

Colby



Colby College
Digital Commons @ Colby

Honors Theses

Student Research

2002

Ecuador's indigenous university movement, UINPI: reconstructing identity in the search for equality

Joshua Gerber
Colby College

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.colby.edu/honorstheses>



Part of the [Anthropology Commons](#)

Colby College theses are protected by copyright. They may be viewed or downloaded from this site for the purposes of research and scholarship. Reproduction or distribution for commercial purposes is prohibited without written permission of the author.

Recommended Citation

Gerber, Joshua, "Ecuador's indigenous university movement, UINPI: reconstructing identity in the search for equality" (2002). *Honors Theses*. Paper 96.

<https://digitalcommons.colby.edu/honorstheses/96>

This Honors Thesis (Open Access) is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Research at Digital Commons @ Colby. It has been accepted for inclusion in Honors Theses by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Colby.



Ecuador's Indigenous University Movement
UINPI

Reconstructing Identity in the Search for Equality



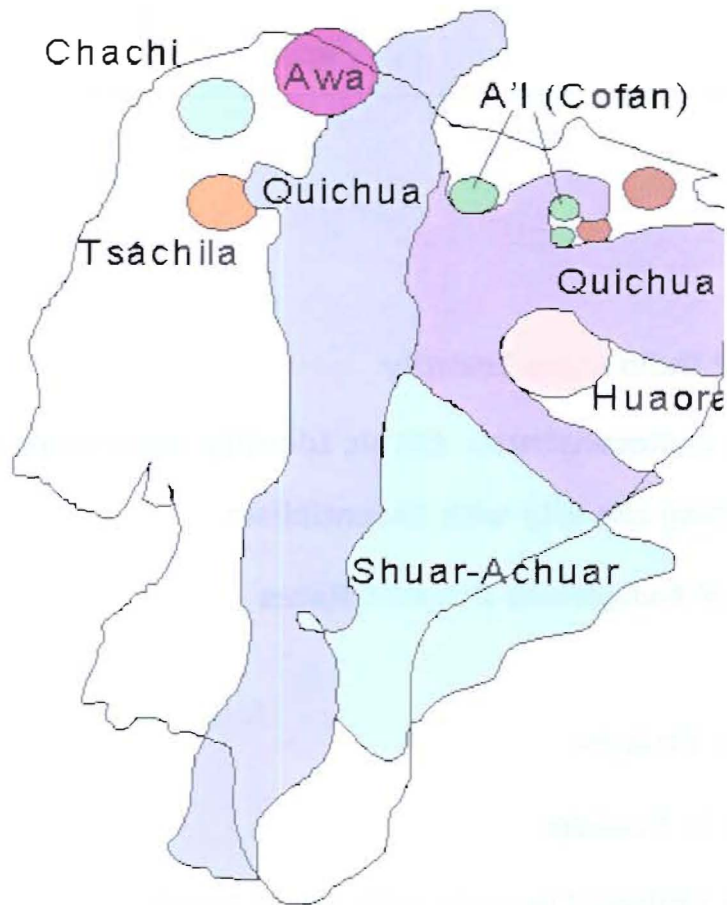
Anthropology Honors Thesis
2002

CONTENTS

Ethnopolitics &
Education

Acknowledgements	1
Introduction	2
Chapter 1: A History of Indigenous Identity	8
Chapter 2: To Reclaim or Reconstruct: Ethnic Identity Assertions and UINPI	43
Chapter 3: Reconstructing Identity with Essentialism	53
Chapter 4: The Roots of Indigenous Dropout Rates	65
Conclusion	92
Appendix A: Poverty in Ecuador	94
Appendix B: Education in Ecuador	96
Appendix C: Matching College Curricula with Local Needs	98
Bibliography	99





Estimated Indigenous Population of Ecuador

Pacific Coast

Awa	16,000
Chachi	4000
Tsáchila	2000

Sierra Highlands

Quichua	3,000,000
---------	-----------

Amazon Basin

Quichua	60,000
Cofán	800
Siona-Secoya	1000
Shuar	40,000
Achuar	500
Huaorani	2000

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank:

Jeff Anderson for his support and always entertaining office visits.

Maritza Straughn-Williams for all of her comments and criticisms and for tolerating my inflammatory comments in class and life.

The Cevallos Family for their unwavering love and support in Ecuador, tolerant of even my most flagrant mispronunciations.

Eliza Kittredge for her companionship.

My Parents for everything.

Introduction

Indigenous people are highly marginalized in Ecuador. Since the conquest, Europeans and Mestizos have exploited indigenous populations, utilizing their labor and knowledge while denying their cultural legitimacy and excluding them from the benefits of their own labor. Consequently, indigenous peoples disproportionately suffer from chronic poverty, illiteracy, and malnutrition. (See Appendix A) Nevertheless, the Ecuadorian indigenous movement is strong. Indigenous peoples have organized on a national scale to form a well-developed representational structure. Now, La Universidad Intercultural de los Nacionalidades y Pueblos Indigenas (UINPI) has been designed to utilize occidental academic and scientific structures to legitimate indigenous identity constructions and provide indigenous peoples with a culturally sensitive superior education. This thesis will examine UINPI's role in ethno-politics and the development of indigenous communities in Ecuador. I argue that the university effectively implements occidental frameworks to construct a strong construction of indigenous ethnicity that will function as a powerful player in the dialogue that acts to reform indigenous identity. The university's focus on ethnicity, however, has limited the university's ability to address the needs of Ecuador's indigenous communities. If UINPI is to serve both the ethno-political and socio-economic needs of indigenous communities, it must address both practical and theoretical subjects.

UINPI, which is the brainchild of the Instituto Científico de Culturas Indígenas¹, (ICCI) does not yet exist. Its framework, however, is set forth in *El Proyecto Académico Curricular* (Ushina and Ramirez, 2002) – a document designed to present an outline of the university to its supporters and the accrediting and financial bodies whose coffers will determine the project's future. It establishes an academic and political framework rooted in the discourse of ethnicity. As such, the rhetoric of ethnicity and ethno-politics is reflected throughout the document; in the University's justification, in its analysis of Ecuadorian society, and in its academic structure, ethno-politics structure the university's approach. As such, my first task is to address the role of identity politics in marginalizing Ecuadorian indigenous peoples.

Socio-economic and political marginalization is usually accompanied by ideological marginalization. In Ecuador, this takes the form of racist conceptions that typify indigenous peoples as lazy, immoral, promiscuous, and unintelligent. Val Plumwood asserts an ideological framework useful for understanding these beliefs. She argues that hegemony, (both human and natural) is founded upon dichotomies, many of which include a hidden value system and power structure. This dualist framework, which incorporates values into diametrically opposed relationships, morphs dichotomies to favor a particular party. These valuations create a devalued sphere of otherness, which is defined against the master, normative identity. Plumwood defines a number of ways in which the master maintains and legitimizes his dominance.

¹ ICCI is designed to support the academic investigation of indigenous cultures. It publishes a monthly magazine, *El Boletín ICCI Rimay*, which contains essays on indigenous culture and the indigenous movement.

Backgrounding is the process of constructing the other as inessential to the master's existence. One way of doing so, argues Plumwood, is to "insist on a strong hierarchy of activities, so that the denied areas are simply not worth noticing." (Plumwood 1993: 48) *Radical exclusion* constructs the difference between the master and the other as a difference in kind, rather than a difference in degree. Such constructions naturalize domination, casting inter-human dominance in the same light as interspecies (i.e. man/dog; man/horse) dominance. *Incorporation*, or relational definition, is central to euro-mestizo dominance in Ecuador. It is the construction of the other in relation to the dominant, as a lack, or a negativity. Instead of conceiving of the "other" as its own right, the dominated is viewed as lacking the qualities of the dominant. Many missionaries, for example, thought of indigenous peoples as vessels to be filled with European morality. *Instrumentalism*, or the objectification of the other, defines the dominated as means to the master's ends. *Homogenization* correlates well with both radical exclusion and backgrounding, in that the "dominated class must appear suitably homogeneous if it is to be able to conform to and confirm its 'nature.'" (Plumwood 1993: 53)

While these forms of domination are primarily used by the master, their continual use normalizes their ideology as part of indigenous identity. Thus, UINPI claims to fight chronic self-esteem problems in the indigenous community.

Dualist constructions, however, are not definitive of indigenous peoples. Indigenous Ecuadorians have maintained strong ethnicities, effaced through their many unique religious and ritual practices. Where, then, does this ethnicity come from, and how is it maintained? I utilize Comaroff's conception of ethnicity as produced through

conflict to make sense of UINPI's identity constructions and their role in representing and reforming indigenous identity.

Comaroff argues that ethnicities are “not things, but relations.” (Comaroff 1996, 165) They can only be understood through their history, which elucidates a complex of hierarchical relationships that give rise to ethnicity. Comaroff asserts four central characteristics of identity. First, ethnicity finds its origins in relations of inequality. It is “constituted in a dialectic of self assertion and attribution.” (166) Second, ethnogenesis is rooted in the mundane. Everyday practices and routine encounters between the dominant and the dominated form the basis for what becomes identity. Third, “once they are constructed and objectified, ethnic identities may take on a powerful salience in the experience of those who bear them, often to the extent of appearing natural, essential, primordial.” (166) Fourth, identity is sustained beyond the conditions that birth it. The relations of hierarchy that gave rise to an ethnic identity may come to pass long before the identity itself does.

While this thesis does not address ethnogenesis, it does grapple with the ways in which identity is being represented/reconstructed through UINPI's identity politics. Identity in Ecuador is continually being shaped and reconstructed through the interactions of racialized euro-mestizo identity constructions of indigenoussness, and ethnic identity constructions presented by indigenous peoples themselves. These constructions, which each represent large numbers of their prospective populace, invoke essential and primordial conceptions of indigenous peoples to strengthen their position.

Like Comaroff, Craig Calhoun argues that the traditional theoretical dichotomy of essentialism and social constructivism is misguided. He emphasizes the power of

indigenous groups to utilize essentialism and primordialism, while simultaneously dismissing racial constructions' claims to those same natures, rejecting them as socially constructed and inaccurate. Calhoun stresses the political nature of identity representations, and the power of social theory to affect them.

The political mobility of primordial ethnic frameworks suggests their role in the reconstruction of identity. While Comaroff's argument is directed towards ethnogenesis, his thesis of ethnicity as produced through hierarchical relationships is applicable to the identity politics being waged in Ecuador. UINPI, using scientific frameworks, is asserting its construction of ethnicity to confront racialized dualist frameworks of indigenosity. The interaction of those (and other) constructions serves to reform and reconstruct indigenous identity.

The following chapters address Ecuadorian history, identity politics, and the education system to analyze UINPI's role in the reformation of indigenous identity. To provide a backdrop for UINPI's identity project, chapter one establishes a historical framework of the development of racialized constructions of indigenous identity in Ecuador. It utilizes Plumwood's hierarchical dualism to address the ways in which identity ideology justified and motivated the often-brutal socio-political domination of euro-mestizo peoples in Ecuador.

Chapter two addresses the role of identity at UINPI, arguing that the university's identity project is oriented towards the reformation of indigenous identity, rather than the representation of a concrete, primordial construction of indigenosity.

UINPI's methodology is presented in chapter three, which addresses the tactics that the university is utilizing to legitimize and assert its constructions of identity.

Chapter three addresses scientific multiculturalism and the ethnopolitical nature of the university's identity constructions.

Chapter four calls UINPI's focus upon identity into question, arguing that to benefit the indigenous community, the university must maintain a balance between practical and academic programs. I analyze some of the structural problems affecting indigenous higher education, and argue that to address the needs of indigenous communities, UINPI must focus upon socio-economics as well as identity. The chapter makes use of the American Indian tribal college model to present an alternative that addresses both identity and the socio-economic needs of the community.

Chapter One

A History of Indigenous identity in Ecuador

Indigenous peoples in Ecuador, like those in many South American countries, are victims of a highly institutionalized form of racism that has been engrained by the racialized identity constructions of mainstream Ecuadorian society since the 1535 conquest. While some Indians are well off, the Indigenous population in Ecuador bears the stigmata of marginalized people all over the world: poverty, illiteracy, high infant-mortality, low life expectancy, and a high incidence of curable disease. This chapter will demonstrate the racialized identity framework that has maintained the dominance of the Mestizo² and Caucasian populations in Ecuador. It will trace the development of such racialized constructions alongside the Indigenous communities' ethnic responses to them.

Relegated to the lowest stratum of Ecuadorian society, Indigenous peoples encounter a form of racism that pervades Caucasian and Mestizo. Many Caucasians and Mestizos in Ecuador perceive Indigenous peoples as children, simply incapable of further development, or as brutes rightfully relegated to manual labor. Further stereotypes such as stupidity and laziness are commonly used to describe Indigenous peoples. These stereotypes are the product of a dualist understanding of indigenusness.

Mestizo and Caucasian constructions of the meanings of Indigenusness can be understood through the framework of hierarchical dualism, which was first emphasized in feminist theory. Dualisms result from the common misperception that the world can be divided into two opposing principles. Dualisms of culture/nature, male/female, reason/emotion, and civilized/primitive are some of the most common. These dualisms

² "Mestizo" refers to the racially mixed (Indigenous – Caucasian) population that composes 65% of Ecuador's population.

take on a hierarchical nature, and become a tool for domination when they are associated with morality or good and bad. Hegemony, (both human and natural) is founded upon dichotomies, many of which include a hidden value system and power structure. The dualist framework, which incorporates values into diametrically opposed relationships, morphs dichotomies to favor a particular party. These valuations create a devalued sphere of otherness, which is defined against the master, normative identity. (Plumwood, 1993) In Ecuador, indigenous people, who occupy the sphere of otherness, are defined in relation to the European master identity. As such, many of the traits typically associated with indigenusness are better understood as the antitheses of European morality, than any real characteristic of indigenous peoples. The immoral traits imposed upon indigenous peoples serve to justify European/mestizo dominance because they allow the dominant class to think of indigenous peoples as less human, in need of values and salvation.

Because dualisms operate in discourse, forming the basic categories that define human experience, they often work to marginalize peoples even when they do not directly criticize them. For example, while some Indigenous groups are singled out for praise, commendations are phrased in terms antithetical to those normally associated with Indians. Otavalenos³ are praised for their success by European socio-economic standards in terms of industriousness, dedication, and hard work (typical European ideals.) As such, in a dualist context, praise for specific communities is essentially racism in that it implies the opposite for the rest of the Indigenous community.

³ While poverty is still pervasive in Otavalo, the town and the indigenous people native to it have become well known for their textiles. There is a weekly market that draws thousands of tourists into the community. Many Otavalenos have become wealthy in industries spawned by the market.

Institutionalized inferiority, constructed in opposition to dominant European values, has affected Indigenous self-esteem, and many communities find themselves struggling to maintain an identity outside of that constructed for them by the dominant society. White/Mestizo constructions of Indigenous identity have, through a lengthy historical process, become engrained in the identities of Indigenous peoples themselves. As such, communities continually combat low self-esteem and the assimilation of their peoples into Mestizo society.

Despite the tremendous power of such inferiority, Indigenous peoples in Ecuador have built what is regarded as the best-organized Indigenous movement in Latin America. Indigenous organizations work for change both within the governmental structure and outside of it, reformulating and validating self-appropriated forms of Indigenous identity. UINPI, as an Indigenous university, is a part of this movement that focuses on combating the historically dominant dualist conception of Indigenous identity. To understand the role that UINPI and the Indigenous movement play in modern Ecuador, it is important to examine the historical context of colonial and post-colonial oppression, the effects of that oppression on Indigenous identity, and the development of an Indigenous movement and political force to combat marginalization. Because identity concepts are an essential part of the modern Indigenous movement's discourse, we will focus on the role Indigenous identity has played in the context of the colonial and national governments and their representations of Ecuadorian identity.

While identity theory is treated more thoroughly later in this thesis, I would like to establish a basic outline of the role of state action in identity formation prior to launching the reader into a history of racial identity construction in Ecuador. This thesis

rejects both social-constructionist and essentialist understandings of identity. Identity cannot be understood as produced solely by the socio-cultural context of an individual immersed in society. Neither can it be understood as some “essence” or core set of values shared by all members of a society. Neither socio-political context nor group membership determine identity. Instead, an individual’s identity is multilocational – fluid and manipulable, but formed and constrained by group membership and socio-cultural surroundings. Identity is formed and can be understood through both agency and structure.

Colonial and post-colonial institutions have used binary constructions to marginalize Indigenous identity. European and mestizo belief structures that categorize Indigenous peoples as diametrically opposed to “superior” European values have justified colonial and post-colonial oppression. They have also affected indigenous identity, engraining some of the Mestizo and European understandings of indigenes into the psyche of the individual. Nevertheless, while dominant constructions have affected Indigenous identity, they do not determine the identity of the modern Indian. In the same way that mestizo constructions of indigenes cannot determine indigenous identity, the historical pre-colonial traditions of indigenous peoples cannot be determinate. Both factors influence indigenous peoples, but within that structure Indigenous people have agency in forming their own identities. Nevertheless, in order to understand the problems of the modern Indigenous movement, it is essential to review the historical context of the dominant construction of Indigenous identity.

Early representations of Indigenous peoples were constructed in contrast to a Euro-centric understanding of “national,” and prior to 1960, national discourse denied

citizenship to Indigenous peoples. More recently, constructions of the “national,” have rejected such understandings, drawing upon Indigenous tradition and symbols, and integrating the rhetoric of ethnicity into Ecuador’s national identity. State-sponsored institutions now represent Indigenous history and culture as a central piece of the unique nation-state of Ecuador and the identity of its people. While these representations recognize pre-Columbian indigenous culture, many discount the social and political marginalization that through which indigenous peoples have suffered. These representations of indigenous peoples remain essentialized, recognizing indigeness only as what it was prior to the arrival of the conquistadors. While the government has historically denied Indigenous identity, it now, for both economic and ideological purposes, uses Ecuador’s Indigenous heritage to its advantage.

Indigenous peoples, however, continue to be marginalized within the political system, and while Indigenous identity is no longer constructed as directly opposed to Ecuadorian values, control over public representations of Indigenous identity still lies in the hands of the dominant White/Mestizo community. As such, these representations are continually contested.

The Colonial Period

The Spanish conquest of Ecuador began in 1534 under the command of Sebastian de Benalcazar, a lieutenant of Pizarro’s. The territory that is now Ecuador was known as the northern Audiencia de Quito. Upon conquest, the Spanish encountered large Indigenous populations, which “needed” colonial management. While this necessity was framed in terms of the Indigenous peoples’ primitive nature and their need for

“civilization,” it was the colonial population that was dependant upon the Indian for his labor and tribute. Such beliefs were rooted in the mind/body dualism most famously expressed by Descartes. While Mestizos were dependant upon the bodies of Indigenous peoples for labor, they constructed the belief that Indigenous peoples were dependant upon settlers for their minds and civilization. By separating mind and culture from the body, settlers were able to simultaneously enslave indigenous peoples and believe that Christianity was liberating them. Moreover, the dualism between mind and body allowed conquistadors to believe that they were liberating indigenous peoples, while they were simultaneously, literally, enslaving them. Because the mind and the body were opposed, ideological, religious, moral liberation were compatible with physical enslavement. The mind and the body were opposed such that enslavement and Christian morality were not. Hierarchical dualisms justified slavery, convincing settlers that they were in fact benevolent.

To harness Indigenous labor, settlers established La Republica de los Indios (The Indian Republic) as a separate commonwealth, with its own code of laws. For the most part, this code allowed Indigenous peoples to remain in their traditional settlements, isolated from Spanish and Mestizo settler populations. La Republica de los Indios was among the first institutional methods of control imposed upon Ecuadorian Indigenous peoples, and while it did not directly acculturate Indigenous populations, it served to harness a much needed labor force and establish European dominance over Indigenous peoples. Indian labor was exploited by colonists through a tributary system, wherein all able bodied Indians between the ages of 18 and 50 were required to pay tribute in the form of labor, species, or kind. (Library of Congress) While the tributary system

enslaved native peoples, there was very little emphasis placed on the reformation of indigenous identity. Indigenous peoples were allowed to remain in their communities, and were therefore able to maintain traditional beliefs and social structures.

The dispersed nature of the highland Indigenous population, living in traditional villages, made Spanish control over labor difficult. “The establishment of a viable colony based on the extraction of revenue and labor from subjugated peoples would depend, in part, on the administration’s ability to achieve an accurate population count.” (Powers 1995: 81) Without an accurate census, colonial governments were unable to enforce tribute laws or determine the efficacy of their labor extraction. In response to this difficulty, the colonial government developed and organized *reducciones*. *Reducciones* were Spanish-constructed villages used to relocate the native populations from their native communities, easing the colonial tasks of assessing the size of the Indigenous population and extracting tribute. These *reducciones*, located in the valleys of the highland region, were far more accessible to the Spanish colonizers than the mountaintop locations of traditional highland Indigenous communities.

While *reducciones* improved tax collection, they also merged culturally distinct Indigenous groups from different highland communities. Much local Indigenous identity was lost as unique cultural communities were dispersed among *reducciones*. The *reducciones* separated Indigenous peoples from their communities and relatives and forced them to move in with other Indigenous peoples from outside kinships. This effectively broke down many aspects of Indigenous identity associated with local practice and ritual, placing culturally distinct (sometimes warring) Indigenous groups in a homogenizing environment dominated by colonial forces. Solely Mestizos and

Caucasians held leadership positions in the reducciones, and while Indigenous peoples had maintained their own power structure in their own communities, that structure was now replaced by one founded upon essentialist racial constructs of Indigenous peoples. The Spanish were well on their way to creating a generic Indigenous identity that was deemed structurally and morally inferior to the dominant colonial culture.

The creation of Reducciones eased the work of state-supported missionaries. Most reducciones were physically structured around a central church, which served to convert Indigenous peoples to Catholicism. This aspect of the colonial mission served to establish a dualist construction of identity in moral and religious terms. By upholding European values and culture as spiritually superior while identifying Indigenous peoples as savages in need of saving, the Church justified colonial domination in non-human, divine terms. Colonial domination and the ensuing enslavement of Indigenous peoples were not socio-political acts of domination; rather they were divine acts of salvation. Conveniently, the church believed that hard work and industrial production were paths to God. Catholic Europeans were justified in their enslavement of Indigenous peoples because they were, by God's decree, superior beings. This divinely hierarchical justification was easily engrained into already weakened Indigenous identities, vulnerable after the destruction of native communities by colonial policy and disease.

Paradoxically, it was the biological characteristics of European settlers that eased their imposition of a culture/nature cultured/primitive dualism upon Indigenous peoples. Scholars⁴ identified five major epidemics between 1524 and 1591 that ravaged Quito, and

⁴ Alchon, *Native Society*, p. 37; Linda Newson, "Old World Epidemics in Early Colonial Ecuador." In *"Secret Judgements of God": Old World Disease in Colonial Spanish America*, ed. Noble David Cook and W. George Lovell (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), p. 111; Tryer, *Historia demografica*, p.

then spread to the Amazon and highland communities. Between 1520 and 1590, it is estimated that epidemics wrought a depopulation rate of 85-90 percent. (Powers 1995: 17) Such devastation weakened Indigenous identity and community structure while simultaneously suggesting the god-like power of Caucasian men to bring forth devastation out of the ethereal and unknown realm of disease.

While communities in the upper Amazon were subjected to Jesuit organized *reducciones*, the Amazon region of Ecuador remained relatively isolated during the colonial period. Tribute policies applied to the Amazonian peoples, but the difficulty of the terrain and rumors of pagan, murderous Indians prevented the full integration of the region with colonial government. While the government avoided the Amazon, Jesuit missionaries established their own *reducciones* based upon an ideology linking labor and religion.

“The ideological foundation of Jesuit economic strategy rested on three major premises: the ‘moralizing’ nature of agriculture, the ‘civilizing’ capacity of religion and, the concept that the Indians were ‘perpetual children’ requiring severe but paternalistic protection.” (Muratorio 1991: 78)

In short, the ultimate goal of Jesuit missionaries in the Amazon was to convert Indigenous peoples from their primitive hunter-gatherer lifestyle to one similar to that of the European peasantry. Like the national *reducciones* policy, the Jesuits achieved their goals by establishing permanent communities, which served to ease the missionaries’ access to Indigenous labor while facilitating their religious mission.

To the Jesuits disadvantage, the vast expanse of unconquered terrain provided a mode of resistance for Indigenous cultures. Because Caucasian and Mestizo settlers were

dependant upon Indigenous labor and tribute for survival in the Amazon, Indigenous peoples were able to passively disable the settler population by leaving the community and moving deeper into the Amazon. The testimony of early explorers of the Amazon attests to this practice:

“One half of the Indians who carried my baggage deserted during the night and returned to Archidona, while another Indian, in whom I had some confidence, threw away my collection of plants and insects and proceeded in an opposite direction...” (Villavicencio 1984:394 qtd. in Muratorio 1991:28)

This common form of resistance highlights the paradox of the colonialists' dependency upon Indigenous peoples, which was justified by a religious ideology that constructed Indigenous peoples as primitive and dependant upon Europeans for their savior. This denial of dependency is dependent upon a dualist conception of the mind and body that denies the value of the body. Val Plumwood applies the term 'backgrounding' to this mode of othering. Masters use backgrounding to simultaneously utilize the labor and knowledge of the dominated, and attempt to deny the dependency that that creates. “One way to [deny dependency] is to insist on a hierarchy of activities, so that the denied areas are simply not 'worth' noticing.” (Plumwood 1993: 48)

The accessibility of escape routes, however, did not diminish the impact of Jesuit reducciones on Indigenous peoples. The reducciones that existed in the Amazon served as pitri dishes for disease, and Amazonian peoples, like those of the highlands, found their populations decimated by epidemics introduced by colonial settlers. Such destruction served to weaken networks between Indigenous communities, enabling settlers to dominate Indigenous populations and impose religion without confronting organized rebellion.

Differences between the ruling colonial settlers and the Indigenous laboring peoples such as language, race, and religion served to justify the highly structuralized hierarchy of colonial society. During this period, colonial settlers characterized the Indian as “child-like, closer to nature than to culture, promiscuous, prone to idolatry and devil worship,” and “a simple ignorant being who could nevertheless be morally reformed by intense Christian labor.” (Crain 1990: 4) As such, the identity of the Ecuadorian Indian was constructed in opposition to traditional Spanish ideology, and was viewed as something to be reformed if not eliminated. These processes of othering occurred throughout the colonial territories, and were central in justifying the colonial forces of Europe throughout the world.

The National Period (1830-1955)

Ecuador's independence from Spain in 1830 affected very little immediate change in the treatment of Indigenous peoples. Haciendas, owned by Mestizos, occupied the sierra's best land. An agrarian census taken in the 1950's showed that while most of the highland population was rural, 'large haciendas monopolized more than three quarters of the total area.' (Zamosc 1994) Exploitation on the hacienda depended upon a system of perpetual debt servitude wherein, for the right to farm a small parcel of land (huasipungo,) Indigenous peoples were indebted to the land-owner (hacendado,) and were thus forced to work in agricultural production, mines, or textile sweatshops. While the hacienda system literally enslaved Indigenous peoples to their hacendados, it also formed a patron-client relationship between Mestizos and Indians that persisted as a part of Ecuadorian culture long after the abolition of the hacienda. This practice was based

upon a system of reciprocity wherein part of the hacendado's wage was paid in the form of gifts that, while essential for survival, were understood as personal favors from the padrino. Thus, Indians became morally indebted to their patrons. While the padrino/huasipungero relationship was suffused with racial inequality, invoking (even in name) many dualisms historically used for domination, (including father/child, subject/object, and culture/nature,) it also gave Indigenous peoples access to resources which they would otherwise be denied. By giving personal gifts to padrinos in positions of power, Indigenous peoples were able to gain access to public facilities (like hospitals and schools) that would otherwise exclude them. It "allowed them a partial release from everyday forms of violence in White and Mestizo spaces." (De La Torre 2000: 35)

The Catholic Church, which was one of the most powerful landowners in the sierra, was highly connected to the landed elite. As such, religion, which had taken hold in the highland Indigenous population during the colonial era of reducciones, justified the unequal relations of production on the hacienda. This justification of the peasant/landowner relationship was rooted in both the Church's and the hacendados's understanding of the Indian as primitive and childlike – a people to be cared for by the more intelligent and industrious Whites/Mestizos.

Like haciendas in the sierra, Jesuit missions in the Amazon served as a focal points for confrontation between Indigenous tribes and Mestizos. The Jesuits though, did not have the advantages of the Church in the sierra. Rather than acting as an external mediator to class conflict, Jesuits were direct participants in the battle. As one of two types of patrons, the Jesuits fought to maintain control over the Indigenous labor force. Traders, who bartered in the extractive economies of gold and pita, relied on the

“unfettered freedom” of the “savage,” whereas the Jesuits tried to limit just that. While Jesuits saw traders as exploitative, Indigenous peoples often preferred to barter with them than join the missions. Xavier Albó points to the central contradiction in Jesuit ideology, arguing that while Jesuits wanted to maintain separation between Spaniards and Indians (as effaced by their reaction to traders in the Amazon,) they adopted Spanish methods of acculturation from the *reducción* system. (Albo, 400, 407 in Muratorio 1991: 79)

“The Jesuit’s image of the Indigenous ... envisioned irrational beings, who only reacted by instinct; beings with no culture to restrain those instinctive impulses, and consequently as generic Indians devoid of a specific ethnic identity.” (Muratorio 1991: 89) For the Jesuits, their mission was not to replace one culture with another, but rather to inculcate culture in the first place. This framework can be understood as one of the modes of “othering” established with the dualist theory of feminist post-structuralism.

While feminist theorists apply these modes of domination primarily to relationships between the sexes, they have also been used by dominant classes, especially in the colonies, to maintain their position over marginalized groups. The concept of incorporation, also known as relational definition, refers to the definition of the “other” as the negation of the dominant group. Rather than granting the dominated unique forms of existence, the dominant group defines them as lacking in its own forms of existence. Memmi describes this method of domination: “The mechanism of this remoulding of the colonized, consists, in the first place, in a series of negations. The colonized is not this, is not that... he is never considered in a positive light.” (Memmi qtd. in Plumwood 1993: 53) Any Indigenous traits that fell outside of this limited sphere of Jesuit negation were neglected or ignored. “The other is recognized only to the extent that it is assimilated to

the self, or incorporated into the self and its systems of desires and needs: only as colonized by the self.” (Plumwood 1993: 52) Jesuits only conceived of Indigenous identity in relation to themselves – as the negation of their virtues. Indigenous minds were empty vessels waiting to be filled. This conception served to justify the Jesuit’s ritual domination over Indigenous peoples in the missions by establishing the belief that by enculturating Indigenous peoples with Jesuit values, they were filling a void rather than overrunning another positively defined identity.

In the mid to late 1800’s industrial capitalism penetrated the Amazon. The automobile industry and the consequent rubber boom, spurred by an increasingly high demand for tires in Europe and the United States, placed high demands on Indigenous communities in the region. During this period Jesuit missionaries lost considerable ground, as traders harnessed Indigenous peoples as the only labor force in the Amazon. The rubber industry, controlled by European and American conglomerates such as the British “Israel Company” and “Iquitos Trading Company,” required its Indigenous workers to travel deep into the Amazon to obtain latex from a source that, with environmental destruction, grew ever more distant from civilization. While rubber traders had no more respect for Indigenous culture than the Jesuits, their interest in Indigenous peoples was limited to their manpower. Religion, morality, and enculturation were of no great concern. The industry served to pull Indigenous peoples away from the missions and into a migratory existence, following the rubber supply. The continual relocation of Indigenous peoples made it impossible for the Jesuits to maintain the population of their missions. Nevertheless, conditions for the Indian were no better.

Instead, the boom was devastating. Indigenous peoples were captured and abused as rubber-slaves, while new outbreaks of small pox and the measles spread through communities. Despite established laws against slavery, documents suggest that rubber traders regularly captured Indigenous peoples in Ecuador, smuggled them to Peru, and then sold them in Iquitos, the center of the Amazonian rubber industry. (Muratorio 1991: 111) The rubber trader's conception of the Indian was essentially based upon instrumentalism, or the objectification of the other. For commercialists, a native's ends were defined by those of his master. Indigenous peoples were conceived as instruments for the trader, as a means to his ends. The characteristics of a good Indigenous person, therefore, were defined by his usefulness to the trader rather than by his own intrinsic value. The rubber trader's instrumentalist understanding of Indigenous identity denied the cultural humanity of Indigenous peoples, assuming their worthlessness beyond their use value as labor power.

While traders and missionaries had conflicting plans for the Indigenous, both were based on the belief that Indigenous peoples were primitive, uncivilized beings. Despite this similarity, the two groups' conceptions of Indigenous identity were dissimilar. The Jesuits' mission was to "care" for these savages by enculturating them, and teaching them the way of the lord. As such, Indigenous peoples were seen as humans, salvageable from their lack of culture. Jesuits incorporated indigenous peoples, defining them as empty vessels lacking the refinement of Mestizo/European culture. Rubber boom traders, on the other hand, saw Indigenous peoples as labor to be exploited if not owned, and as a means to their own ends. They objectified Indigenous peoples as instruments of production, and therefore ignored all cultural value and "potential."

Politically, the Ecuadorian settler population was divided between the liberal and conservative parties. The conservative party, which was concentrated in the highland region of Ecuador, was in support of the Catholic Church and favored the maintenance of existing economic forms. Traditional hacendados, who were concentrated in highland Ecuador, were the driving force behind the conservative movement since their livelihood depended upon traditional forms of labor and tribute extraction imposed on Indigenous peoples. The liberal party, on the other hand, was concentrated on the coast of Ecuador and served the interests of agricultural export elites. Because liberals were concentrated on the coast, where few Indigenous people lived, their wealth was not dependant upon tribute and traditional forms of extraction. Therefore, in the hopes of developing commerce, liberals were in favor of free trade. They supported the abolition of Indigenous communal property, hoped to free vast amounts of land held by the clergy for commercial purposes, and argued for the integration of Indigenous peoples into Mestizo culture. This would serve the dual purpose of freeing land to be developed and providing a labor force for budding industry. By freeing land and establishing limited free trade, liberals hoped to follow the trajectory of the highly successful European countries.

The liberal movement represented one of the first systemic attempts to integrate Indigenous peoples into a singular Mestizo national culture. More accurately, the European/Mestizo collective identity was believed superior to Indigenous identities, and native peoples were expected to assimilate. While liberals were anti-tribute, and the party's rhetoric was permeated with the discourse of equality, many Indian groups opposed integration, fighting to maintain communal lands. (Crain 1990: 5) This

dissension between liberal beliefs about the Indigenous communities' needs, and the actual needs of Indigenous communities themselves, highlights the liberals' projection of values and needs upon marginalized peoples. The liberal party, like the Jesuits and other Catholics, defined Indigenous identity in relation to their own. Its job, as a political party, was to fill the Indigenous people's deficiencies, as reflected when viewed in comparison with economically successful Mestizos/Whites. As such, the values and liberties of the Mestizo population were imposed upon Indigenous peoples to justify the revocation of their communal lands.

Until 1895, conservatives maintained political control, but on February 12 of that year, a liberal revolution began that would last for almost two years. In October of 1896, the first liberal Constituent Assembly met, beginning a series of liberal reforms that transformed Ecuadorian society. By January 14, 1897, the new government passed the XI Constitution of Ecuador, establishing (at least on paper) freedom of worship, the abolition of the death penalty, and equality for all citizens under the law⁵. In the following violent years of civil war between the conservative and liberal parties, laws protecting the freedom of thought and implementing public education (primary, secondary, and superior) were passed. Meanwhile, the Catholic Church lost much of its power as its land was revoked and redistributed, and the government established the "Registro Civil," which revoked the Church's means by which it obtained information and exercised control over the population. The registration of births and deaths became a function of the state. By 1906, the XII Constitution was passed, which officially established the separation of Church and State. Despite the reforms, which discursively gave Indigenous peoples power and equality, suffrage was restricted to literates who,

⁵ Between 1830 and 1979 Ecuador had 19 constitutions, averaging one every 7.8 years.

until 1950, constituted less than 50% of the adult population. Thus, Indians were unable to represent their interests in a political system mandating Spanish literacy.

Liberal reforms attempted to assimilate the Indigenous community into a Mestizo working class culture. The integration was ideologically similar to that envisioned by Catholic missionaries in that it envisioned Indigenous peoples as empty vessels to be filled with (Mestizo) culture. The difference, however, was that liberal reforms were based upon an economic model rather than a religious mindset. Indigenous peoples were to become unified with Mestizos as members of the working-class. Religious integration was no longer important so long as Indigenous peoples provided the labor force needed for industrial capitalists. While it was discursively framed as such, integration was never intended to be a form of empowerment. Indigenous peoples continued to be excluded from the political process, which decided upon crucial aspects of the national economy, of which Indigenous peoples were a central part.

While Indigenous peoples were unable to access the mechanisms of national discourse, their interests were expressed through other groups – primarily the socialist intellectual elite. Laws passed under the guidance of these groups helped to open the doors for Indigenous self-representation. Enacted in 1937, the Law of the Peasant Communes and the Juridical Statute were designed to prevent the further dispersion of Indian communal lands. They provided a mechanism for the political organization and representation of Indigenous villages by granting communities the power to organize into *comunidades* – local communities with constitutional protection of land rights. Unfortunately, the discursive validation of Indigenous rights to organize was hindered by the structural nature of the hacienda system, which tied and obligated Indigenous peoples

to haciendas and their owners. Indigenous people's socio-economic ties to an outdated system, in which they were essentially instruments for the needs of a single hacendado, prevented them from organizing to address their own needs.

In August 1944, the Communist party organized the Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios (Ecuadorian Indian Federation – FEI) While the FEI's leadership was not Indigenous, it pushed for land reform, based upon the belief that the eradication of the hacienda system would lead to the creation of a proletariat dependant upon wage labor. In the context of Marxist theory, this was the next step necessary for a communist revolution. FEI followed traditional labor-movement strategy, focusing its efforts on forming hacienda unions to affect change. (LOC, Crain) While the FEI served to organize Indigenous peoples and give them voice, it was essentially a tool to harness the power of the Indigenous population for the purposes of the communist party. The communist party did not recognize Indigenous identity apart from their economic status. As such, their culture was discounted while their economic desperation was highlighted to emphasize their similarity to the proletariat. While the communist party supported Indigenous rights, it also devalued their culture, homogenizing them by their economic status.

The political parties of both the left and the right denied the role of indigenous populations and their identities as part of national Ecuadorian culture. Ecuadorian nationalism was erected on a euro-centric platform wherein national identity had more to do with European culture than it did with local tradition. The rejection of the local in favor of the European by Caucasians and Mestizos effectively discouraged interest and research into native communities. In fact, it discouraged any recognition of native

identity. Fluency in Spanish was a prerequisite for membership in the National community, while Quechua, the native language of 1.5 million Ecuadorians, went unrecognized. (Crain 1990) Native people were not considered citizens and were therefore voiceless in state politics.

Ecuadorian history was European history – largely made up of the chronicles of generals, nobles, and other great White men. The euro-centric nature of historical discourse stemmed from the dominant group's control over the means of intellectual production. Indigenous people maintained oral histories and traditions through complex social learning processes, but because Spanish was the only recognized language, Indigenous peoples, the majority of whom had a limited understanding of the language, were unable to produce their own histories.

Nevertheless, popular conceptions of Indigenous identity changed drastically during the Nationalist period. While Indigenous peoples were still marginalized by a population that defined them in terms based upon the antithesis of Mestizo morality, they were at least recognized by the socialist and communist parties as a people with needs separate from those of the dominant class. While this structure was still dualist in that Indigenous peoples were essentially homogenized with the proletariat (as opposed to the bourgeoisie,) it no longer objectified Indigenous peoples as means to the dominant classes ends. Instead, indigenous peoples were homogenized for the working classes' gain. It wasn't until the early 1960's that indigenous peoples began to assert themselves as a political force in Ecuador.

Transition in the 60's and 70's

Indians began to receive greater attention in the early 1960's, when various agents, both national and international, began to push for change in Ecuadorian policy. On December 16, 1961, two-thousand Indigenous peoples took to the streets in the first major Indigenous demonstration. This action represented the beginning of an organized Indigenous political agenda, and it signified the power of collective action that would later bring Indigenous peoples to the forefront of Ecuadorian politics. The Indigenous community, along with the international community, was pushing for agrarian reform, banishing the hacienda system.

Two major factors furthered the Indigenous cause. First, the discovery of oil in Ecuador reduced the government's dependency on revenues from hacendados, and their influence quickly eroded. Multinational companies, including Texaco-Gulf, which were pouring money into government coffers in exchange for exploration rights, replaced the hacendado as the primary moneyed political influence. Additionally, an increase in urban migration necessitated an agricultural system that could satisfy the rapidly increasing demand of urban centers. Haciendas were unable to increase production to meet demand. Thus, the huasipungo (hacienda) system was abolished by the 1964 Agrarian Reform. Ironically, the agrarian reform, which was arguably the most important factor in Indigenous mobilization, was enacted by the same military junta that outlawed the communist party – the organizers of FEL, which was central in the Indigenous population's push for the bill. The 1964 Agrarian Reform was part of a larger attempt to modernize Ecuadorian society, and was thus structured by the needs of the bourgeoisie

upper class. It discursively benefited Indigenous peoples, granting former huasipungeros property rights to their small plots of land and abolishing service tenure, while establishing the Instituto Ecuatoriano de Reforma Agraria y Colonizacion (Ecuadorian Institute for Agrarian Reform and Colonization) to centralize land management under the federal government. But, despite the bill's rhetoric, Indigenous peoples had little to gain. The land promised to huasipungeros was rarely reassigned, and Indigenous peoples lost access to the land and resources that they had under the old system. In Chimborazo for example, "only 3% of land was transferred to peasants." (Korovkin, 28) Moreover, the institute's name reflected its mission. By freeing state land for public ownership, the government effectively initiated a recolonization of the Ecuadorian Amazon. Mestizo migration to the Amazon region, spurred by the agrarian reform and a new boom in the petroleum industry, threatened Indigenous communities in the region. Nevertheless, while the immediate effects of land reform economically wounded the Indigenous community, it allowed for greater organization and the long-term growth of the movement. Land reform dissolved dependencies of Indigenous peoples upon Mestizo hacendados, which had previously limited their ability to organize. Independence from the hacienda system allowed Indigenous peoples to utilize the previously crippled 1937 Law of Peasant Communes, which granted Indigenous peoples the power to organize

Table 1
Land Transferred by IERAC (in hectares),
The Number of New Communes, and the Number of Land Claims
Chimborazo, 1964-1991

	<i>1964-1970</i>	<i>1971-1977</i>	<i>1978-1984</i>	<i>1985-1991</i>	<i>Total</i>
Land Transferred (ha)	19,522	46,921	36,990	11,489	114,922
Number of New Communes	101	76	91	88	356
Number of Land Claims	–	97	104	75	276

Source: (Korovkin, 29) "Cummunas Provincia de Chimborazo" and "Planos topograficos do los juicios de la tierra," Archivo del Instituto Ecuatoriana de Reforma Agraria y Colonización, Quito and Riobamba.

community organizations and hold communal property. The collapse of the hacienda was followed by the rapid growth of community organizations, and the number of land communes skyrocketed. (See Table 1) While the agrarian reform was politically empowering, it also effected Indigenous cultural identity and practice. The communal and political organization of Indigenous peoples into land-owning communities granted a cultural focal point for community-wide celebrations and traditions. Indigenous peoples who, prior to colonization, were members of localized communities were separated and dispersed, first by reducciones policy and then by haciendas. The agrarian reform of 1964 allowed for the reformation of Indigenous communities and localized cultural practice. While Indigenous peoples were now free to participate in traditional religious and folkloric customs, they were of a different, reformulated kind because a long history of reducciones and haciendas had broken up old communities. Nevertheless, Indigenous peoples scurried to revive traditional practices and knowledges within the communities, often mixing the practices of distinct, and sometimes-warring pre-colonial communities. Revived Indigenous identity built on the historical tradition, but it was not able to reconstruct pre-colonial societies. Additionally, it is important to note that Indigenous communes were not entirely independent. Much of the funding for the communes came from religious institutions. The clergy of the Catholic Church proclaimed their alliance

with the poor and became heavily involved in the development and organization of Indigenous communities. While the Church had evangelical goals, it no longer dismissed Indigenous culture as primitive and child-like. Instead, the church accepted a limited integration of Indigenous practice and Christian ritual and supported communities with legal and financial support for their battles with hacendados. Meanwhile, the Church established the People's Radiophonic School, "which transmitted daily programs on basic literacy, arithmetic, agricultural techniques, hygiene, and so on... along with local news and evangelical messages" in both Quichua and Spanish. (Korovkin, 30) The Catholic Church was not the only evangelical organization involved in the Indigenous communities. Protestant missionaries also played a pivotal role in some Indigenous communities, building schools and health clinics. Unlike the Catholic Church, however, Protestants allowed Indigenous peoples to join the clergy, and as Indigenous pastors worked to integrate their two worlds, Protestant churches developed practices that were heavily influenced by traditional Indigenous culture. Protestants translated the bible into Quechua, essentially validating Indigenous language within their evangelical mission. The actions of both the Catholic and the Protestant churches reflect a turning point in their conceptions of Indigenous identity. While the organizations worked to change the fact that many Indigenous peoples still lacked faith and salvation, they no longer did so without consideration of Indigenous practice. Instead, Indigenous peoples were recognized as maintaining their own cultural beliefs that could be integrated with the church. It is unclear, however, whether the Church's renewed cultural recognition reflects the development of a profound respect for Indigenous culture, or merely a development in missionary strategy. Because Indigenous peoples were no longer

conquerable, missionary methods that completely denied Indigenous belief, and defined Indigenous identity by the negative reflection of Christian values, were no longer effective or feasible.

The Agricultural Reform Bill and the subsequent development of communes was not the end of the Indigenous struggle. Within their own communities, Indigenous peoples had gained limited control over their customs and practices, but the dominant White/Mestizo society still constructed representations of Indigenous peoples in opposition to its own virtues. Agrarian reform could not remedy the effects of a four hundred year tradition of denying and subverting Indigenous identity. While the communes provided a basis for organization, Indigenous peoples are still academically, politically, and economically disempowered.

Following political turmoil and an attempted coup in 1975, the military regime headed by Presidente Guillermo Rodríguez Lara stepped down, and Ecuador held "democratic" elections in 1978. By 1979, a new constitution was ratified, granting illiterates the right to vote, and the Indigenous community's entrance into the political sphere was made official. The effect of the 1979 constitution was reflected in the growth of the national electorate by 32.3% and, in highland provinces with a strong Indigenous population by 45%. (Cliché and García in De La Torre 2001:108) Political elites in Quito and Guayaquil could no longer completely ignore the needs and demands of the now-voting Indigenous sector. Indigenous peoples, however, were not granted a powerful political voice by the new constitution. The suffrage of illiterates was more symbolic of the state's recognition of the Indigenous community than it was

representative of any real shift in political power. E.E. Schattschneider's dictum – "the definition of alternatives is the supreme instrument of power" is applicable here. (1960: 66) While Indigenous peoples were allowed to vote, they were not given an entrance into the political arena. The polls therefore presented Indigenous peoples with the choice between two Mestizo/White candidates, each with Mestizo/White goals in mind. The power to vote meant little when there were no candidates representing Indigenous interests. Nevertheless, the suffrage of Spanish-illiterate peoples had symbolic importance. The political arena was no longer strictly limited to colonial populations. Indigenous communities that spoke only Quechua were now included as citizens in the nation-state. This integration of Indigenous and national identity signified the beginning of today's Indigenous struggle to maintain control over the form of that integration.

Gramsci's distinction between corporatist and hegemonic rule appropriately describes this shift in Ecuador's political power-base. A corporatist ruling class derives its power from a very narrow economic faction within society. Hegemonic rule must go beyond these limits to establish rule out of and over a much broader range of society. During this period, political rule in Ecuador, which was once dependent only upon the favor of the elite classes, necessitated a broader power base, which was only achievable through linking the interests of the populous to those of the elite. (Gramsci 1991; Crain 1990) As such, corporatist rule gave way to hegemonic rule, and the approval of the masses, at least in rhetoric, became politically influential.

Following the agrarian reforms of 1964 and the suffrage reforms of 1979, Indigenous organizations formed to coordinate the geographically and culturally diverse Indigenous groups into a unified political force. ECUARUNARI (Ecuador Runacunapac

Riccharimui – Quechua for Indigenas Awaken) was formed in 1977 to represent the Andean highland region, while the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon (CONFENAIE,) was formed in 1979 to organize Amazonian Indigenous peoples. These organizations formed a communications network that solidified Indigenous presence in both the national and international communities. This signified the first in a series of tactics (of which UINPI is the latest), wherein Indigenous peoples have used occidental political structures to effect change within the political system.

Upon the Indigenous sector's entrance into Ecuadorian politics, various groups – both Indigenous and non-Indigenous – recognized the importance of control over both collective and individual Indigenous identities. Indigenousness was no longer something to be excluded from, or assimilated into society. Rather, it became an important factor in political and social life in Ecuador. This is not to say that the Indigenous people's entrance into the political sphere legitimated self-proclaimed identities and understandings of Indigenousness. While government structure now accommodated the possibility of an Indigenous presence, its actors continued to resist it. Identity became a contested factor in the social and political spheres, and Indigenous identity became something to be developed rather than eradicated or isolated.

Integration of the Indian: 1979 –

The Roldos-Hurtado Government, elected in 1979, proclaimed themselves Ecuador's first democratically elected government. Unlike previous governments, the administration was especially concerned with winning the favor of the masses, including

the Indigenous population. Promises were made to develop Indigenous communities, providing jobs and economic benefits. Moreover, the government recognized the importance of Indigenous culture to Ecuador. This was demonstrated by Roldos' controversial move to terminate the contract of the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL.) Operating in Ecuador since the 1950s, SIL was a missionary organization with the goal of converting Indigenous peoples by offering adult literacy classes and translating the Bible into native languages. Indigenous organizations as well as academic elites, working in urban universities, interpreted SIL as a threat to Indigenous and national culture. The government passed the educational programs into the hands of national research institutions based in Quito. (Crain 1990) While Roldos and Hurtado took steps to take control over Indigenous education and identity away from missionaries, they failed to take the next step of empowering Indigenous peoples with control over their own education -power remained in the hands of non-Indigenous research institutions.

Much of the Roldos-Hurtado government's dedication to the Indigenous sector was concentrated in economic development. The Fund for Rural Development for Marginalized Groups (FODERUMA,) was established to provide lines of credit to Indigenous peoples for the development of business and the commercialization of Indigenous agriculture. While the program was designed for Indigenous peoples, control over the organization and its decisions remained in the hands of urban Mestizos and Caucasians. (Crain 1990) Once again, power over the integration process was held by the non-Indigenous sector, and changes were affected for the purposes of a national economy dominated by a non-Indigenous elite. As such, government economic and education policy continued to reflect a patriarchal conception of the government's role in

Indigenous identity. While the Indigenous population was recognized as in need, it was done so by a dominant system that defined Indigenous needs in relation to its own necessities. Many of the programs directed towards Indigenous peoples during this era were reflections of the same dualist perception of Indigenous identity that has pervaded Ecuador since the conquest. While Indigenous peoples and their identities were no longer backgrounded or denied, they maintained their marginalized stigmata. This was reflected in the structure's belief that programs constructed for Indigenous peoples are better run by a "rational" Mestizo, than an Indigenous person, incapable of such a task. Indigenous identities, during the Roldos-Hurtado era, were appropriated as an important part of Ecuadorian national identity, but Indigenous nationalities were not pluriculturally recognized as "historically differentiated economic, political, and cultural entities." (CONAIE 1993) As such, the dominant White/Mestizo class acted to homogenize the disparate needs of the Indigenous communities, and in doing so stereotyped all Indigenous peoples together. This stereotyping is also reflexive of a dualist conception of the "other," supporting a hyper-excluded understanding of Indigenous as opposed to White/Mestizo identities. In other words, by grouping indigenous peoples together instead of recognizing the multicultural nature of indigenous peoples in Ecuador, whites and mestizos maintained an the racialized understanding of indigenous peoples as diametrically opposed to European culture.

The Development of the Indigenous Political Force:

The Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE) was established in 1986 out of ECUARUNARI and CONFENIAIE. CONAIE's goal, as Ecuador's only national Indigenous organization, is to represent and organize the

Indigenous peoples on a statewide scale. While CONAIE does represent Indigenous interests on a national level, it is not a political party. It operates strictly outside of the sphere of elected government in order to maintain its focus upon “its central struggle, which [is] working to organize communities, land occupations, the recovery of cultural and ethnic identities, and uprisings as a form of protest.” (Kinto 2000: 5) So, for the 1996 elections, the Indigenous movement formed the Movimiento Unidad Plurinacional Pachakutic – Pais Nuevo (PN – Pachakutik Movement for Pluri-national Unity – New Country) to represent Indigenous and other minority interests in the national political arena.

Since the Roldos-Hurtado governments, Indigenous peoples and their cultures have been considered an important part of Ecuador and its national identity. While they are still politically and economically marginalized, Indigenous peoples, primarily through CONAIE, Pachakutic, UCUARUNARI, COICE, and CONFENIEAIE, have gained influence in both the political and cultural sphere. Pachakutic has gained representation in government, sponsoring the first Indigenous member of the national congress, Louis Maccas. While its 1996 presidential candidate, Freddy Ehlers, placed third, he secured 10% of the national vote, an expression of the power of the movement. Pachakutic’s power has grown – in 1998 the party gained six seats in parliament, and the Indigenous member, Nina Pacari was appointed vice president of the chamber.

CONAIE has meanwhile challenged Indigenous marginalization through more revolutionary tactics. The Indigenous community organized its first major uprising in 1990 in response to the granting of oil concessions in Indigenous territories to foreign companies. Thousands of Indigenous peoples protested, blocking roadways with

boulders and burning tires, temporarily paralyzing the national economy. The power of this tactic was symbolic and actual, both demonstrating the symbols and strength of the Indigenous community and causing the nation significant economic losses. The 1990 levantamiento (uprising) marked the instigation of a tactic that CONAIE has used many times in the last decade. In 1992, Indigenous peoples again took to the streets to commemorate 500 years of Indigenous resistance, but it was in 1994 that the next policy-oriented uprising occurred. In association with the FUT (Frente Unitario de Trabajadores, or the Unified Workers' Front,) CONAIE organized a protest to demonstrate the neo-liberal economic policies of the Sexto Duran government. In the final months of 1996, a conference to reform the national constitution summoned further uprisings from the Indigenous community. 10,000 Indigenous peoples marched on Quito to set up a Popular Constitutional Assembly, which had the task of drafting an alternate constitutional plan, acceptable by the Indigenous communities. While the plan was not accepted or even considered, the action made clear the demands of the Indigenous sector, while symbolically emphasizing the movement's power. It was, however, following Ecuador's economic downfall in 2000 that Indigenous uprisings came to a peak. Inflation skyrocketed in 1999, and between November '98 and February '99, five major banks crashed, freezing the assets of millions of Ecuadorian citizens and forcing the government to take on more than US\$1.5 billion in debt. To counter the economic crisis, the Mahuad government tried to raise fuel prices. The effects of the measure echoed throughout all of Ecuador. By raising fuel prices, the government jeopardized Taxi drivers, while raising the cost of transportation for food and every other commodity. Any hike in the cost of fuel was echoed by a raise in price of every other commodity,

including food. The Indigenous sector could not afford the price increases, and so, in July of 1999 more than 15,000 Indigenous peoples arrived in Quito to demand that the measures be reviewed. In an attempt to curb his dwindling popularity (by this time 8%.) Jamil Mahuad turned to the right, businessmen, and mainstream bankers, announcing plans for the dollarisation of the Ecuadorian economy. This was the last straw, and CONAIE organized community parliaments demanding a coup.

The rise of Indigenous organizations accompanied by the political penetration of Pachakutik served to fill a power vacuum that was left after the dissolve of the Hacienda system and the paternal patron/client debt servitude that accompanied it. Whereas Indigenous peoples were previously forced to solicit the charity of a Mestizo padrino to achieve access to resources or assert claims to their rights, they now had a politically influential structure that served to lodge complaints against discrimination, and assert claims to their rights. Two cases of discrimination within the school system, illustrated by Carlos de La Torre, demonstrate this point. The first, which occurred in the mid 1960's, describes the plight a wealthy Otavaleño boy who, upon entering the school system, encountered blatant and abusive discrimination from his teachers. His father, to remedy the problem, addressed the teacher bearing a present and thanking her for teaching his son. The action was a reflection of the old patron/client ties of the hacienda system, which was based upon the exchange of personal gifts and favors in exchange for improved treatment or equal access to Mestizo/White resources.

The second case, which occurred recently in Otavalo, demonstrates the power of the Indigenous movement. When the son of a wealthy Otavaleño was asked by his teacher to cut his traditional braid for the purposes of a school play, his mother directly

confronted the school's administration. When she was dismissed, she turned to the local Indigenous organization who suggested that she organize a committee to address the provincial director of education.

“Fortunately, because there were going to be elections soon, so the candidates had to be nice to us... We told [the director] our problem, that they wanted to cut our sons' braids for the school parade. It seems that he was sincerely shocked, so he sent an official note to the school stating that they could not cut the male Otavalan Indian's braids because Indians are the cultural foundation of the nation.” (De La Torre 2000: 41)

Indigenous organizations in the second story replaced the patron/client relationships of the first in two ways. Primarily, it was directly through Indigenous organization that the protagonist of the second story achieved her goals. It was the recommendation of an Indigenous organization that she form a committee to address her problem. The power of collective action replaced that of the hierarchically based patron-client relationship. Additionally, her reference to upcoming elections highlighted the larger political clout of the Indigenous population.

The wording of the director's note also illuminates the adoption of Indigenous identity as part of the Ecuadorian national identity. Indigenous culture is no longer dismissed as primitive and base; it is now upheld as 'the cultural foundation of our nation.' Symbols of Indian identity, such as the Otavalan male's braid, have become politicized by the Indigenous movement, and are proudly upheld as symbols of Ecuadorian identity. Whereas Indigenous cultural difference was essentialized by Mestizos and Caucasians for the purposes of domination, those same differences are now essentialized by Indigenous peoples working to assert their influence through cultural symbols. Symbols that once served to identify Indians as “primitive, mischievous,

untrustworthy, and morally degenerate,” are now used by Indians themselves to assert their difference in a positive light.

The political transformation that was initiated by the land reform bill of 1964 and carried out by the Indigenous movement, signified the introduction of the Indian to political discourse, but it did not represent the end of the battle. Many Caucasian and Mestizo Ecuadorians maintain the dualist conceptions of Indigenous peoples that were propagated by hegemonic powers through the mid 20th century. The federal government still seems wedded to a neo-liberal development process that concentrates power and resources in the hands of the wealthy. Indigenous peoples are still economically and politically marginalized, disproportionately suffering from the stigmata of the poor.

Conclusion

Ecuador's history is characterized by dualist identity constructions that place indigenous peoples and indigenous identity in the sphere of the marginalized other. Religious, political, and economic institutions have all used the same forms of domination. They have all denied the intrinsic value of indigenous identity, constructing meanings of indigenusness that are subjugated to European morality and economic needs. While recent developments in Ecuador have recognized indigenous identity as central to Ecuador's socio-political culture, control over the meaning of indigenusness has remained in the hands of mestizos. Such recognition has empowered indigenous peoples to utilize and construct their own identity and, as such, symbols of indigenusness have become central to the movement.

The Indigenous movement's goals have turned to combating forms of racism that were institutionalized by four centuries of Mestizo and Caucasian hegemony, justified by

a dualist conception of Indigenous identity. One of the movement's central tactics is the assertion of a positive ethnic indigenous identity that counters racialized constructions of indigeness. Such identity representations are meant to replace the dualist conceptions of indigeness that predicated indigenous marginalization for hundreds of years.

UINPI's goal is to achieve power over Indigenous identity by adopting the University structure, which holds the cultural capital of its role as the western center of legitimate knowledge. By controlling indigenous identity, indigenous leaders hope to reform both the collective conception of indigenous peoples and culture, as well as the indigenous individual's understanding of himself. While control over the symbols, studies, and histories of Indigenous peoples that present their collective identity to the general public still lies in Mestizo/White hands, UINPI is designed to put that power into the hands of Indigenous peoples for the first time since the conquest.

The following chapter will analyze UINPI's identity project. It will focus upon the school's use of the identity discourse to negotiate the political environment that determines its existence. Moreover, it will address the ways in which the school is proposing to assert indigeness using occidental structures of science and the University.

Chapter Two

To Reclaim or Reconstruct: Ethnic Identity Assertions and UINPI

La Universidad Intercultural de Los Nacionalidades Indigenas (UINPI) aims to do far more than claim the power to represent indigenous identity. UINPI is designed to reconstruct indigenous identity to address the social and political obstacles confronting indigenous people in Ecuador. This chapter will argue that the University explicitly aims to both deconstruct the dualist conceptions of indigenusness that have predicated Ecuadorian history, marginalizing indigenous peoples since the conquest, and reconstruct indigenous identity to confront the unique challenges presented by modernity.

UINPI is asserting an ethnic identity for indigenous people in Ecuador. To understand the meaning of such an assertion, it will be useful to compare it to the racialized identities that were explored in Chapter One.

Ethnicity and Race:

As we outlined in Chapter One, colonial and post-colonial mestizos labeled, defined, and classified indigenous peoples in terms better connected to the antitheses of European morality than any legitimate indigenous traits. Such labeling created an understanding of the Indian that not only served to justify mestizo domination, but also reinforced its power. In political and social arenas, indigenous peoples are now asserting their own identities in opposition to those constructed by colonial history. The distinction between race and ethnicity reflects the difference between the identity constructions of the 'other' authored by the dominant class, and the representation of the self, constructed by marginalized peoples.

Representations of ethnicity, like racialized definitions, are social constructs. Marginalized peoples employ them to counteract racialized discourses that devalue their political, social, historic, scientific, and religious worldviews.

“Ethnicity is the identity which members of the group place upon themselves, race is a label foisted on to them by non-members... While racial identity may be a crippling disability, ethnicity acts as a positive force for the protection and promotion of group interests.” (Carter, Jones, and McEvoy in Carter and Jones 1987, 191)

Ethnicity both promotes self-identification among group members and presents a reconstructed identity to the public, asserting indigenoussness as something unique, and outside of racialized mestizo identity constructions. Ethnic presentations are designed to represent the meaning of indigenoussness to both outsiders and members of the community – they are both collective representations and the substance of individual association.

Individual and Collective Identities

Ethnic movements are composed of two interrelated forms of identity – collective and individual. According to the founders of UINPL, “The collective concept of identity, from the experience of the indigenous communities, is understood as the [community] values rooted in language, earth, culture, history, and philosophy.⁶” Collective identity is the public and communal representation of an entire culture. Individual identity is the way each member of the community identifies themselves with the collective identity.

Collective identity is composed of the ways people are similar to each other, sharing interests and communal histories to form a collective consciousness. Kluckhohn and Murray (1948:35) wrote that:

⁶ Translated from original Spanish: “El concepto colectivo de identidad desde la experiencia de los pueblos Indígenas se entiende como el fortalecimiento de valores tales como la lengua, la tierra, la cultura, la historia, la filosofía.” (Ushina and Ramirez 2002)

“Every man is in certain respects:

- (a) like all other men
- (b) like some other men
- (c) like no other man.”

The first and last similarities of man respectively refer to human nature and individualism. Kluckhohn’s second distinction, however, highlights the characteristics which humans share with *certain* other human beings. Stephen Mannel (1994) describes these characteristics as “the modes of conduct, taste, and feeling which predominate among members of particular groups.”

UINPI asserts collective ethnicity by facilitating research, publications, and events that focus on indigenous subjects. The university is intended to be a center for intellectual production and a hub for the dissemination of that information. It a place for indigenous people to investigate their own culture and develop a greater understanding of the collective meaning of indigenesness, but it is also designed to assert that understanding in public arenas. Founders argue, “Indigenous wisdom and cosmology remain hidden. They need to be investigated and transformed into science so that they can coexist with universal philosophy and have a wider audience.” (Ushina and Ramirez, 2002) As such, publication is central to UINPI’s mission. The University is both producing knowledge and disseminating it to create an audience for indigenous representations of their own identities.

The University’s individual identity projects cannot be separated from its collective identity constructions because the individual both shapes, and is shaped by collective identity. UINPI’s focus on the individual is rooted in the desire to create a generation of indigenous people that is educated about and associated with their collective indigenous identity. Without such a population, collective identities would be

drained of their influence, for they are dependant upon a population that claims them as their own.

Indigenous individuals are as important in affecting political change as the representations of their collective identities. The famous feminist slogan, “the personal is political”⁷ emphasizes the political nature of the marginalized individual’s identity. Not only is the individual shaped by identity constructs, but in everyday life she also acts to shape them. The phrase highlights the role of the political in personal issues but it also highlights the importance of personal assertion in constructing the political. Because indigenous identity is marginalized, it is a political act for indigenous peoples to assert themselves as indigenous in Ecuadorian society. By emphasizing the individual, UINPI hopes to encourage indigenous students to cast off the negative stigmas associated with indigenous identities and unite along the lines of a positively asserted ethnic identity.

Indigenous leaders often refer to an epidemic of low self-esteem that plagues the indigenous community. This epidemic, they argue, is not a personal problem, but rather a political one. Self-degrading mentalities within the indigenous community are the consequence of decades of degrading racial identity constructions. Because racial constructions have placed indigenous identity in opposition to many of Christianity’s high moral principles (such as hard work, dedication, monogamy, etc...) some indigenous peoples have come to believe that it is inherently contradictory to be simultaneously moral and indigenous. This belief is an example of one of the ways in which racialized identity constructions become engrained in the psyche of both the

⁷ The feminist slogan “The personal is the political” carries a multiplicity of meaning. It argues that personal and intimate experience is not isolated, individual, or undetermined, but rather social, political, and systemic. “there is no private domain of a person’s life that is not political, and there is no political issue that is not personal.” (Charlotte Bunch, qtd in Kramarae et al. 1985: 334) “Self assertion is a political act.” (Celestine Ware qtd in Kramarae et. al. 1985: 334)

dominator and the dominated. In part, to counteract negative constructions, UINPI asserts a positive identity construction that is neither degrading nor in opposition to Christian morality. It asserts ethnic identities that legitimize the traditions and value systems of indigenous peoples, denying the authenticity of racialized constructions of identity.

UINPI's project, however, cannot be understood solely as a counter to mestizo-European racial constructions. While the indigenous movement aims to prepare individuals to be simultaneously engaged in indigenous identity and modernity, the modern age presents tremendous obstacles for indigenous identities. The University is working to assert a powerful, all-encompassing identity in the midst of an age that encourages fragmented, disparate identities.

Modernization, Multiculturalism, and the problem of identity:

Ushina and Ramirez argue: "If there is a relationship of value between identities, multiculturalism exists. If there is a skewed relationship of value and disrespect, acculturation exists. If there is mutual disrespect, cultural suicide exists."⁸ The University project focuses on the effects of racism, but while there exists a tremendous legacy of racist identity construction, the movement's goals extend beyond counteracting racism. UINPI and indigenous peoples face structural changes in society that place indigenous identity in an ambiguous context.

⁸ Translated from original Spanish: "Si existe una relación de valor a valor se da un proceso de interculturalidad. Si hay una relación de un valor hacia un antivalor existe acculturación. Si existe un proceso de antivalor a antivalor existe suicidio cultural" (Ushina and Ramirez)

Modernity has made identity distinctively problematic. No longer can individuals claim (or inherit) one clear-cut identity association. Kinship, religion, and place do not offer clearly defined templates for individual identity. Instead, disparate forces demand our attention and association. Individuals chose to associate with collective identities that vie for their attention. As we are exposed to greater quantities of information and groups, we must decide which we will associate with, and which we will dismiss. As such, individuals have agency in the construction of their own identity, forming and reforming themselves through associations with multiple collective identity groups. There is no singular group identity that entirely dominates the individual. Instead, identity is multilocational.

Take, for example, Angel, an indigenous student at La Catolica. While his matriculation at the University identifies him with other students at La Catolica, and defines an aspect of his identity, it is not all encompassing. He is also a student of development, Quechua, and a musician. He works at the corner store and plays soccer. While each of these associations helps to form Angel's identity, they are not necessarily united with each other. Their origins are, in fact, global: Soccer developed in Europe, while the music Angel plays is North American; Quechua is native to the Andean region. Individuals have choices in the ways they chose to construct their identities. While not all identities are accessible to everyone, there are a variety of collective associations that the individual can chose from. The more choices there are, the more complicated identity becomes. Angel is not *necessarily* a student at La Catolica. Upon matriculation, it was possible for him to construct his identity as a student at La Universidad Central or La Universidad Politecnica Salesiana. This is not to say that the individual has complete

agency in the formation of his own identity. Not all identities, however, are quite so easily affected by the individual. Angel's Quechua identity, for example, was never a choice in the same way that his University was. Indigenous peoples can no longer treat the categories of their identity as given. Instead, they must decide how to fit them into "projects of multiplicity and incommensurable identity schemes." (Calhoun, 11)

If we understand the problem that modernity poses to identity in terms of choice, it is easy to identify one of the central contradictions inherent in the University project. As the number of collective associations available to the individual grows, identity becomes increasingly complicated and fragmented. The University project seeks to maintain all-encompassing indigenous identities while simultaneously increasing the number of choices available to indigenous students in two ways.

Primarily, UINPI seeks to modernize indigenous culture. Modernity presents the individual with the ever-increasing ability to pick and chose from a multiplicity of identity schemes. As technology has expedited travel and increased communication, locales and communities that were once isolated have been penetrated by an increasingly wide variety of identity associations. Indigenous peoples in Ecuador are exposed to the same flashing MTV images as businessmen in Hong Kong. Transnational tourism, and the needs and opinions of North American and European travelers present indigenous people with ever-increasing difference, increasingly complicated industry. Transnational ethnic and political movements vie for the individual's attention and association. There is much to be said about such processes, but one affect of modernization is the amplification of choice, which complicates identity.

Moreover, UINPI's nature as a University is economically empowering. One of the central advantages of the University system over other forms of education is its ability to grant legitimate diplomas, recognized by business, government, and academia. As such, the University commodifies knowledge, exchanging it and a diploma for tuition and time. Such commodification is useful because diplomas grant the student access to a wide variety of professions that are well respected and have high salaries. In short, by improving the individual's economic status, the university provides the individual with opportunity, and access to choice. The University, as an institution, complicates indigenous identity.⁹

Modernity, and the increasingly transnational production and spread of signs, symbols, and beliefs, naturally presents the possibility of homogenization. I, like Comaroff, reject this notion, and tend to side with the opposition, and chose to emphasize "the counterprocesses in which the colonizing signs and practices come to be domesticated and localized in terms of familiar symbols and meanings." (Hannerz in Comaroff 1996, 175.) Modernity and commodified education complicate indigenous identity, but they do not assimilate it. Instead, they placing traditional ethnicities in environments that demand identity reconstruction. As such, UINPI reforms identity as much as it presents it. In the context of a movement with clear national and international policy goals, that reformation takes on political overtones.

⁹ Such an argument runs the risk of justifying the marginalized position of indigenous peoples as part of their identity. To improve conditions for indigenous peoples would be to deny them their identity. This is not my claim. It is more accurate to state that to improve conditions indigenous peoples would reform their identity. I place no value judgment upon this.

Identity Politics at UINPI

The indigenous population engages in an endless dialogue with national and international agents. Identity forms the hub of much of this interaction, which addresses concrete economic and political issues. Within that context, indigenous organizations naturally try to represent their collective identity in the most beneficial way possible. These politically motivated constructions are valuable in multiple contexts, and serve to empower communities ideologically and financially. In national political arenas, indigenous organizations demand the federal recognition of Ecuador's multi-nationality and the cultural diversity of the 11 primary indigenous cultural groups. In the international NGO market, representatives from indigenous communities compete to most effectively display the uniqueness of their culture to attract attention and funds for their activities. In the tourism industry, indigenous peoples sponsor and rightfully profit from events and agencies that assert and display their identity to an international audience. In all of these arenas, indigenous peoples renegotiate the codes of their own existence, presenting themselves differently according to the audience at hand. While such presentations of identity are politically and economically beneficial to the community, they require the reconstruction of indigenous identity. UINPI is, in essence, the perfect tool for the legitimate reconstruction/reformation of indigenous identity.

In a recent interview, Louis Maccas emphatically stated, "Nuestro Lucha es para ser Modernos!" (Our fight is to be modern) The University, he argued, will reap the benefits of occidental science for indigenous communities while simultaneously maintaining the legitimacy of indigenous identities, asserting them and their knowledges as useful to the universal sciences. (Steinsleger 2001) Indigenous leaders hope to extract

the studies of their cultures and sciences from the interesting but financially and politically inapplicable world of ethnographies and museums, asserting indigenous knowledge alongside and within occidental science as a legitimate, scientifically valid, worldview. Such an assertion is a reconstruction of indigenous identity. It does not only attempt to validate indigenous knowledge, but it also tries to fit those knowledges into the occidental framework. In doing so, it reconstructs indigenous science, validating it through scientific methods that are distant from 'traditional' indigenous culture.

UINPI's identity project is better understood as one designed to reconstruct and reform indigenous identity, than one to reclaim it. Whether it be the reconstruction of collective indigenous identities for political purposes and NGO fundraising, or the assertion of indigenusness as a viable ethnicity in the modern age, UINPI's identity project is not to establish the "true" meaning of indigenusness, but to mold indigenous identities to the political and social needs of the indigenous population. Paradoxically, such reformation is achieved through the assertion of essentialist, fixed understandings of indigenous identity through an occidental framework that legitimizes essentialized Truths.

Chapter Three

Reconstructing Identity with Essentialism

Indigenous peoples daily confront demeaning, racialized constructions of their identity. The results of such constructions, according to Louis Maccas, (the rector of UINPI,) include Indigenous students who enter the University system only to say, “Now I have my degree... I am not Indian. I am a citizen.” (Steinsleger) The deep seeded belief that there is an opposition between citizenship and education on the one hand, and indigenusness on the other, is exactly what the University aims to deconstruct. Yet, because racialized conceptions of indigenusness are engrained into the Ecuadorian psyche, deconstruction is insufficient. To effectively combat racism, Indigenous people must assert a strong, positive ethnic identity that can be understood by outsiders, and associated with by indigenous people. Because strength is essential, UINPI’s identity assertions do not reflect the fluid nature of identity that we reviewed in chapter two. Instead, using occidental science in a structure called *scientific multiculturalism*, the university asserts essentialist identities constructed out of the historical traditions, sciences, and knowledges of indigenous peoples. I will argue that while such understandings do not reflect the relational nature of identity supported by John Comaroff and myself, they are nevertheless useful in Ecuador’s post-colonial political and economic context. They serve as actors in the formation of modern indigenous identity, asserting difference and a positively defined identity with which indigenous peoples can associate and then use throughout their political battles.

Identity Constructions and Ethnopolitics

Ecuadorian indigenous peoples and the organizations that represent them assert ethnicity as both essential and primordial. They point to history, deriving a series of indigenous values and cultural traits that are inherent to indigeness. While these essentialized primordial constructions of indigenous ethnicity are politically useful, they threaten to deny the complexity and diversity of indigeness, generalizing properties of the whole from the traits of the particular. (Calhoun 1994) For example, in UINPI's Proyecto Academico Curricular, Angel Ramirez and Pedro Ushina identify a series of Indigenous values that elders in all Ecuadorian indigenous communities abide by:

Ana llulla (not to lie;) Ama killa (not to be idle;) Ama shua (not to rob;) Shuk shukulla (A single heart;) Shuk Yuyailla (A single thought;) Shuk makilla (A single fist;) Multiculturalism; Personal and social dignity; Solidarity and reciprocity; Minga; Authenticity; Integrity (Ushina and Ramirez 2001)

These principles, rooted in history and declared universal for Ecuadorian indigenous peoples, form the basis of the University's pedagogy. They do not, however, reflect principles universal to *all* indigenous nations in Ecuador. Quechua is used to grant these principles legitimacy as indigenous tradition, but it also betrays their limits. UINPI represents many indigenous communities that do not speak Quechua, yet principles rooted in Quechua are claimed universal for all communities. While it is discursively recognizing the plurality of traditions in Ecuador, the University is essentializing indigenous value systems based upon a Quechua tradition.

Such understandings of identity, based upon immutable historical characteristics, have been debated for years. I will take an approach to identity and identity politics that is influenced by the works of John Comaroff and Craig Calhoun. Like Comaroff, I reject the validity of the primordialist/constructivist debate that has dominated identity theory,

and like Calhoun, I assert the validity of those discourses in identity politics, arguing that essentialized collective identities can legitimately be deconstructed and/or asserted by marginalized groups. Ethnic groups may choose to simultaneously deconstruct racialized constructions of their culture, and assert essentialist ethnic identities.

In the identity theory debate, theories of inherited primordial identities have traditionally opposed social constructivism. Primordialism constructs identity as biologically and historically defined, whereas constructivism argues that identities are formed through social discourse. The opposition of *primordialism* and *social constructivism* is referred to in the field of psychology as the “Nature vs. Nurture” debate.

UINPI’s tactics seem to transcend this opposition. While the university is asserting primordial, essentialist ethnic identities, Indigenous leaders in the University are simultaneously claiming the socially constructed nature of racial identities imposed upon indigenous peoples (Maccas Reflexiones...; Ushina 2001) Such diverse tactics do not mesh with the diametric opposition between social constructivism and primordialism, because the assertion of one questions the legitimacy of the other.

Comaroff’s understanding of ethnicity as constructed through relations of hierarchy, however, incorporates UINPI’s tactics and the politics of identity into its framework. He rejects the assumption that ethnicity is a concept that can be defined or understood abstractly. Instead, he argues that, “there cannot be a theory of ethnicity or nationality per se, only a theory capable of elucidating the empowered production of difference and identity.” (Comaroff 1996: 166) Ethnic identity emerges out of relations of inequality, wherein groups constitute themselves through dialectics of “attribution and self-assertion.” (166) *The distinction made between ethnic and racial identity*

constructions is useful here – Comaroff argues that ethnicity is the product of both racial (attribution) and ethnic (self-assertion) constructions of identity. It is produced through daily encounters between the dominator and the dominated in mundane representations of difference, manifested through subjects, signs, and styles. These expressions of difference, argues Comaroff, become engrained and “take on a powerful salience in the experience of those who bear them, often to the extent of appearing natural, essential or primordial.” They then last beyond the conditions of inequality that produced them to form persistent ethnic identities. These identities, however, are continually being reconfigured as cultures find themselves in hierarchical power relations.

UINPI reconstructs indigenous identity with reference to the primordial roots of the indigenous nations it represents, which can be found in religion, history, and cultural practice. It establishes difference by connecting identity and modern indigenous ethnicity to history, asserting essentialized constructions of modern indigenous ethnicity based upon the historical traditions of indigenous nations. For example, *El Proyecto Academico* refers to *the* indigenous conception of space and time:

Man lives in a historical-geographic context wherein the categories of space and time are not separated. The geographic space is so important that the man founded in nature considers land like a mother¹⁰

While indigenous traditions, rooted in sustainable agriculture, may support this conception, to assume that all indigenous people maintain such an understanding of space and time would ignore the current state of indigenous peoples, many of whom work as urban vendors, wage-labors, and maids. Leaders in the indigenous movement maintain that indigenous ethnicity has a primordial essence, which always has and always will

¹⁰ Translated from Spanish: “El hombre vive en un contexto histórico demográfico en donde las categorías tiempo y espacio no están separadas. El espacio geográfico es tan importante que el hombre proveniente de la naturaleza considera a la tierra como madre.” (Ushina and Ramirez 2001: 2.2.1)

form the basis of their world-view. Comaroff labels assertions of indigenous identity such as this, “ethnonationalism.”

UINPI functions to reveal that essence through occidentally regulated, historical and scientific investigations of indigenous tradition. In this sense, UINPI is practicing historical essentialism. This construction of identity has its opponents. In the context of African American culture, Dyson argues against historical essentialism:

“Distinct features of black life nuance and shape black cultural expression, from the preaching of Martin Luther King to the singing of Gladys Knight. They do not, however, form the basis of a black racial or cultural essence. Nor do they indicate that *the* meaning of blackness will be expressed in a quality or characteristic without which a person, act, or practice no longer qualifies as black. Rigid racial essentialism must be opposed.” (Dyson 1993: xxi)

According to Dyson, the historical experience and cultural tradition of a group should not define the essence of the group or its members. Dyson argues that by defining identity in these terms, academics stifle the possibility of individual agency and social progress outside of historically determined boundaries of blackness (or indigenoussness.) Concrete definitions of cultural groups are dangerous because they are perceived to be determinate. Historically constructed identity definitions threaten to limit individual agency by telling individuals that to be truly ‘black’ or ‘indigenous,’ they must act and behave within the defined boundaries of their group. This, argues Dyson, is narrow-minded and disempowering.

While Dyson’s argument is powerful, it does not account for Comaroff’s understanding of the relational nature of ethnic representations. While historically essentialized constructions of identity are not accurate, they serve as ethnic assertions that do not define identity, but rather work to form the relationships that produce it. Historically essentialized constructions of ethnicity, like that which UINPI is producing,

do not define ethnicity, but rather serve to assert difference in a political interaction between the dominant and the dominated that continually reconstructs ethnicity.

Knowledge of social and identity theory has the potential to multiply the power of the marginalized's ethnic identity assertions, because while constructing primordial ethnic identity's, educated minorities can deconstruct the (dualist) racialized constructions of their own identity that are perpetuated by the dominant class. Calhoun touches on the power of such an identity politic.

Calhoun suggests, "To essentialist reason we add constructivism, and to this dualism we add the possibilities of both deconstructing and claiming identities." (Calhoun 1994: 19) Individuals and institutions have the power to lay claim to some identities while deconstructing others. Depending upon the context, marginalized groups can analyze identity in light of either of these theories – deconstructing the historical production of identities such as blackness, indigenoussness, etc... or claiming those identities as valid and their own. Calhoun argues that "Rather than a simple opposition between essentialism and constructivism, it is important to see a field of possible strategies for confronting issues of identity. Under certain circumstances... self-critical claims to strong, basic, and shared identity may be useful."(Calhoun 1994: 17)

Calhoun's assertion suggests the power of identity politics – a practice that many minority movements and academics are heavily engaged in. For example, some feminist theorists, like Luce Irigaray, strive to claim identity – insisting on a distinctive "imaginary" rooted in female bodies. (1985) They assert essentially unique and determinist qualities of women while simultaneously deconstructing inequalities based upon those differences. Indigenous institutions, like CONAIE and UINPL, engage in a

similar politic in their battles for cultural and socio-economic equality. UINPI and other indigenous organizations dismantle the dualist, historically defined racial constructions of indigenous identity that we reviewed in chapter one, while simultaneously constructing an academically legitimated version of indigenous ethnicity.

Comaroff argues that the tenacity of constructivist and primordialist social theories that should have been “consigned... to the trash heap” long ago, is due to their adoption by political agents; social theory has reappeared as ideology. (1996: 164, 180)

UINPI utilizes occidental theories of science as well as identity for its own identity politic. Leaders in the indigenous movement have realized the importance of science and academic legitimacy to western institutions and pedagogies. Accordingly, the University movement has adopted the dominant framework, constructing a methodology for legitimating their identity project that utilizes western scientific methods to validate non-western pedagogies and knowledges. This integration of occidental and indigenous knowledges is termed *scientific multiculturalism*.

Scientific Multiculturalism at UINPI

“Scientific multiculturalism is the interrelationship of the knowledges of original cultures with the knowledge of universal cultures.”¹¹ Using it, the University integrates the occidental scientific method with indigenous subjects. Scientific Multiculturalism legitimates indigenous constructions of culture by adopting the internationally recognized, legitimated methods of occidental science. Such frameworks of legitimacy

¹¹ Translation from Spanish: “La interculturalidad científica considera a la interculturalidad como interrelación de saberes de las culturas originarias con los saberes de las culturas universales.” (Ushina and Ramirez)

are essential to a movement that is dependant upon occidental money to effectively confront racism.

The international scientific community follows strict guidelines that govern the legitimacy of its investigations. Such guidelines ensure scientific accuracy, but they also exclude the knowledges of peoples who lack access to western scientific theory, instruments and education, or who maintain pedagogies that are incompatible with western structures. Legitimate sciences are therefore dominated by people who have been raised within the occidental post-Cartesian framework and have access to scientific knowledge, instruments and education. UINPI attempts to upset that dominion by adopting occidental techniques to investigate indigenous culture.

“Science and technology... offer the original communities new instruments to use for the purposes of understanding their own cultures. As such, the information, laboratories, and means of communication [of occidental science,]-grant access to cultural knowledge.”¹² Scientifically legitimated cultural knowledge is politically and economically useful. As greater knowledge is ascertained about indigenous peoples, the movement’s identity construction is fortified. Indigenous peoples have a longer and more developed history to refer to in their attempts to establish difference. Scientifically developed understandings of indigenous people and heritage bolster the primordial nationalism that is central to the indigenous movement. Well-developed, positive ethnic constructions of indigenous identity effectively challenge racially dominated understandings of indigenusness, reconstructing indigenusness through that interaction. Working to reconstruct the public’s conception of indigenusness, UINPI strives to grant

¹² Translation from Spanish: “la ciencia y la tecnologia actual ofrece a los pueblos originarios nuevos instrumentos para conocer sus propios saberes, asi la informatica, los laboratorios, los medios de comunicaci3n social, perminten conocer cada vez m1s los saberes de las culturas.” (Ushina and Ramirez)

indigenous peoples access to resources in Ecuador that are currently denied them because of prevailing racist sentiments.

While the potential for positive, scientifically legitimated, identity constructions is strong within Ecuador, such constructions also have international benefits. Globalization has placed indigenous organizations in the context of a transnational network of forces – some supporting, and some opposing the indigenous cause. As such, indigenous organizations must operate within this framework to obtain support and financial backing. CONAIE, more than most indigenous organizations, has succeeded in its efforts to network transnationally. While this success has been financially and politically rewarding, it has also forced the organization to present indigenous identity in a very specific way that is appealing to outside organizations. Scientific multiculturalism serves to present indigenous identity, using occidental discourse, to outside agents enveloped in western pedagogy.

While scientific multiculturalism has the power to assert some indigenous constructions, it also has the potential to silence other indigenous voices. The University threatens to delegitimize those productions of indigenous ethnicity that do not implement the occidentally oriented framework of scientific multiculturalism. By establishing itself as *the* source for scientifically legitimate indigenous knowledge, the University has the potential to silence voices outside of the system, denying their legitimacy by asserting the importance of the scientific framework. The University is not only creating a center for intellectual production, it is also claiming itself as the legitimate source for its product – indigenous knowledge. The project concentrates the power of collective identity assertion under one roof, empowering some within the indigenous community while

simultaneously disempowering others. This concern is especially pertinent when viewed in light of some of the internal conflict within the Ecuadorian indigenous community¹³.

This is not a denial of the legitimacy of CONAIE's struggle, nor is it a condemnation of the indigenous movement for its methodology. Indigenous "peoples have been forced to seek extra-national support because national governments and diverse national [and international] groups of power have increasingly encroached their territories and deny them any rights." (Mato 2000: 343) In order to be heard in the political struggle, organizations like CONAIE must negotiate with a variety of outside agents. These agents, which include religious organizations, human rights and environmental NGO's, universities, and philanthropic foundations, have the limited resources for which indigenous organizations and others are forced to compete. As such, it is the Ecuadorian indigenous movement's goal to have the most attractive representation of its ethnicity possible. CONAIE, along with most other organizations of its kind, tailors the presentation of its constituency to these goals. As such, CONAIE, and the indigenous communities it represents must "renegotiate their own codes with the codes of those who hold financial and political power, and who, at the same time, are willing to back their demands." (Mato, 348) The indigenous movement must legitimize itself and its constituency as "authentically" indigenous to its financial and political backers. While UINPL, through scientific multiculturalism, may establish a monopoly over identity representation, silencing other indigenous voices, it is designed to assert the

¹³ There is conflict within the indigenous movement over a number of key issues. The political arena has empowered certain visions of indigenous progress while it has disempowered others. Unfortunately, many sense a growing ideological gap between wealthy indigenous leaders and the overwhelmingly impoverished populous.

ethnic constructions of identity that most effectively challenge the dualist ideologies of the mestizo ruling class. That force can only be achieved by adopting the frameworks of the dominant class, asserting indigenous ideologies that challenge hegemonic assumptions within their own discourse.

Conclusion

While UINPI's essentialized, primordial representations of indigenous identity reflect long outdated assumptions about the nature of ethnicity and identity, they are manifestations of the university's political role as a representative of a marginalized population in identity conflict with dominant mestizo classes. Within the context of Comaroff's theory of ethnicity as produced through conflict, UINPI serves as a participant in the complex of relationships that perpetuates and gives rise to ethnicity.

This is not to say that UINPI is constructing ethnicity from scratch. Instead, it is utilizing primordial representations of indigenous culture to influence the reconstruction of an indigenous ethnicity that addresses the problems of modernity that we addressed in chapter two.

To do so, UINPI has invoked occidental frameworks of social and natural science. By adopting occidental social theory and scientific frameworks, the indigenous movement both strengthens its own identity assertion and empowers itself to destabilize racist ideologies. In this way, the University serves to simultaneously present powerful constructions of indigenous identity and deconstruct the racialized constructions of indigenusness that have marginalized indigenous peoples for so long. As Calhoun

argues, identity theory grants the indigenous movement the power to address racism using a multi-pronged attack of ethnic assertion and racial deconstruction.

Through scientific multiculturalism, occidental approaches to science serve to strengthen the Universities representation of primordial indigenous identities. Science simultaneously grants the university access to new methods of investigation that develop and legitimize indigenous knowledge about their own culture. While this framework threatens to consolidate the power of representation under one roof, it is a very affective tactic for the indigenous community to combat racism and assert difference.

Ideological racism, however, is not the only factor that marginalizes indigenous peoples. Socio-economic domination, justified by racism, has characterized mestizo relationships with indigenous peoples since the conquest. While racist ideologies were central to such domination, they did not single-handedly cause it. The following chapter will examine the roots of indigenous failure within the University system, arguing that UINPI's political project as expressed through its identity framework, does not effectively address the socio-economic obstacles that indigenous communities face.

Chapter Four

The Roots of Indigenous Drop Out Rates

La Universidad Intercultural de Los Nacionalidades y Pueblos Indígenas (UINPI) asserts criticisms against Ecuadorian society and the national university education system that are couched in a discourse of identity and ethnic difference. Indigenous peoples, they argue, have a vastly different pedagogical understanding of the world than mestizos, and approach academics with unique learning styles and educational needs. Because indigenous pedagogies do not mesh well with the traditional education system, Ecuador is in need of a university that caters to their specific pedagogical needs. By framing its discourse in ethnic terms, the indigenous university asserts difference and employs a strong ethnic identity. Discourses that focus on ethnicity, however, ignore the central problem for indigenous students in the University system: structural inequalities in primary and secondary education. The University's approach is indicative of its role as an ethno-political figure, working to assert difference and gain support within the confines of international and Ecuadorian political institutions. While the ethnic framework is politically important, it does not address the central and far more difficult socio-economic problems that confront indigenous peoples. This chapter will argue that while pedagogy and cultural displacement contribute to the failure rate of indigenous students in the University system, underlying structural inequalities form the root of the problem. Under-funded public primary and secondary school systems, especially bilingual schools in rural areas, fail to provide students with a basic preparatory education. As such, students are unable to compete in a University system that bases

academic standards upon the performance of a middle and upper-class population, able to educate it's children in private schools. By focusing solely on issues of ethnicity and identity, UINPI denies itself the opportunity to address powerful structural problems within indigenous communities. UINPI must employ existing tribal college models to balance its curriculum with both practical and theoretical programs.

UINPI's Criticisms

UINPI's "Proyecto Academico" asserts criticisms of traditional Ecuadorian society and education that serve as justification for the University. By highlighting problems in Ecuadorian society, the project hopes to define spaces where the university will fill gaps in Ecuador's socio-political climate. Such justification is necessary because UINPI is dependant upon federal and NGO resources that need clear-cut solutions to well-defined problems. UINPI's criticisms can be broken into categories, which we will address separately.

The first set of criticisms targets large-scale social problems in Ecuador, addressing national issues of institutional racism and economic marginalization. Many are in response to the dualist racial constructions and identity suppression that we focused on in chapter one. Some directly target the political system for its impotence in recognizing diversity. The University's criticisms are as follows:

- Ignorance to the existence of different and diverse human groups.
- Refusal to accept the existence of different cultures and languages.
- Failure to recognize the existence and presence of indigenous wisdom.
- Resistance to the recognition of the presence of science and technology in indigenous communities. (Ramirez and Ushina 2001)

These first criticisms address the processes of othering that were a prominent part of state practice and religious ideology through the mid twentieth century. They highlight the

persistence of many of the central racial constructions that defined indigenous peoples for the mestizo population.

Indigenous cultures are marginalized by individuals and organizations that identify indigenous people in terms antithetical to their own values. It is common to hear the same stereotypes that prevailed during colonial and post-colonial eras echoed today. Indigenous peoples are still defined as dirty, unintelligent, promiscuous, and primitive. Instead of recognizing the pervasive discrimination that structures Ecuadorian life, many Mestizos blame the problems of the indigenous population on the individual. Racially constructed, essentialist understandings of indigenous peoples place the blame for economic and political marginalization on indigenous peoples themselves, ignoring the long history of social and economic marginalization imposed by whites and mestizos.

While most mestizos and whites in Ecuador deny their own racism, discursively recognizing the value of indigenusness and multiculturalism, many marginalize indigenous identity in their everyday actions. For example, many indigenous women are employed as empleadas (maids) in middle and upper class households in the city. While their employers are often self-proclaimed liberals, discursively agreeing with indigenous rights, they continue to demand long hours and pay unlivable salaries. This forces empleadas to ask for favors and loans from their employers. Constant indebtedness objectifies the empleada, backgrounding her needs while imposing a system of debt servitude similar to those in post-colonial haciendas. Leaders in the indigenous movement highlight the contradictions between the prevailing liberal ideology and the daily actions that maintain indigenous marginalization in Ecuadorian society.

While UINPI's first criticisms are directed towards general problems in Ecuadorian society, they also apply directly to the Higher education system, for universities have a powerful effect on dominant discourse. Ecuadorian universities, as part of a larger socio-economic context, have focused their resources on subjects that prepare students for an occidental market. As such, traditional universities have not provided classes on indigenous religion, culture, science, or technology. While some universities, such as the Universidad Politecnica Salesiana, have developed extensive anthropology, agriculture, and development departments, those departments that focus on indigenous science and culture understand them as strictly anthropological or historical subjects. Attention is paid to indigenous issues within the context of social science, but leaders within the movement want their sciences and pedagogies removed from objectified study as cultural remnants. Indigenous knowledges, they argue, should be applied to modern understandings of science. Indigenous science and pedagogies are not historical, the founders argue, they are both current and applicable to occidental understandings of the world. . (Ushina and Ramirez 2002)

UINPI directs its second set of criticisms to the faults of the national University system. They focus on the occidental orientation of Ecuador's universities, and their ensuing inability to address the needs of Ecuador's peoples – indigenous and mestizo.

UINPI's criticisms are as follows:

- The imposition of an elitist and alienating superior education program that excludes indigenous sectors and populations.
- The use of foreign educational models and stereotypes.
- The national higher education system has not demonstrated the capacity to address the social, economic, and political requirements of the country because it develops ideas outside of local realities. (Ushina and Ramirez 2002)

The criticisms boil down to one central attack on the public University system: Ecuadorian Universities use a western pedagogical framework which is compatible with neither Ecuador's national needs, nor Indigenous peoples' pedagogies, and is therefore alienating and elitist.

Angel Ramirez, UINPI's academic coordinator, argued that Indigenous peoples' failure rates in the traditional university system are due to a pedagogical gap rooted in the Occidental orientation of traditional Universities. Indigenous and western pedagogies differ so drastically that indigenous students cannot succeed within a traditional university system. Traditional Universities were born out of western colonial, religious, and economic structures. Such occidental structures are both pedagogically distant from indigenous understandings, and considered by many indigenous peoples to be the source of their marginalization. The results are devastating on the indigenous student population. One professor of anthropology at the Universidad Politecnica Salesiana (which has the strongest indigenous studies department and the highest enrollment of indigenous students in the University system) estimates that 80% of indigenous students enrolled at the University leave before finishing classes and writing their final thesis.¹⁴ Other professors and students confirmed this estimate.

Founders of UINPI argue that to address the needs of indigenous peoples, the university system needs a program that validates indigenous pedagogy within the academic context. La Universidad Intercultural de Los Nacionalidades y Pueblos Indigenas is designed to be that program.

¹⁴ From interview conducted 1/19/02

UINPI's allegations of occidental orientation are rooted in the history of the university system. We must, therefore, examine those roots to understand their argument for "La Universidad Intercultural de los Nacionalidades y Pueblos Indigenas."

Higher Education in Ecuador: From Colonial to Occidental

The Catholic Church established Ecuador's first Universities during the colonial period. They focused on humanistic and ecclesiastical studies, but also developed departments in algebra, geometry, civil history, Spanish and New World jurisprudence, public law, political economy, and medicine; all of the departments were focused on European disciplines. The University system was open only to Spaniards; those mestizos who did manage to study did so illegally.

During the early national period, public universities remained in the hands of various church organizations. The shining star of the system was the National Polytechnic School, which was run by the German Jesuits and focused upon technical fields such as architecture, machinery, civil engineering, geology, botany, and mining.

The liberal revolution of 1895¹⁵ effected significant changes in the structure of the university system. By reducing the influence of the church, it improved academics and established limited academic freedom. Emphasis was placed on occidental science and the disciplines necessary for national growth. Focus shifted away from religion, opting instead for a scientific pedagogy.

¹⁵ See Chapter One "The National Period"

In 1918, the Cordoba reforms of Argentina¹⁶, and the examples of university reform that led from it, resulted in Ecuador's first University reform. The changes led to student participation in University organizations and the beginning of a movement to grant students the ability to challenge professors. Between 1940 and 1970 the stability of the University system fluctuated with the Nation's population booms and economic and political turmoil. Such fluctuations resulted in weak academic structures that were highly vulnerable to political turmoil.

In 1970, la Universidad Central de Ecuador initiated the country's second major university reform. Focused primarily upon the democratization of schools, the reform eliminated entrance exams, integrated the student's right to challenge professors, and granted student's increased power in the administration of the University. The goal was co-governance. (Knowles 1978: 1350-1351)

While early reforms in education granted increased control over the institutional structure and academic environment of the universities, they failed to reorient the system to address the needs of minority students. The student population remained overwhelmingly white/mestizo, thus the increased power of the students within the institutional structure only led to reforms based upon majority concerns.

¹⁶ Argentina's University Reform Movement of 1918 was initiated by student protests in Cordoba, pressing for progressive changes in both the university system and the federal government. The reform called for student participation, access for the middle class, tuition-free admission and open admissions, institutional autonomy from the state, mechanisms to protect academic freedom, and open hiring practices. The changes that were instituted in Argentina echoed throughout Latin America, initiating reforms throughout the continent. (Schugrensky 2002; Torres 1991)

Table 1: National financing of higher education in Ecuador (percent of GDP)

	1981	1983	1985	1987	1989	1991	1992	1993	1994
GDP per cap. (1986) (ppp \$)	3193	2919	2913	2769	2788	2835	2830	2886	29489
National Government Budget	17.7	18.5	18.8	20.5	16.8	15.9	15.9	15.7	15.5
Education	4.6	4.4	4.3	3.9	3	2.9	3.1	2.7	2.9
Higher Education	1.15	1.1	1.1	1	0.75	0.7	0.75	0.69	0.7
Health	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.1	0.9	1	0.8	0.7
Public Debt	3.2	5	5	7.1	5.7	5.1	5.2	3.9	3.6

Sources: GDP: Penn World Tables, on Ecuador Homepage (1996)

[Http://www.instruct1.cit.cornell.edu/Courses/crp522/ecbsd.htm](http://www.instruct1.cit.cornell.edu/Courses/crp522/ecbsd.htm)

(Jameson, 272)

By 1996, the nation's higher education system was under distress. Between 1982 and 1993, the student population grew by 33%, placing increased demands on the system. Academic and financial resources were thinly spread amongst an ever-growing student population. Moreover, there was growing public discontent with the system, which received little attention and fewer resources from a federal government that was continually confronting neo-liberal economic reform. As the government floundered financially, resorting to international loans for support, the university system suffered similar fiscal pressure. Public expenditures for education declined, falling from 26% of the budget in 1981 to 19% in 1994, and from 4.6% of GDP in 1981 to 2.7% in 1993. (See Table 1) Real expenditures on higher education fell by almost fifty percent, and expenditures per student fell to 40% of their 1980 values. (Jameson, 271) Major public Universities were burdened with large debts, and the results were devastating for their educational performance. In September 1995, the monthly salary of a full-time professor at one regional University was \$260. Because salaries are so low, many professors are forced to work jobs outside of the University, detracting from their ability to spend time with their students and classes. (Jameson, 272)

Because funding is limited, academic institutions have focused on high demand, low cost departments; these include programs in engineering, economics, and business

management. Universities have spent little time and energy on departments that focus on indigenous studies, because they are not in high demand and are not financially viable.

The history of superior education in Ecuador confirms the accusations of the University's leaders. Higher education in Ecuador developed out of the same religious framework that marginalized and worked to assimilate indigenous peoples during the conquest and national periods. While religious university structures gave way to post-Cartesian scientific approaches to education, non-European pedagogies have received very little attention. Financial limitations have diminished the quality of the higher education system, but they have particularly harmed indigenous studies programs. Occidental structures continue to control the universities structure and academic orientation.

The validity of UINPI's criticisms, however, is not in question; traditional universities do not successfully accommodate indigenous knowledge and pedagogy. The primary factor behind the perpetual failure of indigenous students within the University system, however, is not pedagogy. University professors and indigenous students claim that the indigenous dropout rate is due to the inability of many indigenous students to academically perform at a university level. Many indigenous students, they argue, lack the basic reading and writing skills necessary for success. To reconcile the difference between UINPI's assertion that devastating pedagogical gaps cause failure, and the belief that dropout rates can be attributed to academic shortcomings, it is essential to understand how indigenous students are prepared for the University environment.

Ecuador's Schooling System

Indigenous education was originally designed to dismantle indigenous identity. The first schools, established by missions during the post-colonial period, were created to replace the 'savagery' of indigenous youth with western religion and culture. All schools during the colonial and post-colonial periods were missionary – established by mestizos to convert the indigenous population to Christianity. It wasn't until the mid twentieth century that the state began to recognize rural education as a function of the government.

In the early 1950's the state began to take responsibility for rural education. It did not, however, run its own programs. Instead, the Minister of Education oversaw a number of external organizations that operated schools within the nation. While the XII constitution of 1906 established the separation of church and state, many of these organizations were based upon missionary principles.

Between 1952 and 1979, the government contracted with the Summer Institute for Linguistics (SIL) to provide education to rural areas. In its attempts to reach highland indigenous peoples, SIL established the first bilingual education program. The organization translated the bible into Quechua, and preached Christianity along with basic reading and writing skills. Students learned Spanish by translating the Bible. The detrimental effects of SIL's religious orientation on indigenous culture were recognized by the federal government in 1979, when the Roldos/Hurtado administration terminated SIL's contract and banned them from teaching in Ecuador.

Other organizations operating schools in rural Ecuador at the time included the Misión Andina, which was a part of UNESCO, (United Nations Educational, Scientific,

and Cultural Organization,) a division of the United Nations. Misión Andina, which operated between 1956 and 1975, promoted rural education based upon assimilationist policies and ideals.

It tried to modify the cultural patterns of the indigenous population, and the mobility of their social structure to affect integration with the national community.¹⁷

Until 1980, indigenous peoples in the Mission Andina program were taught alongside mestizo campesinos. Indigenous language was not recognized, and many indigenous students were unable to learn in classrooms conducted in a language that was not their own. Known as “castellanizacion,” this educational framework focused on creating a singular national identity by assimilating indigenous races. National identity focused upon mestizo and European ideals, excluding all languages, practices, and cultures that were not part of the dominant mestizo society.

Between 1980 and 1984, the federal government instated the Quechua sub-program, intended to establish an education system constructed for the Quechua population. In 1980, El Centro de Capacacion Bilingue began to integrate the Quechua language with educational projects in Chimborazo through the translation of Castilian texts into Quechua. The federal government established DINEIB (Direccion Nacional de Educacion Indigena) in 1981 to set up an official written version of Quechua – a traditionally spoken language. The project alphabetized Quechua while establishing a national curriculum to teach bilingual education. Between its inception and 1984, DINEIB educated approximately 1200 alphabetizers and promoters of the Quechua,

¹⁷ Translated from Spanish: “De hecho se trata de obtener la modificacion de los patrones culturales de la poblacion indigena y la movilidad de su estructura social para los efectos de su integracion a la gran comunidad nacional.” Cossio, Consuelo Yanez. *La Educacion Indigena en Ecuador* (Quito: Nina Comunicaciones) p. 46

Siona-Secoya, Huao and Chachi communities; sixty-five books were published, and more than 120 bilingual teachers were trained by the program. (Cossio, 56)

DINEIB's concept empowered indigenous communities because the federal government funded the project while indigenous peoples executed it with the help of University professors in Quito. For the first time, indigenous peoples had input into the educational institutions that schooled their children and interpreted their culture. The institution marked the beginning of an educational pedagogy that recognized the validity of indigenous knowledges and the importance of cultural maintenance. DINEIB's existence, however, did not guarantee that its programs and curriculums would be implemented. It wasn't until several years later that the institution's work would be implemented in rural communities

Throughout this period, the German government funded between 70 and 80 bilingual primary schools in Ecuador. The concept used a centralized curriculum and indigenous teachers from the same communities as the schools. The project's goal was to "develop and validate a mode of bilingual, multicultural education at the primary level for the Quechua speaking population."¹⁸ The schools, however, were ineffective because most of the teachers were poorly educated. "Teachers received instructions on what they should do in their classes, but not how to do it."¹⁹ Indigenous education was caught in a bind formed by the simultaneous desire for indigenous teachers, and a lack of candidates for the positions worsened by the older generation's lack of education.

¹⁸Translated from Spanish: "Desarrollar y validar un modelo de educacion bilingue intercultural a nivel primario para la poblacion Quichua hablante." (Cossio, 60)

¹⁹ Translated from Spanish: "el maestro recibe instrucciones sobre lo que deberia hacer en sus clases, pero no sabe como a hacerlo." (Cossio, 61)

It wasn't until 1984 that the government applied the bilingual education program to the entire system. PROMET-AMER (Promet-Atención a la Marginalidad Educativa Rural) used bilingual education within its schools, but for the same purposes of assimilation. The program's goal was to diminish the "isolation" of indigenous peoples. PROMET-AMER, however, dissolved because of political turmoil, and the system readopted the old postulates of indigenous education.

In 1986, the Minister of education implemented the *Modelo de Educacion Macac*. The program was the first federally supported school model that placed indigenous peoples in teaching and administrative positions. Macac was, in essence, the implementation of the DINEIB curriculum.

In 1988, DINEIB was adopted again, this time under the umbrella of the Ministry of Education. The ministry established a centralized curriculum for bilingual schools in Ecuador. Focusing on both bilingual and multicultural education, it incorporated all of the indigenous education programs that had previously been under the control of Non-Governmental Organizations. Now DINEIB was a federally funded program, directly connected to Ecuador's indigenous party, CONAIE. The two organizations maintained a working relationship, in which CONAIE established programs for teacher instruction and the investigation of didactic material for the smaller chachi, tsachi, a'i and awa communities. (See Appendix C)

In 1993, under pressure from the indigenous organizations, the federal government systemized the bilingual multicultural education program that CONAIE and DINEIB had designed. The rural education system now operates under the "modelo intercultural bilingüe," which integrates indigenous sciences, beliefs and

languages with those of mainstream culture. Indigenous languages are taught as the primary form of communication, while Spanish is taught as a mode of intercultural interaction. Each language is taught in conjunction with its own socio-cultural reality. As such, occidental sciences and practices are taught in Spanish, while indigenous religion, science, and traditions are all taught in native languages. The program is constructed to value indigenous heritage and identity, while simultaneously providing the education necessary to survive in the mestizo world.

Were the rhetoric of the bilingual education system consistent with the actions of the program, the university would (at least in 10 years) have a weak pedagogy argument. Indigenous students would be educated in both indigenous culture and western knowledges, and would therefore have the tools to succeed in either world. The realities of the rural education system, however, are far from the promises of bilingual pedagogy theory. A vast disparity exists between the rhetoric of the education system, and its action in the field.

Funding for education has dropped in the last decade. Total expenditure on education has dropped from 3.7 (1985) to 3.5 (1993-96) percent of GNP. In primary schools, per student expenditures dropped from 5.6 (1980) to 3.9 (1996) percent of GNP per capita. (See Table 2) Public schools, especially those in rural areas, are underfunded, and there are few teachers willing to participate in the low-paying bilingual education program. Those who do are often inexperienced and poorly educated. Many indigenous teachers within the school system were educated by a poorly funded, ineffective, assimilating system, so they now tend to pass on their poor education. (Cossio, 89.) In a survey taken in Quito's public schools, all public instructors

Table 2: Public Investment In Education – Republic of Ecuador

Education (as % of GNP)		Public Expenditure On:			Public Expenditure per Student (% of GNP per capita)					Pupil/Teacher Ratio	
		Education (as % of total government expenditure)	Primary and Secondary Education (as % of all levels)	Higher Education (as % of all levels)	Primary		Secondary		Tertiary		
1985	1993-96	1993-96	1993-96	1993-96	1980	1996	1980	1996	1980	1996	1996
3.7	3.5	13	74.4	21.3	5.6	3.9	–	15	25.2	34	25.3

Source: Agency for International Development 1999

complained about a shortage of materials. Some complained about a lack of everything while others specified didactic material, pens, chalk, chalkboards, and paper. One instructor said that the parents of the students all chipped in to buy the white-board markers for class.²⁰ It is commonly understood that rural schools (where bilingual programs are concentrated) receive fewer resources than those in urban areas. On a visit to a bilingual school in a community outside Riobamba, we observed a cement block school with dirt floors and few teaching materials. Students were sharing long-outdated workbooks.

Public school teachers in both urban and rural areas receive salaries that barely provide subsistence. Public school teachers in Quito have a salary-ranking program (1-14) that is determined by years served, performance, and education. Starting teachers make under \$100 monthly, but as they climb the ladder their salary improves slightly. One educator, with 20 years of experience made \$100 monthly (1200 annually). Another teacher, after 35 years of service, achieved the highest ranking of 14. She now makes \$224 monthly (\$2688 annually). It is important to realize that two years ago, many of these salaries were half of what they are now.²¹ Salaries in indigenous communities are

²⁰ Survey taken in Fall 2000, Gerber

²¹ Statistics gathered in Fall 2000 Survey, Gerber

far lower than those in Quito's public schools. Parents and teachers complained that low salaries provide little motivation for educational excellence.

The current educational model for bilingual multicultural schools is intended to integrate indigenous and occidental pedagogies. By combining indigenous and Spanish languages with both indigenous and occidental science and cultural studies, the program integrates indigenous and mestizo cultures with the dual intent of fortifying indigenous identity and granting indigenous peoples the skills and knowledge to operate within the occidental market and political sphere. The socio-economic conditions of indigenous communities and educational under-funding, however, cripple rural school systems. Poorly educated, poorly paid teachers working in under-funded schools with often-malnourished children produce poorly educated students. Accordingly, the few indigenous students who have the opportunity to attend universities find themselves lacking the basic skills needed to succeed.

Cycles of Education: Academic Standards, Private Schools, and Indigenous Dropouts

While the tuition costs of a University education in Ecuador seem paltry in comparison with those of the United States, they are prohibitively expensive for much of the nation's indigenous population.²² Tuition costs keep many indigenous students out of the University system, but they are not the primary cause of the indigenous drop out rate. The vast majority of the indigenous students who begin their studies at Ecuador's

²² La Escuela Politecnica Nacional (public) has a variable tuition system that charges between \$60 and \$300 per semester. Books are additional, and can cost up to \$200 per semester. Private schools can cost upwards of \$3000 per semester.

Table 3: Percentage of Private Educational Institutions

	Preschool	Primary	Secondary	Superior
1919	-	8,2	28,5	0,0
1928	-	12,8	-	0,0
1935	-	9,4	-	0,0
1959	34,0	14,2	59,9	20,0
1975	52,3	13,1	49,0	29,4

Source: G. Ossenbach, *Formación de los sistemas educativos nacionales en Hispanoamérica. La política educativa como factor de consolidación del Estado Nacional (1870-1900): el caso del Ecuador*, tesis doctoral inédita, Madrid. Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, 1988, pp. 318 y 322; L.F. Bilbao, *Economía y educación en el Ecuador a partir de 1960*, Quito, Ed. Banco Central del Ecuador, 1980, pp. 83 y 251. (Ossenbach)

Universities are financially supported through scholarship programs.²³ While tuition costs are not the primary cause of indigenous drop out rates, class is central to the struggles of minority students in Ecuador's universities.

Ecuador's public education system is under-funded and ineffective in both urban and rural areas. Rural, indigenous schools, however, are especially inefficient. High rates of poverty and malnutrition, and a lack of well-educated, bi-lingual teachers result in a substandard rural education system. (See Appendix B) Consequently, there is a booming private school industry that provides the nation's middle and upper classes with adequate education.

A significant proportion of Ecuador's upper and middle classes attend private schools. Although I have been unable to find more recent data, a study conducted in 1975 states that 13% of the national primary school enrollment and 49% of the secondary

²³ Two major foundations provide becas (scholarships) for indigenous youth. The Institute for Social Development and Scientific Research (INDESIC) is a subsidiary of the Hanns Seidel Foundation, which is operated by the German government. The program has awarded 378 scholarships to indigenous youth who intend to return to the indigenous movement to share their education. The World Bank's Development Project for Indigenous Peoples (PRODEPINE) also provides scholarships, but may lose its funding at the end of this year.

school enrollment is in private institutions. (See Table 3) The private school industry has grown rapidly since 1970.

While conditions vary between private schools, they are altogether far superior to the public school system. Instructors are better paid, materials are usually plentiful, and class sizes are smaller. Many private schools have lush campuses that house bilingual (Spanish and English) education programs that compete with private schools in the United States. The results are self-evident. While “instructors at public schools estimate that less than 3% of their students continue on to colleges or universities after graduating, teachers at Colegio Britanico Internacional, a private school in Quito, attest to 100% of their students continuing to attend a University of some kind.” (Gerber, 2000) The difference in the quality of public and private secondary education is striking in itself, but the lasting effects of such a disparity are even more devastating. Because of such a system, “the social origins of the students [in Ecuador’s University system] are the upper and middle classes, with scant participation from the lower class and minority groups such as Indians and blacks.”(Knowles 1978: 1355)

The high rate of university matriculation for students of private schools, coupled with very low rate of attendance by public school graduates, results in the inundation of the university system with private-school graduates. While private school graduates are not necessarily more or less culturally sensitive to the pedagogical needs of indigenous students, they do affect their performance within the school.

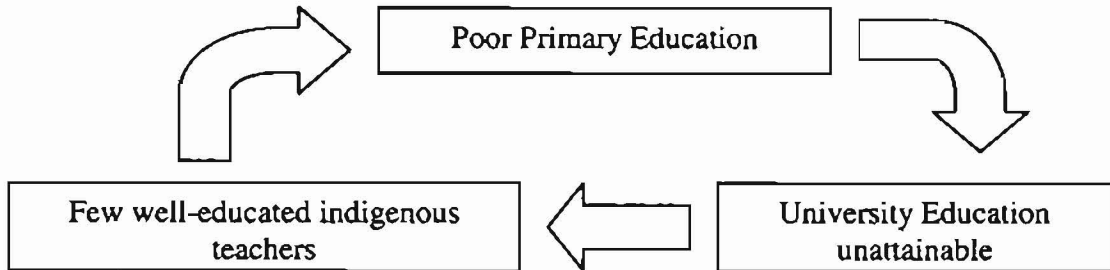
Educational standards and grading systems are based upon average student performance. Ideally, professors structure their material and grading systems so that there is a parabolic distribution between the few students who perform very well, those

who perform moderately, and those who perform well. The educational standards within the classroom therefore cater to the largest proportion of students' needs possible. The controversy over grade inflation in North American schools is rooted in the distortion of this system. Because B's have replaced C's in the middle of the grade curve, student's grades have inflated. With reference to the high marks that schools such as Harvard and Stanford grant their students, many argue that standards need to be raised. (Mansfield 2001, Barovick 2002) By raising standards, schools would return to the parabola that is designed to determine standards in schools. The controversy demonstrates the dependence of academic standards upon student performance. Critics of grade inflation argue that as students perform at higher levels, the standards must rise to maintain grade distribution.

Because grades are based upon average student performance, and university standards are based upon student performance in multiple classes in a variety of schools, the academic standards of the University system are essentially based upon the average performance of the Ecuadorian University student. Since students coming from private colegios (secondary schools) comprise a large proportion of the university student population, the academic standards are set by their achievement. Indigenous students, who disproportionately come from public schools and impoverished backgrounds, make up a small percentage of the University population; thus their performance as graduates of the (rural) public school system does not affect academic standards. (Maccas 2000) University standards are therefore based upon the performance of private school graduates, whose preliminary educations are far superior to those of public school graduates. Collegiate standards in Ecuador inherently exclude lower socio-economic

sectors from participation in the University system because they are based upon the

Image 1: The Cycle of substandard education



academic performance of a student body disproportionately coming from private colegios. The public school system does not provide most lower class students with the opportunity to succeed in the University system.

As one anthropology professor and two indigenous students argued, the difficulty that indigenous students have encountered in the traditional university system is due to their substandard academic performance. This failure to achieve traditional academic standards is unrelated to intelligence. Instead, it is directly connected to a substandard public education system that drives middle and upper class students to private schools, thus raising the academic standards of universities beyond the level supported by the public school system itself.

Inequity in education perpetuates itself. Because public schools are inadequate, most indigenous students are unable to attend and succeed in the traditional university system. Because indigenous students do not have access to University education, DINIEB and the bilingual education program lacks well-educated teachers. Public primary and secondary education programs are therefore compromised. (See Image 1)

This is not to discount the validity of UINPI's argument for pedagogical and cultural alienation. Certainly, indigenous students encounter significant pedagogical problems within the university system. Even more certain are the problems that accompany the urban migration necessary to attend Ecuador's better universities. Nevertheless, the underlying problems for indigenous education are inherently structural and socio-economically based. By directing attention to pedagogical difference, UINPI obscures the socio-economic structures that lie behind the problems of indigenous education. Rigid class structures are reinforced by an education system that excludes the poor from Universities. By benchmarking academic standards with the educational levels of middle and upper class private school graduates, the educational system in Ecuador ensures that only the wealthy have the opportunity to obtain university educations. Indigenous peoples, the majority of whom are economically marginalized, do not have access to private education, and therefore do not have access to University education.

The structural problems that prevent indigenous people from accessing the University system may have dire consequences for UINPI. To provide an accessible university education to economically marginalized indigenous students, UINPI must maintain lower academic standards than traditional Universities. This necessity poses problems for UINPI both immediately and in the long term. UINPI is currently seeking certification from the National Council on Superior Education (CONESUP), which sets academic standards for Ecuadorian Universities. Because UINPI plans to serve a public-school educated population, it will be unable to meet the academic standards of traditional universities and may encounter difficulty in the certification process.

In time, UINPI's academic standards may limit its graduates' opportunities in political and economic arenas. CONESUP is in the process of creating a University ranking system, which orders schools according to their academic standards, but even without such rankings, employers understand the variable standards of universities, and will want to employ the most academically qualified students. (Unknown 2001)

The structural inequalities presented UINPI are vast. Indigenous peoples disproportionately suffer from high rates of illiteracy, poverty, malnutrition, and infant mortality. (See Appendices A, B) For these reasons, an indigenous University is especially important. Indigenous universities have the potential to address both socio-economic and ethnic barriers for their communities. Native American Tribal colleges, for example, have had tremendous success. They have reduced poverty in their communities, improved education at all levels, asserted indigenous ethnicity in academic arenas, and supported regional development. The system's success, however, is due to its variety of tactics. Tribal Colleges focus upon both socio-economically practical skills and ethnic production. If UINPI's goal is to address the needs of indigenous communities, it too must diversify its tactics.

Models for Progress: Native American Tribal Colleges

While structural inequalities threaten certification and cripple the University's potential to assert indigenous peoples into the greater market, UINPI maintains the potential to drastically improve indigenous life. Tribal colleges in the United States demonstrate ways in which ethnically oriented institutions of higher education can affect change within local communities. Tribal Colleges are heavily engaged in their

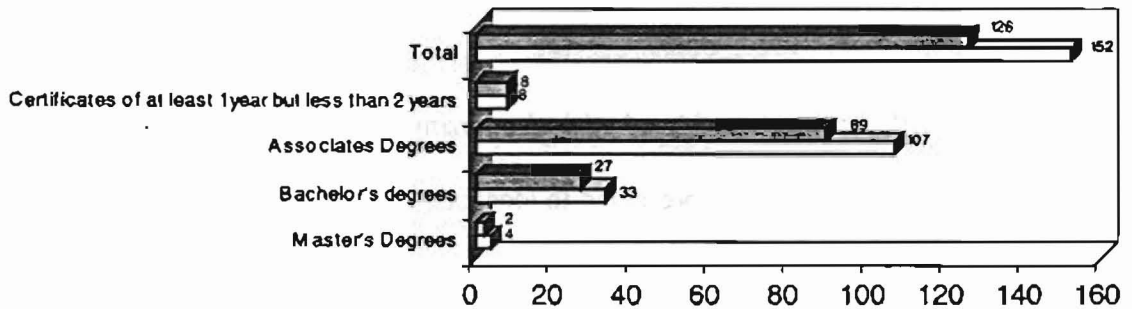
communities, addressing issues in pre-school and elementary education, health and nutrition, agriculture, and cultural preservation. Unfortunately, UINPI is not adhering to the Tribal College model, and is focusing on academic subjects instead of technical and community skills. Education is the only “technical” skill that the university is designed to address.

Teacher education is considered critical on many Native American reservations, where native teachers are underrepresented in local school systems. Like Ecuadorian indigenous peoples, Native American students are concentrated in rural, native-dominated schools; nearly half of all American Indian students are enrolled in schools where they comprise a significant proportion of the student population. Native Americans suffer from historically high dropout rates and low levels of educational achievement. (AIHEC 2001: 4) To help remedy some of the problems in Native American primary and secondary schools, Tribal colleges have established programs that both directly address school needs, and train native peoples in educational professions.

Tribal Colleges on many reservations have established direct links to local schools. The Tribal College Rural Systemic Initiative (TCRSI) facilitates these relationships as part of its mission “to increase the leadership and presence of future generations of American Indians in a world that is increasingly becoming more technological and reliant on professions requiring strong mathematics and science backgrounds.” (AIHEC 2001: 5) This integration of tribal colleges with local schools is manifested in many forms. For Example:

- Little Bighorn College maintains a technology camp called “Cyber Rez” that

Degrees Awarded in Education-Related Fields at Tribal Colleges, '96-97



Note: 29 colleges reported data.
Source: AIHEC, 2001

□ All Students ■ American Indians

annually educates more than 60 students in grades 3 through twelve.

- Black Hills State College and Knife Memorial College are assisting the Lame Deer Elementary School and the Ashland public school in implementing “Connected Math,” a highly reviewed mathematics curriculum.
- White Earth Tribal College, the University of Minnesota, and the Circle of Life School developed a math, science, and technology program aimed at improving test scores. Test scores for the 7th through 12th grade participants demonstrated a one and a half year grade-level increase.

The programs offered by tribal colleges provide local primary and secondary school students with resources and faculty that would otherwise be unavailable, and the results have been positive. “Between 1995-96 and 1998-99, the math and science ACT scores of students attending Turtle Mountain Community Schools increased 11 percent and 10 percent respectively. (AIHEC 2001: 8,10) The programs have had effects in higher

education as well. The number of math, science, and technology majors in tribal colleges has increased.

Many tribal colleges also have strong teacher education programs that place graduates back into local schools. Many of these programs include culturally specific content focused upon educating American Indian children. In part because tribal colleges have placed emphasis on their education departments, Native American enrollment in education programs increased 57 percent between 1991 and 1995. By focusing on education, tribal colleges have increased the number of native teachers in local schools and improved the cultural content of primary and secondary education.

Cycles of poor education maintain themselves, disconnecting indigenous peoples from traditional paths of class mobility. Because indigenous peoples suffer from misguided, poorly developed primary and secondary systems, many are unable to achieve success in the University system. Because there are few indigenous students in the University system, there are few bilingual teachers willing to return to their communities. Primary education is compromised because teachers are poorly educated and in need of resources. (See Flow Chart.) Tribal colleges have succeeded in breaking this cycle developing strong teacher education programs and involving the universities with primary and secondary schools.

While UNPI is forced to maintain lower academic standards than traditional universities because of its students' public-school background, it has the potential to subvert the educational cycle that works to maintain indigenous marginalization. By placing well-educated, bilingual teachers into communities, the University can affect change on the primary and secondary levels and, in the long run, improve its own

academic standards. UNPI has integrated teacher education into its curriculum, offering its students degrees in basic education and educational science that are designed to prepare them for the classroom. (Ushina and Ramirez 2002)

Tribal Colleges in the United States are highly engaged in their communities outside of education. By developing programs that focus upon local industries, Tribal colleges support local economic development, while providing students with an applicable education. (See Appendix D) These programs focus on local industries, providing concentrations such as entrepreneurship, tribal management, biological science, casino operations, and forestry. Tribal colleges in the United States improve local economies by increasing the skills and productivity levels of their students. One study indicated a positive correlation between Tribal Colleges and both workers' incomes and lower poverty rights. Between 1980 and 1990, overall poverty rates grew 22% more on reservations without tribal colleges and family poverty rates grew 8% more than on reservations with colleges. (Harris 1997 qtd. in AIHEC 2000: 17)

Livestock and agricultural production are central to the local economies of most reservations in the United States. Tribal land (which totals 30 million acres in the United States) constitutes a major source of income for many tribes. Accordingly, tribal colleges in many communities engage in agricultural and land management research, structuring their courses around the agricultural needs of the community. Tribal Colleges offer courses on sustainable development, fishery and livestock management, and natural resource extraction. For example, the Menominee sustainable development institute researches and educates the community about sustainable development; its goal is to

preserve the tribe's forest resources while maintaining tribal income from resource extraction.

Agricultural development programs are in high demand in Ecuadorian indigenous communities. Seven out of nine indigenous students in their final year at a community school outside of Riobamba stated that they would like to study Agriculture in a university. UINPI, however, does not offer agricultural classes. The university's "Proyecto Academico Curricular" (Ushina and Ramirez 2002) focuses on education and academic investigation, ignoring technical skills²⁴.

There is a conspicuous lack of programs geared towards local economic and development needs in the University's proposal. UINPI is designed to develop knowledge about local indigenous practices, and wrestle control over representations of indigenous identity, but it does not address the underlying socio-economic inequalities that threaten indigenous peoples. If its overall goal, however, is to improve the condition of, and opportunities for, indigenous peoples in Ecuador, it would be advantageous to develop a program based upon the tribal college model of community engagement.

²⁴ UINPI's proposal defines two title levels: Yachai, and Amautai. Yachai is the equivalent of an associates or bachelors degree, and is offered for basic education, educational science, philosophy, linguistics, and psychology. Amautai is an advanced degree that specializes in indigenous studies.

Conclusion

Dualist constructions of indigenous identity have historically legitimized and maintained euro-mestizo dominance in Ecuador. These constructions function to deny the intrinsic value of indigenesness, constructing indigenous identity in opposition to euro-Christian ideals. Modern indigenous movements have focused upon confronting these constructions in two ways. UINPI is designed to deconstruct dualisms, attacking the legitimacy of their foundation. It also asserts a strong ethnic identity as a positive alternative to the negatively constructed dualisms that devalue indigenous people.

UINPI's ethnic assertions, however, are better understood as reconstructions than representations. The university contextually reconstructs its ethnic assertions. Its presentations vary, and can be molded to address the political and social needs of the indigenous population. Nevertheless, the university presents its identity constructions as both essential and primordial.

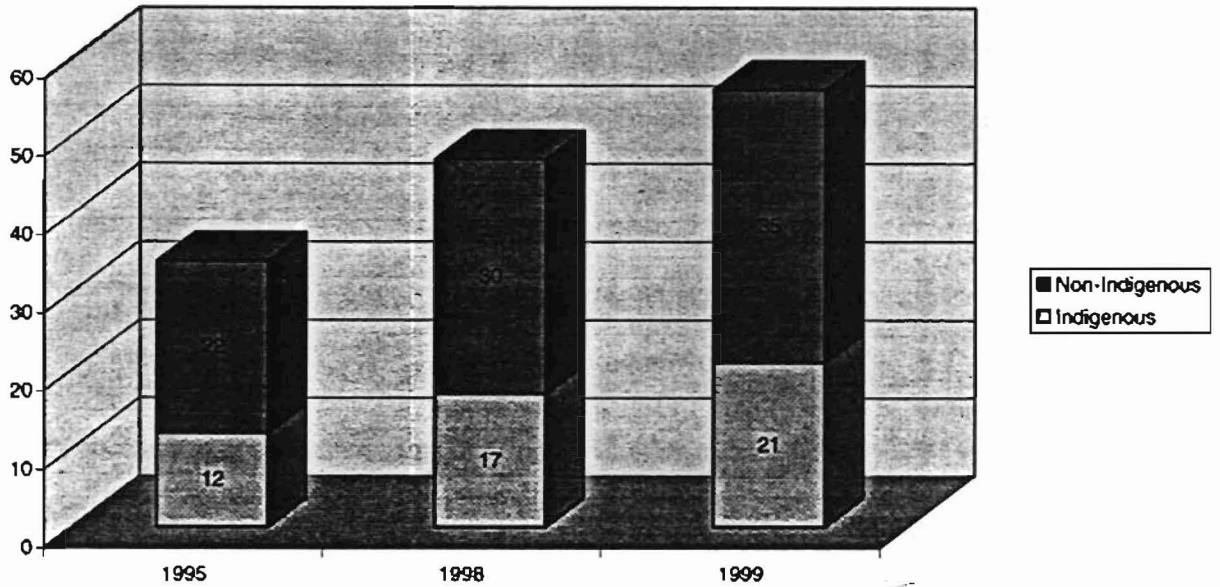
Indigenous ethnicity is represented as essential and primordial *because* ethnicity is neither. UINPI's representations of indigenesness are best thought of as participants in the dialogue that forms and perpetuates identity. They invoke both primordialism and essentialism to bolster their own strength and influence in the dialogue.

UINPI operates both within and against mestizo hegemony. By implementing the occidental discourse of western science, UINPI strengthens and legitimizes its representation of indigenous identity. Scientific multiculturalism is designed to simultaneously legitimize indigenous knowledges and reap the benefits of scientific and financial knowledge for the communities themselves.

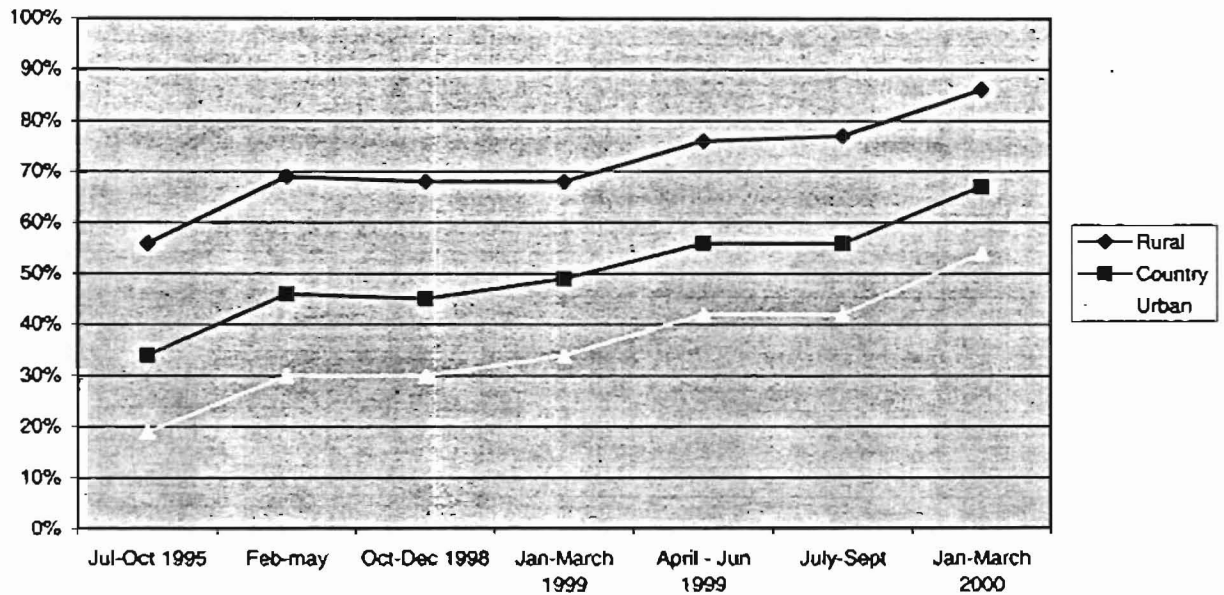
Nevertheless, identity politics do not address many of the underlying socio-economic barriers that confront indigenous peoples. Because UINPI has focused so intently on identity and its production, it fails to address the many practical needs and desires of indigenous peoples. The university's focus upon cultural investigation and academic subjects is limiting. As an institution designed for the indigenous population, UINPI must focus upon both practical knowledge and ethno-politics.

Appendix A: Poverty in Ecuador

Percentage of households whose per capita consumption is below the (i) poverty line and (ii) extreme poverty for Indigenous



Poverty 1995-2000 (% of Total Population)



Integrated Analysis of Poverty in Ecuador 1995-1999

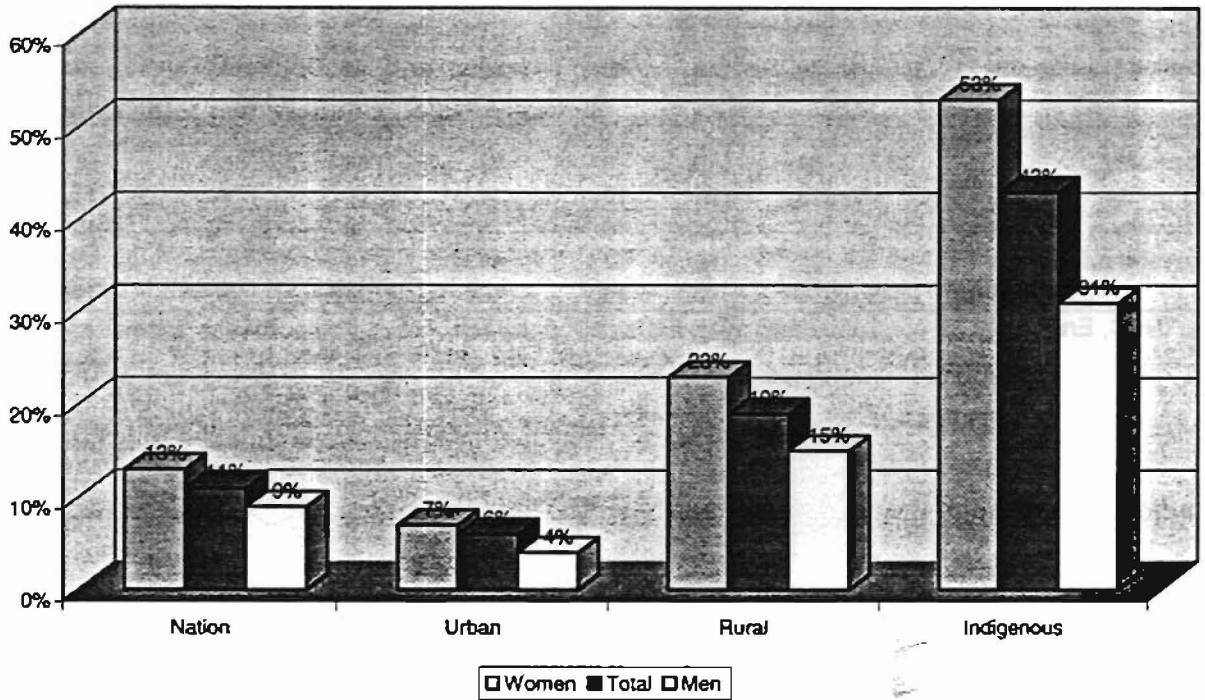
(% of the population in each category)

Category	National			Urban			Rural		
	1995	1998	1999	1995	1998	1999	1995	1998	1999
Direct Method									
Basic Needs Unsatisfied	55	55	53	38	37	37	80	79	76
Indirect Method									
Consumption Poverty	34	46	56	19	30	42	56	69	77
Integrated Method (Katzman analysis)									
Chronic poverty	28	38	39	13	20	23	50	62	61
Recent Poverty	6	9	13	6	10	14	6	7	11
Inertial Poverty	27	18	14	25	18	14	30	18	15
Not Impoverished	39	36	34	56	52	49	15	14	13
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

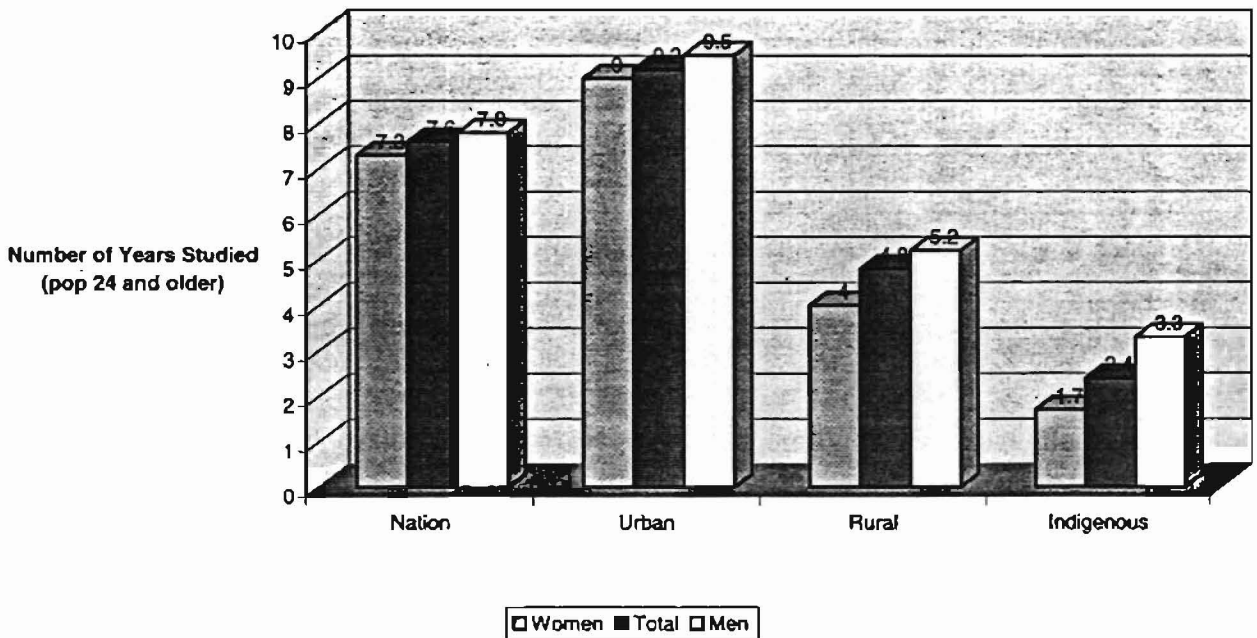
Source: INEC, Encuestas de condiciones de vida. Elaboración: SIISE.

Appendix B: Education in Ecuador

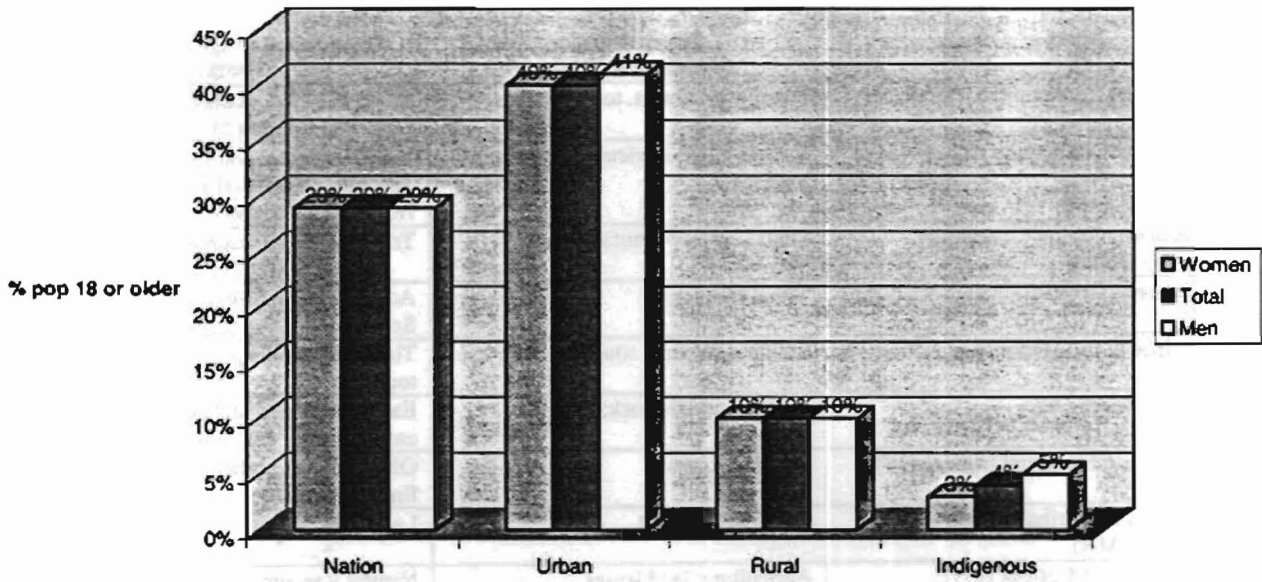
Illiteracy (% of Population >15yrs)



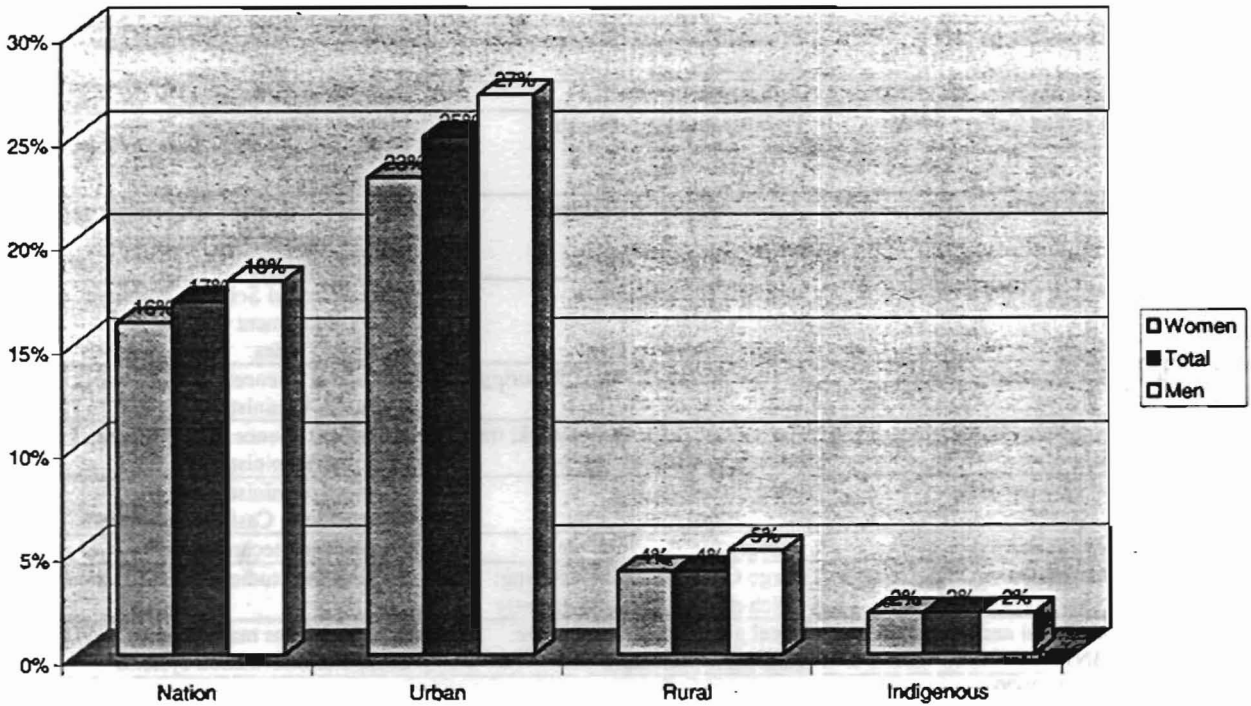
Median Level of Education



Percentage of Ecuadorians with a Secondary Degree



Percentage of Ecuadorians With a Tertiary Degree



Appendix C: Matching College Curricula with Local Needs

Name of College	Selected Major Industries/Employers	Examples of Programs Offered (1998)
Bay Mills Community College (MI)	Local government, tobacco sales	Tribal Business Management; Natural Resources Management
Blackfeet Community College (MT)	Construction; Agriculture/livestock; tourism	Building Trades and Construction Technology; Natural Resources; Hospitality Occupations
Candeska Cikana Community College (ND)	Land Leases; Manufacturing	Tribal Administration; office systems
Cheyenne River Community College	Tribal business	Administrative Systems, Business Specialist
College of the Menominee Nation (WI)	Lumber, sawmill; tourism	Timber Harvesting; Hospitality and tourism
Dine College (AZ)	Agriculture/livestock; forestry; mining	Earth/Environmental Sciences; pre-engineering
Dull Knife Memorial College (MT)	Small business	Office Management; Entrepreneurship
Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College (MN)	Local government	Law Enforcement; tribal management
Fort Belknap College (MT)	Agriculture; land leases	Natural Resources
Fort Berthold Community College (ND)	Gaming, electronics manufacturing	Casino operations; Entrepreneurship management
Fort Peck Community College (MT)	Livestock; defense manufacturing	Natural Resources Management; Electronics Technology
Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College (WI)	Local government; logging; cranberry farming	Tribal Management; Agriculture and Natural Resources
Leech Lake Tribal College (MN)	Fishing; forestry; retail trade	Natural Sciences; Business Entrepreneurship
Little Bighorn College (MT)	Mineral Resources leases; federal government	Human Services; Office Systems
Little Priest Tribal College (NE)	Agriculture	Environmental Science
Northwest Indian College (WA)	Fishing, seafood processing	Fisheries enhancement; Environmental Engineering Technology
Oglala Lakota College (SD)	Agriculture; small business	Natural Resources management; agribusiness; organic agriculture; entrepreneurship
Salish Kootenai College (MT)	Lumber; construction	Environmental Science; Forestry; Heavy Equipment Operation; Building Trades
Sinte Gleska University (SD)	Livestock; Jewelry manufacturing	Biological science; agribusiness; Business Administration
Sisseton Wahpeton Community College (SD)	Agriculture (leases); livestock; trash bag manufacturing	Biological science; Agribusiness; Business Administration
Sitting Bull College (ND)	Land leases; gaming	Business Administration / Management; Casino management
Stone Child College (MT)	Lumber	Construction technology
Turtle Mountain Community College (ND)	Cargo Container manufacturing; watch manufacturing; data entry	Engineering studies; office education
White Earth Tribal and Community College (MN)	Local government; retail trade; garment manufacturing	Tribal business management; Computer information systems

Source: AIHEC 2000

Bibliography

- Abya Yala. (1998). Indigenous Organizations in Ecuador <http://ecuador.nativeweb.org/orgs.php>: Abya Yala. English and Spanish.
- AIHEC. (February 2000). Tribal College Contributions to Local Economic Development. Tribal College Research and Database Initiative. [Online] Available: <http://www.aihec.org/contribution.pdf> [2002, May 09]
- AIHEC (May 2000). Creating Role Models for Change: A Survey of Tribal College Graduates. Tribal College Research and Database Initiative. [Online] Available: <http://www.aihec.org/rolemodels.pdf>. [2002, May 09]
- AIHEC (April 2001) Building Strong Communities: Tribal Colleges as Engaged Institutions. Tribal College Research and Database Initiative. [Online] Available: <http://www.ihep.com/Pubs/PDF/Communities.pdf> [2002, May 09]
- Apple, Michael. (1996) Cultural Politics and Education. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Barovick, Harriet, Bland, Elizabeth, Rainert, Victoria, White, Roy, & Winters, Rebecca. (2/18/2002). Throwing the Curve. Time, 24.
- Beck, Scott H., & Mijeski, Kenneth. (2000). Indigena Self Identity in Ecuador and the Rejection of Mestizaje. Latin American Research Review, 35(1), 119.
- Bernard, H. Russell. (1994) Research Methods in Anthropology (2nd). London: Alta Mira Press.
- CONAIE. (1992). CONAIE: A Brief History <http://conaie.org/conaie1.html>: English.
- CONAIE. (December, 1993). Political Declaration of Ecuador's Indigenous Peoples. [Online] Available: <http://www.conaie.org/conaie4.html>. [May 1, 2002].
- Calhoun, Craig. (1995) The Politics of Identity and Recognition. In Critical Social Theory (193-230). Cambridge: Blackwell.
- Calhoun, Craig. (1994) Social Theory and the Politics of Identity. In Social Theory and Politics of Identity (9-36). Cambridge: Blackwell.
- Calhoun, Craig and Ianni, Francis. (1976) In The Anthropological Study of Education. Paris: Mouton Publishers.
- Chambers, Ian. (1996) Signs of Silence, Lines of Listening. In Chambers, Iain and Lidia Curti, The Post-colonial Question: Common Skies, Divided Horizons (47-62). New York: Routledge.

- Comaroff, John L. (1996) Ethnicity, Nationalism, and the Politics of Difference in an Age of Revolution. In Wilmsen, Edwin and McAllister, Patrick, The Politics of Difference: Ethnic Premises in a World of Power (162). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Cossio, Consuelo Yanez. (nd) La Educacion Indigena en el Ecuador. Quito, Ecuador: Imprenta Abya Yala.
- Crain, Mary. (1990) The Social Construction of National Identity in Highland Ecuador. Anthropological Quarterly, 63(1), 43.
- De La Torre, Carlos. (2000). Racism in Education and the Construction of Citizenship in Ecuador. Race and Class, 42(2), 33-45.
- Dyson, Michael. (1993) Reflecting Black: African American Cultural Criticism. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Espinoza, Simon. (1978). Republic of Ecuador. In The International Encyclopedia of Higher Education (4, 1349-1358). Washington, D.C: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Gerber, Joshua. (2000). A Comparative Study of Public and Private Education in Ecuador. Colby College.
- Gramsci, Antonio. (1991) Prison notebooks. New York: Columbia University Press.
- IMF. Ecuador Country Brief. [Online] Available:
<http://wbln0018.worldbank.org/external/lac/lac.nsf/093e674928c454fb852567d6006b0cd/a/8d81a502a9063ec885256931006d7132?OpenDocument>. [2002, May 07]
- Irigaray, Luce. (1985) This Sex Which is Not One. Ithica, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Jameson, Kenneth P. (1997). Higher Education in a Vacuum: Stress and Reform in Ecuador. Higher Education(33), 265-281.
- KEPA. (nd) Finnish Organizations [Online] Available:
<http://www.kepa.fi/english/south/etvo/finland/> Service Centre for Development Cooperation (KEPA). Finnish/English. [2002, May 07]
- Kluckhohn, Clyde, & Murray, Henry A. (1948) Personality in Nature, Society, and Culture. New York: Knopf.
- Knight, Banielle. (June 98). An enemy of indigenous peoples. Multinational Monitor, 19(6), 24.
- Knowles, Asa. (1978). Republic of Ecuador. In Knowles, Asa, International Encyclopedia of Higher Education (4, 1349). Washington: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

- Lozano, Alfredo. (nd) Sintesis de la Propuesta Tecnica Academica de la U.I.N.P.I. In Documentos [Online] Available: <http://uinpi.nativeweb.org/docs/lozano.lozano.html> UINPI. Spanish. [2002, May 07]
- Ma Rhea, Zane, & Teasdale, Bob. (2000) A Dialogue Between the Local and the Global. In Ma Rhea, Zane; Teasdale, G.R., Local Knowledge and Wisdom in Higher Education. Oxford: Pergammon.
- Macas, Luis. (nd) Como Se Forjo La Universidad Intercultural?. In Documentos, [Online] Available: <http://uinpi.nativeweb.org/docs/macass2/macass2.html> UINPI. Spanish. [2002, May 07]
- Maccas, Luis and Castro, Alfredo Lozano. (October 2000). Reflexiones en torno al proceso colonizador y las características de la educación universitaria en el Ecuador. Boletín ICCI Rimay, 2(19).
- Mannel, Stephen. (1994) The Formation of We Images: A Process Theory. In Calhoun, Craig, Social Theory and Politics of Identity (175-197). Cambridge: Blackwell.
- Mansfield, Harvey C. (4/6/2001). Grade Inflation: Its Time to Face the Facts. Chronicle of Higher Education, 47(30), B24.
- Mato, Daniel. (2000). Transnational Networking and the Social Production of Identities by Indigenous Peoples. International Sociology, 15(2), 343-360.
- Mayberry-Lewis, David. (1997) In Indigenous Peoples, Ethnic Groups, and the State. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Muratorio, B. (1991). The Life and Times of Grandfather Alonso: Culture and History in the Upper Amazon. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- Nines, Peter, Kalos, Shoba, & Aitchison, Claire. (2000) Dominant and Subjugated Knowledges in Indian Higher Education: A Preliminary Analysis. In Ma Rhea, Zane; Teasdale, G.R., Local Knowledge and Wisdom in Higher Education (169). Oxford: Pergamon.
- Ossenbach, Gabriella. (June 1999). La Educacion en el Ecuador en el periodo 1944 - 1983. In EIAL - La Educacion en el Ecuador en el periodo 1944 - 1983, 10(1) [Online] Available: http://www.tau.ac.il/eial/X_1/ossenbach.html. Estudios Interdisciplinarios de America Latina y El Caribe. Spanish. [2002, May 07]
- Oubre, Alondra. (1996). Plants, Property, People. Skeptic, 4(2), 72.
- Perreault, Thomas. (2001). Developing Identities: Indigenous Mobilization, Rural Livelihoods, and Resource Access in Ecuadorian Amazonia. Ecumene, 8(4), 381-413.
- Plumwood, V. (1993). Feminism and the Mastery of Nature. New York: Routledge.

- Powers, Karen..(1995) Andean Journeys: Migration, Ethnogenesis, and the State in Colonial Quito. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.
- Schattschneider, E.E. (1960) The Semisovereign People. New York: Holt, rhinehart, and Winston.
- Schugurensky. (2002). 1918: Students ignite democratic reform in Cordoba, Argentina. In History of Education: Selected Moments of the 20th Century. [Online] Available: http://fcis.oise.utoronto.ca/~daniel_schugurensky/assignment1/1918cordoba.html. Ontario Insitute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto. [2002, May 07]
- Sefa Dei, George J. Rethinking the Other f Indigenous Knowledges in the Academy. International Journal of Inclusive Education, 4(2), 111-132.
- Shields, David L. (1986) Growing Beyond Prejudices: Overcoming Hierarchical Dualism. Mystic, CT: Twenty-third Publications.
- Somers, Margaret and Gibson, Gloria. (1994) Reclaiming the Epistemological "Other": Narrative and the Social Constitution of Identity. In Calhoun, Craig, Social Theory and Politics of Identity (37-99). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Steinsleger, Jose. (February 4, 2001). Nuestro Lucha es para Ser Modernos. In Jornada. [Online] Available: <http://www.nuclecu.unam.mx/~jornada/01-02/010204.dir/mas-ser.html>. Spanish. [2002, May 07]
- Torres, Carlos Alberto. (1991). Argentina. In P.G. Altbach, International Higher Education: An Encyclopedia (2, 869). New York: Garland Publishing Inc.
- UINPL (nd). La Universidad Intercultural. [Online] Available: <http://uinpi.nativeweb.org/folleto/folleto.html>. UINPL Spanish.
- Unknown. (2001). Education sector seeks increased funding and technology: Universities strive to produce global leaders. In InternationalReports.net – Ecuador. [Online] Available: <http://www.internationalreports.net/theamericas/ecuador/2001/educationsector.html>: The Washington Times. [2002, May 07]
- P. Ushina, Angel. (2000). Proyecto Academico Curricular. In Documentos, [Online] Available: <http://uinpi.nativeweb.org/docs/ushina/ushina.html>: UINPL. Spanish. [2002, May 07]
- Zamosk, Leon. (1994). Agrarian Protest and the Indian Movement in the Ecuadorian Highlands. Latin American Research Review, 29(3), 37-68.