, but they were not the only group outraged and brave enough to stay on the streets for 11 days despite violent police repression. Organized groups, like the *Frente Unitario de Trabajadores* (Unitary Workers Front), were present, and many self-organized groups of people were an important part of the uprisings. By the eleventh day there were at least 8 dead, 1507 injured, 1330 detained…

A straightforward explanation as to why the protests took place is that the central government, claiming their actions would leave a better country for future generations, passed unpopular economic and labour reforms that would gravely impact the livelihoods of most people. However, the protests took off the lid of tensions that go beyond the increasing harshness of the economic and labour conditions for most Ecuadorians. The protests seemed to be *un punto de fuga*—an intense outflow—that showed the different views about what the country should be like, who the future generations are and what their lives should look like. These are precisely the tensions that constitute conviviality understood as a process of negotiating living together in a country shaped by coloniality and colonial differentiations that produce abjection.

The underlying logic of the reforms and protests remain entangled with what Sylvia Wynter calls the coloniality of being/power/truth/freedom.[246] Coloniality overdetermines Europeanized ways of living and of imagining the place where lives happen; as a result, it produces and condemns Otherness in racialized, gendered, economic, and political terms.[247] The protests effectively questioned those logics and brought them to many spaces of discussion, including the presidential palace. The initial response of Lenin Moreno, the president of the time,

[246] Wynter, Unsettling the Coloniality
[247] Ibid.

was to abandon the presidential palace, flee Quito and take refuge in the main port city, Guayaquil. This escape was to no avail; the protests followed him to Guayaquil.

Amidst that mobilization, the former Mayor of Guayaquil and leader of the Social-Christian Party, Jaime Nebot responded to a reporter's question about the entrance of Indigenous protesters to the city by saying: "you can advise them to stay in the moorland"[248]. With his assertion Nebot was pointing to the moorland as the *natural* place of Indigenous people; the moorland was a place at the borders of the nation and its politics. He was denying the existence and questioning of the Indigenous people born or living in Guayaquil and rejecting the entrance of Indigenous protestors from other parts of the country. His performance was meant to "put them in their place." He enacted the kind of authoritarian conviviality which demands assimilation or political erasure to live together in the same country, supposedly in harmony, and under a claimed superior political reason and culture. His statement built upon ideas of who Ecuadorians are, where they live, and how Indigenous people fit or do not fit in that concept.

Those are questions related to the politics of being. That is, they are related to ideas about which lives, and places *are* political, and which lives, and places are assumed to be part of the *quehacer político* (political making) expected to provoke changes and take decisions in reforms. The moorland in the kind of discourse Nebot was perpetuating is an *uninhabitable* place for "*Man"*[249] (see chapter 1)—the human political and bioeconomic subject fraught with European thought—and as such, the correspondent place for the genre of people colonial states tried to debar from politics.

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[248] Jaime Nebot, Interview, AT Noticias, October 09, 2019. https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=526350224637171
[249] Wynter Unsettling the Coloniality, 321-323

Expanding on Wynter's argument that the *uninhabitable* is a geographical story which upon the racialization of space speaks of a non-homogeneity of humanity or unevenness of human praxis (see chapter 1), the proposition here made is that the colonially-organized Ecuadorian nation has mapped the uninhabitable unto "the rural". This mapping has turned "rural" into a category of problematic difference in need of assimilation or erasure as a condition for conviviality. The uninhabitable rural is a narration of people and land as naturally unsustainable for political life and good life. This is evident in Nebot's statement amidst 2019 protests, and in the education projects of the decades that are the focus of this chapter.

Fundamental Education embraced the story of the uninhabitable rural as it attempted the "inclusion" of people living in rural areas. Hector Burbano in his manuscript *Education and Economic and Social Development in Ecuador*, lauded book by the Ecuadorian House of Culture and the Ministry of Education in 1966, posed that intention as solving "the problem of the *superación* [self-improvement] and dignification of man".[250] With similar reasoning Gonzalo Rubio Orbe, delegate for UNESCO for Fundamental Education and Education Director of the National Planning Board asserted that "in the remote areas where Indigenous groups live, there is a lack of development stimuli and forces, agents and agencies of progress; only the school and the teacher are the best mentors and inspirers of change, integration and *superación*".[251] The call he makes is for dignifying rural people and land by making them part of the nation—the territory

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[250] Hector, Burbano, "Education and Economic and Social Development in Ecuador," *Revista de Educación Ecuatoriana*. 18, no 56 (1966): 48.; It is important to note that *superación* is a highly racialized term as it has historically been used in Latin America to address the work Indigenous peoples and peasants *'had'* to do on themselves in order to become accepted into society. In that sense, it is an extension of the problem Wynter, building in Aimé Césaire and Frantz Fanon, points at with the overrepresentation of *Man* and the production of *damnés de la terre*.

[251] Gonzalo Rubio Orbe, *Población Rural Ecuatoriana*, (Quito: Talleres Gráficos Nacionales, 1966): 100.

of *Man*. This “inclusion” into national(ized) culture is the underlying requirement for conviviality.

The Andean Mission—organization supported by the Ecuadorian government and funded by the Alliance for Progress and other international aid institutions—for example, justifies its program “Integration of the Peasants” asserting that:

> The fact that a great part of the population is constituted by the rural inhabitant and especially by the Highlands indio, who do not participate of the economic, cultural and social life of the country is a problem, which solution conditions the possibility of Ecuador to start an organized and harmonic development process.[252]

One of the main activities by the Andean Mission to “integrate” the “rural inhabitant” was precisely Fundamental Education. Similarly to Rubio Orbe’s statement, the Mission’s orientation was for “the teacher to change the attitude of peasants acting as their guide, advisor and friend”[253] as part of the “great task of integrating the indigenous population”.[254] Inclusion to the nation was suppeditated to development described by many of the intellectuals committed to Fundamental Education, like Rubio Orbe and Burbano, as a change of mind and attitude.[255] Fundamental Education as carrier of development was a means to obtain a kind of conviviality which continued sociopolitical and economic structures to which Indigenous peoples had to adapt.

Burbano describes Fundamental Education as: “the organized drive for ‘Community Development’, which becomes the best instrument or the milestone for the GENERAL

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[252] Andean Mission, *Program Integration of the Peasant*, (Quito: Andean Mission, 1966):1.
[253] Andean Mission, *Activity report May 1954-April 1961*, (Quito: Andean Mission, 1961):14.
[254] Ibid.
[255] Burbabo, *Education*; Rubio Orbe, *Población Rural Ecuatoriana*

DEVELOPMENT of a Country".[256] Burbano draws in an Argentinian thinker influential at the time, Ezequiel Ander Egg, to think about community development. Ander Egg proposes that community development attends to "psycho-social aspects that intervene in the attitudes, aspirations and desires for development".[257] The concern of development for these thinkers was not centered on economic development, rather they saw development as a consequence of creating "the psychological foundation" to provoke the "take off of marginal population".[258]

The idea of "take off" revised by Burbano and Ander Egg is entangled with the approach to modernization theory and development put forth by Walt Whitman Rostow during his time at the Department of State in Washington. Rostow proposed that the powers of the 'West' had the responsibility to assist economically "underdeveloped" areas of the world in modernizing so that they "take off" and not succumb to Communism. Fundamental Education, as articulated by Burbano and Ander Egg attempted to reframe development away from economic motivations, however they reinstated "rural" as a vulnerable space and population in need of change.

Even though Rostow's thought does not represent modernization theory as a whole, something Rostow and other modernist theorists[259] agreed on was the American obligation to propagate modernity. The theory of modernization was driven by an optimism on "building a better world" through social scientific rationalization of societies. This objective was linked as well to the aspiration of a post–World War II American geopolitical advantage.[260] The threat of

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[256] Burbabo, *Education*, 49. (original emphasis).
[257] Ezequiel, Ander Egg, *Metodología y Práctica del Desarrollo de la comunidad*, (Buenos Aires: Lumen, 2003):10.
[258] Ibid.
[259] Modernization theory found home in several research universities in the United States; some other main figures were Gabriel Almond, Lucian Pye, David Apter, Cyril Black, Bert Hoselitz, Myron Weiner, Karl Deutsch, and Daniel Lerner. See more in Nils Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future: Modernization Theory in Cold War America*, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004.
[260] Nils Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future: Modernization Theory in Cold War America* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 2004).

Communism as a deviant kind of modernity was a part of the discourse of modernization that justified the intervention in countries that had not got to the "stage" of "take-off". Rostow in particular spoke of a linearity of history and economic development which would end in High Mass Consumption; a stage in which allegedly societies looked like the United States' society. "Traditional societies", like Latin American ones, needed change to reach that final stage. Foreign aid and education for the development of skills to participate in a capitalist economy were part of the program of triggering that global historical moment.

In Ecuador, as in Latin America more broadly and other areas of the world narrated as underdeveloped or "traditional societies", economic aid was deployed as a strategy for grounding a capitalist economy and industrialization as a political exercise of creating peaceful societies.[261] Modernization theorists celebrated industrialization and urbanization as means to produce the city, the space of modernity and of economic growth, which in turn would assure wellbeing.[262] The practices to foster development as a project of modernization included education of peasants and support of agrarian reform to facilitate the liberation of lands and labour (*mano de obra*) for capitalist penetration in the country.[263] In succession, this logic proposed that the prosperity of a capitalist economy ensured the reduction of poverty, well-off people would not create revolutions, thusly uprisings and communist revolutions would be prevented, and the realization of peace would be possible.[264]

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[261] Jeffrey Taffet, *Foreign Aid as Foreign Policy the Alliance for Progress in Latin America* (Florence: Taylor and Francis, 2012).
[262] Luis Reissig, "La vida nacional: la enseñanza y la educación," *Cursos y Conferencias*, 47(1955): 414-439; Gilman *Mandarins*.
[263] Cecilia Ortiz, *Indios, Militares, e Imaginarios de Nacion en el Ecuador del siglo XX*, (Quito: FLACSO-Abya Yala, 2006); Marta, Rodriguez, *Educación Intercultural Bilingüe, Interculturalidad y Plurinacionalidad en el Ecuador. Luchas y Experiencias del Movimiento Indígena: Desde Dolores Cacuango Hasta La Revolución Ciudadana*, (Quito: Abya-Yala, 2018).
[264] Taffet, *Foreign Aid as Foreign Policy*

Burbano and Ander Egg engaged with the psychological aspects that Rostow's approach to development left out, as he focused on economics and politics. Yet their thoughts on development continued to story populations not fully participant of the modernizing national projects as vulnerable and marginal. Burbano and Ander Egg proposed that it was not economic aid but education of the marginal populations within nations, what development should be about. This was seen crucial as "this search of a new order in a given moment entails great danger. Because, if there is no planned educational orientation the intrinsic values of the spirit will be lost".[265] Education as community development would change the psyche-mind, spirit, and values of rural populations to "dignify" their lives and, in turn, ensure prosperity and peace in the country.

Modernization and development theories upon which the Alliance for Progress and aid diplomacy was based, were thusly translated to inner parts of "traditional" countries. The narrative that brought about Fundamental Education in UNESCO's Preparatory Commission as a condition to ensure peace and alleviate poverty by removing ignorance and "lightening the 'dark zones' of the world"[266] moved deeper into the geographical bodies of nations through modernization and community development narratives. The national government of Ecuador—similarly to other Latin American and Caribbean countries—, storied the populations and lands unreached by the government, "the rural", as the vulnerable populations in need of modernization. The discourses on rural education, and the peace and prosperity rural education was expected to bring, carried the threat of ignorance, war, and poverty. Those discourses corresponded with the fear of the existence of uninhabitable "dark zones of the world".

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[265] Burbano Educacion, 49.
[266] Julian Huxley, "Fifth Session of the Preparatory Commission of Unesco 9th of July of 1946," In *Unesco, Fundamental Education*, (US: MacMillian, 1947): 6.

This story of rural as uninhabitable has not gone unchallenged and it is of course not the only story about what rural life might mean. The next section engages with a poem published in the newspaper *Jatari Campesino* (Rise Peasant) which discusses rural life as it relates to people, prayers, mountains, landscapes, animals, and spirits. The stories present in the poem constitute a leap from the story of the uninhabitable rural. The poem in itself is a forceful example of languaging an otherwise existence of rural life in the political and educational con-texts of Ecuador.

The rural as bread of life

Jatari Campesino, sprouted from the space of radiophonic schools, circulated through the thirteen provinces that participated in the radio-school program. Radiophonic schools were born in 1962 in Chimborazo, the Highlands province with the largest Indigenous population in the country at the time, and then spread to twelve other provinces. Even though funded by the Andean Mission and mediated by a section of the local church—liberation theology priests and collaborators[267]—Indigenous and peasant organizations made the radiophonic school their own.

[267] The Andean Mission often worked together with priests as local in-situ leaders that could reach the community. The schools were funded by the Andean Mission and as such a project supported by governmental, non-governmental and religious institutions all with different views on the needs of Indigenous peoples. Nevertheless, these schools became a space of critique. In Chimborazo, the Andean Mission contacted and worked with an already very active group of priests led by Monsignor Proaño. He was a liberation theology bishop known as the "Indio bishop" because he gained the friendship and respect of the Indigenous community, particularly in the Highlands, with his work and approach to pastoral work. As Estuardo Gallegos, a priest who worked closely with Proaño, explains it, that pastoral work was care for life and all relationships including those with God, with people and with place. In this sense Gallego asserts that an authentic pastoral work is a political companionship which implies supporting social organization to eradicate violence, protect lands, and ensure own housing and education. In this line of thought, Proaño was critical of education initiatives that were functional to integration and to national economic production. Him and likeminded priests saw the UNESCO and CREFAL as appropriating the language and methods of liberating education proposed by Paulo Freire while considering people "one nut more in the big machinery of profit and money production" (Proaño [1973] 2010, 16) The priests were also critical of the Andean Mission actions for development in that they fostered the integration of people to the nation and imposed nationalized

Over time its direction and programming were completely in the hands of the community.[268] The radiophonic schools opened spaces to contest the overrepresentation of nationalized ideas of good living/bettering life/dignifying life and the assumptions supporting those ideas. Simultaneously, they provided instruments to deal with the constant flow of practices, ideas, values, and language from other kinds of living valued within Ecuador/ianness. One example of that is the bilingual Kichwa-Spanish community newspaper *Jatari Campesino* which was attached to the bilingual literacy program of a radiophonic school.

The newspaper shared students, tele-assistants (local teachers following radio lessons) and *campesinos'* thoughts and experiences of the everyday across different communities. Contributors used greco-roman script and Spanish language to express concerns off the grid of coloniality. Those contributors appropriated colonial tools and modernizing literacy projects for otherwise storytelling.

The following poem, published on page 3 of *Jatari Campesino* of November 1965, is a counter/ otherwise narrative about rural life.

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culture and language rather than support people's own social organization. Despite differences, Proaño and the local church did collaborate with the Andean Mission trying to negotiate funding for projects of mutual interest for the Mission and the community. The radiophonic schools were one of those projects of mutual interest that once funded took its own spin in terms of objectives as it fostered Indigenous *campesinos'* social organization and education.

[268] In the 1960s and 1970s it was a space where both social organizations and adepts of liberation theology worked together. The radiophonic schools did provide spaces for critique, discussion, and evaluation of the roles of its members and the values and content promoted in its programs. The transcripts of Escuelas Radiofónicas Populares del Ecuador (ERPE)'s Reflection Seminar held in 21-24 February 1974, records members of the community critiquing the involvement of priests and demanding more space for the community. That the radio and its programming ended fully in hands of the community is a consequence of its members gradually occupying and reimagining that space into a cultural one. In a conversation with one of the current directors of the radio, Bélgica Chela, she asserted that in the 1960s and 1970s it was important for the radio to focus on educational shows and provide literacy teachings because there was an urgent need for that. In the present the focus is on opinion shows, news, music, and promotion of local culture.

El Pan De Vida

Yo quiero pasar la quebrada honda, la honda quebrada. Yo quiero estar en el otro lado. Al lado del páramo helado donde pastan las ovejas y el ganado por el pajonal.

Aquí está mi choza, mi mujer, mi madre. Y allá está el pastor, el hijo pastor. Aquí la cocina, el pondo, la parva. Y allá sin amor, solo con su perro el hijo pastor.

Que nunca aparezca gavilán a quitarle ovejas. Porque esas ovejas me valen el pan aunque están ya viejas. […]

¿Llegará el pastor con todo el ganado? ¿llegará el ganado arriado y contento?

Mi Virgen, Señora, tráelo. Ama mía sin ningún trabajo sin ninguna pena. Que no haya lamento en hijo o en madre, ni tampoco en mí.

Te ofrezco la lana del mejor carnero y tejer con ella un manto carmesí y fino sombrero, llevarlos al pueblo y allí en la capilla, ponerlos yo mismo sobre tu rodilla y sobre tu cabello.

Y decirte gracias. Señora, por todos, por mi madre vieja, por mi buena esposa por mi hijo pastor y por cada oveja que hay en el aprisco, que engorda en el risco y que algo nos deja para nuestro pan a pesar del frío y del gavilán.

The Bread Of Life

I want to cross the deep ravine, the deep ravine. I want to be on the other side. On the side of the freezing moorland where the sheep and the cattle graze off the moorland straw.

Here is my hut, my woman, my mother. And over there is the

shepherd, the shepherd son. Here is the kitchen, the pots, the grain. And there, without love, only with his dog is the shepherd son.

May the hawk not come down to take his sheep. Because the sheep are worth our bread even if they are old. […]

Will the shepherd come back with all his cattle? Will the cattle come back walked and content?

My Virgen, my Lady, bring him back. You, my Master with no work and no sorrow. May nor the son, nor the mother, nor me have laments.

I offer you the wool of the best ram to knit with it a crimson mantle and a fine hat; I will take them to the town and in its chapel I will myself put them over your knees and hair.

And I will say thank you my Lady, for everyone, for my old mother, for my good wife, for my shepherd son and for each sheep in the sheepfold which the mountain fattens, the crag gives birth, and which leave something for our bread regardless of the coldness and the hawk.

The Lady the poem interpellates is the Virgin Mary, who came to embody Mama Killa/Mother Moon, Mother Earth, and Mama Ocllo, the first Inka woman.[269] The most famous Virgin of the Quito School,[270] the dancing Virgin, stands on a half moon and wears a blue cape adorned with

[269] In other stories, the first Inka woman was Mama Huaco, who was described as a warrior, a woman of power, and a kind woman who cured those in need with her medicinal plants knowledge. Simultaneously, from a Christian perspective and chronicles, she was said to be devilish, lustful with many lovers, she was free and a witch. She was also associated with the mountains and their worship as sacred wak'a. See Martinez Borrero, Juan. *Develando el Origen de la Mama Huaca.* Ediciones La Pajarera- Universidad de Cuenca, 2009, and Zevallos, María Angélica. "El mito de Pilcosisa y Mama Huaco: madres de una dinastía endiablada." *Revista de letras* 58, no. 1 (2018): 49–62.

[270] The Quito School is the name given to the distinctive artistic production of Indigenous artists who blended their own techniques with European ones for painting and sculpting religious imagery. The

stars. She dances over the sky with her two wings extended, emanating light with the silver rays that stem from a starry crown around her head. Similarly, paintings from Cuzco depict the Virgin Immaculate Conception as queen of heaven standing over a half-moon. Moon symbolism has deep meaning for Andean societies who have venerated Her even before the Inkan empire. That devotion was later intertwined with Inkan veneration to Mama Ocllo as a queen-like motherly figure who oversaw and cared for all her people.[271] The *wak'a* (sacred representation) of the moon had the shape of a woman and was dressed and cared for by women. The Christian imagery of Virgin Mary as a heavenly queen was easily translated into the lunar/Inkan goddess. Amidst colonial religious impositions, the Virgin "became a means of ensuring, in a fractured world, the survival of ancient ritual".[272] Spanish chronicles describe how Andean peoples would knit clothes for the *wak'a* of Pachamama (Mother Earth), Mama Killa and Mama Ocllo simultaneously with the clothes of the Virgin. Often, the weavers would hide the *wak'a* inside the Virgin's dress. In this way, whenever Andean people prayed and venerated the Virgin they were also praying and venerating the *wak'a.*

The offering of clothing to the Virgin in *The Bread of Life* is an offering to the divine Mothers protectors of shepherds and Andean Indigenous people. The peasant offers to devotedly weave mantles and hats for Her while asking for a safe return of the son. "*I offer you the wool of the best ram to knit with it a crimson mantle and a fine hat".* The gratitude promised to the Lady, which will be shown by dressing her *wak'a,* is also extended to what her *wak'a* represents: the

artists of the Quito School received training and had access to materials and work studios in monasteries in the colonial royal audience of Quito which extended from Popayan, in what is now known as Colombia, to Cajamarca, in what is now known as Peru. The school's most famous productions date to the 17th and 18th centuries.

[271] Carol Damian, "The Virgin of the Andes: Queen, Moon and Earth Mother," *Southeastern College Art Conference Review*, 14 no 4 (2004): 303-313.

[272] Ibid, 305.

Andean mountains, crags and rams that sustain the life of the family. It is an offering to the lands, *"which leave something for our bread regardless of the coldness and the hawk."*

The (hi)stories of religious-political life in the Andes are present in the poem's tone of an intimate prayer to a divine Lady inhabiting temples and mountains. "*My Virgen, my Lady, bring him back."* That melancholic prayer is a commitment to mutual care. "*I will take them* [mantle and hat] *to the town and in its chapel I will myself put them over your knees and hair".* The prayer is melancholic because it languages the relationship to sacred space across (hi)stories which remain alive and lively in defiance of colonial attempts of suppression of Indigenous spirituality.[273] It is an objection to be stripped from the life-giving blessings and care of Pachamama, Mama Killa, and Mama Ocllo. In this case the use of a colonial language does not simply counter colonial thought but appropriates a colonial tool to express beautifully a spiritual thought and a quotidian concern, despite coloniality.

The relationships of care that the poem calls upon are both spiritual and deeply political, as intersecting realms regarding livingness. As Kichwa thinker Armando Muyolema and Quechua thinker Justo Oxa have suggested, relationships of care and respect between human beings, and more-than-human beings (including spirits and mountains) are a fundamental part of life in the Andes.[274] Muyolema proposes *minkanakuy* as a practice of active and mutual care that makes life possible. Importantly, he argues that this practice of care happens with/on/in *pacha* (translatable as but not reducible to, space-time).[275] Similarly, Oxa asserts that *uyway* is a

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[273] Theresa Delgadillo, *Spiritual Mestizaje: Religion, Gender, Race, and Nation in Contemporary Chicana Narrative*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011).
[274] Armando Muyolema, "The Poetics of Sumak Kawsay On A Global Horizon," In *A Postcapitalist Paradigm: The Common Good of Humanity*, Edited by Birgit Daiber & François Houtart, 293–307, (Brussels: Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, 2012); Justo Oxa, "Vigencia de la Cultura Andina en la Escuela." In *Arguedas y el Peru de Hoy*, Edited by Carmen Maria Pinilla, 235–242 (Lima: SUR, 2004).
[275] Muyolema, "The Poetics of Sumak Kawsay".

practice and desire to nurture other beings (children, Apus/spirits, animals, Pachamama) and to be nurtured by them which underlies the continuation of life and learning about life.[276] *Minkanakuy* and *uyway* are practices of livingness which both thinkers, as a philosophical exercise, elaborate upon to explore the possibilities present in Kichwa and Quechua everyday *languaging* of the world. Simultaneously they make evident some of the affectivities that sprout from a living together in community, with land, and often against the backdrop of hardship, economic and/or sociopolitical. This is not to romanticize Indigenous Andean living together, but to point at the on-going possibilities and stories that institute life distant from, purposefully disregarding, or surpassing, modern/colonial projects of assimilation. In that sense *minkanakuy* and *uyway* stand as principles of Indigenous reason for the convivial living of a community human and more-than-human which sometimes might take the form of offerings to the *wak'a*, or prayers to the Apus, Pachamama, Mama Killa, Mama Ocllo.

Offerings—like the mantle and hat—and prayers—like the poem itself—accompany the narration of people into existence and that of their social order. It is not a surprise thence that political spaces and claims by Indigenous groups in the Andes are accompanied by soulful spiritual ideas and practices. An extension of this is the use of ritual dancers and banners, common in religious processions, in protests against governmental actions that threaten the existence of mountains as Marisol de la Cadena examines regarding the uprisings against the mining of mountain Ausangate in the Cusco region of Peru.[277] As de la Cadena points out, Andean Indigenous politics include more-than-human people as political subjects. As such the intoxication or destruction of land, mountains, and moorland is a crime in and of itself as well as

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[276] Oxa, "Vigencia de la Cultura Andina en la Escuela".

[277] Marisol De la Cadena, "Indigenous Cosmopolitics in the Andes: Conceptual Reflections beyond "Politics"." *Cultural Anthropology*, 25, no 2, (2010): 334–370.

in relation to people's livelihoods. The health and life of what de la Cadena calls Earth-beings, is inseparable with that of human beings. Under that understanding—Earth, human, and more-than-human—beings who have tight family-like relationships act upon and request reciprocal care.

This is not to assert that care always underlies convivial living of Indigenous Andean human and more-than-human community, but that it is an important principle and value upon which otherwise narration of "rural" has been/is possible. In the same vein the verses, *"[w]ill the shepherd come back with all his cattle? Will the cattle come back walked and content? My Virgen, my Lady, bring him back. You, my Master with no work and no sorrow. May nor the son, nor the mother, nor me have laments",* propose that in the rural family, care is reciprocal and a spiritual and political action requested especially in life-threatening situations.

The moorland as a political being part of the rural landscape is recognized in the poem with the assertion of the Virgin being a *"master with no work and no sorrows"*[278] That statement is a call for care that highlights the coexistence of caring and callous politics and power in the Highlands. In the 1960s and 1970s, the lives of several groups of Indigenous peoples were still administered under the hacienda regime.[279] This regime had its foundation on agrarian

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[278] Jatari Campesino, 1965

[279] Still during the 1960s and 1970s, state, church and prominent families owned large properties called haciendas. Haciendas were destined to agricultural production with non-waged and some task-paid labour. One of the most prominent kinds of work relation was called huasipungo and implied that the landowners would ab/use Indigenous labour for production in exchange of giving access to Indigenous peasants to a plot within the hacienda for cultivating their own food and access to pastures. Because Indigenous peoples were constructed as a racialized subject not deserving of citizenship and narrated as occupying an honorary human-standing, the state law provided little protections which meant that haciendas regulated work and treatment of peasants in mostly an autonomous way. Under those conditions the work relation was immensely asymmetrical and the abuse of power rampant. Despite hacienda's links to exports the regime deepened the monopoly of land without sustaining the desired modernization of the nation. See Luis Alberto Tuaza, 2014, "The Continuity of Hacienda's Discourses and Practices in the Context of International and National Cooperation", *Revista de Antropología Social*, 23: 117-135 and Víctor Bretón Solo de Zaldívar, 2020, "Del crepúsculo del gamonalismo a la etnitización de la cuestión agraria en Chimborazo (Ecuador)", *Latin American Research Review* 55(2): 291–304.

production, land tenure and notions of citizenship which allowed for "masters"—*gamonales, patrones, mayordomos, mayorales*—who embodied a totalitarian governance authority over landless Indigenous peoples.[280] Markers of this system were its exploitative work conditions and violent practices of punishment and control towards Indigenous *campesinos*—including burning down their houses, vituperation, whipping, mutilation, and murder.[281] Incessant uprising and confrontations between Indigenous communities in *haciendas*, *hacendados* ('landowners'), and public forces were part of the rural landscape. Discrimination against all Indigenous communities was normalized.

During these decades of agrarian reform,[282] Indigenous and *campesino* organizations saw in the reform a possibility to reclaim lands and stop the abuse of *mayordomos* and *mayorales*. In a time of decisive *luchas*/struggles, the call to the Mother for protection is aligned with the resistance against a harsh political climate. Through their demands and advice to Indigenous communities, the organizations, supported by the progressive church and activists, achieved modest redistribution of land and work regulations, and a stronger national Indigenous movement. Indigenous people and land sustained futures and provoked societal change together despite the colonial insistence of imagining Indigenous existence as apolitical.

This resilient and grounded political (hi)storying can also be thought with one of the most important Indigenous elders of the time, Dolores Cacuango. Amidst struggles against

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[280] Hernán Ibarra, "Gamonalismo y Dominación en los Andes," *Íconos*, 14 (2002):137-147.
[281] Víctor Bretón Solo de Zaldívar, "Del crepúsculo del gamonalismo a la etnitización de la cuestión agraria en Chimborazo (Ecuador)", *Latin American Research Review* 55, no 2 (2020): 291–304.; Sergio Huarcaya, "Land Reform, Historical Consciousness and Indigenous Activism in Late Twentieth-Century Ecuador," *Journal of Latin American Studies,* 50 (2017): 411-440.
[282] There were two agrarian reforms in Ecuador one in 1964 and one in 1973 fruit of a convergence of interests from several groups. This included liberal politicians and advocates of the Alliance for Progress program who supported the reform to attempt state's modernization by disassembling the hacienda regime in favour of a market-oriented economy which necessitated partition of lands and waged-labour to foster competition.

mistreatment in the hacienda and demands for remuneration, Dolores Cacuango famously asserted: "*somos como paja de páramo, si nos arrancan volvemos a crecer y de paja de páramo sembraremos el mundo* [we are like moorland straw, if they pull us out, we grow again, and of moorland straw we will plant the world]." Cacuango's metaphor is not an abstraction and is much more than imagery of resistance. It rather elicits a way of being in the world, a genre of existence. Moorland existence is what *The Bread of Life* describes and what Dolores Cacuango calls upon as an assurance to those *luchando*. The force she calls upon is that of life grown within the moorland, sustained in *uyway,* and ready to flourish everywhere. It is a call that affirms Indigenous, particularly Kichwa, ways of living, knowing, and making futures. As such it demands a space of transculture and it opposes assimilationist and/or genocidal conviviality. As Muyolema has pointed out on the matter, Dolores Cacuango's moorland straw resists the violence and politics of death against Indigenous existence.[283] Simultaneously, it resists the practices that make the moorland uninhabitable by swallowing it inside nationalized values and ways of living through Europeanized development. Indigenous *luchas* question the *how* and at *what cost* of national(ized) conviviality to change and expand its meaning.

Rural as the bread of life is livingness that challenges the supremacy of colonial stories. The poem presented in this section is a leap inventing the rural as a place/entanglement of relationships that support the continuation of life of its inhabitants, physically, spiritually, and politically. It shows how Indigenous people created spaces of resistance by asserting their values even within projects justified upon the story of an uninhabitable rural as pertaining to the "'dark

[283] Armando Muyolema, "De la "cuestión indígena" a lo "indígena" como cuestionamiento. Hacia una crítica del latinoamericanismo, el indigenismo y el mestiz(o)aje." In *Convergencia de Tiempos: Estudios Subalternos/Contextos Latinoamericanos Estado, Cultura, Subalternidad*, Edited by Ileana Rodríguez (Atlanta: Rodopi, 2001).

zones' of the world".[284] The use of new spaces and instruments, like schools, newspapers, reading and writing in Spanish, opened other platforms to challenge the storying of rural life as populated by ignorance and excluded from the political and economic life of the country. In this sense, the poem is a creative leap languaging rural life while challenging assumptions like that of the Andean Mission regarding the lack of contribution to the economic, social, and cultural life of the country by Indigenous rural population.

Read con-textually the poem challenges the educational orientation proposed by Fundamental Education and Community Development projects that advocated for the change of mind, spirit, and values of rural populations to "dignify them" (see chapter 2), and only then consider reasonable living together respectfully. Indigenous people in rural areas rather have used all social spaces including educational ones to continue to build upon their spirituality, mind, and values to change society into a more respectful society.

Convivial movements

The politics of conviviality in this article are entangled with the stories that drive education projects and the stories that invent spaces to demand continuation of people's own knowledge. This chapter suggests that narratives and otherwise narratives of what counts as good living, political living and where that kind of living takes place become practices of conviviality that seep into education. For example, while the funding and planning coming from institutions like the Andean Mission and the Ministry of Education were driven by the expectation of "integration," the people targeted in those education projects saw in them opportunities to plant futures that would push back against "integration". As pointed out before, stories of exclusion

[284] Huxley, "Fifth Session", 6

continue to be present and often slip off the tongues of their embracers in the crudest ways, as it was demonstrated by Nebot in the October 2019 uprisings. The logics of exclusion stories are not separated from the desires and stories of integration, which condition the celebration of living and knowing to the assimilation to certain genres of existence. The push backs against those logics have led in following decades to bilingual-intercultural and then multicultural education programs within the Ministry of Education, a space gained by the Indigenous and social movement *luchas*/struggles which nevertheless remains a convivial battleground.

A more subtle pushing and pushing-back is also part of coexistence. For example, Indigenous peasants found support to their political cause in liberation theology priests at radiophonic schools. An extensive discussion of that relationship is beyond the focus of this article; however, it is important to notice that conviviality can also mean a synergy from similar yet different values and worldviews. This means recognizing the tensions implicit in a harmonious relation among different people with different histories who nevertheless share a living space and often social goals. Synergy for example was crucial in making the Radiophonic schools and *Jatari Campesino* places of resistance, in which nevertheless, Catholic, and national(ized) ideas about the meaning of being educated and "good living" in rural areas were also present. *The Bread of Life* was published side by side with news about the latest speech by the Pope, letters from instructors celebrating literacy as the definition of education, and advertisements for chemical fertilizer. Yet these "equivocations"[285] or failures to grasp that understandings about something can differ and yet are real in different worlds, allow for the emergence of joint fights with similar goals sustained by different worldviews. This is the kind

[285] See Marisol de la Cadena, Earth Beings: Ecologies and Practices Across the Andean World. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2015; and Marisol de la Cadena, "Indigenous Cosmopolitics in the Andes: Conceptual Reflections beyond "Politics"", *Cultural Anthropology*, 25, no 2, (2010), 351

of equivocation that Marisol de la Cadena sees in the actions of environmentalists and Indigenous peoples protesting jointly against mining projects. The first group protecting the mountain Ausangate, and the latter protecting the Earth-being Ausangate. Similarly, in the Radiophonic schools and *Jatari Campesino*, Indigenous peoples and liberation theology priests fought jointly against a homonymic problem, that of the exploitation of, and discrimination against Indigenous peoples, from different experiences and worldviews.

Spaces like those of the radiophonic schools and *Jatari Campesino* exemplify the movements, sometimes violent and sometimes sympathetic, of conviviality within rural education in Ecuador. The practices and politics that allowed for the formation of such spaces were directed to change and assimilate rural populations whose lives were narrated as a problem. The convivial imagination underlying Fundamental Education and Community Development was that these programs could change the minds, spirits, and values of people living in rural areas to make them fit into the national(ized) ways of living narrated as “better”. That imagination builds upon colonial logics that continue to describe certain lives and lands as uninhabitable and voided from the grace of God, initially, and then of reason.[286] Simultaneously, people who have cultivated their living *with* lands, like Indigenous peoples living in or spiritually connected to the moorland, have also struggled to co-exist with other groups of people in the ‘body’ of the country. However, that struggle has been about asserting the deep knowledge and validity of Indigenous lives in their own terms and in all social spaces. Indigenous *luchas* have opened spaces of transculture where conviviality is pushed beyond assimilation and a harmony that ignores its own tensions and the culturally specific rules for living that make it possible. The leaps of invention of self through art, prayers, and social movements articulated by Indigenous

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[286] Wynter, “Sociogenic Principle”

campesinos breathe life into their own religious and political projects. Sometimes, the spaces for the expression and continuation of Indigenous lives and knowledge have been possible through synergistic efforts between groups of people with different worldviews. Asserting livingness opens the possibility of a care-ful conviviality.

Closing reflection

This chapter has looked at leaps of invention languaging and storying a ruralness deeply political and sustained by caring/*uyway/minkanakuy* relationships among humans, land, and spirits. The invention of a "ruralness", deeply political, care-ful, which sustains "good living", and remains in deep relation with what could be called "urban" and also "national(ized)" living, was possible through self-narration in spaces set up to "solve" the "problem of the rural man" through "inclusion". From those spaces self-narration challenged the narration of "rural" as a problem to national "good living". The chapter suggests that the poem *The Bread of Life* is too a breath of life as it provides with descriptive statements about "good living" which push/ed back against the logics of "bettering" in relation to an overdetermined "good living" offered by Fundamental Education and Community Development projects of "inclusion". That kind of "good living" demanded letting, in this case, Indigenous values, worldviews, and spirits be buried into "uninhabitability" or "backwardness". In contrast, poetic sensibilities and synergetic fights were openers of pockets of air in the form of transcultural spaces where to bring about sociogenic codes about self and life to narrate a "rural" "good living".

The continuation of stories grounded in values and practices, in this case of a Kichwa Indigenous community, which described care-ful relationships and knowledge, in new spaces, like newspapers, and with new instruments, like Spanish literacy, narrated an otherwise "good

living" from ruralness. Here ruralness is a practice of existence, which disrupts overdetermining notions of what counts as dignified life, valid political demands, and possible futures.

Storytellers of ruralness and their sensibilities about "good living" set in the moorland instituted territories of existence with the support of transcultural spaces and synergetic conviviality. Next chapter focuses on the strategy of "appropriation of tools" in the making of territories of existence for "good living".

Chapter 4 Facing the Nation: Appropriation of literacy to question the territory of good living

The Shuar[287] Federation produced since 1972 books to study literacy and culture called *Shuara Antukta* (Shuar awake, listen), and supported bicultural radio education.[288] Through the textbooks and radio education the Shuar Federation appropriated national(ized) fundamental education and literacy projects in their territories located in the Amazonia as well as historically European tools and forms of education (greco-roman alphabet, Spanish language, books, class periods) to invigorate Shuar knowledge and question the relation of the Shuar Indigenous nation with the Ecuadorian nation-state. The practices around education served to question the territory of human life (see chapter 1). Territory here is the governing sociogenic code of what it means to be human, which enacts maps—descriptive statements and re-presentations—in relation to the genre of human and its life instituted through that sociogenic code (see chapter 1 and 3). In this case the Shuar Federation questioned the territory of human life, particularly of a good life, that instituted the national(ized) ideal of human/Ecuadorian citizen and its lifestyle. Those ideas articulated international and national discourses about "rural" places challenging the ability of people to live well, and in need of modernization for "rural" people to have "better" lives, to be able to "improve" themselves, and for the nation to solve the "problem" of underdevelopness that threaten a "good living" (see chapter 2). With their education project and texts the Shuar Federation opened the meaning of what might mean to be human and to lead a good life in what is now known as Ecuador.

[287] Shuar is one of the Indigenous nationalities who live in the Amazonia in what is now known as Ecuador.
[288] Crespo Carlos. Alfabetización y uso de radio en Ecuador. Ecuador Debate, 1983, 2:161-171.

Ecuador's national literacy programs in the 1960s and 1970s bet on the skills of reading and writing to include "rural" population in the economy of the nation and the social dynamics the economy relied upon. That "inclusion" was thought as the "solution" to the "problem" of difference that Indigenous and Afrodescendant lives and living posed to Europeanized "good living" and to the intellectuals proposing ways to achieve it. Literacy programs were entangled with Fundamental Education as they followed Fundamental Education's norms and practices for the development of curricula, methodology of instruction, and its discourse on "bettering life" as modernizing. One of the purposes UNESCO outlined for Fundamental Education in its Monograph *The Teaching of Reading and Writing* published on 1957,1963, and 1969, was "to help men and women to live fuller and happier lives in adjustment with their changing environment, to develop the best elements in their own culture, and to achieve the social and economic progress which will enable them to take their place in the modern world."[289] Literacy skills would serve the inclusion of people into the much desired modern society which was built upon science. Leon Blum, the president of UNESCO's First General Conference, questioned the ability of people to "lead the good life"[290] without and understanding of science and when they "do not know even how to read or write".[291] At the national level those concerns were reflected in the view expressed in governmental documents and by education scholars of the time, which asserted that literacy "achieves its full importance"[292] at service of adult education and

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[289] William S. Gray, The Teaching of Reading and Writing: An International Survey (Paris: Unesco, 1956), 16.
[290] General Conference, First Session, Held at UNESCO House, Paris from 20
November to 10 December 1946 (including Resolutions), General Conference, 1st, 1946, 23–24, UNESCO Archives. Cited in Charles Dorn and Kristen Ghodsee. The Cold War Politicization of Literacy:
Communism, UNESCO, and the World Bank. Diplomatic History, Vol. 36, No. 2 (April 2012), 377.
[291] Ibid.
[292] Gonzalo Rubio Orbe, et al. Las obras y servicios sociales del Estado. Plan General de Desarrollo Económico y Social, Junta Nacional de Planificación y Coordinación, 1970, 191.

professional training “to progressively elevate the level of existence”[293] of people in rural areas and to enable them to contribute to “the progress of the nation they live in.”[294]

The education proposed by the Shuar Federation questioned the inclusion in the nation as an “elevation” of Shuar existence, and the use of literacy for national “progress”. This chapter focuses on how that critical stance constructed a territory (see chapter 1)of good life and how is that territory expressed in some of the lessons of the textbooks *Shuara Antukta.* The first edition of these textbooks was printed in 1972. They were used at the schools and radio schools supported by the Shuar Federation in the 1970s and 1980s. The lessons analyzed are part of the books *Shuara Antukta* No.2, 1978 edition, and No. 3 1976 edition, which are available in the library of the Salesian University and the virtual repository of the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO, in Spanish). The lessons speak of the use of literacy to “face the nation”[295], of the desire to have Shuar teachers, and of the orchard as a place of knowledge and care, making evident the appropriation of the national(ized) language of Ecuador, Spanish, to assert the value of the own knowledge and life. That change in the objectives of literacy implies a shift in the politics of reading and writing as practices to re-signify the territory of good living.

This chapter will focus on how a Shuar community institution used literacy as a tool to question the narratives that hide mechanisms of overrepresentation of the Ecuadorian Europeanized ideals of life as being a “better life”, and produce sociogenic codes to institute a Shuar territory of existence. First, the chapter presents a brief history of literacy projects directed towards the Shuar as a point of reference to see how *Shuara Antukta* challenged the reason of

[293] Ibid
[294] Ibid, 193.
[295] Shuar Federation, “Lesson 25”, Shuara Antukta, 1976:121.

previous literacy projects. Second, it will exemplify the notion of appropriation of literacy. Third and finally, it will analyze the lessons 17 and 25 in *Shuara Antukta* No.2, and the lesson *In the orchard with mom* in *Shuara Antukta* No.3.

Nationalized territories of good living

If we think of territory of existence as a tapestry of principles that sustain the social composition of a meaning of having a human (good) life and maps as functions enacting the codes of territory (see chapter 1), Shuar education produced territory and simultaneously disrupted the mapping of their existence through Europeanized principles. The mandate of "elevating" and changing Others assumed by European and Europeanized priests in the Amazonia was questioned by the education programs and curricula supported by the Shuar Federation, which were fraught in the midst of a contentious relationship between the Shuar community and the Salesian order.

Historically the Ecuadorian state entrusted the education in rural areas of the Amazonia to the Salesian and other Christian orders. In 1870 the president of Ecuador García Moreno entrusted the work of 'civilization' and 'education' in Shuar territory in the Amazonia, colonially called, the Vicary of Gualaquiza and Macas to the Jesuits, the Dominicans followed them in 1887 and by 1893 the Salesians took over and stayed, with more or less presence, until today.[296] There were changes in the conditions over which the state supported the presence of Christian orders in the area, especially after the liberal revolution of 1899. However, the logics of "entrusting" certain populations, particularly

[296] Juan Botasso, Los Salesianos y La Educación de Los Shuar 1893-1920. Mirando más allá de los fracasos y los éxitos, *Istanze ed attuazioni in diversi contesti. Volume II. Relazioni Regionali: America*, Jesús Graciliano González et al., eds., Roma:LAS, 2007: 237, 243.

the ones located in "rural" areas of the Amazonia, was slowly reformed rather than suspended in following governments regardless of them being conservative or liberal.[297]

Christian missions were supposed to cultivate Ecuadorianness. Being Amazonian territory and Indigenous populations fairly out of reach by the state, religious orders constituted its presence, and their actions were a way to ensure the nationalization of territories and peoples. The education offered by the missions was seen as an instrument for 'acculturating' people to bring them into the nation (see chapter 2). The cultivation of certain work skills, Spanish literacy, and a change in dress, and ways of social and affective relations to fit national(ized)/Europeanized ways of living was the objective of Christian education. This education would "better" the life of the "Orient indio", a genre of human described in national(ized) narratives as the most primitive of Indigenous peoples (see chapter 2). The ecuatorianization of Shuar people showed a national concern over

[297] It is important to notice that Ecuador had several Concordats, or agreements with the Catholic Church from 1862 to 1899 in order to be under the care of the Church and be part of the world 'Catholic civilization.' The search for what was called 'the perfect society' implied a moral development that was supposed to go hand in hand with scientific knowledge even though it also embraced censorship as a way to cultivate 'right knowledge'. In 1899 the liberal revolution broke the Concordat to separate the Church from the State. This however did not chance the logics of "entrusting" the education and even 'modernization' of certain groups of people, particularly the ones in rural areas and in the Amazonia, to Christian orders. This was so partly because of the lack of resources to reach this populations and partly out of a political strategy to have presence and build a national border through culture and education. See more on the history of Ecuador's concordats in Carlos Espinosa Fernández de Córdoba and Cristobal Aljovín de Losada, "Conceptos clave del conservadurismo en Ecuador, 1875-1900", *Anuario Colombiano de Historia Social y de la Cultura* 42,1 (2015): 179-212.

protecting the border with Peru (see chapter 2) and of fulfilling a pendent task of colonizing and was 'civilizing' the borderlands.[298]

The reasoning of entrusting Indigenous peoples to religious orders was that Christian priests could "better" their life by "including" *them* in the "civilized" life of the nation. In 1944 the *contract for the colonization and civilization of the jibaro tribes* [Shuar nation] *of the forests*, the Ecuadorian government gave the Salesian order *tutelaje* (legal guardianship/guidance) of the Shuar and part of their territory. *Tutelaje* is a doctrine called upon for the government of Abya-yalan people since the XVI century. It builds upon Gines de Sepulveda's proposition that the "divine and natural law command that the most perfect and powerful dominate over the imperfect and unlike [the powerful]".[299] Sepulveda's *Treaty on just causes of the war against the Indians*, asserts that Abya-yalan people to whom he refers as barbarians or Indians, are "so inferior to Spaniards like children to adults and women to men… and I am about to say monkeys to men."[300] That supposed inferiority 'demanded' from Spaniards *tutelaje:* "to imitate the father of a family, govern [Abya-yalan people] with fatherlike empire […] And when over time they become more human and probity and the Christian religion flourish among them, more freedom and a sweeter treatment should be given to them."[301] The *tutelaje* of Shuar people entrusted to Salesians by the government, followed a colonial logic by which Indigenous peoples and their knowledge were assumed inferior and thus in need of guidance. This policy narrated

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[298] Cecilia de Lourdes Ortiz Batallas, Shuar, salesianos y militares. La formación del estado en el sur-oriente ecuatoriano 1893-196, doctoral thesis, Flacso Ecuador, 2019.
[299] Juan Gines de Sepulveda, *Tratado sobre las justas causas de la guerra contra los indios*, Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1987 [1550]: 83.
[300] Ibid, 101.
[301] Ibid, 173.

Shuar people as unable to correctly protect and educate themselves, and to manage their own territory.

The Ecuadorian government not only assumed the power of entrusting Shuar people and their territory to the Salesians, but also economically ensured Salesian 'civilizing' actions. In 1946, president Velasco Ibarra established the mechanism of *fiscomisionalidad* (public-religious action) to guarantee the education operations of the Salesians in Shuar territory.[302] This was an agreement between Ecuador and the *Oriente* (Amazonia) Salesian Missions to secure the sustainability of education projects in the Ecuadorian Amazonia which supported the creation of schools, curricula, and education methods by the missions. The state's relation with the church under *fiscomisionalidad* regularized education projects directed towards Shuar people giving the church almost complete autonomy, which lessen in terms of curricula, only by 1955.[303]

The logics of the *fiscomisional* education built upon the assumed mandate of 'elevating' people into the European lifestyle and codes of a good human life. The *internados* (boarding schools) Salesians established in the late 1920 are a clear example of that mandate. Juan Vigna, the *internados'* organizer between 1927 and 1948, described them in his autobiographical notes of the 1970s as the "beginning to solve the problem regarding the evangelization and *human promotion* of the Shuar race".[304] *Internados* were seen as a solution because previous evangelization experiences of Salesian missionaries in

[302] Jose Juncosa, *Civilizaciones en Disputa*, Abya-Yala, 2020, 157.
[303] Jose Juncosa, *Civilizaciones en Disputa*, Abya-Yala, 2020
[304] Juan Vigna. Autobiographical notes of 1970s, 2014, in Jose Juncosa, *Civilizaciones en Disputa*, Abya-Yala, 2020: 154 (my emphasis).

South America were not too helpful in approaching Shuar communities who constantly moved through the rainforest. The lack of permanent settlements made it difficult to have regular contact and making people attend school. Up to that point, all the narrations of missionaries described the work with Shuar people as extremely difficult and frustrating.[305] Not only Shuar lifestyle resisted the projects of evangelization, but also was a point of critique to what the missionaries preached. For example, being a *pueblo* of warriors Shuar people showed no admiration by the God the priests preached about because he let his son get crucified. The *internados* enforced "civilization" and "education" by settling Shuar people in schools and breaking the line of transmission of knowledge from parents to children by sequestering Shuar children to 'reform' the community. The distance with their parents and elders was articulated as 'helping' Shuar children and youth to achieve an orderly and useful life. A sense of respect towards schedules and norms would support discipline and knowledge on how to be productive.[306] The violence of forced settlement and separation of children from their families, the violence of forcing a new lifestyle on Shuar communities was conceptualized in *fiscomisional* schools as 'elevating' or "promoting" the humanity of Shuar people.

To ensure the cultivation of moral and productivity Salesian pedagogy privileged constant surveilled action. The days were full of activities that started and ended with Christian liturgy, like mass and prayers, and included literacy, subject studies, sports,

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[305] Juan Botasso, Los Salesianos y La Educación de Los Shuar 1893-1920. Mirando más allá de los fracasos y los éxitos, *Istanze ed attuazioni in diversi contesti. Volume II. Relazioni Regionali: America*, Jesús Graciliano González et al., eds., Roma:LAS, 2007; Jose Juncosa, *Civilizaciones en Disputa*, Abya-Yala, 2020.
[306] Juan Botasso, Los Salesianos y La Educación de Los Shuar 1893-1920. Mirando más allá de los fracasos y los éxitos, *Istanze ed attuazioni in diversi contesti. Volume II. Relazioni Regionali: America*, Jesús Graciliano González et al., eds., Roma:LAS, 2007

cleaning and maintaining the school's buildings, and agricultural work, all done with or supervised by priests[307]. By filling the days with regulated and supervised activities Salesians prevented "ill-spent" time and liberties in how to live life that might divert from Christian morale.

Salesian education equated the territory of humanity with that of being Christian. Existence was thus regulated to cultivate humanity, while tacitly asserting Shuar life as a dangerously blurry map of humanness. The life at the *internados* was designed to change the meaning of good living into a Christian life productive to the Ecuadorian nation. Yet Shuar people resisted that equation and often became exasperated with the enclosure, fell in depression and even preferred suicide than staying in the *internados*.[308] The following verses from a song used in the community mass in the *internado* of Logroño, in the

[307] Jose Juncosa, *Civilizaciones en Disputa*, Abya-Yala, 2020, 164.
[308] Juan Botasso, Los Salesianos y La Educación de Los Shuar 1893-1920, 242.

province of Morona-Santiago, may be an example of the Salesian concern of turning mistrust and sadness into strength and joy.

> I will come close to God's altar, the joy of my youth. I will come close.
>
> Be kind with me oh my God, and free me of all evil
>
> If you are my strength my God, why should I ever be sad?
>
> Grant me your light and truth to turn my heart to You
>
> And trust in You, father of heavens, because you are my God and Savior.[309]

Salesian education sought precisely a "turn of heart" for Shuar people to "come close" to Christian life understood as the life *worth living*—not even Shuar suicides made missionaries retreat.

The Ecuadorian government supported the stubborn Salesian stewardship of Shuar people because the "betterment" of the lives of Shuar implied as well the reach of the government to Shuar people and lands. The presence of the Salesians was a way of the state to act upon people particularly in the realm of labor training. Historically Salesians trained Shuar children for certain kinds of jobs like housekeeping and agriculture.[310] The missions also opened settlements and roads for the exploitation of natural products like

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[309] Alfredo Germani, Libros de Música del Centro Shuar de Logroño. Box Morona-Santiago, Salesian Archive. Quito, Ecuador.

[310] Cecilia de Lourdes Ortiz Batallas, Shuar, salesianos y militares. La formación del estado en el sur-oriente ecuatoriano 1893-196, doctoral thesis, Flacso Ecuado, 2019.

rubber.[311] Simultaneously, Salesian presence built a living border with Peru—country with which there was territorial disputes and tensions—through a sense of national belonging to Ecuador. After the Agrarian Reforms of the 1960s and 1970s Salesian presence was mediatory between *colonos*, settlers from other parts of the country, who worked the land and raised cattle. In this sense the impact of Salesian presence in Shuar life made possible national discourses about, and practices directed towards Shuar people which envisaged the Shuar as readily available for Ecuador's projects of control of territories, economic production, and potential labor force.

Through *tutelaje* and *fiscomisionalidad*, Salesians in tandem with the government assumed the duty to 'elevate' Shuar people to the "good life" described in terms of Christian probity and belonging to the economy and rules of the nation. This "good life" implicitly demanded an acceptance of a "natural law" which deemed Christian Europeanized life and people superior. Christianity and national economy were key threads of the social composition of the territory of humanity and of a life worth living in the *internados*.

Salesian education, funded and supported by the Ecuadorian government, instituted national(ized) territories of human existence which acted as measurement of good living. This is, it enforced a politics of being where Shuar life could be valorized just in terms of being material to become 'more human'. That humanity would be gained by following the

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[311] Ibid.

'guidance' of European (many missionaries were Italian and Spanish) and Europeanized teachers, and by serving Ecuador's modernization and economic capitalist wellbeing.

Spanish literacy was initially a practice that not only mapped Shuar existence into Europeanized territory as abject, but also philosophically and practically impeded the narration of Shuar territories of existence. One of the first rules in the *internados* was to abandon the use of Shuar language in all spaces—orchard, bedrooms, dining room, etc.—not only in the classrooms. This was a requirement which was enforced with physical and/or labor punishments to whom would break it.[312] The prohibition to speak in Shuar, not only imposed the national(ized) culture and a language understandable for whom represented the moral and state authority. It also implied abandoning Shuar knowing. Shuar language was mostly an oral language[313] where, to acquire the power of knowing and to sustain bodily and social life, people needed to learn and say the words that carry knowledge and power (see section "Lessons from Shuara Antukta"). Spanish literacy, when enacted not as a bilingual bicultural practice, but as a way to erase Shuar language was intended to, and broke paths for continuing Shuar culture and, ways of being and knowing.[314]

It was not until the 1960s, after changes proposed at the Second Vatican Council (1959-1965), that Salesian order repurposed the *internados* as higher education institutes and collaborated in the teaching of Shuar literacy. In the Second Vatican Council it was proposed that missionaries were to "discover, with joy and respect, the seeds of the Word which are

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[312] Cecilia Ortiz-Batallas, "El Estado Ecuatoriano En La Frontera Suroriental, Una Construcción Desde El Afecto, 1893-1964," Íconos - Revista De Ciencias Sociales, no. 70 (2021): pp. 95-112.
[313] Shuar is a language family spoken by people now settled in the Amazonian lands of Peru and Ecuador. The known written systematizations of Shuar language are of Shuar Chicham and date to the early XX century. See more on Shuar Chicham language and history in: Paati Serafín, Awak Mariana and Andicha Pedro. *Visión Funcional de la Lengua Shuar.* Cuenca: Universidad de Cuenca. 2012.
[314] Ortiz-Batallas, "El Estado Ecuatoriano En La Frontera Suroriental"; Juan Bottaso, personal communication, August 2019.

contained in them [diverse religious traditions]"[315] and it was the duty of the missionaries to make those seed flourish. Progressive members of the Church in Latin America interpreted this as a call to learn the culture of Indigenous peoples and evangelize in Indigenous languages. Salesian progressive priests like Alfredo Germani, saw in that statement a possibility to respect Shuar language and knowledge and collaborated in the preservation of Shuar culture through the Shuar Federation.[316] The *internados* survived into the 1970s and were slowly reformed into higher education institutes opened to local people. The shift in the discourse of the Church opened paths for convivial synergies (see chapter 3), which nevertheless had different ultimate goals. The next section will argue that the Shuar Federation appropriated national(ized) tools and the tools offered by Salesian education not simply for an insertion into national(ized) society and rights, but for the protection and cultivation of a geographical and existential Shuar territory to cultivate good living in their own terms.

Appropriating tools disrupting territories

In the early 1960s families living in Shuar territory with the sponsorship of Salesians built the Shuar Centers which were legally recognized and inscribed in the Ministerio de Previsión Social (Social Welfare Ministry).[317] Each center comprised twenty-five to thirty family houses, a soccer field, a radiophonic school, and a chapel. The centers were greatly autonomous and to coordinated the activities of all the Shuar Centers (130 by 1977), the families created Shuar

[315] *Ad Gentes* decree on missionary activity of the Church. "Christian Testimony". Rome, 7th of December of 1965. https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651207_ad-gentes_sp.html
[316] Juan Bottaso, personal communication August 2019.
[317] Ernesto Salazar, An Indian Federation in Lowland Ecuador, IWGIA Document 28, 1977; Juncosa, Civilizaciones en Disputa, Ch3.

Associations. The Shuar Federation emerged as an organism that regulated and politically represented all the Shuar Associations.[318]

Refusing the mapping or "elevation" of Shuar life, and instead looking for a way to narrate a Shuar territory of existence in ways that could simultaneously institute it and protect it, the Shuar Federation appropriated national(ized) and Salesian civilizing tools. Here appropriation of tools means the use of Church and State funded spaces and Spanish language literacy to question the ideas and principles by which Hispanic education and knowledge and a Europeanized life within Ecuador were deemed as a better life than Shuar life.

The above reflection builds upon Audre Lorde's caution that "the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house.[319] They may allow us temporarily to beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change"[320]; and the respectful questioning to that statement that Lewis and Jane Anna Gordon make by pointing that enslaved and colonized peoples "have historically done something more provocative with such tools than attempt to dismantle the Big House. There are those who

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[318] Salazar, An Indian Federation, 1977

[319] Thank you Licho López López for all our work and conversations together which made it possible for this thought and others to be present in this dissertation text. Gracias también por la compañía en mis pensares mientras escribo. Together with Licho López we question how were tools and house assumed to be the master's on the first place and what does that mean for academic writing in the article entitled "Where was Audre Lorde's master's house anyway? Unmastering editorship".

[320] Audre Lorde, *Sister outsider: Essays and speeches*, Berkley, CA: Crossing Press Feminist Series, 1984: 204.

used those tools, developed additional ones, and built houses of their own on more or less generous soil."[321]

For example, since 1964 the Shuar Federation used the 'Shuar Centers' as spaces for their political planning and collective decision-making while maintaining their usual housing for everyday and family life.[322] The missionaries, with their own masterful evangelizing and nationalizing agenda were still present and sponsoring the Shuar Federation and Centers but distant from the political activities in these spaces. The suggestion here made is that even though Shuar people did change their relationship to space and language due to the impositions and surveillance of their lives by the missionaries—and through them the national government—, they used those new relationships to continue to live and to project to the future Shuar existence, knowledge, and worldview.

The Shuar Federation and Centers became the spaces from which Shuar community proposed a Shuar existence and identity to be a political way of being. As such they could break with political *tutelaje*, strengthen Shuar government of Shuar communities and territories, and negotiate with the Ecuadorian government—rather than being assimilated into Ecuador-ianness. The Shuar Federation was founded in January of 1964 and recognized by the government in October of 1964. Regulated by the title XX of the Civil

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[321] Lewis R. Gordon & Jane Anna Gordon, Not Only the Master's Tools: African American Studies in Theory and Practice. London, UK: Routledge, 2006: ix.
[322] Juncosa, Civilizaciones en Disputa.

Code, the Federation became a legal person thusly displacing Salesian legal *tutelaje.*[323] This allowed the Federation to inscribe Shuar lands as collective property of the members of the Federation, take ownership of the schools and stop the abduction of Shuar children into boarding schools.[324] The leaders of the Federation used tools—their own and the ones they forcefully attained through "civilizing" national projects—to protect Shuar lives, families, culture, and language. This was possible by reading the reality and the historical place they were situated in at the time to take actions according to what they considered the best strategies for Shuar lives to survive and flourish.

When Shuar community inserted itself in the national Ecuadorian political frameworks by taking the figure of a legal person—thus appropriating legal masterful tools—, they made an important statement. Shuar community asserted Shuar existence as a possible human territory within the 'national' territory. This was one of the crucial movements that later supported the proposal of seeing and regulating Ecuador as a multinational nation, where each pueblo/people/community (Indigenous, Afrodescendant, Montuvio, Mestizo) is considered a nation. That proposal, which was taken into the 2008 Ecuadorian Constitution (still with problems, tensions, and breach in practice), subverts the homogeneity of territory, both human and geographical, by acknowledging multiple genres of existence of land and people. The adoption of a legal person thus set a precedent for actions of Indigenous movements to increase rights and participation of Indigenous peoples within the Ecuadorian nation. Yet the participation in the dynamics of such apparatuses for

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[323] Yankuam Raúl Ayui Papue and Ukukui Toño Yankur Pujupat, 2014, Modelo De Autonomía Y Gobernabilidad De La Federacion Interprovincial De Centros Shuar "FICSH", En El Marco Del Estado Plurinacional E Intercultural", Tesis de Licenciatura, Universidad de Cuenca.

[324] Juncosa, Civilizaciones en Disputa.

regulating life was not the goal. Rather it has been a strategy 'to play' the masterful game to which Indigenous peoples were drag or drawn into because of the continuous effort of national colonization of Indigenous territories, absorption of labor and, in the case of Shuar people, also the militarization of the Ecuador/Peru border which crosses through Shuar lands.[325]

What the strategy shows is not merely an appeal to the national(ized) legal system, but the use of masterful tools to shift power dynamics, even if slightly, and expand Shuar territory of existence. In her research on affectivities related to ecuatorianization of Shuar people, Cecilia Ortiz shares testimonies of former students of boarding schools who narrate the surveillance of their behavior by Salesian priests even when they were using the bathroom.[326] That is an example just to point out that the creation of a legal person and the lift of *tutelaje*, decreased surveillance and facilitated the exercise of personal and political borders which in turn made easier for conversations, mobilization between community and schools, and social and political organization to take place. The lift of *tutelaje* accrued Shuar community certain freedoms to return to Shuar living and knowing practices as well as to create new ones, including striving to gain citizenship and state protection, which demanded reformation of national law (a long-standing project). The use of masterful legal

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[325] In the 1970s under the law of "colonization law of the Ecuadorian Amazonia" the Ecuadorian government fostered the migration of people of the most populated provinces in the Highlands and the Coast regions. The law declared the colonization of the Amazonia a national priority for the modernization of the country and the "development" of Indigenous populations in the area. Shuar lands were claimed by both Peru and Ecuador as theirs. The Ecuadorian government sought to assert ownership through the military presence. See Maria Belen Albornoz and Maria Antonia Machado. "Transformaciones en la política de tierras y redistribución agraria del Ecuador. Una visión desde las redes de política pública." *Mundo Agrario*, 17, 36, (diciembre 2016). https://www.mundoagrario.unlp.edu.ar/article/view/MAe036/7751; Cecilia Ortiz Batalla, *Indios, militares e Imaginarios de Nación en el Ecuador del siglo XX.* Abaya-Yala, 2006.

[326] Ortiz-Batallas, "El Estado Ecuatoriano En La Frontera Suroriental".

tools implied a recognition of, and play to the coloniality of power in legal systems and national(ized) living to temporarily beat the “master” at his own game while simultaneously doing something more provocative like pursuing a good life in Shuar terms.

Shuar community appropriated “civilized” language and political culture to disrupt the normalcy of the discourse of *Man's* life or Europeanized life to be a better life, ‘proper’ human life itself, or the goal of progress of other(ed) lives. Their actions did not seek to simply map Shuar existence into the territory of Ecuador-ianess but produce more and their own discourses about existence, valuable human life, knowledge, and aesthetics. Territory understood as codes that institute humanness and knowing, can and has, through liberal humanism discourses, supported a monopoly of the meaning of humanity and of truth.[327] In that regard, Shuar questioning of the territory of existence overdetermined by Europeanized humanism opened modes of sociogeny to challenge the monopoly over humanness which narrated Indigenous peoples as in need of “acculturation” and “betterment” (see chapter 2).

Through the Shuar Federation, Shuar groups expanded territories of (good) living and knowing which included the creation of transcultural spaces like those of bicultural education and texts. The following section looks at Shuar use of language, literacy and literacy education in the pursue of Shuar good living.

Ii nunke (our land), territory for combative literacy

The Blood’s Old Song
I didn't suck the Spanish language in
when I came into the world.

[327] Sylvia Wynter, “On How We Mistook the Map for the Territory”.

My tongue was born among trees

and tastes like earth;

My grandparents' tongue is my home.

And if I use this language that is not mine,

I do it as the one who uses a new key

and opens another door and enters another world

where words have another voice

and another way to feel the earth.

this tongue is the memory of a pain

and I speak it without fear or shame

because it was bought

with the blood of my ancestors.

In this new language

I show you the flowers of my song,

I bring you the taste of other sadness

and the color of other joys...

this language is just one more key

to sing the old singing of my blood.

Humberto Akabal[328]

[328] Humberto Akabal, "The Blood Old's Song", poem cited in Maria Jacinta Xon Riquiac, "Chi Uwach Loq'Alaj Q'ij Saq: The Sacred Existing in Knowing/Learning from Space/Time," in *Indigenous Futures and Learnings Taking Place*, ed. Licho Lopez and Gioconda Coello (Oxon, UK: Routledge, 2021), pp.77.

Shuar community dedicated education to the production of territories of existence through producing Word. Ii nunke (our land in Shuar language) is precisely a territory that sustains life and thought, common ones as well, between the different beings that make that territory possible.[329] To keep Shuar knowledge and ways of knowing alive it is important that the lands are alive. As Serafin Paati, Shuar leader asserts, “our way of living goes beyond anything, it leads us to take care of life, because our wisdom and our learnings are there.”[330] Territory has a meaning in relation to all the beings that share it and make it and “the existence of all those beings open the Shuar memory to feel the reality [of their ancient stories].”[331] The stories from the land provide a way to know the world. “The orchards, the great trees, the water we drink, are our [Shuar] wisdom and the knowledge our grandparents taught us.”[332] This is why the ancient stories from the land are considered a must in Shuar education.[333] In this sense the protection of Shuar land and word is the protection of Shuar life and knowledge.

That sense of sustaining Shuar life is deeply political because it challenges the authority of the Word of Man understood as a discursive monopoly of the meaning of humanness and human good living. The use of literacy that the Shuar Federation proposed took the use of Spanish language "beyond the Word of Man”[334] to replace the postulate of *Man* as human itself with the postulate of a subject shaped by culturally relative modes of being human, therefore breaking the assumption of the “negatively invested mode of the Abject, of Ontological Lack”[335] projected over the Shuar because of not being/refusing to be *Man.* In other words, challenging

[329] Juncosa
[330] Serafin Paati Wajai in Jose Juncosa “Civilizations in Dispute,”pp272-273
[331] Serafin Paati Wajai in Jose Juncosa “Civilizations in Dispute,”pp272-273
[332] Ibid
[333] Ibid, 272-273.
[334] Sylvia Wynter, “Beyond the Word of Man: Glissant and the New Discourse of the Antilles,” *World Literature Today 63*, no. 4 (1989): 645.
[335] Ibid.

the authority of the Word of the discursively instituted human which uses Black and Indigenous genres of humanity as its defining opposite (as well as *the poor* and *the mad*)[336]—thence embodying the Ontological Lack—made it possible to create new Words that sustain life as existence, and not as Lack or symbolic death. Taking charge of the Word is a combative strategy understood as refusing the negation of the own being and own knowledge, which happens by affirming the own life value.[337] This is similar as well to Fanonian "combating air" which implies refusal of the "expulsion of the self"[338] to become agreeable, a well-adjusted-good-life-self, to colonial logics. Becoming such self is surrendering geographical and existential territories' "history, its daily pulsation".[339] Taking charge of the Word combats expulsion of the self and practices to turn it into a territory of Lack, a mere map of Europeanized good life. In the case of Shuar literacy "taking charge of the word"[340] made available descriptive statements of Shuar life and land as political places of existence, as places from where knowledge and epistemology arise. A Word with which to narrate a relationship with Ecuador-iannes that did not imply "acculturation".

In concrete taking charge of the Word implied for the Shuar Federation to appropriate the spaces, the techniques, the relationships (like with the Salesians), and the language they had bought with the blood of their ancestors, as the Mayan poet Humberto Akabal says, to produce textbooks and Radio Education programs that affirmed Shuar existence. The following subsections exemplify the Federation's kind of taking charge of the Word through the textbooks in *Shuara Antukta* lessons.

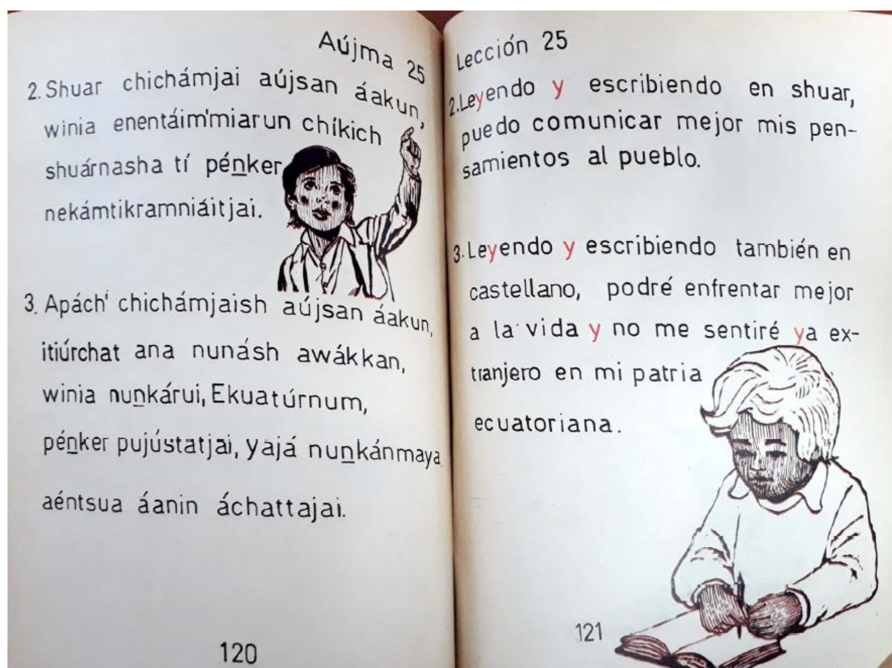
[336] Ibid.
[337] Ibid, 76
[338] Fanon, 65
[339] Ibid.
[340] Ibid, 639.

Lessons from *Shuara Antukta (Shuar listen)*

The textbooks *Shuara Antukta* are literacy and culture textbooks produced by the Shuar Federation in collaboration with Alfredo Germani, a Salesian priest, during the 1970s. The books were meant for basic education and carried lessons about Shuar life as well as Shuar and Spanish Language. In terms of language, the lessons show a progression in the length and complexity of text. Some lessons have simple phrases focusing on the use of consonants and vowels while other lessons are composed of long stories to practice reading. All lessons are about Shuar culture or about the relation of Shuar people with Ecuador-ianness.

Shuara Antukta through Word provides a territory, or codes that institute humanness and the order of knowledge, which decenters the monopoly of truth of Ecuador-ianness. The lessons affirm the value of Shuar life and knowledge and narrate a relationship with the country, Ecuador, and its rules. The stories presented in the lessons, even the simplest ones, speak of interrelated existences rather than about Shuar life as an Ontological Lack.

*Reading and Writing, leyendo **y** escribiendo.*



Aújma 25

2. Shuar chichámjai aújsan áakun,
winia enentáimmiarun chíkich
shuárnasha tí pénker
nekámtikramniáitjai.

3. Apách chichámjaish aújsan áakun,
itiúrchat ana nunásh awákkan,
winia nunkárui, Ekuatúrnum,
pénker pujústatjai, yajá nunkánmaya
aéntsua áanin áchattajai.

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Lección 25

2. Leyendo y escribiendo en shuar,
puedo comunicar mejor mis pen-
samientos al pueblo.

3. Leyendo y escribiendo también en
castellano, podré enfrentar mejor
a la vida y no me sentiré ya ex-
tranjero en mi patria
ecuatoriana.

121

Figure 10. Shuar Federation (1978), "Lesson 25", Shuara Antukta No.2

An example of how *Shuara Antukta* decenters the monopoly of truth can be seen in Lesson 25 of *Shuara Antukta* No.2, focused on the use and sound of the letter "Y" in Spanish. The message that accompanies the phonetics lesson says that it is important to read and write in Shuar to be able to communicate thoughts among Shuar and, it is important to read and write in Spanish "to confront/face better life and stop feeling foreign in my own Ecuadorian homeland."

This short lesson allows the reader to see that there is a duality to the uses of literacy in terms of it being pragmatically a means of communication and it being codes and techniques which are political and carry a worldview. Even though *Shuara Antukta* is a bilingual literacy text its purpose goes beyond reading and writing in two languages. The idea of learning Spanish and "facing life" in Spanish is having to deal with the overrepresentation of life as functioning within the paradigm of the nation-state, its language, law, landscape, and worldview and being productive in its measures. It is a recognition of the tacit claims of the nation over language

which positions Spanish as the language that counts for political life and for the transmission of knowledge in Ecuador. Understanding that duality, which is not necessarily an opposition, starts by the appropriation of writing and of the Roman script —having been Shuar mostly an oral language—to further politicize Shuar language as an instrument to communicate thought in Ecuador.

In the following story, to acquire the power of knowing how to use the blowgun, the right poison and how animals behave, and thus become a good hunter, people need to sing the words taught by the wise one, Etsa. To sustain the life of the body with food and of social belonging by participating in the ceremony mindfully, this story suggests, it is important to learn and say the words that carry knowledge and power. The following fragment of a traditional story shared by Shuar elders speaks of this kind of learning and acquiring power:

> When the Shuar learned to make the blowgun, Etsa—the Sun—wanted to pass on his powers, the techniques of the tsenkak arrows, the poison tseas and an adequate knowledge about the customs of the animals, so that Shuar people would become good hunters.
>
> Etsa sat near the ritual post of the house, called pau. He took some reeds and filled them with tobacco making a kusupank. After lighting the kusupank, blowing from the lit part he passed the smoke into the mouth of the attendees who sucked it until they felt dizzy. Then Etsa recited an *anent*,[341] then sang, begging them to repeat it without fainting, to achieve the power of each *anent*.

[341] Anent is a Shuar word which means sacred chanting.

> Before each *anent*, he would light another kusupank and make them suck tobacco smoke, since tobacco has the power to bring spirits and animals closer together.
>
> One of the attendees, named Washikiat, despite sucking in tobacco smoke, did not chant the prayers. Etsa called his attention several times to sing, but he kept his mouth shut, assuring that he was singing.
>
> At the end of the celebration, after Etsa indicated the last prayer, he strongly invited Washikiat to sing for real. Washikiat, resentful, opened his mouth to sing, but the only noise that came out was: Ju ju ju! He transformed into a washi-monkey.
>
> Etsa cursed him by saying: He will be a speechless monkey, so that people may remember that no one can receive the power of the spirits without singing the *anents*. For this reason, the leaders of a celebration always insist that the participants say the words and sing the *anent* loud, all together.[342]

In Shuar tradition, grandmothers, grandfathers, and wise people are considered the carriers of knowledge. They pass on that knowledge orally, through morning rituals and storytelling, through experiencing something together with the one who learns, and even after death giving others visions.[343] Through that knowledge people acquire and exercise power in daily live both for sustaining physical and social life.

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[342] Ibid, 30, 31.
[343] Juan Manuel Mashinkiash Chinkias, *Etnoeducación Shuar y aplicación del Modelo Educación Intercultural Bilingüe en la Nacionalidad Shuar*, Universidad de Cuenca, 2012.

The words of knowledge give power to people. The transition towards also sharing words of knowledge through writing with a Roman script implies using the techniques of Spanish as a language to accrue a certain power for Shuar people. In terms of education, the translation of knowledge into written culture has to do with the Federation's objectives of facilitating bicultural fluency. That is a fluency in Shuar and national(ized) culture to ensure political recognition of Shuar life, and knowledge through the necessary involvement of Shuar people in the Ecuadorian nation. Fluency thus means a skillful use and approach to what makes language a means of communication and expression of political life. An extension of this is the use of Shuar and Spanish language in classrooms, and radios to valorize Shuar identity and culture as the place from which to relate with the national government, and to demand from it the respect to Shuar life, self-government, and territory, and to negotiate how Shuar involvement in the national economy.

Language is always political as it carries and enlivens a worldview. The reflection that through language people institutes the self and society, that is, that language has sociogenic power, implies that it creates the relationships that sustain the world we live in. The stories people tell about the world and how it works build upon a materiality which is interpreted, mythologized, or 'read' with lenses produced culturally and from a particular human praxis. The political here implies precisely the creation of social worlds through languaging existence, history, and the possibilities of living together—among human and more-than-human beings—which organize life and can/has produce/d traditions, mandates, and a certain reasonableness about living. Those are all avenues to support and assert life as well as to regulate behavior and order action, discourse, and reason.

Under that premise, written Indigenous knowledge is an exercise of combative survivance. This is, a political exercise of languaging existence to continue to live. In, Chippewa writer Gerald Vizenor's words, "the practices of survivance create an active presence, more than the instincts of survival, function, or subsistence."[344] It is not merely surviving, but continuing to create life. Written Indigenous knowledge, which was previously transmitted orally, cannot be simply thought as indication of 'assimilation' into a national(ized) practice stemming from a history of colonial occupation. Appropriating written language is a practice of survivance which allows the continuation of knowledge and brings the presence of Indigenous, in this case Shuar, existence into more spaces to assert the value of the own life. In this sense, survivance is not an expression of a hope to go back to the past or to undo history—ideas sometimes used to dismiss Indigenous fights—, rather it is a will to continue to live, flourish, and produce and enrich otherwise futures. A will which, while asserting difference and learning, critiques hierarchizations built upon difference and demands of assimilation.

The approach to literacy that *Shuara Antukta* embodies makes evident that dual aspect of language as a means to communicate with others and to propose a worldview and political stand about life and good living through codes oral and written. *Shuara Antukta* made of literacy a strategy to simultaneously face life in Spanish and promote life in Shuar.

Shuar teachers for Shuar kids, maestros Shuar para ***niñ****es Shuar*

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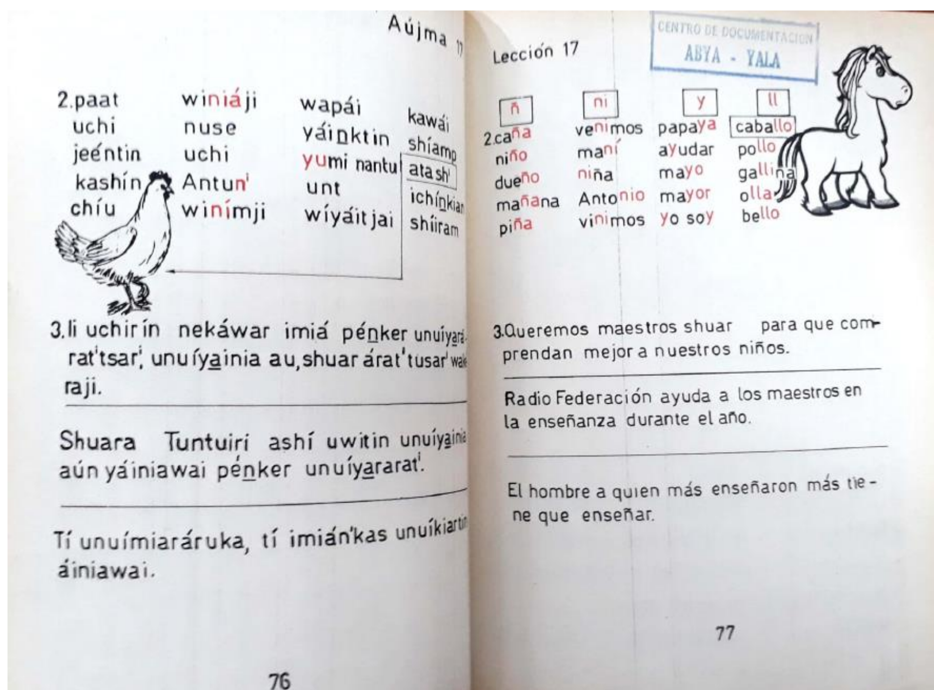
[344] Gerald Vizenor, *Manifest Manners.* (Hanover: Wesleyan University Press), 2014:11.



Aújma 17

2. paat	winiáji	wapái	kawái
uchi	nuse	yáinktin	shíamp
jeéntin	uchi	yumi nantu	atash'
kashín	Antun'	unt	ichínkian
chíu	winímji	wíyáitjai	shíiram

3. Ii uchirín nekáwar imiá pénker unuíyará-
rat'tsar', unuíyainia au, shuar árat'tusar' wak-
raji.

Shuara Tuntuiri ashí uwitin unuíyainia
aún yáiniawai pénker unuíyararat'.

Tí unuímiaráruka, tí imián'kas unuíkiartin
áiniawai.

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Lección 17

CENTRO DE DOCUMENTACION
ABYA - YALA

ñ	ni	y	ll
2. caña	venimos	papaya	caballo
niño	maní	ayudar	pollo
dueño	niña	mayo	gallina
mañana	Antonio	mayor	olla
piña	vinimos	yo soy	bello

3. Queremos maestros shuar para que com-
prendan mejor a nuestros niños.

Radio Federación ayuda a los maestros en
la enseñanza durante el año.

El hombre a quien más enseñaron más tie-
ne que enseñar.

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Figure 11. Shuar Federation (1978), "Lesson 17", Shuara Antukta No.2

Part of asserting the value of Shuar life and knowledge was demanding Shuar teachers. Lesson 17 of *Shuara Antukta* No.2 again, apart from teaching the sound of certain syllables, gives the message that Shuar people want Shuar teachers for they would better understand their children. This message is to be read historically and thus considering that the Shuar community and Federation at the time had recently prevented the abduction of children into Salesian boarding schools. Renewing education, however, had to mean more than avoiding abduction. It also had to mean returning some of the power of teaching to the Shuar wise person.

Shuar communities, led by the Shuar Federation and with support of Salesian missionaries integrated schooling as a space for Shuar knowledge. The Radio of the Shuar Federation, funded in 1967 to communicate among Shuar communities in Shuar, allowed for a schooling within each community. Classes were led by a tele-teacher who was a Shuar tutor who had finished primary education. As another of the sentences of Lesson 17 mentions, "Radio

Federation help[ed] teachers teaching during the year". Tele teachers would lead the learning activities of their community following the classes passed on by Radio Federation. The classes followed a curriculum standardized by the Federation which, as mentioned before, was bilingual and bicultural.[345]

Lesson no.17 shows how Shuar education was simultaneously a way to produce Shuar territories of existence—it cultivated and gave continuation to Shuar language, knowledge, culture, and livingness; a tool to "face life in Spanish" by learning nationalized codes of existence and resisting assimilation; and a space where masterful logics in schooling affected the ideas of who the educated and wise Shuar person is. Education in schools, with textbooks, through written language, did mean a transformation of how learning would take place among the Shuar. Particularly during the boarding school system there was a displacement of spaces for knowing and curriculum locales, and the image of the one who teaches, the wise one. That displacement continued in a more tenuous way with the Federation's Radio Education. Radio schooling privileged classroom education, which was facilitated in a scheduled manner with a Shuar teacher who embodied the character of the wise one. This is not to say that elders were no longer considered wise, nor that traditional education ended. Rather, the demand for a Shuar teacher was aimed at bridging Shuar knowledge and national(ized) knowledge and showed the desire for combative learning.

In this scenario, combative learning emerges as a way to deal with the discourses and practices from the national government which narrated Shuar in relationship to Ecuador-iannes and within the imagined borders of Ecuador. In this sense combative learning was/ is both the attempt and the desire to have an education that does not continue the colonizing teaching

[345] Jose Juncosa, Civilizations in Dispute, (2021).

practices and content of boarding and Hispanic schools. Shuar education would be a place to refuse surrendering the meaning of the geographical and human territory of Shuar existence to Ecuador's national(ized) education and teachers.

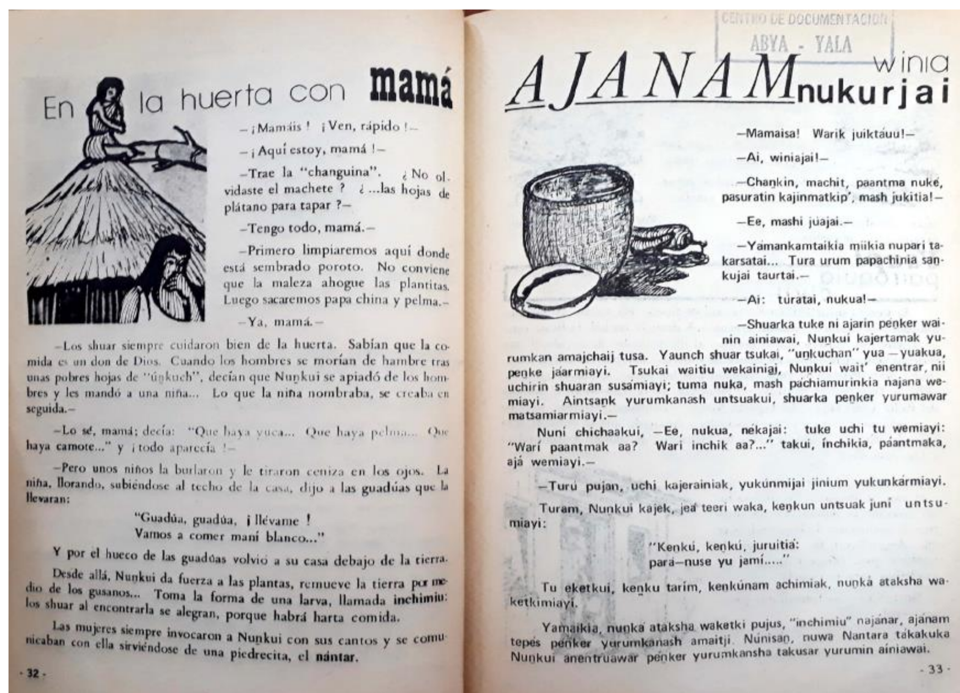
The appropriation of curriculum, class periods and the figure of the teacher as a wise person, in addition to elders, parents and grandparents, extended spaces of education and pluralize paths of being. This is, Shuar schooling allowed for paths that bridged Shuar and national(ized) culture and multiplied ideas about what living a good life might mean. That bridging path and ideas have made possible for Shuar intellectuals and leaders to reach more scenarios of knowledge and political assertion within Ecuador.

Combative learning as a refusal of the expulsion of self has been a space of resistance to reformed colonial practices and discourses. However, adopting schooling as a political assertion of existence has not gone unquestioned by Shuar community. For example, Susan Katz and Cornelia Chumpi Nantip report testimonies of Shuar mothers critical of an education inside classrooms and driven by written rather than oral language.[346] They claim that traditional Shuar people and knowledge needs to "regain dignity",[347] because Salesian education has affected the strength of their value in current Shuar education. An extension of this is how the boarding schools' prohibition to earlier generations to speak in Shuar has made it difficult to have a Shuar language-based education in the present. Similarly, the use of the classroom as the privileged space for learning rather than the land prevents more land-based education and more orchard-

[346] Susan Roberta Katz and Cornelia Lupe Chumpi Nantip, "Recuperando la dignidad humana [Recovering human dignity]: Shuar mothers speak out on intercultural bilingual education," Intercultural Education, (2014) 25:1, 29-40.
[347] Ibid, 37.

based learning to happen. The assertion of Shuar self in nationalized spaces follows a logic of political survivance which nevertheless has compromised certain aspects of Shuar knowing.

In the orchard with mom, en el aja con mamá



En la huerta con **mamá**

–¡Mamáis! ¡Ven, rápido!–

–¡Aquí estoy, mamá!–

–Trae la "changuina". ¿No olvidaste el machete? ¿...las hojas de plátano para tapar?–

–Tengo todo, mamá.–

–Primero limpiaremos aquí donde está sembrado poroto. No conviene que la maleza ahogue las plantitas. Luego sacaremos papa china y pelma.–

–Ya, mamá.–

–Los shuar siempre cuidaron bien de la huerta. Sabían que la comida es un don de Dios. Cuando los hombres se morían de hambre tras unas pobres hojas de "úŋkuch", decían que Nuŋkui se apiadó de los hombres y les mandó a una niña... Lo que la niña nombraba, se creaba en seguida.–

–Lo sé, mamá; decía: "Que haya yuca... Que haya pelma... Que haya camote..." y ¡todo aparecía!–

–Pero unos niños la burlaron y le tiraron ceniza en los ojos. La niña, llorando, subiéndose al techo de la casa, dijo a las guadúas que la llevaran:

"Guadúa, guadúa, ¡llévame!
Vamos a comer maní blanco..."

Y por el hueco de las guadúas volvió a su casa debajo de la tierra.

Desde allá, Nuŋkui da fuerza a las plantas, remueve la tierra por medio de los gusanos... Toma la forma de una larva, llamada **inchimiu**: los shuar al encontrarla se alegran, porque habrá harta comida.

Las mujeres siempre invocaron a Nuŋkui con sus cantos y se comunicaban con ella sirviéndose de una piedrecita, el **nántar**.

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CENTRO DE DOCUMENTACION
ABYA - YALA

AJANAM winia **nukurjai**

–Mamaisa! Warik juiktáuu!–

–Ai, winiajai!–

–Chaŋkin, machit, paantma nuké, pasuratin kajinmatkip', mash jukitia!–

–Ee, mashi juajai.–

–Yamankamtaikia miikia nupari takarsatai... Tura urum papachinia saŋkujai taurtai.–

–Ai: turatai, nukua!–

–Shuarka tuke ni ajarin peŋker wainin ainiawai, Nuŋkui kajertamak yurumkan amajchaij tusa. Yaunch shuar tsukai, "uŋkuchan" yua –yuakua, peŋke jáarmiayi. Tsukai waitiu wekainiaj, Nunkui wait' enentrar, nii uchirin shuaran susámiayi; tuma nuka, mash páchiamurinkia najana wemiayi. Aintsaŋk yurumkanash untsuakui, shuarka peŋker yurumawar matsamiarmiayi.–

Nuni chichaakui, –Ee, nukua, nékajai: tuke uchi tu wemiayi: "Warí paantmak aa? Wari inchik aa?..." takui, ínchikia, páantmaka, ajá wemiayi.–

–Turú pujan, uchi kajerainiak, yukúnmijai jinium yukunkármiayi.

Turam, Nuŋkui kajek, jeá teeri waka, keŋkun untsuak juni untsumiayi:

"Keŋkú, keŋkú, juruitiá:
pará–nuse yu jamí....."

Tu eketkui, keŋku tarím, kenkúnam achimiak, nuŋká ataksha waketkimiayi.

Yamaikia, nuŋká ataksha waketki pujus, "inchimiu" najánar, ajánam tepés péŋker yurumkanash amaitji. Núnisaŋ, nuwa Nantara tákakuka Nuŋkui anentruawar péŋker yurumkansha takusar yurumin áiniawai.

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Figure 12. Shuar Federation (1976), "En la huerta con mamá", Shuara Antukta No.3

Even though Shuar schooling might have happened in classrooms, land continues to be understood as a place of knowledge, power, and protection important to build a good Shuar life. The lesson "en la huerta con mamá/ in the orchard with mom" talks about respect to land as a space of gifts and power through the story of Nunkui the goddess Earth. Nunkui sends her daughter with Kunku, a Shuar woman, to give food to the Shuar. Nunkui's daughter would simply say the name of plants and animals, and they would appear. But one day playing with Kunku's boys, they asked for the heads of animals and the girl refused to make such thing appear. The boys mad at her threw sand to her eyes and mistreated her, crying she returned to her

mother, the Earth. Nunkui annoyed with Kunku said the Shuar will have to work the land hard and harvest little and gave her a few seeds to plant in the orchard before leaving.[348] From then on Nunkui sends her strength to the orchard and to Shuar women through a little worm found in sweet potatoes called inchimbiu.[349] The lesson narrates the following:

> -Mamais! Come quickly!
>
> -Here I am, mom!
>
> -Bring the changuina! Did you forget to bring the machete? The plantain leaves to cover [the ground]?
>
> -I have everything mom.
>
> First, we will clean up the space where beans grow. It would not be convenient that the weeds choke the little plants. Then we harvest papachina and palm.
>
> -Ok, mom
>
> -The Shuar have always taken good care of the orchard. They knew that food is a gift from God. When men famished having just some unkuch leaves, they said that Nunkui felt sorry for them and sent a little girl over… Whatever the girl named was created instantly.
>
> -I know mom, she would say. "May there be cassava. May there be palm. May there be sweet potato." And everything appeared.
>
> -But some kids made fun of her, and they threw ashes to her eyes. The girl, crying, climbed to the roof of the house and said to the guadua plants to take her away.

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[348] Juan Marcelino Atamaint, Recopilación y elaboración de un folleto de mitología y leyendas del pueblo Shuar para impulsar la identidad cultural de los alumnos(as) de la escuela Luis Najar de la comunidad San Pablo, parroquia y cantón Sucúa, provincia Morona Santiago, en el período escolar 2011-2012, Universidad de Cuenca, 2012: 23-26.

[349] Siro Pelizzario, Arutam Mitologia Shuar, Abya-Yala, 1990: 13.

"Guadua, guadua, take me away! Let's go to eat white peanut…"

And through the hole inside the guaduas she went back home inside the earth. From there Nunkui gives strength to the plants, moves earth around with worms…. She takes the form of a little worm called inchimbiu. When Shuar people find that worm, they turn very happy because there will be food.

Shuar women always invoke Nunkui with their songs and communicate with her with a little stone, the nantar.

You can still ask God for food in this way:

I am a daughter of Nunkui,

I'm doing my work,

I'm thinking about what happened,

She visited again,

Please have mercy of us,

Send us your delicious food

Give everyone your gift

Look at me with compassion

You suffered because of me

And now I suffer because of you.

The relationship of Earth for human survivance underlies the narration of being human in this story. In this lesson "orchard" is not simply a garden with vegetables. Because Shuar people used to move around through the forest, finding food was not always easy. Orchards were spaces

close by Shuar settlements which ensured access to food. The relationship with the orchard is a relationship with Shuar survivance territory as a space that supports livingness—live, the force of life, and memories to continue Shuar lives.

This lesson and the prayers it present, make available descriptive statements about Shuar concerns, the importance of Shuar women labor to support a family, and the orchard as a space and a being which shares powers and gifts when treated respectfully. Those are values and qualities of living that are invoked through songs and narrations, through words, transmitted by elder women to their keen.[350]

The possibility of Earth itself to become human, to become woman, and send her daughter to sustain Shuar life with the gift of food, speaks of the importance of land knowing to care for life. Women are in charge of the *aja,* the orchard, and they are meant to care of the *aja* as a daughter. Women are to pamper the *aja*, clean her, sing to her. The *aja* cannot be left alone for too long or to be left loveless if she is to grow happy and strong.[351] There is a ritual aspect of engaging with the *aja* when women ask for her power and gifts. Women often abstained of having food and sex, and prayed before planting in the *aja* to receive protection for the family, and for the plants they planted to grow healthy.[352] The family prayers/songs (*anents*) to Nunkui taught from mothers to daughters, which are often kept secret, gave/give women Nunkui's protection and power to create. In caring for the *aja* as a daughter there is a learning process about agriculture, family values, and women to women care.

Continue to teach the story, relationship, and prayer to Nunkui is taking charge of the Word in so far as it means to offer discourses to institute Shuar humanity, particularly Shuar

[350] Karla Gabriela Reátegui Encarnación, Shuar Aja Saberes Y Prácticas Ancestrales, Máster en Gestión del Desarrollo con Identidad para el Buen Vivir Comunitario, 2011:35.
[351] Ibid
[352] Ibid.

women humanity which give ground to a female good living. The story engages the *aja* through written word. Reading about the *aja* as a Shuar place of power, health, and knowledge asserts the importance of the *aja* as a curriculum locale, a place from which paths of being—human, alive, someone who knows—arise. This challenges views about Shuar people and forest/land/*aja* as the embodiment of Ontological Lack, like those boarding schools embraced. *In the orchard with mom* subverts the moral order of the Europeanized classroom, knowledge and the figure of a Father God instituted by boarding schools as the place, knowledge and protective figure which would ensure the making of a good life, a life 'worthy' enough to be called human.

Regrettably, the authority of land as a place of knowing and mothers and grandmothers as teachers and protectors of their daughters is compromised if the words and stories are only read rather than lived in place. This is an important concern of Shuar women because as reported by Carmen Martinez, Shuar girls suffer from gender discrimination in Ecuadorian schools including intercultural and Shuar schools.[353] For example, it was a common practice in the Radio schools to expel pregnant girls accusing them of being a bad example to their classmates. Boys in a similar situation, of being fathers to be, were not expelled. What is even more worrisome are the stories of sexual abuse and rape to Shuar girls in Hispanic and intercultural schools which are not prosecuted. Rather they are ignored and sometimes, in the case of pregnancy, 'solved' by marrying girls to their abusers. Even though Martinez' report is based on testimonies of the 2000s her research suggests that this kind of violence against Shuar girls and Indigenous women at large is long standing and ongoing.

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[353] Carmen Martinez Novo, "Género y educación intercultural bilingüe shuar: un avance de investigación", In Estudios ecuatorianos: un aporte a la discusión Tomo II, compiled by William F. Waters y Michael T. Hamerly, FLACSO-AbyaYala, 2007, 111-123.

Shuar children have gained spaces for knowing and political assertion of life in national(ized) spaces through schooling and literacy. However, particularly in the case of girls, this has meant giving up partially or completely important practices and sacred spaces for learning, protection, love, and care.

Writing Shuar livingness

Literacy among Shuar people historically started as an effort from Christian missionaries and the Ecuadorian state to "civilize" the Shuar. Learning to speak, read and write in Spanish was understood as a practice that would "promote the humanity" of Indigenous people who, through colonial national(ized) reasoning, were rendered as "slaves-by-nature", or at best as children. Literacy thus was an instrument to narrate European(ized) territories of existence and limited the Shuar to describe their own lives as maps in function of that existence; always a close imitation and never the actual territory.

The history of how literacy took place was equally violent. The abduction of children into boarding schools, family separations, prohibition of living Shuar culture and speaking Shuar language, imposition of Christian morale and worldview, and suicide cases, are intertwined with national projects of literacy among the Shuar. The appropriation of Spanish literacy and technologies associated with it—classrooms, class schedules, textbooks, Roman script—for political reordering of language evidences Shuar combat against the expulsion of the self. The Shuar Federation's emphasis on a bilingual, bicultural education is a strategy of survivance understood as ensuring Shuar presence in the future and Shuar good living. Asserting the value of the own life and dealing with all the relations that life has to other beings, lands, and political

scenarios and instruments ensures Shuar futures in Ecuador. In this sense, Shuar self is embraced and enliven. It is asserted as life and good life, rather than death or Ontological Lack.

Taking the stand that humans narrate themselves into existence (see chapter 1), language, oral and written, is one of those fundamental political instruments to continue to live and to assert othered people's humanity. In that line of thought, the bilingual literacy proposed by the Shuar Federation is taking charge of the word in order to provide avenues to narrate and thus institute a Shuar territory of existence in Ecuador.

Taking charge of the word however should imply a multiple inquiry as to what Shuar life means and how to respect and protect all Shuar lives. As mentioned above, Shuar women even though respected as daughters of Nunkui, have also been, similarly to Nunkui's daughter in the story, mistreated by men. This statement is not meant as a generalization but as a call of attention to gender dynamics, which is required in all kinds of schooling and education practices to stop violence patterns in their nuanced and intersectional aspects.

Closing Reflection

In the Amazonia, in Shuar lands, Ecuador's literacy campaigns to include rural population amidst modernization built upon long standing colonial practices of "civilizing" Indigenous peoples. Schooling and literacy were instruments of those civilizing projects narrated as "elevating" Shuar humanity and "bettering" Shuar lives. The 'rural problem' was constructed in Shuar lands as a problem of Ontological Lack, symbolic death, of political and good living. Shuar territory, geographical and human, was narrated as empty of the necessary conditions to add to the national good and good living. Simultaneously it was recognized as rich in

resources—land, including its minerals and agricultural goods, and labor. The national concern for the inclusion of Shuar lands and people into the life of the Ecuadorian nation, which is deeply intertwined with intentions of extending the government reach and expanding the national economy, was discursively proposed as a duty of care which would fill with human life Indigenous territories through Christian teachers and their *tutelaje*.

The actions of the Shuar Federation reformulated the problem in the Amazonia as regaining authority over Shuar human and geographical territories for livingness and for bridging two cultures. They appropriated the education and literacy tools initially proposed by Salesians and the national government to use them as part of the strategies to revert *tutelaje*, stop the abduction of children, and enliven Shuar culture and language after been prohibited and diminished in boarding schools. Similarly, bridging Shuar and national(ized) cultures is a practice of survivance and a political combative practice. Shuar combative survivance in education created descriptive statements and stories about the world to narrate a Shuar good living in the future. There is no victimry in the practice of survivance, but an exercise of a strong will to continue to live, and break away from what threats life. In the face of decades of violent relationship with Christian missionaries and the government of Ecuador, to become fluent in two languages and two cultures breaks certain patterns of violence and opens space for new sociogenic codes on what it means to be human within and in relation to Ecuador's society.

Shuara Antukta textually makes available stories about "fuller and happier lives" built through codes that do not stem from the knowledge the UNESCO refers to in its *Reading and Writing Manual*. As such through the same technology of language proposed by UNESCO, and embraced by Ecuadorian Fundamental Education, civilizing, and modernization projects, Shuar Radio schools offer ideas about "leading a good life" that build on Shuar knowledge. This has

been a process of appropriating political tools, like literacy, to question the reason and the consequences of being ‘civilized’, ‘modernized’, ‘included’.

In using the tools offered by a reason, in this case a Europeanized and national(ized) reason, transformations have taken place. Literacy might have changed the logics of the language and storytelling that institutes Shuar life, and particularly a good life. While combative literacy refuses the expulsion of the self, storytelling for living within the national(ized) space has been privileged precisely because of a threat to existence.

The previous chapter shows an appropriation of spaces like newspapers and tools like literacy to storytell the good living and beautiful livingness of rural life. This was done through poetry that both resisted and surpassed the coloniality of thought which portrays “rural” as a “problem” to be solved. It also proposed that synergetic convivial efforts can arrive or open pathways to such spaces. In this chapter the suggestion is that Ancestral pueblos have appropriated the masters’ tools and ‘played’ to his game to create more tools and spaces that can and have sustained philosophical and deep reflections about the self, about good living, and about the creation of futures which do not negate (hi)stories and encounters in all its beauty and all its violence, but rather engage them strategically and mindfully. That ‘playfulness’ is also a productive way of living together which faces power unevenness.

The creation of territories of existence—that is the existential place from where people can narrate life and good living from their own sensibilities, knowledge and (hi)stories—happens through encounters and arise constantly with different sensibilities. In the case of Shuar people, the encounters with ancestors and land, for example, have had a different sensibility and quality that the encounter with priests and boarding schools. The later more often than not marked by

acute violence. Yet both encounters are constitutional of Shuar territories of existence. The thought and ideas about living and good living are part of the (hi)stories lived and narrated. It is the place from where those narrations happen and how they happen what is often at stake in the politics of being.

The following chapter looks at "demonic grounds" as the place from and the how of stories and argues that despite colonialism and coloniality of being Ancestral pueblos have maintained spaces of livingness from where knowledge and education can/has arise/d for re-existence. These are not "pure" spaces, unaffected by coloniality, but rather territories of existence (hi)storically constituted, rich in encounters of all sorts, which refuse "inclusion" and mapping while calling for interaction. Precisely because or their richness and refusals they propose re-existence, or the institution of the self and life through knowledges of a community which also are in communication with other knowledges, sometimes in contentious but productive ways.

Chapter 5 Recited Curriculum: Afroecuadorian *décimas* and *lo propio* as the ground of re-existence

Afroecuadorian thinkers, and elders started to gestate in the 1970s what would be known from 1979 on as Etnoeducación (Afrocentric ethnoeducation). The Afroesmeraldeñan thinker, Juan García, was one of the main proponents of unlearning Europeanized knowledge about, and categorization of Afroecuadorians while sowing the knowledge of Afrodescendant elders as a way of asserting Afrodescendant ways of living and existing. The Centro de Estudios Afroecuatorianos (Center of Afroecuadorian Studies) with García's lead compiled Afroecuadorian poetry and stories, and other orally passed-on knowledge in the *Afroecuadorian Notebooks* which became an important referent for the development of ethnoeducation grounded in demonic grounds. In "Beyond Miranda's Meanings: Un/silencing the 'Demonic Grounds' of Caliban's Woman"", Sylvia Wynter proposes "demonic grounds" to be the places of truths that European and Europeanized thought did not reach or those places discursively located outside human-ist mode of being/feeling/knowing. Demonic ground therefore presents the possibility of a vantage point from empirical differences in social reality, and political human life beyond the privileged text of hu*Man* discourse. In this sense, it is the place for "demonic" sociogenic codes that allow an otherwise politics of being (see chapter 1). Here "good living" is tinged by narrations from *lo propio* (the own—knowledge, history, culture, etc.), in words of Afroecuadorian thinker Juan García, creates a territory of existence (see chapter 1). Poetics as a practice that institute the self—individual, collective, relational—, and a community's land and (hi)stories (see chapter 1), provides the ground for narrations that refuse "inclusion". This chapter looks at the *Afroecuadorian Notebooks* as a source of "demonic" sociogenic codes to

support a shift in the politics of being that foregrounds Afrodescendant resistance and re-existence.

The idea of an ethnoeducation emerged during a time in which national and international education programs directed towards people living in rural areas and dedicated to agriculture emphasized literacy and written culture as a skill needed for development to "better lives". In contrast, Juan García and the Centro de Estudios Afroecuatorianos' work emphasized the importance of oral culture and written memory to challenge development's promise of wellbeing and rather support *own* ways of bettering lives. The notion of 'bettering lives' differed greatly in the two projects because the first intended 'including' people in a capitalist modern economy, while the latter had the purpose of strengthening and re-creating *lo propio* as a way to ensure collective good living and set the ground to establish links with modernity and participating of national(ized) projects and culture.

For example, Fundamental Education as embodied by the programs of "inclusion of the peasant" or "rural men", and as storied by indigenista intellectuals of the time, was concerned with creating a "force of progress". The issue 51 of *Revista Ecuatoriana de Educación* (Ecuadorian Journal of Education), dedicated to adult education and written by CREFAL alumni, states that the orientation of adult education must relate "the ways of life and forces of progress so that they can contribute to the development of humanity".[354] Adult education targeted people who "live at the margin of every stimulus and force of progress"[355] who embodied "UNESCO DARK AREAS in [the continent of] America",[356] with the objective of "rescuing the great

[354] Gonzalo Rubio Orbe, "Notas Editoriales Educación Adulta", *Revista Ecuatoriana de Educación,* No. 51, 1963:10.
[355] Ibid, 9.
[356] Fernando Valderrama and Gonzalo Rubio Orbe, "Alfabetización En La Educación De Adultos", *Revista Ecuatoriana de Educación,* No. 51, 1963: 95.

majority from the grasp of ignorance"[357] and "achieve a full development of the human person to conquer a good life."[358] Meanwhile, Afroecuadorian elders and thinkers were concerned with protecting and managing their territories, culture, philosophy, and history as resources to support and continue Afroecuadorian ways of knowing and living well. This was seen as a crucial project and the starting point of relation with the nation because, in words of Juan García, "when you're included, it's difficult to be yourself. The power, the hegemony, belongs to the one who includes you."[359]

The challenge to projects of "inclusion" standing on *lo propio* is understood here as Wynterian "demonic" sociogeny insofar as it opens paths of being and existing beyond the privileged text of hu*Man* discourse upheld in national and international scenarios. In what follows this chapter looks at the nuances of "inclusion" through education on the Fundamental Education projects of the time, and then focuses on the challenges to those projects through *etnoducación*. *Décimas* (ten-lines stanzas) in the *Afroecuadorian Notebooks* are analyzed and presented as examples of how *lo propio,* as the foundation of *etnoeducación*, established a demonic ground to sustain ethnoeducation.

Demonizing to Save

Fundamental Education in Ecuador was narrated by intellectuals associated with it as a national and international "decided and urgent movement"[360] to face "what constitutes negative forces to progress".[361] Gonzalo Rubio Orbe, a leader of that movement in Ecuador describes it in his

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[357] Ibid, 95.
[358] Ibid, 95.
[359] Juan García quoted in Patrick Breslin, "Lesson from the Elders. Juan Garcia and the Oral Tradition of Afro-Ecuador", *Grassroots Development Journal*, 2007:5.
[360] Rubio Orbe, "Notas Editoriales", 3.
[361] Ibid, 3.

editorial notes to the 51st issue of *Revista Ecuatoriana de Educación* (Ecuadorian Journal of Education) as a form of adult education "directed towards helping to solve the essential problems that having a moderately worthy and decent life demands".[362] Solving those problems implied "changing the attitudes of adult generations to have a positive sense of living, and one responsive to the unstoppable rhythm of evolution of the world",[363] and to "create a human environment for new generations to acquire and develop capacities and potential for progress and *superación* (improvement of the self)".[364] These changes were moved by the aspiration of "reducing differences and even the great abyss between communities, human groups and peoples; because while some are living the start of an atomic and interplanetary era, with all the progress of civilization and culture, others struggle with ignorance, illiteracy, and sub-human levels of life, primitive forms of economy, with techniques in which there is still some characteristics of the ages of barbary and savagery."[365] The latter groups embodied difference and were described as "UNESCOS' DARK AREAS"[366] of the world. These areas, in Fundamental Education discourses, had their local similes inside each country, in the case of Ecuador, darkness was projected over rural areas.[367] In this sense rural areas were narrated as what Wynter calls *uninhabitable* space, a produced geography of Ontological Lack in terms of the normalized political subject embodied by *Man* (See Chapter 1 and 2). Because of that discursive but also

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[362] Ibid, 4.
[363] Ibid, 4.
[364] Ibid, 4.
[365] Ibid, 4.
[366] Ibid, 95.
[367] In other parts of the world "dark areas", areas storied as "under the grasp of ignorance" in Rubio Orbe words, are not necessarily located in rural areas. In the United States for example, even though the U.S. was not considered by UNESCO a "dark area", in terms of areas narrated as in need of change within a country, urban areas have embodied those targeted spaces. See Popkewitz, Thomas S. *Cosmopolitanism and the Age of School Reform Science, Education, and Making Society by Making the Child*. Routledge, 2008.

material differentiation the uninhabitable and demonic grounds share a location of distinct existential landscape. They are produced by a kind of narration here called ‘demonizing’ which referrers precisely to that description of Lack and need for salvation.

The logics expressed in the descriptions above related to what Fundamental Education was about, demonize difference while aspiring to include it. The statements story “worthy and decent” living as entangled with a universal and singular “civilization and culture” which is located in an era of atomic science which marks the direction of the “evolution of the world”—Rubio Orbe’s mention of atomic science is not insignificant after WWII, as it symbolizes the power of the United States and allies and their positioning as the leading force in the order of knowledge and international relations—.The language of “worthy living” linked to universalized “civilization” brings about *good lives* and *lives to be included into good living*, where inclusion is contingent in “reducing difference”. Here difference is demonized insofar as it embodies “a negative force of progress”, which makes it contrary to the path assumed to be the one leading to a “worthy” life, a good life. Demonization thence comes into play as a discursive practice that places certain cultures and peoples dangerously outside of “civilization”. The language of “ignorance”, “sub-human”, “primitive”, “savagery” shows the kind of dangers “outsiders” would bring. Not only are *they* different, but also an “obstacle” for “civilized” people—the *we* of that assumed universal singular culture—to build a “civilized” world.

What counts as “worthy living” is deeply entangled with the proposals of the “superstructures” formed after WWII with the hope of ensuring “universal peace” in the future. Rubio Orbe, assures that Fundamental Education as an effort of the UNESCO, one of those superstructures, is a “response to the urgent needs of elevating the levels of life of the great majorities; one which aspires to the take off of the life of marginal population or those with a

tremendous backwardness in their material, spiritual and social life; one which wants to find through education and culture the improvement of material and social life". Rubio Orbe uses UNESCO´s language of "elevating life"[368] (see chapter 4)—and modernization theory's language of the "take off of marginal population"[369] (see chapter 2), which makes evident the translation of international concerns into a local discourse for transforming the life of "the great majorities"[370] in Ecuador. The targeted people, the great majorities to be changed, were in Fundamental Education projects like those supported by the Andean Mission, adults living in rural areas (see chapter 1). The "dark areas" in the discourse of UNESCO translated into a national discourse of inclusion of "rural" places and people to improve their lives and support the modernization of the nation.

There is a salvationist quality to Fundamental Education as a form of "inclusion" through education because it is motivated by an assumed singularity of good living and the need for *superación* of some to get to that good living. That assumption makes salvation a dual matter. On the one hand the "civilized" save the "savage" from their ignorance and 'unworthy' lifestyle by educating them so they can "improve themselves." On the other hand, salvation is directed to the "civilized" self in the actions taken to remove obstacles that endanger their own sense of good living. The fear that "dark areas of the world" hinder the "unstoppable rhythm of evolution of the world"[371] underlies the hope to include those same "areas." The assumed singularity of "good living" thus demonizes all other ways of living, including the kind of relationship to land and the nation those lifestyles express, in order to save them from their "darkness".

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[368] Rubio Orbe, "Notas Editoriales", 5
[369] Ibid, 5.
[370] Ibid, 5.
[371] Ibid, 4.

Fundamental Education's kind of "improving lives" or creating "worthy living" embodies what Thomas Popkewitz calls *double gestures*, a notion that points out that exclusion is inseparable from the logics of including.[372] As Popkewitz remarks double gestures imply the normal and the pathological.[373] The hope that education would make the civilized, narrated as a normal, reasonable subject involved in modern economy is linked with fears of the dangers and dangerous populations which are relationally narrated as uncivilized, unreasonable, backward.[374] Similarly, "illuminating" the so called "dark areas" embodied double gestures which, in Ecuador, deemed "rural" areas and people as backward and in need of inclusion and modernization to save the nation.

To look at the dynamics of inclusion/exclusion through the lenses of demonic grounds is to focus on how have people rejected those dynamics. Here is important to remember Juan Garcías' comment "when you're included, it's difficult to be yourself" which through *etnoeducación* aimed at fostering critical engagement rather than inclusion. García's comment is an important one because discursive practices that narrate certain knowledges and ways of living as in need of inclusion do not necessarily disappear "lives to be included" and have not necessarily erased them. Those discursive practices have given justification to actions that threaten existences—sometimes even grounded pernicious attempts of epistemicide and genocide—and yet people survive and resist finding strength precisely on demonized grounds.

[372] Thomas S. Popkewitz, *Cosmopolitanism and the Age of School Reform Science, Education, and Making Society by Making the Child*, U.K.: Routledge, 2008.
[373] Thomas S. Popkewitz "Reform and Making Human Kinds: The Double Gestures of Inclusion and Exclusion in the Practice of Schooling", Essay In *Critical Analyses of Educational Reforms in an Era of Transnational Governance*, 133-150, Hultqvist, Elisabeth, Sverker Lindblad, and Thomas S. Popkewitz eds., Switzerland: Springer, 2018.
[374] Popkewitz, Cosmopolitanism; Popkewitz Reform and Making Human Kinds.

Knowing from *lo propio*

The space of poetics that demonic grounds are (see chapter 1), when understood as one's own house of existence have a similar quality to Juan Garcías' *lo propio* (the own) in that both are spaces that constitute and institute a community (people and land). García explained *lo propio* as knowledges and practices *casa adentro* or *towards the inside of the house.* In contrast, he spoke of knowledge *casa afuera* or *towards the outside of the house. Casa adentro* and *casa afuera* knowledge are both important because while *casa adentro* poetics give continuation to ancestral knowledge and values of life, *casa afuera* poetics are necessary to relate with other cultures and communities—including the national(ized) ones. In this sense demonic grounds and *lo propio* are not enclosed and sealed but rather they are interconnected with other communities and orders of knowledge. This implies a porousness which is nevertheless guarded in order to relate among communities rather than being included in any other community. This goes back to García's proposal to Afroecuadorians of standing firmly on *lo propio*, to critically relate to the nation and its projects rather than being 'included' in them.

To compile the stories and knowledge of *lo propio*, Juan García recorded Afroecuadorian oral traditions in thousands of cassettes over three decades. He started doing this work in the 1970s recording his grandfather Don Zenón. García's community asked him to let Don Zenón pass on his great knowledge and lift the weight he bared of guarding the culture.[375] From 1972 to 1978, García worked as a cooperative organizer at a time he described in an interview as populated by ideas of development which had no affinity with the concerns of Afroecuadorians. "We all had development in our heads those years, the idea of forming organizations to better our lives, in economic terms. […] We would have meetings with technicians from cooperatives

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[375] Patrick Breslin, "Lessons of the elders: Juan Garcia and the oral tradition of Afro-Ecuador", *Grassroots Development Journal*, 2007:3.

in Israel, in Germany or in the mountains of Ecuador. I saw that they had no affinity with us, nor did the project they described to us have any affinity with who we really were."[376] Responding to that mismatch, Juan García wrote a project about compiling the rites, myths, popular medicine, and music of Chota and Esmeraldas—the two larger settlements of Afroecuadorians—and to do research at archives related to slavery. In 1978 Juan Garcia received funds from the Central Bank of Ecuador to carry out his project and in 1979 he gathered in Quito a group of about 15 university students and professionals to set up the Center of Afroecuadorian Studies and travel to Afroecuadorian communities recording their elders. The center later published the *Afroecuadorian Notebooks* which gathered the knowledge the group had recorded.[377] The *Notebooks* were meant as an instrument to share Afroecuadorian thought throughout the country. That work was continued through the 1980s with funds from the Interamerican Foundation.[378]

The *Afroecuadorian Notebooks* were an effort to carry on the knowledge *casa adentro* embodied in memories that could die with the elders of Afrodescendant communities. For this reason, the questions that drove the interviews and conversations tended to be about the past. Yet communities were also concerned about the livingness of memories and knowledge. García remembered the following conversation: "'Without territory, where do we preserve the culture?' they demanded. And at first, I responded, 'well, on the cassettes.' But they said 'No, where do we preserve the creation of the culture? The rivers have been taken away. The ancient cemetery was destroyed to put in a highway. There went our memories. What do we do now?'"[379] Development plans implied a loss of land of Afroecuadorian communities which was narrated on those plans as non-productive. In the case of Esmeraldas, much of the territory was taken by

[376] Ibid, 3.
[377] Juan García, "Poesía negra en la costa de Ecuador", *Desarrollo de Base,* Vol. 8, 1, 1984.
[378] Breslin, "Lesson of the elders", 2007.
[379] Ibid, 5.

shrimp and banana farms, and in the Chota Valley for cane sugar plantations producing for national and foreign markets.[380] The emphasis in the practices of ethnoeducation with the *Notebooks* responded to those concerns as it built upon, in García's words, "a fountain of thought, of philosophy, of experience, to which we can return."[381] This knowledge would help people protect their culture and territories, and to be critical and cautious of being "included in somebody else's project."[382]

Afroecuadorian Notebooks supported the project of ethnoeducation of rooting thought in the demonic grounds of *lo propio*—knowledge and land—, to reproduce and create knowledge *casa adentro*, and to critically engage with other spaces of knowing and ways of living *casa afuera*. In the book entitled "Tradición Oral" (Oral Tradition), García asserts that ethnoeducation is what the elders describe as learning *casa adentro* to support a process of permanent reflection and collective building of the identity of Afroecuadorians as a pueblo/people. Moreover, the foundation of that process, he asserted, had to be the political proposals of Afroecuadorians and had to help the communities guarantee their permanence in their territories.[383] In this sense ethnoeducation rejected inclusion and rather advocated for a respectful relation between Afroecuadorian projects and those of the nation.

Ethnoeducation appropriated nationalized tools, like Spanish written language and local funds for development and anthropology studies, to continue to cultivate *lo propio.* García's team recorded and then transcribed the stories and poems shared by elders in La Tola, Limones, San Lorenzo, Playa de Oro, Izquandé, Río Verde, Chontaduro, Esmeraldas, Atacames, Muisne

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[380] Ibid.
[381] Ibid, 5.
[382] Ibid, 5.
[383] Juan García, *Tradición Oral. Una herramienta para la etnoeducación,* Quito-Ecuador, Génesis. n/d: 4.

and Quinindé. They also recorded and transcribed stories from the Chota Valley.[384] The memories of the elders of all the mentioned communities were articulated into the narratives found in the *Notebooks*. As García mentions, "the stories and other information are not from one person, but the sum of contributions from all members of the Afro-Ecuadorian group",[385] collected from over 200 "knowers of the ancestral tradition".[386] The recordings and publications were later archived and published to return to Afroecuadorian adults and children the knowledge "that was always theirs".[387] The team of compilers borrowed *casa afuera* techniques—archival logics and places, written expression of oral tradition—to strengthen *casa adentro* knowing.

The poetics elders shared with Juan García and the Center for Afroecuadorian Studies' team instituted textual grounds of *lo propio*. The project of compiling oral tradition knowledge—recording it, archiving it, organizing it into books—opened a new space, a textual space, for demonic grounds. That space supports tradition as memory and re-creation of stories and sociogenic codes. This is similar to how the Shuar Federation appropriated literacy to both communicate in Spanish, and propose a worldview and political stand about life through codes oral and written (see chapter 4). García's project appropriated compilation tools to foster the continuation of Afroecuadorian livingness. The descriptive statements and stories about who Afroecuadorians are, what is their history, what values sustain Afroecuadorian lives rooted in Afroecuadorian memories-knowledge-experiences expanded from oral to textual spaces. That expansion of the territory of *lo propio* multiplied the possibilities of education through ethnoeducation stories and practices, and grounded political action and ways of relating to the nation.

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[384] García, "Poesía Negra", 1984.
[385] Juan García, "Presentación", *Cuadernos Afroecuatorianos No. 1*, Quito-Ecuador, n/d:7
[386] Ibid,7.
[387] García, "Poesía Negra", 1984: 30.

Afroecuadorian Notebooks

The *Notebooks* have been an effort to narrate *la historia propia* (the own history) of Afroecuadorian people. Their contents were Afroecuadorian elders' memories about the history, culture, life, and values of their communities. There were *Children Notebooks* which tended to have more short stories and drawings depicting the story and *Notebooks* dedicated to adult readers, which had mostly *décimas* (a kind of poem) and *argumentos* (poems composed in poem battles). The contents this section engages with are *décimas* from *the Afroecuadorian Notebooks* No.1 and No.4 dedicated to adult readers.

Décimas in Afroecuadorian culture are recited poetry that was also composed orally. They are called *décimas* because they derive from a form of poetry which is said to have been invented in Spain in the sixteenth century by Vicente Espinel, a poet from Málaga. The Spanish *décima* is a stanza with ten verses of eight syllables each and a strict rhyme in the form of abba:ac:cddc. [388] *Décimas* reterritorialized in Latin America and permeated popular literature and also popular music like *payadas* in Uruguay or *galerones* in Venezuela.[389] The use of *décimas* vary greatly from spontaneous and ephemeral declamation, to singing, and Violeta Parra, famous Chilean singer and poet, even wrote her autobiography in *décimas*. In Afroecuadorian communities the *décima* is a poem that begins with a *redondilla* or a four-line stanza composed of the four last verses of the four stanzas that follow the *redondilla*. They have in total forty-four verses and, generally, their rhyme structure is more flexible than the Spanish *décima*.

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[388] García, "Poesía Negra", 32; Maximiano Trapero, *La décima: Su Historia, Su Geografía, Sus Manifestaciones* (S.l.: Centro de la Cultura Popular Canaria, 2001).
[389] Jorge Drexler beautifully explains, from musical culture, the reterritorialization of *décimas* and how diverse their performance is in a TED talk.
See https://www.ted.com/talks/jorge_drexler_poetry_music_and_identity/transcript?language=en Thank you Drexler, for your inspiring music. Thank you Camilo Martínez, for introducing me to this video.

According to Juan García the importance of *décimas* for Afroecuadorians is that they facilitated enslaved Africans and Marroons to maintain the African tradition of chroniclers and relators of passing on local history and culture through oral literature.[390] García asserts that the African chronicler would memorize the genealogy of their village and clan, the local history and customs, and the relator would memorize the proverbs, stories, and anecdotes of a community.[391] In a similar way, García proposes, Afroecuadorian *decimeros* (people who recite *décimas*) are guardians of the local history and culture. They compose poems or receive poems from others, which they memorize and recite in community events to share knowledge.[392] There are two main types of *décimas*: those dedicated to narrating human life and those about the divine. The *Afroecuadorian Notebooks* focus on *décimas* on human life. They provide descriptive statements about the world and about the meaning of being human passed on through generations by *decimeros.* In Juan García's words:

> *Décimas* regarding human life are about all the aspects of the social life of Coastal Blacks. In these verses, the poet can interpretate and narrate the experience of their community. Many *décimas* tell historical events, and they tend to be the only historical document of a community. Other poems are satirical and attack the pompous politicians, Hispanic culture, or the activities of the local population. Some *décimas* are simply good stories, fantasy flights. The Black poets of Ecuador also participate in *argumentos* or poetic battles. In the battles they apply the *décimas* about the divine and the human […] The *argumentos* are full of spark and diatribes and create a forum where the young poets can unfold their talents.[393]

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[390] García, "Poesía Negra".
[391] Ibid.
[392] Ibid.
[393] Ibid.

The *décima* of A Black Man's Question confronting the Question of Black Man

The following *décima* from *Afroecuadorian Notebooks No.1* has a sarcastic tone and critically raises questions about the assumed virtue of whiteness.

La Pregunta del Negro

Como ignorante que soy
me precisa preguntar
si el color blanco es virtud
para mandarme a blanquear.

El ser negro no es afrenta
ni color que quita fama
porque de zapatos negros
se viste la mejor dama.
Las cejas y las pestañas
y su negra cabellera,
que lo analice cualquiera
que interrogando es que estoy
me precisa preguntar
como ignorante que soy.

Pregunto sin vacilar
que ésto no comprendo yo;
si el sabio que hizo la tierra.
de qué color la dejó,
de qué pasta la formó
a nuestro primer padre Adán
y el que me quiera tachar
que me sepa contestar,
como ignorante que soy,
me precisa preguntar.

[…]

El negro con su color
y el blanco con su blancura,
todos vamos a quedar
en la negra sepultura.
Se acaban las hermosuras
de las blancas señoritas,

se acaba el que más critica

y el del color sin igual

A Black Man's Question

As ignorant I am

I must ask

if the color white is virtue

to get myself get whiten.

Being Black is not an affront

Nor a color that takes away fame

because of black shoes

the best lady dresses.

Eyebrows and eyelashes

and her black hair,

may someone analyze this

questioning I am

I must ask

as ignorant I am.

I ask without hesitation

because this I don't understand;

y si el color blanco es virtud

para mandarme a blanquear.

the sage who made the earth

what color did he leave her?

from what paste he formed

our first father Adam

if someone wants to cross me out

they need to know this answer,

as ignorant I am,

I must ask.

[…]

Black man with his color,

And white man with his whiteness,

Everyone will end up

In a black burial.

Beauty will end

For white maidens,

Ended will be who more complains

And the one with color will end as well

And if whiteness is virtue

I'll get myself get whiten.[394]

The *décima* offers a poetics of critique that suspends the naturalization of whiteness as virtuousness, provides descriptive statements of blackness as a divine creation, and grounds a commonality in the human experience of being mortal. In the *redondilla* the *decimero* takes on a position of ignorance and in doing so makes evident the arbitrariness of assuming a color, particularly white, to be associated with virtue. The *redondilla* denounces the unknowability of why whiteness is equated with moral superiority. The first stanza links social hierarchization to skin color by reminding the reader that the color black itself has no determined meaning. The second stanza stands on a religious argument, suggesting that God made Adam of black earth and how could God have made a mistake of creating Adam, a Black man? The last stanza is an existential reflection on the sameness of people in their condition of being subject to old age and death. The ending is important as it repeats that challenge to the reasonableness of whitening as a project.

The verses build what could be called, drawing from Wynter, demonic sociogeny in so far as they ground the experience of being Black beyond the narratives that overdetermine white European as human itself. The poem provides descriptive statements about being human where difference from whiteness cannot be equated with an Ontological Lack, a mode of being human negatively relative to *Man,* the Abject, the Other to Human (see chapter 1 and chapter 4). The suggestion is made that not holding whiteness—physically, culturally, or spiritually—does not determine a condition of lesser morality or genre of life. The verses break the logics of colonial

[394] Juan García and Grupo Afroecuatoriano. "La Pregunta Del Negro." In *Cuadernos Afro Ecuatorianos* [*Afroecuadorian Notebooks]* No.1 Ed. Juan García. Abya-Yala. pp 13-14. (My translation).

narratives which described Indigenous and Black people as "irrational" and therefore the Other to Human which with the invention of *Man* become the Other to the Rational Self *homo politicus* equally overdetermined by white Europeans.[395] The *décima* disrupt as well the social evolutionist logics which attach a "corporeal malediction"[396] to peoples of African descent 'uttered' by a racial epidermal schema historically and religiously instituted.[397] The *décima* confronts the construct of a biological *being human* called to be a self with a body predetermined by lack and defect "to be amended into the 'true' being of whiteness"[398] or the 'virtuous' being of whiteness. The suspension and disruption of those logics comes "without hesitation" and moves to propose that the divinely created human was Black. The verses continue with words that do not undo white humanity but rather point to a common experience of being mortal that break the seal of Black/White entrapment. Demonic ground emerges from *poética propia,* own poetics, which, in storytelling Black divine humanity, institutes a self relative to itself, to the divine, and to life rather than to whiteness.

A Black Man's Question is the first *décima* of the first *Afrodescendant Notebooks*, setting the tone of the whole book and collection. The *Notebooks* start by holding the sociogenic ground of Afroecuadorian oral tradition. Historical, political, and cultural narratives in the form of *décimas* and stories provide threads, "mental contents",[399] to weave a sense of self and

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[395] Sylvia Wynter, "Towards the Sociogenic Principle: Fanon, Identity, the Puzzle of Conscious Experience, and What It Is Like to Be "Black"", 46-82, Essay in *National Identity and Sociopolitical Change: Latin America Between Marginizalization and Integration,* Routledge, 2001.
[396] Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, Pluto Press, 2008: 84; Wynter "Towards the Sociogenic Principle", 41.
[397] Wynter, "Towards the Sociogenic Principle".
[398] Ibid, 41.
[399] Ibid, 41.

community beyond corporeal and cultural “malediction”.[400] In this sense, they draw *lo propio* as the well and geography of demonic sociogenic codes.

Currents of *Lo Propio*

The *décima* of the *Measurement of the Sea* maps knowledge *casa adentro.* For that same reason, certain meanings elude academic analysis. However, the *décima* does make evident the sharing of knowledge about a Black Coastal geography of solidarity.

La Medición Del Mar

Por medir este océano
las aguas de Anchicaya
Yo me zambullí en Tumaco
y resulté en Panamá.

Yo cargaba un euromestico*
y también un uroplano*
para medir el tamaño
que tenía de aquí a Irlamento
como once mil millas y un ciento
la' conté por meridiano.
Anduve más de cien años
midiendo el hondo del mar,
caminando por el plan*
por medir este océano.

Yo medí toda la hondura
del Colón el Darién,
del puerto de San Miguel
medí hasta Buenaventura.
A Guayaquil fui a contá
todo lo que yo medí
Treinta mil millas tenía
en toda su profundidad
y seguí midiendo la hondura·
las aguas de Anchicaya.

[400] Ibid, 41.

Desde Colón empecé a medir
todo el hondo del mar
y no pude resollar
hasta llegar a Santa Jué.
Sin numeración conté
treinta millas en un rato
con regla de veinte y cuatro
Seguí midiendo por acá por el Norte
con un cuaderno grandote.
Yo me zambullí en Tumaco.

The Measurement of the Sea

To measure this ocean
in the waters of Anchicaya
I dove in Tumaco
and I ended up in Panama.

I was carrying a euromestic*
and also an uroplane*
to measure the size

Medí desde Magdalena
toda la costa del Brasil.
Cuando fui a sacar la cabeza
jué en la punta de Santa Helena
Me encontré con una sirena
en una profundidad
y no le quise aceptar
ninguna conversación
Aquí pegué el zambullón
y resulté en Panamá.

from here to Irlamento
About eleven thousand miles and one
hundred
I counted by the meridian
I spent more than a hundred years
measuring the depth of the sea,
walking through the plan*[401]
to measure this ocean.

I measured the whole depth

[401] *Euromestic = a weird machine; Uroplane = an airplane; Plan = the bottom of the sea. Meanings offered at the end of the *décima* in the *Cuadernos Afro Ecuatorianos [Afroecuadorian Notebooks]* No4 pp 38

from Colón to Darién,
From the port of San Miguel
I measured up to Buenaventura.
To Guayaquil I went to tell
everything I measured
Thirty thousand miles it had
in all its depth
and I continued to measure the depth
of the waters of Anchicaya.

From Colón I began to measure
all the depths of the sea
and I couldn't rest
until reaching Santa Jué.
Without numbers I counted
thirty miles in a while
with a ruler of twenty-four
I continued measuring here in the North
with a big notebook
I dove in Tumaco.

I measured from Magdalena
the entire coast of Brazil.
When I went to get my head out
It was at the tip of Santa Helena
I met a mermaid
At that depth
and I didn't want to accept
no conversation with her
Here I took a dive
and I ended up in Panama[402]

In an effort to understand and analyze this *décima* with knowledge, experiences, and memories of someone located *casa afuera*, the first questions that popped up were: where are the places mentioned in the poem? –they are all in the coast of Colombia, Panama, Ecuador and Brazil. Would it actually be that if one dove in Tumaco (Colombian coast) one would end up in

[402] Juan García and Grupo Afroecuatoriano, "La Medición del Mar," *Cuadernos Afro Ecuatorianos [Afroecuadorian Notebooks] No.4*. Ed. Juan García. Abya-Yala. (My translation).

Panama?—And as it turns out a Colombian high school textbook says most of the year the marine current in Tumaco is directed towards the north.[403] Colón and Darién are in Panamá North to Tumaco. Maybe the poem speaks about Afroecuadorian knowledge of marine currents? But from Magdalena to Brazil? Is that Magdalena the Magdalena River which starts in Barranquilla in the Colombian Atlantic Coast? From there surely one could navigate towards the Brazilian Coast, no? But are not the Caribbean and North Equatorial currents normally flowing to the North and away from Brazil? Maybe the poem speaks of *Palenques* (Marroon settlements) in the South American coast? Maybe it is a map for getting by sea to *Palenques* similar in a way to some African American songs shared among enslaved people to escape plantation's horrors?[404] Are the numbers in the poem time and distance codes? Even though all those possibilities of the meanings left there by the composer are intriguing they seem out of reach for this dissertation. And then the second wave of thought came with a more historical and *casa afuera* answerable question: how does this *décima* make historical sense as a memory of Afroecuadorian communities later written down in the 1970s?

Afrodescendant territory in the Pacific Coast of Abya-Yala is understood to be a space that sustains the life of, is cared by, and it is a common heritage to the whole pueblo. It includes "the rivers, the waters, the animals, all the visible and the invisible beings." The notion of heritage and commitment to care is based upon the memories of having been adopted by that territory despite arriving at it forcefully. Africans and their descendants employed a series of techniques and appropriated colonial and then national discourses to live in freedom in, and to

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[403] See Ministerio del Interior y de Justicia Sistema Nacional de Prevención y Atención de Desastres. *Nosotros, Tumaco y el ambiente, un texto para reconocer el sitio en que vivimos. Texto opcional para el Bachillerato,*
en la región de Tumaco (Nariño). Colombia, Impresora Feriva.

[404] See http://africaamericanculturalnarratives.weebly.com/songs-from-slavery.html; http://www.harriet-tubman.org/songs-of-the-underground-railroad/

create and sustain a relationship with these territories. In her work entitled *De esclavizados a comuneros. Construcción de la etnicidad negra en Esmeraldas, siglos XVIII-IXI* (*From enslaved to community. The construction of the Black ethnicity in Esmeraldas, centuries XVII-IXI*), Rocío Rueda speaks of the ways in which the Black population managed to resist the control of colonial institutions, and then during the nineteenth century fight for the territories they occupied (and during the twentieth century fight for the continuation of life, memories and culture in those territories).[405] Rueda investigates the area of the Santiago-Cayapas River which is part of the Pacific coastal lowlands that extend, similarly to the first dives in the *décima* above, from Panama to Ecuador. The settlement of people in this area was mediated by mining and trade and imagined, thanks to its dense vegetation that allowed only fluvial movement,[406] like a wild and *uninhabitable* jungle. In Northern Esmeraldas-Ecuador the flows of families have been frequent and irreverent to "*la raya*" (the line), as the border with Colombia is popularly called.[407] The lowlands of the Pacific have been built as an Afro-descendant territory precisely because of the shared history, ways of life and solidarity among the population that was enslaved and later forged and sustained in those lands their free lives. Part of this region would later be proposed, in the 1990s, as the Great Afrodescendant Comarca (District), a cultural territory constituted by the sum of *Palenques* (Maroon settlement) and free communities who lived in and cared for the territory of the Pacific coastal lowlands, upheld common values and exercised solidarity among them.

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[405] Rocío Rueda, *De Esclavizados a Comuneros: Construcción De La Etnicidad Negra En Esmeraldas, Siglos XVIII-XIX* (Quito, Ecuador: Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar, Sede Ecuador, 2019).
[406] Ibid, 267
[407] Juan García and Catherine Walsh, *Pensar Sembrando/Sembrar Pensando con el Abuelo Zenón*. Ecuador, Abya-Yala, 2017, 19.

In tapping into the importance of an Afrodescendant territory as a space for making free good living possible, and as Juan García would say planting knowledge and memory, this *décima* disrupts the idea of "rural" space as uninhabitable. Like the poem analyzed in chapter 3, "rural", here the "jungle" of the Pacific coast, is a space of livingness which sustains life. Territory allows for a liberation in sociogenic terms. This is, it provides the space to make society and to narrate its particularities, values, and heritage.

Rueda's discussion on the Playa de Oro community settlement—which is one of the communities the *décimas* in the *Notebooks* come from—shows how the relationship to land was fundamental to institute a community identity and living well. In the second half of the nineteenth century the real mines were transformed into mines-haciendas or agro-mining complexes under the labor system of *concertaje*, which was a work relationship were people remained in the land and worked it in exchange.[408] In 1866, the hacienda-owner Antonio Flores made the claim to the authorities that the peasants in his haciendas started an insurrection due to the influence of migrants from Barbacoas (town in Colombia).[409] According to a letter to his sibling, Reynaldo Flores, went to Playa de Oro to negotiate with the Black community there, particularly with the workers who refused to work. In the record Flores asserted that the answer the community gave was:

> That they [the community] do not have to work because God has made the lands for everyone and that they have as much right as anyone else to be there, and they have asked

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[408] Rueda in *De Esclavizados a Comuneros* explains that in the Highlands of Ecuador, *concertaje* was a system in which hacienda owners recruited workers to use their labor force in exchange for a minimum payment and the possibility of living on the hacienda. The owner often indebted workers through money advances or goods as a strategy to ensure more labor from the worker under the threat of making use of a regulation to imprison debtors. In places in the coast, like Playa de Oro, it is not clear exactly how *concertaje* worked but the regulation of imprisoning debtors existed. See pages 239-240.
[409] Rueda, "*De Esclavizados a Comuneros".*

> me in how much I bought the land from God and if He has sold it to me and a thousand other insolences and barbarities of the like. And I have told them that if they do not recognize me as the landowner and do not work the property that they must leave, and they answered to me that [they won't do] neither one nor the other that the landowner is God.[410]

Later the Afrodescendant community in Playa de Oro also abandoned work to go to celebrations and caused collapses in the mine to create blockades that would make the work impossible as preventive measures to avoid the risk that their lives ran.[411] The confrontation between the community and the Flores family ended in a negotiation. Reynaldo Flores through a sales contract transferred to the community of Playa de Oro, the mine, the hacienda house, the banana plantations, and the land from the Cojerías ravine to the Salto in the banks of the Santiago River. The contract clarified that the land from the Cojerías ravine to the Borbón road was owned by Reynaldo Flores.[412] The lands were purchased by nine freedmen surnamed Arroyo who paid four ounces of gold each in the name of 214 villagers who committed to pay the remaining value of the total debt of 7460 pesos.[413]

The Black community of Playa de Oro resisted the dynamics of *concertaje* and focused on their own political and existential project of living in freedom in a collective territory—as defined by Garcia above. The occupancy of territory meant building a common heritage like the later written into the Gran Comarca project through ties to the lands and waters, upholding

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[410] Letter to Antonio Flores from his brother Reynaldo Flores, Playa de Oro 1866-7-III. In Rueda "*De Esclavizados a Comuneros*", 241.
[411] Rueda, "*De Esclavizados a Comuneros".*
[412] Ibid.
[413] Ibid.

community mandates of care—including payment of the debt assumed—, respecting values and growing a sense of solidarity that would recognize the shared history and protect life objectives. That sense solidarity surpassed the Playa de Oro community as migrants—perhaps passers—from other parts of the Pacific coast helped in thinking about, planning, confronting, and enacting belonging to the people and territory.

Solidarity as practices for living in freedom, well, and under *códigos propios* (own codes), made possible the narration of Playa de Oro as ancestral lands. The storytelling here institutes a territory of *lo propio* weaved through a fundamental commitment of care. That commitment ensures the possibility of sustaining free life and distinctive cultural customs, knowledge, and values. Solidarity practices allowed for the effective habitancy of a space that sustained a *casa adentro* construction of knowledge and of identity as a community. It also made possible an effective resistance *casa afuera* selectively using *casa afuera* reasoning and tools (like Christian discourses and sales contracts) to continue the community's project of free good living.

The Playa de Oro example shows that practices of solidarity are prominent among the many things that created a Black geography and that they might have made this *décima* possible as a memory of Afroecuadorian communities later written down in the 1970s. Following this logic, the *décima* of the "measurement of the sea" would speak of the "depth" of cultural, family and care ties that have sustained Afrodescendant communities. A depth passed on through verses that draw routes of historically similar life experiences, affective bonds to land, and struggles to live free and live well from Tumaco to Darién, from Buenaventura to Guayaquil, from

Magdalena to Brazil. All those currents marked by a clear sociogenic project of instituting self, community, territory, and a free good living with *códigos propios,* own codes.

The Hairiness in *décimas*

Even though *décimas* are a crucial way of communicating Afroecuadorian knowledge to institute collective living well or good living. There are a few *décimas* in the Notebooks questionable in their approach to gender. The two selected stanzas of the following *décima* entitled “Hombres Cabelludos” (hairy men or men with long hair) is one of them. This *décima* narrates women identity and “women power” biologically determined and attached to body parts as well as a “wrongness” attached to the break of the norm in regarding to gender and its assumed aesthetics.

Los Hombres Cabelludos

[…]
Los que andan caminando,
trabajador, deportista,
fíjense para enamorar
a las mujeres mocitas
repárenle bien las vistas,
los senos y su carriel
que no vaya ser varón
que se vistió de mujer
y se equivoqué en la cara.
No sé dónde vamos a dar
con esta moda tan rara.

La cosa está equivocada
a manera que da susto,
se están cambiando los gustos
que no se puede entender.
Los hombres le están quitando
el poder a la mujer.
No se puede comprender
y a mí me parece duro;
decente son las mujeres

y los hombres andan peludos.

[…]

Hairy Men (fragment)

[…]

Those who walk around,

worker, athlete,

be careful before falling in love.

When looking for young women

repair well on their face

their breasts and their bum

it could be that a man

has dressed as a woman

and their face you get wrong.

I don't know where we'll end up

with this fashion so odd.

This thing is mistaken

in a way that frightens,

tastes are changing

and can´t be understood.

Men are taking away

Women's power.

And it seems to me hard;

That decent are women

and men hairy are.

[…][414]

The first quoted stanza links woman identity to body parts—face, breast, "bum"—which in the following stanza seem to be related as well to women's power in the suggestion that "men that dress as women" take away women's power. The spiritual, intellectual, and affective realms of being a woman (cis, non-binary, trans) are ignored in such narration of "women power." The storying of women as presented in the *décima* reduces women identity to a corporeal biologically determined matter and constructs "women power" presumably in relation to the attractiveness of

[414] Juan García and Grupo Afroecuatoriano, "Hombres Cabelludos", *Cuadernos Afro Ecuatorianos [Afroecuadorian Notebooks] No.1*. Ed. Juan García. Abya-Yala, 1985, 35-36. (My translation).

particular parts of their bodies to heterosexual men. This implies a displacement of power out of women and their bodies towards men and their gaze. As Bell Hooks mentions in her book *Feminism is for Everybody Passionate Politics*, challenging sexist thinking about the female body has been "one of the most powerful interventions made by contemporary feminist movement."[415] This is so because liberation from the sexist thinking that women's "value rested solely on appearance and whether or not we were perceived to be good looking, especially by men,"[416] grounds critical examination of the discourses on value, power, desirability, sexuality, social belonging, love, and self-love which affect the life experiences of women (cis, non-binary, trans).

This *décima* also narrates men "dressed as a woman" as "mistaken", something that "frightens", and "can't be understood." The logics of the language in that narration configurates normalized identities while denying other identities that surpass those configurations which creates abjection.[417] To consider a "man dressed as a woman" and with long hair or "hairy" as simply a "fashion" assumes a temporary expression of "taste" rather than a deep expression of the self which often places the person in the position of having to confront covert and overt violence. Denying meaningful existence by trivializing aesthetics or considering them frightening and mistaken is a violent narration of gender-nonconforming people.

The *Notebooks* are part of a crucial project of making available Afrodescendant thought, culture and (hi)stories to adults and children. Considering the importance of *décimas* and storytelling in that project, a gender approach to examine the texts of the *Notebooks* now used in ethnoeducation would allow for a re-creation of tradition in a way more attentive to the historical

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[415] Bell Hooks, *Feminism is for Everybody Passionate Politics,* Cambridge, South End Press, 2000, 31.
[416] Ibid.
[417] Yuderkys Espinosa, "El futuro ya fue. Una crítica a la idea del progreso en las narrativas de liberación sexo-genéricas y queer identitarias en Abya Yala". *Desde el Margen.* 2015 https://bit.ly/3ILnh2R

unevenness in gender relations, to suspend language that re-produces. gender stereotypes, and violence. This assertion is made in accordance with García's definition of *lo propio* which constitutes a well of knowledge to which people can return to assert their identity and belonging to a territory and culture to ensure a collective wellbeing.[418]

Concluding, Pedagogies of Resistance and Re-existence

This chapter has explored demonic grounds' poetics and their sociogenic power. In particular, how *décimas* in the *Afroecuadorian Notebooks* gather knowledge from elders to foreground descriptive statements about the experience of being Black beyond whitened narratives of being human. Demonic ground emerges from *poética propia,* own poetics, which institutes the Afroecuadorian self and territory, and a sense of belonging to a larger Afrodescendant community born from a common history and solidarity against racism.

This concluding section is called pedagogies of resistance and re-existence to highlight that *décimas* in the *Afroecuadorian Notebooks* are an expression of resistance towards "inclusion" and an exercise of continuous self-instituting of the self or re-existence. Afroecuadorian thinker Edizon León, building upon Juan García's work, has pointed out that *lo propio*, the own poetics of Afroecuadorians, is the foundation of "philosophies and knowledges that are sown in the territories of the communities"[419] which are used to face "the denial and control of life that derives in the coloniality of being"[420]until the present. He calls these

[418] Juan García, "Introducción", *Cuadernos Afroecuatorianos No1*; Juan García and Catherine Walsh, "Desterritorialización Palabras Introductorias", *Pensar Sembrando/Sembrar Pensando,* 223-228.
[419] Edizon León, "'No One Dies On The Eve': Feel-thinking knowledges and doings in confinement times", *Journal of Poverty*, forthcoming, 2.
[420] Ibid, 2.

philosophies and knowledges pedagogies of re-existence.[421] The *Notebooks* are precisely a compilation of those pedagogies. The *décimas* and stories are a foundation to resist "inclusion into someone else's projects" of education and community/nation-making by asserting *casa adentro* knowledge and values. That resistance challenges racialized assumptions about what knowledge, ways of living, and genre of lives count as producers of good living. They simultaneously embody the use of *casa adentro* and *casa afuera* tools to re-exist, or to continue to institute Afroecuadorian living and knowing grounded in own terms and in relation to Afrodescendant communities, as well as other cultures, technologies, knowledges, lands, and peoples.

The *Notebooks* challenge the demonization of Afroecuadorian existential and geographical territory which turn it into a geography of Lack or a place of uninhabitability. Projects like Fundamental Education—which projected "DARK AREAS" described as marked by "ignorance" and "primitiveness" onto rural areas—discursively deemed uninhabitable the very places that have been the thriving ground of Afrodecuadorian *own* knowledge and good life. The *Notebooks* are one of the instruments of ethnoeducation which embody that knowledge.

Both ethnoeducation texts and the efforts done by thinkers like Juan García and the Afroecuadorian Center team continue to be an important well of knowledge from elders who have lived in rural areas of the Pacific Coast and the Chota Valley. The elders, and the territories

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[421] León asserts that these pedagogies have allowed Afroecuadorian survival during colonial and hacienda times and for re-existence and resistance afterwards. He illustrates the use of pedagogies of re-existence in the present through the Chota community's experiences during the covid pandemic. In the Chota Valley—the second major Afrodescendant community in Ecuador after Esmeraldas—, people defied the lack of care by the state by caring for the ill with their own medicine knowledge, housing Choteñxs who ended up homeless, and doing funerals and wakes despite being forbidden during the closedown. All these actions were resistance in a non-confrontational way because they aimed at maintaining live and humanizing death. They were also the exercise of solidarity, affectivities, and knowledge to survive and continue to build community despite the circumstances.

themselves, have guarded the history and philosophies that provide own descriptive statements for Afroecuadorian resistance to "inclusion" and re-existence as an assertion to continue to live with own codes. Here it has been proposed that a gender approach to the texts would be a point for creating re-existences and resistances through the *Notebooks*. The logics that classify lives in "good lives" and "lives to be improved" through racialization processes are similar to those which make the same classification through gendering. That rationality reiterates difference as a "problem to be solved." A gender approach would emphasize the solidarities with all lives within the Afrodescendant community and their relationalities of refusal to "inclusion". Those are *luchas* that have been present in the community through their practices of care[422] and which are strongly articulated now in feminist and dissidences Afroecuadorian movements, like *Re-existencias Cimarrunas* and *CONAMUNE (Black Women National Coordination).* Afrodescendant women (cis, trans) and gender dissidents are contributors of ongoing struggles in the poetics and institution of land, landscape, and community self.[423] Struggles which both, challenge the coloniality of being/power/truth/freedom and geographical domination, and put forth practices of languaging life to remember and to make knowledge, tradition, and Afrodescendant good living.

[422] Edizon León. (2021). ""Nadie muere en las vísperas" Saberes y haceres sentipensantes en tiempos de confinamiento." *Capitales, personas y conocimientos: flujos y contraflujos en un mundo (pos)pandémico*, 43, 63-76.
[423] McKittrick, Demonic grounds.

Chapter 6 Closing Thoughts

> I invite you to reflect on what it means to "live deliciously" for Black people, from our ethnic and cultural gut. It refers to living without fear, to live in dignity, to live with guarantee of rights. When you put it to me like I am going to live deliciously because I am going to go live in the vice-presidential house surely you are very wrong, surely "living deliciously" means that I could live in my own house, that I had the security guarantees to live in my house and maybe not surrounded by armed people, because that is not good living that is not "living deliciously"… having to walk every day with 30 armed people is not delicious.[424]
>
> Francia Marquez—Vice-president of Colombia,
> June 21 of 2022, interview C&M news.

> On Saturday (the government) has issued a statement to the CONAIE [Confederation of Indigenous Nations of Ecuador], and we must say Mr. President, it is not only a problem of CONAIE, much less of a leader Leonidas Iza, who [the government] tried to put in jail surely to disappear him, here [on the streets] is the FEINE, the FENOCIN, there are brothers of the mountains, of the coast, of the amazonia, the unions, the students, house keepers, transporters, It is not the problem of an organization. It is the problem of the

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[424] Francia Márquez, interview with C&M News, 21 June 2022.
https://twitter.com/FranciaMarquezM/status/1539482524870664193?s=20&t=3j8LEpvILCRDMDPmgwvh3Q
Original text: Te invito más a reflexionar sobre que significa "vivir sabroso" para el pueblo negro desde nuestra entraña étnica y cultural se refiere a vivir sin miedo, a vivir en dignidad, a vivir con garantía de derechos, entonces cuando me colocas que voy a vivir sabroso porque voy a ir a vivir a la casa vicepresidencial seguramente estas muy equivocada, seguramente "vivir sabroso" significa que yo pudiera vivir en mi propia casa, que tuviera las garantías de seguridad para vivir en mi casa y talvez no con un poco de gente armada, porque eso no es vivir bien eso no es vivir sabroso tener que andar todos los días con 30 gentes armadas no es que sea sabroso.

> society which no longer have the conditions to continue surviving, not even living, continue surviving. So, it seemed important to us to mobilize in front of the deaf ears of the government at the city of Quito.[425]
>
> Leonidas Iza—President of the CONAIE,
> June 22 of 2022, amidst national uprisings.

This dissertation intervenes in the conversations on "good living" pointing at how the idea is deeply entangled with post WWII logics and stories on "bettering lives" to achieve a generalized well-being and a more peaceful world order. Under that reasoning "good living/living to be improved" is a discourse on difference. The discourse when focusing on "bettering" or "improving" assumes a wrongness or lack in the human praxes of certain groups of people and their ways of living. Simultaneously, this work argues, population targeted for projects of "inclusion" into a "good living" overdetermined by hu*Man*ness, have strategically pursued the continuation of their livingness as "good living". That has often meant among other things, to seek ways of conviviality despite the embracement of different ideas and political projects regarding "good living", appropriating tools narrated as belonging to hu*Man* "good living" to narrate *propio* "good living," and refusing "inclusion" while instituting a "good living" from demonic grounds.

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[425] Leonidas Iza, public speech, 22 June 2022. https://fb.watch/dQz2mNIGk3/
Original text: El día sábado (el gobierno) ha emitido un comunicado a la CONAIE, y debemos decir señor presidente, aquí no es solo un problema de la CONAIE, peor de un dirigente Leonidas Iza, que pretendió meter en la cárcel seguramente para desaparecerlo, aquí está la FEINE, la FENOCIN, están hermanos de la sierra de la costa, de la amazonia, están los sindicatos, están estudiantes, amas de casa, transportistas. No es problema de una organización, es problema de una sociedad, que ya no tenemos condiciones para seguir sobreviviendo, ni siquiera viviendo, para seguir sobreviviendo, por lo cual nos pareció importante trasladar frente a los oídos sordos del gobierno, a la ciudad de Quito.

The anteceding chapters looked at the example of Fundamental Education and the categorization of "rural" as a place of threatening difference to engage with the history of "good living" as a proposal of a way to be in the world. "Good living," which has been a discourse determinant of many public policy in the last decade in the Andean region, has been most often described as either ancestral yet ahistorical or an invented tradition. This dissertation shows that the struggles and debates about what "good living" might be, has taken several forms over the years. That debate makes of "good living" much more than a philosophy disengaged with (hi)stories. Rather the debate is deeply shaped by the diverse forms in which colonialism and coloniality of power/truth/being/freedom[426] is entangled with Andean life and how Ancestral pueblos have strategically, and mindfully dealt with the often overtaking and overwhelming changes demanded by projects of "inclusion" into hu*Man* "good living."

Part of the argument woven through this work has been that the particular nuance of "bettering" life as a goal for "solving" the "problem" of difference in the region is shaped by modernization and its ideas grounded on liberal values of equality and democratization. Those very positive ideals however are brewed in international(ized) climates, and (hi)stories shaped by hierarchies imposed to life/ lives/living which overdetermine "good living". In this regard, they are emergent from the coloniality of power/truth/being/freedom and as such articulate within educational practices as colonial narrations of "improvement" of "dark zones" of the world. In Ecuador and the region, the practices of making hu*Man* "good living" more often than not have targeted "rural" population—a descriptor used for Indigenous, Afrodescendant, and Afro-Indigenous peoples or Ancestral Pueblos—, and targeted them for "bettering". The discourse on "bettering" intertwines ideas on what constitutes "good living" in terms of bioeconomic

[426] Wynter "Unsettling the Coloniality"

categories which re-produce a problematic "rural" person. The problem is narrated as a lack of the "spirit of enterprise", a quality which puts work and production at the center of *the* moral life which is in turn determined by a disposition to "modernize" the nation by modernizing people. "Improvement" of people becomes entangled with technification and industrialization as necessary conditions connecting political life with the space of democracy and a strong economy. The "political sense" of education is, under that reasoning, to "technify" the self to serve the economy. The attribution of value to people and their life spins around imaginaries of *industrial worth*, a story where productivity attributes worth to people and their lives and distributes in society justice and wellbeing through money-driven prosperity.[427] This *characterization* of people, in a con-text of coloniality, is part of narrations on what lives are "fully human", and proposes stages of worth in becoming hu*Man*. The much desired economic "take-off" of societies towards modernity has a direct link with an imagined "take-off" of "rural people" into hu*Man*ness.

The discourses on "good living" embraced and proposed from governmental spaces in Ecuador follow a similar logic despite supposedly stemming from Indigenous ideas of "good living". They dismiss the politics of being embedded in historical "good living" narrations: the descriptions of Ancestral pueblos' living as lacking or ill equipped to have "good living"; and the narrations and practices from the Ancestral pueblos which simultaneously create meaning for "good living" and challenge ailing stories.

The politics of being in hu*Man* "good living" as written into Fundamental Education is evident in the languaging of difference as solvable by "improvement" through education. Ancestral pueblos in the decades examined were not described anymore as "soulless", or "slaves

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[427] Ibid

by nature"—as did Sepúlveda—but they were described as "lacking the force of progress", as in need of "acculturation", as holders of "primitive" knowledge and economic practices, and having a "disregard for the future"—in Rubio Orbe's words. All those descriptive statements weave a narrative which project over people a kind of living deemed as in need of "improvement" or "bettering." That "improvement" however is not impossible, as it might have been portrayed in other colonial densities in previous centuries.

Education and acculturation in Fundamental Education—that is burring a differentiated culture to assimilate into a Europeanized culture—was seen as the "solution" to elevate people and their living into "actual" humanity leading a "good life". "Bettering" people and their lives was held to be the "reasonable" fix to the "problem" of difference. Fundamental Education texts show the flows between "good living" and "living to be improved" and exemplify the languaging of difference and of the "solution" to the "problem" of difference. "Salvation" of differentiated population continues to be a concern inscribed in the language of "bettering" through education present in the texts. The hue of that "salvation" is "elevating" people, "improving them in all the aspects of their existence,"[428] to climb out of a condition of being Ontological Lack.

Ancestral pueblos' education projects challenged that relationship with knowledge, economy, and society assumed to be fundamental to becoming human, and which produced Ontological Lack. The (hi)story of good life of Ancestral pueblos is partly crossed by a (re)humanization of Ancestral pueblos' human praxes. Beyond binaries and simple oppositions, Ancestral pueblos education projects and texts have continued and renewed their ideas and practices for "good living" appropriating and going/staying well beyond the projects of "bettering". The uses of language, literacy, and *propio* knowledge in those spaces has been

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[428] CREFAL, "Educación fundamental : ideario, principios, orientaciones metodológicas", 20.

unsettling, disrupting and shortcutting of overrepresentations of humanity through the Europeanized genre of human. The efforts of the collectives involved do not stop at making evident violence and demanding change but have created sociogenic codes that assert their existence as "good living" and vibrant livingness which also challenges any narration of Ancestral pueblos' lives as lack, wrongness, or death.

In the chapters, textual spaces—proposed by, against, despite, or beyond Fundamental Education—become the landscapes through which "good living/living to be improved" flows circulate. Those "inner travels" sometimes form loops of overdetermining ideals, sometimes grounds for resistance, and yet other times convivial synergetic and/or transformational (mis)encounters. The texts in themselves become spaces of transculture where multiple reasons and political projects are readable. Those reasons intra-act in forming territories of existence and paths of being through appropriation or refusal.

This quality of relationality that the texts, (hi)storically situated, show is significant because it evidences a coloniality shaken by the people its logics have narrated as lacking enough humanity and reason as to make their own destinies. The picture becomes clearly about (hi)storying life and in doing so instituting the self—individual and collective—and the world. Those stories which make human good living and a world where to live it are protected or enforced through power—political, economic, military, rebellious, spiritual, etc. In this sense, storytellers from all paths of life have shaped coloniality; some using their powers to deepen the grasp of colonial abuse and politics of death, some using their powers to undermine colonial reason and disrupt its practices, some to strengthen demonic grounds of existence beyond colonial logics, and more. Coloniality not only has different densities according to life paths and

(mis)encounters, but also internal tensions eroding its bones and opening pockets of more breathable air, as well as "demonic" spaces of livingness it never ruled.

Re-existence, understood as the institution of lives/living through sociogenic codes stemming from philosophies and knowledges sown in *propio* physical and existential territories, is possible despite coloniality precisely through (hi)storytelling. This work contributes to (de)colonial studies in Latin America proposing *homo narrata* as the being driving human history. (Hi)storytelling is a way to build upon Caribbean thought—in this text mainly that of Sylvia Wynter, Edouard Glissant, and Frantz Fanon—to inquire the dimensions of human living and the possibilities that languaging, and wording bring to challenge the violence of the hierarchization of human, the invention of degrees of humanness, and the historical overrepresentation of *Man* as human. All of which is deeply connected to the production of knowledge that is considered such. The exploration of sociogenic and word institution of society and societal wellbeing can, through (hi)storytelling, engage with the critique that stories, poetry, and d*éeimas* constitute to logics of "bettering" and "including" as they relate to curricula understood as paths for being human and leading a good human life.

This acknowledges the multiple and contentious stories that institute truth-telling in the diverse spaces that social existence produces. It also questions the absolutist and power-robbing narratives in Ecuador that confront mestizos with indígenas and forget the existence of Afrodescendant and Afroindigenous population and struggles, as well as the very complex familiar (hi)stories and convivial grounds which sustain solidarities. This is not to deny how privileges and (hi)storical categorization of people/life/knowledge has created unevenness and suffering, but to point towards the force of livingness, affectivities, and respect that continue to be the soil for hope and change, and which sustains the best of rebelliousness.

In an international perspective it also challenges simplistic narratives about the practices that breed (in)justice. The reasoning that underpins practices that produce injustice continues to be reformed; it shifts, morphs, and sometimes takes progressive faces. This is exactly the reason why to (hi)storize political proposals as well as to con-textualize their nuances and languages is a must. The ongoing examination of how ideas circulate and cross through the international, national, global, and local constituting each other, and also a whole new space in educational discourses is necessary to disarticulate injustice and articulate something just-er each time.

In curriculum studies (hi)storytelling could expand the practices of historization of educational ideas. As shown through the chapters (hi)storytelling goes beyond engaging with personal stories or narratives. Rather it looks at the way stories offered in texts, images, and oral compilations engage in conversation with national and international flows of ideas, and creation of social projects. They speak as well of communities' political formation and collective strategies to enliven territories of existence paying attention to the alliances between human and more-than-humans—lands, animals, spirits, machines—in (hi)storytelling or in narrating the world into existence.

Engaging with demonic grounds in education might be a way of reading/approaching the thought that institute human praxes, not to discipline it but to respect it. Not all educational thought pertains to the disciplined realm of education. However, it stands as formative of pedagogies of (re)existence, which could, in a similar way Ancestral pueblos have, inter and intra-act with the educational discipline as to sustain transcultural spaces for learning. This is of course, not a new idea, the exploration the chapters do provide evidence of some of its (hi)story. Yet a mindful/soulful recognition of such transcultural spaces and pedagogies of (re)existence could humble and multiply the possibilities of the field of education including curriculum

studies. It could as well sustain the political work education does to challenge the politics of being in "good living" social narrations as to remain attentive of the dynamics of inclusion/exclusion and de/humanizing in the practices of storying of living and knowing.

Placing hard borders around Indigenous and Afrodescendant living, and living well, in Latin American societies has been a common practice of (hi)storying, one which, from the stand of this work, denies its own life. That is, a denial of the transformations that the living of all pueblos and peoples have gone through because of their (mis)encounters. As the two quotes above suggest—the first by a leader from the Gran Comarca and the second by an Andean leader— the ideas related to living well in Abiayala are grounded in *lo propio* of each pueblo and simultaneously looking for a respectful relationality with national(ized) spaces for living. Those proposals have and continue to transform society. The (hi)stories of that relationality are inscribed in the desire of "living without fear, in dignity, and with guarantee of rights" given by, in this case the Colombian nation, even though the Black pueblo of the Abiayalan Pacific Coast have an ancestral belonging that crosses Colombia-Ecuador border. The (hi)stories of that relationality is also inscribed in the solidarities shown in uprisings where Indigenous organizations of what is now Ecuador fight side-by-side with the syndicates, the feminist and gender dissidents movement, transportation organizations, and people of all classes to claim for social reform "before the deaf ears of the government."

This dissertation has proposed an angle to look at the ongoing (hi)story of the ideas of "good living" where the multiple meanings and storytelling battles around "good living" sustain relationships to knowing, being, and worlding. Those relationships are the grounds upon which paths for learning, political life, and quotidian "good living" are built from diverse human praxes. The suggestion this work has done is that those relationships are affected by

(mis)encounters and thusly the diverse dimensions of the (hi)story of "good living" speak of tensions, struggles, sensibilities, affectivities, and spaces of ease in the institution of territories of existence. Education and curricula production take place with/in those territories and therefore respond to ideas about what humanness is and how human good living looks like. Those ideas have many (hi)stories and their (hi)stories many (mis)encounters which shape as well what counts as education, knowledge, and knowing.

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