

Kevin Gosner and Arij Ouweneel (eds)

Indigenous Revolts in Chiapas
and the Andean Highlands

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Acknowledgments

This book is the end product of the 1994 CEDLA ONE-DAY SEMINAR which took place at CEDLA Amsterdam, November 18. The general aim of this multi-disciplinary seminar was to develop a comparative, historical understanding of the much discussed phenomenon of *indigenous revolts*. Because the Senderistas in Peru and the Zapatistas Chiapas had been in the spotlights during the late 1980s and the year 1994 respectively, I decided to invite specialists on Chiapas and the Andean highlands, addressing to the questions:

- What had 'happened' in both areas during particular periods of revolt?
- Could the revolts be labelled 'indigenous'?

The seminar provided the opportunity for anthropologists Gary Gossen and Jan Rus, for sociologists Lewis Taylor and Dirk Kruijt, and for historians Michiel Baud, Kevin Gosner, Ward Stavig and Jan de Vos to exchange ideas on the historical anthropology or the anthropological history of some of the native peoples of Latin America. The seminar was well attended, helping thus to spark off a fruitful discussion between participants, graduate and post-graduate students and colleagues like Geert Banck, Raymond Buve, Maarten Jansen and Kees Koonings. In fact, the CEDLA was somewhat overcrowded by people. Not unlike the indigenous highlands nowadays.

Personally, I like to see this volume as a companion to two other volumes on the history of indigenous communities, one edited with Simon Miller, *The Indian Community of Colonial Mexico. Fifteen Essays on Land Tenure, Corporate Organizations, Ideology and Village Politics* (CLAS 58, 1990), and one edited with Wil Pansters, *Region, State and Capitalism in Mexico. Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (CLAS 54, 1989). The first volume is a compilation of articles by U. Dyckerhoff, R. Hoekstra, M.C. Torales, B. García Martínez, S. Wood, R. Haskett, W.S. Osborn, D. Dehouve, D.A. Brading, S. Gruzinski, A. Lavrin, L. de Jong, W.B. Taylor and E. Van Young. The volume offers useful background information to the problem of the political and cultural leadership of indigenous communities. The second volume contains work by S. Miller, R. Rendón, M. Cerutti, G.P.C. Thomson, P. Garner, R. Falcón, R. Buve, W. Pansters, F.J. Schryer, C. Alba Vega, D. Kruijt and M. Vellinga and concentrates above all on the Mexican Revolution and its aftermath.

The essays now collected present the results of original research not hitherto reported, with the exception of an up-to-date of Jan Rus' article. The substantive topics and discussions are current, given the salience of ethnic politics in contemporary Latin America and ongoing debates among anthropologists, sociologists and historians. The essays in the prevailing volume are in general directed towards the past and they are interdisciplinary. Due to conference circumstances, it is not an ideal mix between Mesoamerica and the Andean region because while the latter encompasses three different countries, the former focuses exclusively on Chiapas. Above all Mexico is missing. Therefore, I like to see this volume also as a companion to for example Frans J. Schryer's *Ethnicity and Class Conflict in Rural Mexico* (Princeton, 1990), who discusses the nature of indigenous revolts in other areas of Mexico, with many cross-references to studies dealing with the politics of resistance in other ethnically diverse regions of Latin America. Despite this lacuna, I hope the reader will find enough of a common threat to hold the volume together.

The financial support necessary to bring the mentioned specialists from the United States, Mexico, England and the Netherlands together in Amsterdam was made available by CEDLA. With regard to the planning and organization of the seminar we benefited greatly from the capable assistance of María José Ramírez and Ton Salman. Kees de Groot was willing to preside over the sessions, leaving me free to attend the discussions without looking at the clock continuously. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to Christopher Lutz for mailing me addresses and telephone numbers indispensable to invite the participants.

Arij Ouweneel
March 1996

Introduction

KEVIN GOSNER*

On January 3, 1994, *The Arizona Daily Star*, Tucson's morning paper, headlined an AP wire story on the front page above the fold, "Indian rebels seize 4 towns in S. Mexico."¹ The account told readers that "[a]rmed Indian peasants battled soldiers yesterday on the second day of an uprising in one of Mexico's poorest states." In a brief commentary that seemed intended to reassure readers rather than alarm them, the report went on to state that "[t]he unrest was the latest of many peasant uprisings over the years in Chiapas, one of Mexico's most impoverished and isolated states. It is also the country's most southern state." That last *non sequitur* aside, the reporter's confidence in the categories that they used to describe the event and the place where it was happening was impressive. Couched in terms that North Americans (and Europeans) would find very familiar, it all seemed so simple. After all, Indian peasants south of the border were always rebelling, weren't they? Readers across Tucson, where a statue of Pancho Villa on a rearing stallion dominates a small park across the street from the country courthouse, must have shrugged their shoulders at the story and muttered to themselves, "So, what else is new?"

Of course, it was not so simple after all. Within days, conflicting reports of government actions against the rebels began to complicate the story. Did the army bomb villages or not? How many noncombatants died in the battle for Ocosingo? What really happened on January 7th in Ejido Morelia? As Subcomandante Marcos emerged as spokesperson for the rebels, still more questions were raised. Who is he? What does he want? Why is this *ladino* (in general: non-Indian) commanding a band of Indian rebels? Accounts of the early years of the *Zapatistas*, as they were soon called, in the frontier zone of Las Cañadas on the edge of the Lacandón rainforest raised doubts about whether or not this was really an Indian rebellion at all. What ties did the rebels have to Maya villages

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in the highlands? Were Guatemalans involved? And what about the *narcotraficantes*, who were active in the region? And finally, when the Mexican stock market collapsed, when tens of thousands marched in Mexico City's *zócalo* (central plaza) in solidarity with the rebels, and when, on March 23, Luis Donaldo Colosio, the ruling party PRI candidate for President, was murdered in Tijuana, everyone understood that this was not a simple Indian rebellion in an isolated corner of southern Mexico. The Zapatista uprising was part of a political and economic crisis of extraordinary and quite unexpected proportions.

Arij Ouweneel convened our seminar eleven months later, in November 1994. In Mexico, a new president had been elected, a fragile ceasefire was in force in Chiapas while negotiations continued, and a new movement was emerging, the National Democratic Convention, that would link the Zapatistas to a broad coalition of intellectuals and opposition politicians. But nothing was settled. Hostilities in the south seemed ready to resume at the slightest provocation, and each morning's newspaper seemed to carry news that might upset the delicate peace. The value of the *peso* was falling. These events, whose outcomes remain uncertain more than a year, formed the backdrop to our seminar. We met to discuss historical precedents for Indian rebellion in Chiapas, and to examine comparable movements in the Andes that might help to raise interesting questions.

The course of the Zapatista uprising brought home to all of us that these movements rarely run true-to-form. Despite an extensive academic literature that has identified common patterns and articulated a sophisticated body of theory to explain them, when it comes to cases, indigenous revolts and peasant rebellions always have at least some divergences and contradictions that defy the conventional paradigms.² Andeanists, confronted with the terrifying puzzle of Sendero Luminoso, have recognized this for some time. Our papers, consequently, focus on the particular, setting the idiosyncracies of real-life against the models that provide common frames of reference. This, after all, is the analytical tension that promises to keep the whole topic fresh.

Our volume spans some 470 years of history, beginning with Jan de Vos' reconstruction of the revolt of the Chiapanecos in 1524 that climaxed in a massacre in Sumidero canyon. His account, like my essay on the 1712 Tzeltal Revolt and Jan Rus' study of the so-called Caste War of 1869, challenges popular memory of these dramatic events among the citizens of modern-day Chiapas. Arij Ouweneel and Gary Gossen, in the contributions that follow, also invite readers to take the long-view of contemporary history, and provocatively link the Zapatista uprising to processes of cultural and political life that extend back before the Spanish Conquest. Mariano Peres Tsu's first-hand account of events in January and February, 1994, closes Part One, and adds an indigenous voice to the collection that we regret was absent during our seminar.

The essays on the Andes also begin with the colonial era. Ward Stavig's analysis of the Thupa Amaro insurrection looks beyond struc-

tural relations between large social groups and the state, and invites readers to confront the diversity of individual experiences and to contemplate the obstacles to generalizing that this diversity poses. The three articles that follow emphasize the variety of forms that Andean rebellion has taken as well as the varied modes of production and systems of political domination that characterize the Andean countryside across time and among regions. John Dawe examines conditions specific to the Araucanian frontier in Chile. Lewis Taylor links unrest in the Peruvian highlands to the commercialization of rural agriculture and artisan production that pushed male peasants into migrant labor and women into more intensive work as weavers and garmentmakers. Michiel Baud studies Cuenca, an area in Ecuador that by contrast was not dominated by large commercial landholdings. Here rebellion was linked to increases in taxes and the labor demands of the state for public works projects. Finally, Dirk Kruijt casts the Shining Path movement against political and economic changes imposed by a series of military governments from 1968 to the present.

We recognize that by focussing on overt, armed forms of indigenous revolt, we are returning to the study of events that many scholars feel have already gotten too much attention. Since the mid-1980s, the literature on resistance has shifted to concentrate on forms that are less violent, more subtle, and often hidden. Several factors have contributed to this trend.³ One is that regional political economy studies so dominated the social history of Latin America throughout the 1970s that the approach, which set the context for most research on rebellion, had become predictable. Historians and anthropologists also faced the fact that organized violence was a rare thing and almost always failed, with heavy consequences for the peasantry. To continue to focus on full-scale rebellion, then, risked inflating their long-term significance and invited accusations that scholars romanticized them. And finally, as social scientists began to reexamine the fundamental epistemologies of their disciplines in wide-ranging debates about postmodernist theory, conventional premises about cultural and political processes that shaped resistance studies were no longer adequate. These premises needed to be reconceptualized for the field to move forward.

Some urged that so-called accommodation and resistance approaches be abandoned altogether. In 1991, Patricia Seed published an essay in the *Latin American Research Review* in which she examined several recent works by historians, anthropologists, and literary critics that have contributed to the much-discussed turn toward poststructural discourse analysis.⁴ Her essay began with a broad critique of "*traditional criticisms of colonialism*" in terms that echoed the self-critiques of scholars who had worked within the paradigm, but in language that was stronger and more dismissive:

"In the late 1980s, these tales of resistance and accommodation were being perceived increasingly as mechanical, homogenizing, and inadequate versions of the encounters between the colonizers and the colo-

nized."⁵

Seed did not identify any example of this literature, and consequently, she exposed herself to arguments that she had overstated and overgeneralized her case. Rolena Adorno offered just this rebuttal in an otherwise sympathetic commentary published two years later.⁶ Adorno stressed:

*"Frankly, it would be difficult to proceed with any sort of cultural or literary study involving autochthonous Andean society or consciousness without taking into account studies like those of [Steve] Stern, Karen Spalding, and Brooke Larson, works that I would identify with the themes Seed mentions."*⁷

A Mexicanist might have added monographs by Inga Clendinnen, Nancy Farriss, William Taylor, and John Tutino to Adorno's list.⁸ Seed, in response, reaffirmed her argument in even stronger terms:

*"[...] what narratives of resistance and accommodation cannot do is explain the world as it is today. Nor can they explain how we arrived at our contemporary state."*⁹

Again, she declined to discuss specific works, inviting further criticism, which arrived in an important essay by Florencia Mallon that is sure to extend and redirect the debate, "The Promise and Dilemma of Subaltern Studies: Perspectives from Latin American History."¹⁰

One need not accept Seed's verdict on the value of accommodation and resistance approaches to acknowledge that her reading of intellectual trends in colonial and postcolonial Latin American history was probably accurate. Excellent new studies of rebellion that fall within the broad paradigm continued to appear after the late 1980s. See, for example: R. Douglas Cope, *The Limits of Racial Domination*; Todd A. Diacon, *Millenarian Vision. Capitalist Reality*; Grant Jones, *Maya Resistance to Spanish Rule*; and Erick Langer, *Economic Change and Rural Resistance in Southern Bolivia*.¹¹ But the talk at academic conferences, in graduate seminars, and during faculty cocktail parties, especially in the United States, was more likely to be about the implications of poststructuralism than the nuances of regional political economy or the cultural origins of agrarian ideologies. The Quincentenary brought a wave of new scholarship centered on textual analysis, though perhaps the best of this literature (D.A. Brading, *The First America*; Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions*; Anthony Pagden, *Spanish Imperialism and the Political Imagination*) owed at least as much to conventional intellectual history as it did to new critical theory.¹²

The Zapatista uprising, however, thrust questions about resistance and political economy back into the spotlight. While the black ski-masks, the clever and sophisticated correspondence of Marcos on the Internet, and the rebels' requests for laptops and fax machines offered a banquet of material to be deconstructed by the postmodernists, textual analysis did not seem, by itself, to hold much promise of explaining who was fighting and why. To do that, and to begin to talk about the social construction of cultural forms, requires careful analyses of material life.

Moreover, Marcos himself has reminded us that the costs of resistance do not play out in discourse or rhetorical gamesmanship, but in the hard physical cruelties of modern warfare. Scolding a journalist who had sent him an angry letter after being denied an interview, Marcos wrote:

*"We are at war. We rose up in arms against the government. They are searching for us to kill us, not to interview us."*¹³

The essay by Florencia Mallon cited above is one of four new works on peasantries and indigenous peoples in Latin America to appear since 1994 that explore new conceptual designs for the study of resistance and power. The others are *Everyday Forms of State Formation: Revolution and the Negotiation of Rule in Modern Mexico*, edited by Gilbert Joseph and Daniel Nugent, *Peasant and Nation: The Making of Postcolonial Mexico and Peru*, also by Florencia Mallon, and *The Secret History of Gender: Women, Men, and Power in Late Colonial Mexico*, by Steve Stern.¹⁴ Each has emerged out of the theoretical debates of the last decade to integrate current ideas about power, state formation, and hegemony with ongoing research on political economy, ethnic conflict, and class struggle. They also integrate study of episodic, organized forms of agrarian violence with explorations of more common, everyday forms, and thus move away from approaches that tend to emphasize the importance of one at the expense of the other.

These pathbreaking works mark a new stage in the literature on colonial and postcolonial resistance. None were available to us as we prepared the papers for this volume, but we look forward to making a contribution to a revitalized literature on indigenous revolt as new scholarship continues to appear, and as events in Chiapas, the Andes, and elsewhere in the rural hinterlands of Latin America wind their tortuous, unpredictable way into the future. To conclude, on behalf of Jan de Vos, Jan Rus, Gary Gossen, Ward Stavig, Lewis Taylor, Michiel Baud, and Dirk Kruijt, I want to offer deep and sincere thanks to Arij Ouweneel and the community of scholars at CEDLA who treated us with such extraordinary warmth and generosity during our stay in Amsterdam. The volume our seminar has produced is only a small measure of what we learned from each other.

Endnotes

1. *Arizona Daily Star*, January 3, 1994, pp. 1A-2A.

2. In an effort to avoid redundancy, rather than include a lengthy introduction to the bibliography on indigenous revolt here in the introduction, I direct readers to consult the footnotes of each of our contributors.

3. Two scholars offered especially useful critiques that contributed to the shift. The first was James C. Scott, who wrote:

"[...] it occurred to me that the emphasis on peasant rebellion was misplaced. Instead, it seemed far more important to understand what we might call everyday forms of peasant resistance—the prosaic but constant struggle between the peasantry and those who seek to extract labor, food, taxes, rents, and interest from them. Her I have in mind the ordinary weapons of relatively powerless groups: foot dragging, dissimula-

tion, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander, arson, sabotage, and so forth."

See his *Weapons of the Weak*, p. 29. For the further development of Scott's ideas see his *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*. The second, especially for Latin Americanists, was Steve J. Stern, whose introduction to an anthology on resistance in the Andes explicitly offered suggestions for future research. Among other points, he wrote, "*that studies of peasant rebellion should treat peasant consciousness as problematic rather than predictable, should pay particular attention to the 'culture history' of the area under study, and should discard notions of the inherent parochialism and defensiveness of peasants.*" In "New Approaches," p. 15. See also his "Struggle for Solidarity."

4. Seed, "Colonial."

5. Seed, "Colonial," p. 182.

6. Adorno, "Reconsidering Colonial Discourse."

7. Adorno, "Reconsidering Colonial Discourse," p. 137. Larson, *Colonialism; Spalding, Huarochirí; Stern, Peru's Indian Peoples*.

8. Clendinnen, *Ambivalent Conquest*; Farriss, *Maya Society*; Taylor, *Drinking*; Tutino, *From Insurrection*.

9. Seed, "More Colonial."

10. See bibliography.

11. See bibliography.

12. For Brading, Greenblatt, and Pagden, see bibliography. Examples of the literature on textual analysis include Cevallos-Candau *et al.*, *Coded Encounters*; and two collections edited by Jara and Spadaccini, *1492-1992*, and *Amerindian Images*.

13. Letter to *El Sur*, *XXI-Century Journalism*, February 11, 1994, in Subcomandante Marcos, *Shadows*, pp. 125-126.

14. See bibliography.

Part One

Chiapas

The Battle of Sumidero

A History of the Chiapanecan Rebellion Through Spanish and Indian Testimonies (1524-34)

JAN DE VOS*

The Two Chiapas

The modern state of Chiapas took its name from two cities that in the colonial period were the capitals (*cabeceras*) of the region's two most important ethnic groups: the Chiapanecans and the Spanish. Of the two, the first and oldest was Chiapa de los Indios, which after 1552 was also known as Chiapa de la Real Corona. Since time immemorial, this had been the capital of a particularly enterprising people. Located on the right bank of the Chiapa River, the town is today the city of Chiapa de Corzo.

The second, generally known as Chiapa de los Españoles, was founded by the conqueror Diego de Mazariegos on March 5, 1528. Though he first intended to locate the settlement on the same side of the river one league upstream from Chiapa de los Indios, on March 31, Mazariegos moved his capital to the Jovel valley, in the heart of the unconquered provinces of the highlands. Besides this name, Chiapa de los Españoles, the new capital was successively named Villa Real de Chiapa (1528-29), Villaviciosa de Chiapa (1529-31), San Cristóbal de los Llanos de Chiapa (1531-36), Ciudad Real de Chiapa (1536-1829), San Cristóbal (1829-44), San Cristóbal Las Casas (1844-1934), Ciudad Las Casas (1934-43), and finally San Cristóbal de las Casas (since 1943).

The fates of the two cities would diverge throughout the colonial period. From the start, Chiapa de los Indios was the largest and most prosperous of the two, with four thousand families in 1524, according to

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Bernal Díaz del Castillo.¹ In the sixteenth century, its population plummeted at a dizzying rate as epidemic diseases spread throughout all of Mexico and Central America. However, according to the testimony of Fray Tomás Gage, by 1630 the city again had a population of four thousand families.² And at the end of the seventeenth century, Chiapa de los Indios was still considered the most important Indian community in the *alcaldía mayor* (district) of Chiapa, if not in all of New Spain. The *cronista* Antonio Vásquez de Espinosa called it, "one of the largest and most beautiful Indian cities not only in New Spain but in all the Indies."³ Though its Indian population declined during the eighteenth century with the increasing mixture of races (*mestizaje*), the city's fame continued until the end of the colonial period.

The fate of Chiapa de los Españoles was very different. Founded in 1528 with a population of less than fifty *vecinos* (Spanish citizens), a half a century later in 1579, "it only had one hundred of them," according to Pedro de Feria.⁴ And by the end of the sixteenth century, Andrés de Ubilla tells us, there still were only "120 *vecinos* in the city, people of all kinds but all of them very poor."⁵ By 1611, Chiapa de los Españoles had a Spanish population of 198, among whom were fifty-eight *encomenderos*.⁶ A judge from Guatemala who visited the city that same year reported, certainly disappointed, that "there was neither fort nor slaughterhouse; it had only one bridge [...] but no jail and neither enough butcheries nor many other indispensable things in a Republic."⁷ Besides suffering an endless state of poverty throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the citizens of Chiapa de los Españoles also gained a reputation as quarrelsome people. The antagonisms among them originated with the two rival groups of conquerors, one from Mexico and one from Guatemala, who populated the town in 1528.⁸ At the end of the colonial period, Chiapa de los Españoles remained a small provincial city without significant commercial or industrial activities. Most of the city's inhabitants were poor people, though they tried to conceal their limited economic means behind the mannerisms of proud gentility (*hidalguía*).

The Legend of Sumidero

For many years, it was thought that both Chiapa de los Españoles and Chiapa de los Indios were founded in 1528. Before the arrival of the Spaniards, the Chiapanecans were believed to have lived in a fortified city in the Sumidero canyon. After their defeat by Diego de Mazariegos in 1528, it was understood that they were forced to move one league upstream, settling in an open field by the river. That story was so popular that in 1928, four centuries later, the state of Chiapas commemorated the anniversary of the foundation of both cities. There were many speeches and public tributes during those events, including the composition of epic poems by Angel María Corzo and Galileo Cruz Robles.⁹ In addition to the birth of the two Chiapas, the poems celebrated in verse an ancient legend that in Chiapas had been passed down from father to

son. According to this tradition, the ancient Chiapanecans heroically resisted the Spanish conquerors, until finally they consummated that resistance with a collective suicide in the waters of Sumidero canyon. That sublime act ended the hostilities and ushered in Spanish control of Chiapas.

This legend, which we will call the *Legend of Sumidero*, narrates an episode of the Conquest. According to the basic elements of the tale, the Chiapanecans fought bravely against the invaders but were easily defeated because of the military superiority of the Spaniards and because their traditional enemies aided the European conquerors. Facing an imminent defeat, the Chiapanecans retreated to their ancient capital in Sumidero canyon, where from a high cliff they could watch the river and hope to more easily defend their city. After a fierce battle, the city fell but its defenders did not surrender, preferring to throw themselves, together with their women and children, down the precipice. According to a colonial source, as many as fifteen thousand died in that collective suicide, and less than two thousand survived.¹⁰ The survivors were forced to abandon the city, and its strategic location, and move to the new site upstream, Chiapa de los Indios, where today the descendants of those Indians, the *Chiapacorceños*, still live. In 1535, a depiction of the battle of Sumidero canyon was included in the coat of arms given by Charles V to the Spanish town of San Cristóbal de los Llanos de Chiapa, the modern city of San Cristóbal de Las Casas.¹¹

The collective suicide of the Chiapanecans is without doubt a legend, but this is not to say that the whole episode is an invention of the imagination. A legend always is tied to a real historical event, to something that happened, but the event itself is customarily concealed by novelistic accretions to the narrative. To rediscover the historical fact, it must be distilled from the added details and the divergent accounts that accumulate in the oral tradition over many years. The legend of Sumidero is not an exception to this rule. If we want to know what really happened to the Chiapanecans who were defeated in the canyon, we must turn from the poets to the historians. Let us see what they have said and written.

Here a surprise awaits us, for the legend has not only seduced the poets. Various historians also have been enchanted by its charm, and they have been the ones primarily responsible for convincing the general public that the legend represents an actual historical event that can be precisely located in the past. Most notable among them are Vicente Pineda, author of *Historia de las sublevaciones indígenas habidas en el estado de Chiapas* (1888), and Manuel Trens, author of the monumental *Historia de Chiapas* (1957), the classic work on the history of the state. Accepting the legend as fact, these two historians as well as many others relied almost exclusively on one primary source, a 1619 version of the Sumidero battle included in Fray Antonio de Remesal's *Historia General de las Indias Occidentales y particular de la Gobernación de Chiapa y Guatemala*.

However, Remesal's chronicle does not deserve the credence that

modern authors have blindly given it. First of all, Remesal wrote his *Historia* almost a century after the events. In addition, he spent only a few days in Chiapas and had no time to collect concrete evidence about the first battles between Spaniards and Indians. Regarding the Sumidero episode, the friar simply plagiarized the 1601 version found in Antonio de Herrera's *Historia general de los hechos de los castellanos en las Islas y Tierra Firme del Mar Océano*.¹²

Where did Antonio de Herrera learn the legend of Sumidero? How did he know about it? These questions are impossible to answer. The only thing certain is that Herrera never was in Central America, and that he likely did not have access to any official documents about the Sumidero battle except for the coat of arms given by Charles V to San Cristóbal de los Llanos de Chiapa in 1535. Perhaps he heard an oral tradition that circulated among the conquerors who returned to Spain, although there is no evidence of that, either. Nonetheless, even if Antonio de Herrera did not create the Sumidero legend himself, he certainly was responsible for its publication in Spain and Mexico. Fray Antonio de Remesal did nothing more than help him in this work.

Now, of what historical value is the version promoted by Herrera and Remesal? Is it true that the ancient Chiapanecans lived in the Sumidero? Is it true that they ferociously resisted the attack by the troops of Diego de Mazariegos? Is it true that most of them flung themselves into the deadly waters of the Rio Chiapa? If we are to believe the official historiography written by Pineda, Trens, and others, the answer is, "yes." Nonetheless, serious doubts remain. These doubts were initially expressed by the German archaeologist, Enrique Berlin, and the historian, Eduardo Flores Ruíz, himself a native son of Chiapas.¹³ Later, they were raised again by Carlos Navarrete in his excellent study of the history and culture of the ancient Chiapanecans.¹⁴

Enrique Berlin was the first to call attention to Remesal's plagiarism of Herrera's work. Thanks to careful analysis of certain documents preserved in the Archivo General de Centroamérica, in Guatemala, Berlin reached quite different conclusions than Pineda or Trens. First of all, he wisely recognized that "about the supposed military actions of 1528 [which is to say the conquest by Diego de Mazariegos], we do not have reliable data," but he did surmise that between 1528 and 1535, a portion of the Chiapanecans staged a rebellion.¹⁵ According to Berlin, it was then that the Indians of Chiapa retreated into Sumidero canyon and, rather than surrender, leaped from the high rocks of the canyon into the river below. Berlin suggests that the royal *merced* granted in 1535 did not allude to the conquest in 1528, but rather to this rebellion some years later.

Eduardo Flores Ruíz also tried, for his part, to reduce the account of Herrera and Remesal to its historical dimensions. He was the first who dared to use the term 'legend.' Using the same documents that Berlin would examine a year later, the *chiapaneco* historian arrived at slightly different conclusions. There were two cases of collective suicide in the

Sumidero Canyon according to Flores Ruiz: the first one took place in 1528 during Diego de Mazariegos' military campaign, and the second one occurred in 1533 when the Chiapanecans rebelled against the encomendero Baltasar Guerra. However, the heroic, massive suicide of fifteen thousand referred to by Remesal never occurred. Approximately six hundred died in 1528, and no more than hundred-twenty in 1533. As for their motive, Ruiz concluded that the Chiapanecans died in a panic-stricken attempt to run from the Spanish.¹⁶

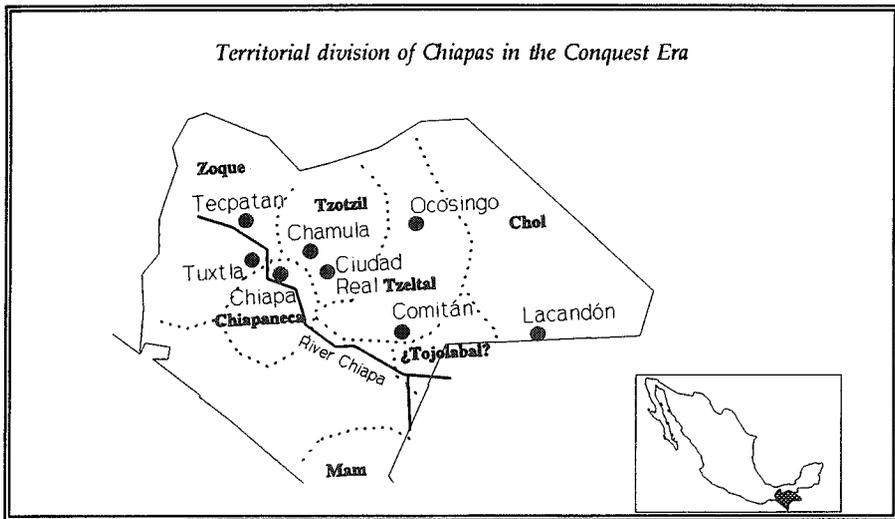
Unfortunately, Enrique Berlin kept to the middle ground in his analysis, while Eduardo Flores Ruiz committed several errors in his interpretation. Consequently, we decided to reexamine the legend of Sumidero, with more careful study of the documents that they utilized and with a search for new material. The result of this search is a series of twenty-five documents, many unpublished. Among them figure several *probanzas de méritos y servicios* of Spanish conquerors, which, though previously unknown, we were lucky to find in the Archivo General de Indias (Seville, Spain). These documents, among all the rest, have enabled us to lift the veil surrounding the legend of Sumidero. At the same time, the new evidence helps us understand what really happened to the Chiapanecans, from their first attempts at armed resistance in 1524 until their final surrender in 1534.

Before we look at the panorama of those ten dramatic years, it is necessary to introduce the chief protagonist of this story, the people of Chiapa de los Indios. Let us see who those Indians were whose name was given to the state of Chiapas, and what their small but powerful empire along the fertile banks of the majestic Chiapa river was like. Later we will consider the military struggle between the Spaniards and the Chiapanecans that took place 1524 and 1528, as well as the two occasions — 1532 and 1534 — when the Indians rebelled, without success, against the yoke of colonial domination.

The Ancient Chiapanecans

During precolumbian times, most of the territory of modern-day Chiapas was inhabited by Maya Indians. We can distinguish five large groups among them, based on the languages they spoke: the Choles from the jungle, the Mames from the Gulf Coast, the Tzotziles, Tzeltales, and Tojolabales from the highlands and plains. A sixth group, the Zoques, occupied the western region of the state closer to the Mixes from Oaxaca than to the Mayas from Chiapas (see map on next page).

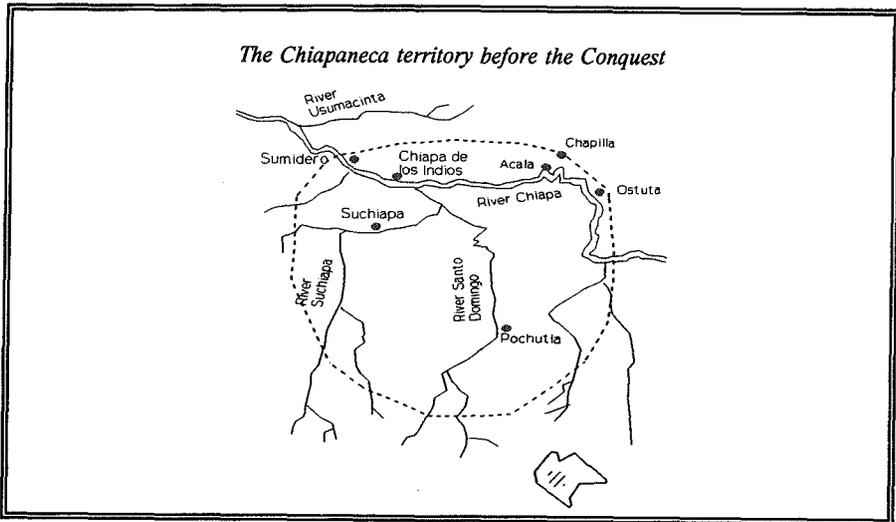
Among these six groups, more or less linguistically linked, lived a nation that was racially and culturally distinct from the others, the Chiapanecans. There has been a good deal of controversy regarding their origins. The Chiapanecans themselves believed they were "*natives from the province of Chiapas from time immemorial.*"¹⁷ However, their neighbors and adversaries, the Tzotziles from Zinacantán, insisted that "*they were newcomers, natives of the province of Nicoya as far as three*



hundred leagues from the province of Chiapas." This debate, summarized by Carlos Navarrete in his cultural history of Chiapas, commenced in the colonial period and still continues today.¹⁸ According to Navarrete's conclusions — certainly provisional — the Chiapanecans probably came from the Mexican highlands, emigrating to Central America through the coastal corridor of the Soconusco. They arrived in the central valley of Chiapas during the sixth century A.D., from Soconusco, according to some, or more circuitously, from Nicaragua, according to others.

If we are to believe the colonial chroniclers, the Chiapanecans were a particularly aggressive people.¹⁹ Upon their arrival, they expelled populations of Zoques and Tzotziles from the banks of the Chiapa river. By force of arms, they also established themselves along the tributaries of the river, in the southern valleys of the Macatapana, the Cutilinoco, and the Nejundilo (today Frailesca) rivers. From there, they expanded their military power to include the mountain passes that connected Chiapas with the Soconusco and the isthmus of Tehuantepec. The Chiapanecans imposed a regime of terror upon their neighbors, especially the Zoques and Tzotziles, whom they continuously attacked in their search for slaves and victims for human sacrifice. Some of these neighboring communities were forced to pay heavy tributes as well as to work in their fields as servants. Chiapanecan military might was so strong that it is doubtful the Aztecs ever conquered them. Bernal Díaz del Castillo called them, "*the most powerful warriors in all New Spain, including the Tlaxcalans and Mexicans.*"²⁰ They were, beyond doubt, the most powerful and best organized Indian kingdom in southeastern Mexico at the arrival of the Spaniards in 1524.

The bellicosity of the Chiapanecans was not the only thing that impressed the Spanish conquerors. They also admired the stately character of their capital. As Bernal Díaz del Castillo reported, it was the only

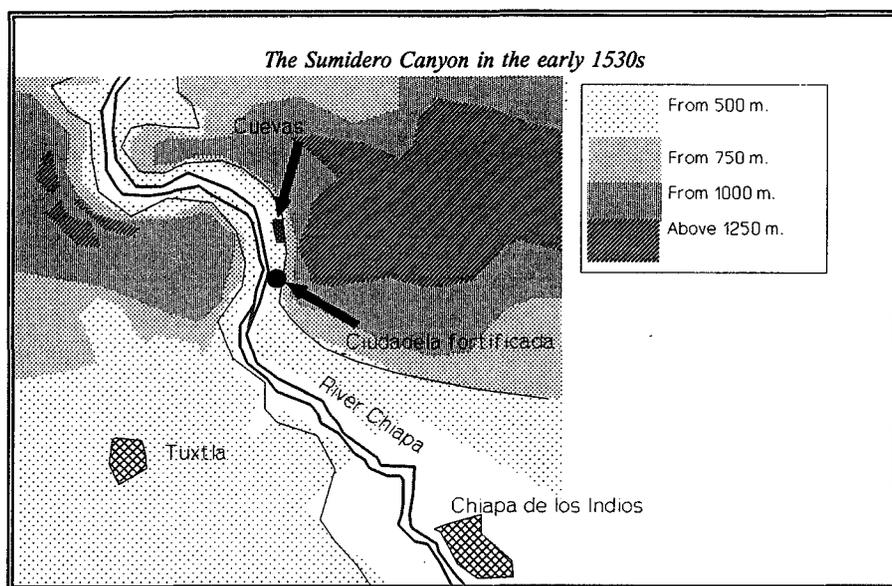


Indian *cabecera* (head town) in the entire region that deserved the name of 'city.' As we said before, the Chiapanecan capital was located on the right bank of the Chiapa river. Its official name was the same as that of the majestic river that bathed its ramparts, Chiapan, or 'water where the chía grows.' Chía (*salvia chian*) was a medicinal herb used as a remedy for coughs and spitting-of-blood. Chiapan was known by this Nuhua name throughout the Aztec realm, and called so by the Mexican merchants and soldiers who traveled through the region in their travels to Central America.²¹ The Chiapanecans used a name from their own language, most probably Napiniaca, meaning Pueblo Grande (from *napijuá*: pueblo, and *yaka*: grande).²² The city well-deserved the name, for when the Spanish arrived it was home to more than four thousand families, who inhabited well-built houses laid out in an orderly way along, to use Bernal Díaz' words, 'harmonious streets' ("*calles muy en concierto*").²³

This grand city, however, was not the Chiapanecans' first capital. In a document from 1571, they themselves recorded that they had come from the east, descending the Chiapa river little by little, settling various sites along the way before finally establishing themselves in the location where the Spaniards found them.²⁴ They also established other, smaller towns, including the colonial-period villages of Chiapilla, Acala, and Ostuta to the northwest, Suchiapa to the south of Chiapa, and Pochutla, on the southern border of Chiapanecan territory. Of these, probably only Suchiapa and Acala were prehispanic settlements; the others were founded by Dominican friars immediately after the conquest. However, there is no doubt that the territory surrounding these new towns belonged to the Chiapanecans long before the Spaniards arrived, for the rivers, hills, and valleys of the region have Chiapanecan names (see map above).

This overview of the Chiapanecan's territory would not be com-

plete without reference to the canyon known as the Sumidero. Until very recently, this gigantic canyon, a true wonder of nature, looked exactly as it did at the Conquest. The Chiapa river flowed through the deep and narrow bed of the canyon in an impressive series of torrents and rapids. So great was the power of the turbulent waters that the noise could be heard from the heights of the cliffs, in places more than a thousand meters above the river. On its narrow, steep river banks, a combination of vegetation and animal species unique in the world co-existed. The almost vertical walls sheltered thousand-year old caves, some with the remains of ancient human occupation, including prehistoric paintings and mud earthenware (*tepalcates*).²⁵ The canyon was so narrow that there was not enough space for building a road along the river. Only on the right side of the canyon entrance, before the first



rapids, did the riverbank open onto a sandy area of any size. Here, the Chiapanecans built a small religious center with pyramids, temples, ceremonial plazas, and other buildings for their devotions. They never thought to build permanent houses in that place, because there was not enough space to grow the crops they needed to sustain themselves (see map above).

This ceremonial center was probably consecrated to Nandada, the Chiapanecan god of water, as suggested in an 1836 document, a copy of an idolatry case dated 1597. In this document, one of the accused confessed that an idol representing Nandada was worshiped in the fields (*milpas*) "within the hill cut by the river."²⁶ Around 1580, the idol was destroyed by the Dominican friars, and its remnants thrown into the river. However, the Chiapanecans continued to hold secret celebrations

in the Sumidero to honor Nandada, *"when the rainy season began and when the last great flood had passed."*²⁷ The customary offering was *"to behead a couple of roosters and chickens, and a little dog, and spill their blood into the river."*²⁸

The Sumidero ruins were mentioned by the archeologist Hermann Berendt in 1869 and explored during this century by Marcos Becerra (1923), Enrique Berlin (1946), Carlos Navarrete (1966), and Alejandro Martínez (1982). According to the studies done by these scholars, the occupation of the ceremonial center began toward the end of the classic period, around the ninth century after Christ. These excavations confirmed the religious significance of the site, which was already evident in the 1597 idolatry document. However, we cannot discount the possibility that the ancient Chiapanecans also used the ceremonial center in the Sumidero for military purposes. The sand bank could well have served as a refuge whenever the population fled the danger of an invasion.

In fact, the Chiapanecans employed this defensive strategy during the four years that they resisted the Spanish invaders. If we believe their own recollection of that period, the Chiapanecans lived in the ceremonial center of Sumidero between 1530 and 1534, the four years that led up to their definitive defeat by captain Baltasar Guerra: *"We all hid together in a rock located at the river, under the so-called town of Chiapa, and there we fought a four-year war."*²⁹ Thus, they transformed the ceremonial center into a military camp, constructing fortified barriers that extended from the canyon walls to the river. The Chiapanecans also built an additional fortification on a nearby rock out-cropping. From this almost impregnable stronghold, they schemed to attack their aggressors with stones, arrows and spears, in the event that the enemy took control of the temples and plazas of the ceremonial center.

What did the Chiapanecans look like? We may get an idea of their physical appearance and the impression that they made on the Spaniards, by reading a description by Fray Tomás de la Torre. This Dominican arrived with Fray Bartolomé de las Casas on his first visit to Chiapas in 1545. De la Torre described the Indians in this way:

*"The [Chiapanecans] have the ability to pick up various flowers and make beautiful decorations with them. When it is possible, they walk with flowers and other fragrances in their hands because they like to smell good [...]. They wear a piece of rock like amber that keeps their noses open wide, and they proudly showed this to us [...]. The people are astonishingly tall, thus both men and women seem to be giants [...]. The [Chiapanecans] go naked. It is almost impossible to find a blanket or a shirt in town. Only the principales wear a blanket across their chest, knotting it on their right shoulder. Some women dress as the Yucatecan women, with the blanket over both shoulders and tied over their arms as the men do with their coats. They adorn their hair with fancy braids around their heads without any other ornament."*³⁰

Tomás de la Torre also tells us about agriculture and domestic industries among the Chiapanecans:

*"They have many of the best lands found in the Indias from which they extract cacao. The [Chiapanecans] plant twice a year but it is possible to sow up to seven times in such a good land. A few rainy days are sufficient to get all the water they need for agriculture which is done along the river banks. The land is not plowed or dug and their only preparation for planting is to clean the plot with fire. They store corn in its cane and pick up what they need without thinking that somebody could steal it [...]. The fruits of the land are abundant: pineapples, bananas, jicamas, sweet potatoes, avocados, prunes, and many other things. They satisfy their needs from these plots. The [Chiapanecans] are hard workers. Lights can be seen in their houses at night while the women are weaving. They produce the best cotton blankets in all the Indies [...]. I also have to say something about the pumpkins we found. They are of different proportions and the [Chiapanecans] use them as baskets and dishes by cutting the pumpkins through the middle. They look as beautiful as the dishes from Valencia when they are painted and decorated."*³¹

Little information exists about the religion of the ancient Chiapanecans. From Fray Tomás de la Torre we learn only that:

*"Their ancient god was a unique creator of all things and lived in the sky. The idols represented good things for them. Before dying, the [Chiapanecans] confessed themselves before the god they called Nombobí."*³²

This information is confirmed by the proceedings of the 1597 idolatry trial. In it, the Indians say that *"Nombobí was the Sun, which they worshiped as their creator"* and that the other gods were *"Nombobí's servants living in the hills, caves, and crop fields."*³³ We have already seen that one of these gods was Nandada, god of the water. Among the others, Matove or Mohotove, the god of fertility, occupied a privileged position in the Chiapanecan pantheon. The priest who served him also wielded great power at the political level. As Ximénez wrote, he was *"obeyed as another God by the Chiapanecans, and he held political authority within the community because they did not have caciques"* (caciques were Indian nobles).³⁴

Thus, Chiapa was an authentic theocracy. However, the *principales* also had a place in the structures of power. They formed a privileged class, differentiated from the rest of the community by their nobility and their wealth. The *principales* were led by eight lords, each one the head of a Chiapanecan *calpul*, a sub-group defined by ties of kinship and territoriality. We know the name of six of these *calpules*: Caco, Ubañamoyy, Candí o Candilú, Moyola, Nanpiniaca, y Nipamé.³⁵

The native tongue of the ancient Chiapanecans no longer exists. We know a little bit of it through the reports written by the Dominican friars who lived among them during the colonial period. A grammar book (seventeenth century), five catechisms (seventeenth century), a treatise on confession (nineteenth century), and a Passion-book (eighteenth century), have been preserved until the present. The grammar

book and one of the catechisms were published in Paris by A.L. Pinart (1875). L. Adam, a French scholar, published another vocabulary based on the contents of the other two catechisms in 1887. Thanks to these two publications, it has been possible to establish close ties between Chiapanecan and the Mangué language of Nicaragua. Today, the language of Chiapa survives only in the last names of some people and in the geographical names of the region. The Chiapanecans apparently lost their tongue during the course of the nineteenth century. The great nineteenth century specialist of indigenous Mexican languages, Father Charles Etienne Brasseur de Bourbourg compiled a small *vocabulario* during his visit to Chiapas in 1859, with the help of some informants who still spoke the language. By 1871, as Brasseur de Bourbourg wrote, these informants were just "three or four elderly Indians, the only ones who remained among an indigenous population of ancient origins, that had certain knowledge of their tongue."³⁶

To suggest how the Chiapanecan vocabulary sounded, we have copied one of the two calendars transcribed by Brasseur de Bourbourg from the 1691 grammar book. These are the names of the eighteen months as used by the people from Suchiapa. The list also gives us a good introduction to the Chiapanecan agricultural cycle:

1. <i>Numaha yucu,</i>		June 4.
2. <i>Numaha ñumbi,</i>	in which the maguey is sowed,	June 24.
3. <i>Numaha muhu,</i>	mosquito season,	July 14.
4. <i>Numaha hatati,</i>	beginning of the windy season,	August, 3.
5. <i>Numaha mundju,</i>	when the chile is seeded,	August, 23.
6. <i>Numaha catani,</i>	end of water,	
	beginning of the corn,	September, 12.
7. <i>Numaha manga,</i>	the fish is raised,	October, 2.
8. <i>Numaha haomé,</i>	the river waters descend,	
	the fish returns,	October, 22.
9. <i>Numaha mahua,</i>	the peak begins,	November, 11.
10. <i>Numaha toho,</i>	end of the sowing time,	December, 1.
11. <i>Numaha mua,</i>	the sweet potatoe is sowed,	December, 21.
12. <i>Numaha topia,</i>	the humidity intensifies,	January, 10.
13. <i>Numaha tumuhu,</i>	nothing is left,	January, 30.
14. <i>Numaha ?</i>	February, 19.	
15. <i>Numaha cupamé,</i>	the <i>coyol</i> matures,	March, 11.
16. <i>Numaha puri,</i>	the <i>jocote</i> matures,	March, 31.
17. <i>Numaha puhuari,</i>	April, 20.	
18. <i>Numaha turi,</i>	maturity,	May, 10.
<i>Numaha nbu,</i>	(five additional days)	May, 30.

Another example of the Chiapanecan vocabulary are the numbers one to twenty, copied by the German researcher, Karl Hermann Berendt when he visited Suchiapa in 1869:

1. <i>títché, ndítché</i>	11. <i>jenda-mu-ndítché</i>
2. <i>jómiji</i>	12. <i>jenda-kikáu</i>
3. <i>jímiji</i>	13. <i>jenda-mui</i>
4. <i>jámiji</i>	14. <i>jenda-makuá</i>
5. <i>jaómiji</i>	15. <i>jenda-mú</i>
6. <i>jambámiji</i>	16. <i>jenda-mume-ndítché</i>
7. <i>jindámiji</i>	17. <i>jenda-mu-kukáu</i>
8. <i>hajúmiji</i>	18. <i>jenda-mu-nui</i>
9. <i>jilímiji</i>	19. <i>jenda-mu-makuá</i>
10. <i>jenda</i>	20. <i>jájua</i>

The Years 1524-34

We have designated the collective suicide of the Chiapanecans a legend, and identified Antonio de Herrera and Antonio de Remesal as its first propagators. Unfortunately, this was not the only error committed by the chroniclers, but one among a series of mistakes. To sketch a general overview of the conquest in Chiapas, the errors of these two colonial authors first must be corrected. Only then is it possible to reconstruct events and understand them.

The first inaccuracy introduced by Antonio de Herrera and Antonio de Remesal was to attribute the first conquest of Chiapa, in 1524, to Diego de Mazariegos. This error was first detected at the beginning of the eighteenth century by Fray Francisco Ximénez. In *Historia de la provincia de San Vicente de Chiapa y Guatemala*, Book two, Chapter 41, Ximénez pointed out that "it is known that our [Fray Antonio de] Remesal is wrong when he said that the first conquest was carried out by Diego de Mazariegos"³⁷ Toward the end of the nineteenth century, Hubert Bancroft (1883) and Vicente Pineda (1888) reached the same conclusion: the first military expedition to Chiapa took place in 1524 and the captain of conquest was Luis Marín. Diego de Mazariegos only headed the second expedition in 1528.

The key document used to refute Herrera and Remesal, for Ximénez and the two nineteenth-century authors, was Chapter 166 of Bernal Díaz del Castillo's *Historia verdadera de la conquista de Nueva España*. Herrera and Remesal did not know the work, because it was not published until 1632. Bernal Díaz remarked in Chapter 41 that "Cortés sent captain Luis Marín to conquer and pacify the province of Chiapa. He sent me along with him." Since Bernal Díaz was an eye-witness to these events, his testimony is the most credible. He challenged Herrera and Remesal on various other points besides the issue of Diego de Mazariegos' supposed leadership. According to Bernal Díaz, the Chiapanecans did not live on a fortified rock within the Sumidero canyon but in an open place along the riverbank. He also reported that they resisted the Spaniards from outside their city, not from within the canyon. Finally, this resistance in no way culminated in a retreat into the Sumidero, much less a collective suicide into the waters of the Chiapa River.

If the collective suicide did not take place in 1524, perhaps the legend originated with an episode of the conquest in 1528? Unfortunately, we do not have a first hand account of the second expedition. The report of the second military campaign that Diego de Mazariegos probably wrote is lost and only a series of *probanzas de méritos y servicios* submitted to the Crown between 1540 and 1570 remain.³⁸ In none of those *probanzas*, requested by Spaniards and Indians who participated in the 1528 military campaign, is a battle between Spaniards and Chiapanecans mentioned. On the contrary, in one of them, it is explicitly stated that the Chiapanecans surrendered to Diego de Mazariegos without any resistance.³⁹ Those documents also speak of three rocky (*empeño-*

ladas) strongholds that Spanish had great difficulty seizing. However, these three rock fortress (*peñoles*) — Suchitepeque, La Coapa, and Maquil Suchitepeque — had nothing to do with Chiapa. The first, Suchitepeque, was located in the province of Tehuantepec. The second, La Coapa, was in the province of the Zoques. And the third, Maquil Suchitepeque, was a Tzotzil pueblo subject to Zinacantán. The 1528 conquerors would have not failed to report a battle against the Chiapanecans, but an absolute silence prevailed regarding those events. Hence, in 1528, on the part of the Chiapanecans, there was no retreat into the Sumidero, no collective suicide in the Chiapa River, no battle whatsoever with the Spaniards.

Does this mean that Herrera and Remesal just invented the Sumidero legend? No. There was a battle between Chiapanecans and Spaniards at the Sumidero canyon, but it took place some years later between 1532 and 1534. The Indians from Chiapa rose up in arms not during the time of conquest, but after being subjected to colonial rule. Thus, it was not resistance against an unknown invader — as occurred in 1524, but a genuine revolt against Spanish domination.

We do not know for certain the motives of the rebels who participated in the uprising. However, it is possible that the obligation to pay exorbitant tributes and to provide excessive forced labor to their *encomendero* led to the turmoil. Immediately after the conquest, Spanish settlers committed all kinds of excesses, and the Chiapanecans were likely to have suffered especially hard under this regime of terror. Almost every year, new *encomenderos* arrived, all disposed to raise new demands for tribute and labor. Luis Marín arrived first in 1524, Juan Enríquez de Guzmán in 1526, Diego de Mazariegos in 1528, Juan Enríquez de Guzmán again in 1529, Francisco Ortés de Velasco in 1530, and Baltasar Guerra de la Vega in 1532. The last one came from Guatemala with the title of 'lieutenant governor of the province of Chiapa' granted by the *adelantado*, Pedro de Alvarado, obtained with the help of his cousin Francisco Ceynos, an influential judge on the second Audiencia of Mexico.

According to Guerra de la Vega, the Chiapanecans had already risen up when he arrived to take office — at the beginning of 1532? — in the town of San Cristóbal de los Llanos.⁴⁰ The new lieutenant governor managed to smash the rebellion with the aid of the Spanish settlers and their many Indians allies, but only after a hard struggle that lasted several weeks. The Chiapanecans did not confront the enemy openly, but left their city and retreated to the Sumidero. There, they occupied an old ceremonial center located on the right bank of the river and protected by several trenches (*albarradas*). Pushed by the Spaniards, the besieged Indians soon abandoned the site and escaped to a nearby fortress built on a rocky ledge. Finally, they also abandoned this stronghold and sought refuge deeper in the canyon, in the caves where their women and children were hiding. At those caves, beyond the first rapids, the dramatic pursuit by the conquerors ended. The Chiapanecans, to avoid

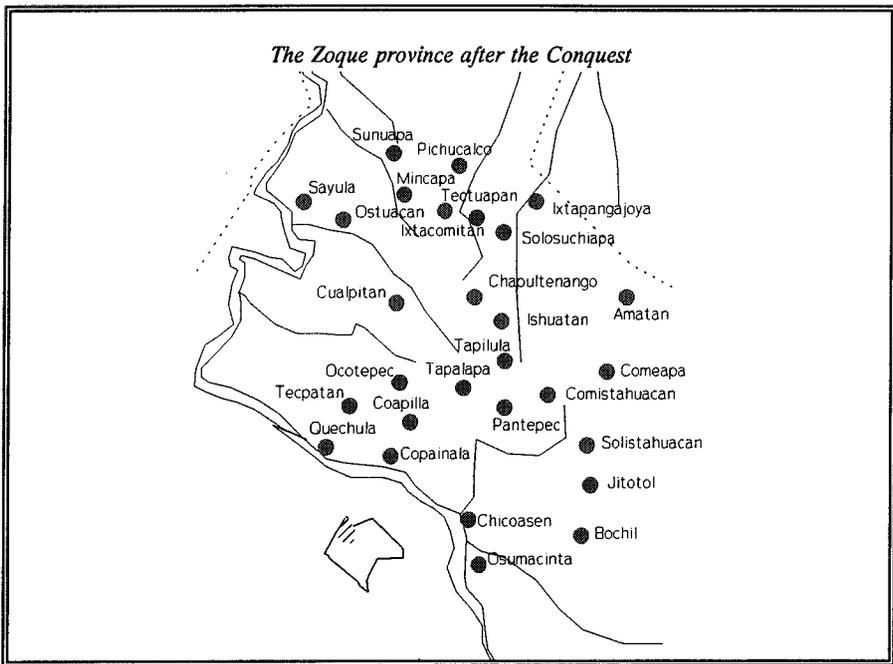
falling into the vengeful hands of their enemy, tried to escape any way that they could. At that moment, some lost their footing and fell. They met a horrible death upon the rocks and turbulent waters of the rapids. In his final report on the conflict, Baltasar Guerra said that he prohibited his comrades in arms from pushing their pursuit, doubtless because he feared losing a large portion of his Indian tributaries.⁴¹

Once the Chiapanecans were dominated, the victorious captain extended his military campaign north to the province of the Zoques. In this region, on the border with Tabasco, which had been in a state of continual unrest since 1524, several pueblos had followed the example of Chiapa de los Indios and also risen up against colonial rule. According to the available documentation, there were nine rebel communities: Ixtacomitán, Ixtapangajoya, Comeapa, Solosuchiapa, Mincapa, Ostuacán, Cualpitán, Zozocolapa, and Suchitepeque.⁴² The pacification took several months, for there were no battles. The rebels fled into the forest as soon as the conquering army crossed into their territory. Many days later, after exchanging messages and negotiating terms of surrender, they finally returned to their villages and reconciled themselves to colonial domination. With this campaign, which took place in the first half of 1533, the northern region of the Zoques was definitively integrated to the colonial province of Chiapa (see map on next page).

When Baltasar Guerra returned from Zoque territory, he designated two governors for the vanquished community of Chiapa de los Indios, choosing them from among the *caciques* of the pueblo. Those two leaders were given responsibility to collect the tribute and promote the conversion of their subjects to the Catholic faith. Their names were don Diego (Guajaca) Nocayola and don Juan (Ozuma) Sangayo.⁴³ But Baltasar Guerra seems to have been a particularly demanding *encomendero*. According to his adversary, Juan de Mazariegos, the eldest son of the founder of Villa Real, Guerra's lieutenants imposed excessive tribute and labor obligations on the Chiapanecans, including forced labor in the recently discovered mines in Copanaguastla, more than thirty leagues from Chiapa.⁴⁴ The Indians were obliged to get themselves to the town and to work as miners in groups (*cuadrillas*) of two hundred.

Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that at the end of 1533 part of the Chiapanecan community again turned to rebellion, this time not only against their exploitive *encomendero* but also against their two Indian governors. The rebellion was headed by a *principal* named Sanguieme, together with hundred-twenty other *principales* and their followers (*séquito*).⁴⁵ After killing Juan Sangayo — Diego Nocayola escaped to San Cristóbal — the rebels retreated anew to the Sumidero site. There, they established a new community, breaking all contact with the other Chiapanecans who remained loyal to the Spanish government.

This second revolt was more easily accomplished because Baltasar Guerra was outside his jurisdiction at the time. Pedro de Alvarado had called his lieutenant to the port in Nicaragua, where he was building an armada to sail for Peru. Notified by messengers, Guerra immediately



returned to San Cristóbal to prepare a new punitive expedition. This time he was escorted not only by Spaniards and Indians from the Jovel valley but also by loyal Chiapanecans. The campaign followed the same pattern as the previous one. When the rebels retreated to the fortress and the caves in the Sumidero, the army of pacification pursued them once more. According to an Indian source, some of those trapped were again driven into the chasm. On the other hand, no Spanish source mentions any leap into the void (*desbarrancamiento*).⁴⁶ Finally, the rebels surrendered. A number of those considered to be leaders were put to death in the plaza of Chiapa de los Indios, among them the principal leader, Sanguieme. Don Diego Nocayola, a pro-Spanish *cacique* played an important role in the executions in his capacity as Balthasar Guerra's *justicia mayor*.

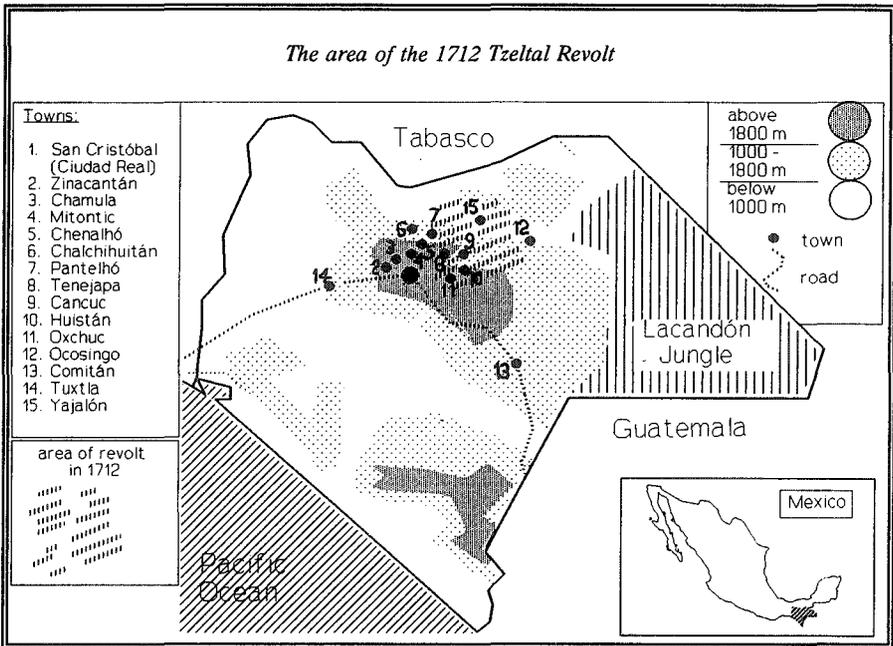
That second revolt was, according to the same Indian source, the last one attempted by the Chiapanecans. After that, they became loyal friends of the Spaniards. They lent their services to all of the armed expeditions the colonial government organized later against other rebel communities in Chiapas. They participated as 'friendly Indians' in the military campaign against the *Lacandones* in 1559, 1586, and 1695, and in putting down the revolt in the province of the Tzeltales in 1713. They linked themselves so closely to the Spanish, in cultural and racial terms, that they gradually lost their original identity and became a *mestizo* community. Today, the descendants of the Chiapanecas live in Chiapa de Corzo. Memory of the conquest and of the rebellion survives in the dance of the Parachicos and in the mock naval combat that is celebrated

each year on the river. The Sumidero battle also has survived, in the form of a legend. But the *Chiaparcorceños* no longer tell it in their original language. That, too, the legend itself has become *mestiza*.⁴⁷

Endnotes

1. See Díaz, *Historia verdadera*, pp. 386,397.
2. See Gage, *Nueva relación*, pp. 148-150.
3. Vásquez de Espinosa, *Descripción*, p. 183.
4. Feria, "Memorial," p. 459.
5. "Relación de los pueblos que forman la diócesis de Chiapa, por el obispo Andrés de Ubilla," Archivo General de las Indias (AGI), Audiencia de Guatemala, 161 (1598).
6. "Censo de los habitantes de las provincias de Chiapa y Soconusco, mandado redactar por Frutos Gómez y Casillas de Velasco, deán de la catedral de Ciudad Real," AGI, Audiencia de México, 3102 (1611).
7. "Informe del oidor Manuel de Ungría Girón sobre el estado de la Alcaldía Mayor de Chiapa," AGI, Audiencia de Guatemala, 44 (1611).
8. Remesal, *Historia*, Vol. 175, p. 394 and Vol. 189, p. 64.
9. Corzo, *Nandiume*; Cruz Robles, "Sumidero."
10. See Remesal, *Historia*, Libro V, Capítulo 13, y Libro VI, Capítulo 16 (1619).
11. "La Real Merced de un Blason de Armas a favor de la Villa de San Cristóbal de los Llanos, 1 de marzo de 1535," Biblioteca Manuel Orozco y Berra, Archivo de Chiapas, Tomo I, Doc. No. 1.
12. Herrera y Tordecillas, *Historia*, Tomo IV, p. 291 and Tomo VI, p. 123.
13. Berlin, "Asiento"; Flores Ruiz, "Sumidero ante la Historia."
14. Navarrete, *Chiapanec*.
15. Berlin, "Asiento," p. 30.
16. See Flores Ruiz, "Sumidero," and "Sumidero ante la Historia."
17. "Pleito entre Chiapa de los Indios y Zinacantán sobre la posesión de unos terrenos cerca de Totolapa," Guatemala, 6 de junio de 1571, Archivo General de Centroamérica (AGCA), A1. 18-6074-54880.
18. Navarrete, *Chiapanec*, pp. 5-7.
19. Díaz, *Historia verdadera*, p. 387; Remesal, *Historia*, p. 376; Ximénez, *Historia*, p. 363.
20. See Díaz, *Historia verdadera*, pp. 386-397.
21. See Ross, *Codex Mendoza*.
22. Becerra, *Nombres geográficos*, p. 72.
23. See Díaz, *Historia verdadera*, pp. 386-397.
24. AGCA, A1. 18-6074-54880.
25. Navarrete, *Chiapanec*, p. 32; Gussinyer, "Pentures."
26. Navarrete, *Chiapanec*, p. 23.
27. Navarrete, *Chiapanec*, p. 23.
28. Navarrete, *Chiapanec*, p. 23.
29. AGCA, A1. 18-6074-54880.
30. Ximénez, *Historia*, pp. 376-378.
31. Ximénez, *Historia*, pp. 378-379.
32. Ximénez, *Historia*, p. 379.
33. Navarrete, *Chiapanec*, pp. 20-21.
34. Ximénez, *Historia*, p. 278.
35. Navarrete, *Chiapanec*, pp. 105-106.
36. Brasseur de Bourbourg, *Bibliothèque*, p. 5.
37. Ximénez, *Historia*, p. 362.
38. "Probanza de Méritos y Servicios de Luis de Mazariegos y Diego de Mazariegos, su padre," Ciudad Real de Chiapa, 29 de marzo de 1573, AGI, Audiencia de Guatemala, 118; "Probanza de Méritos y Servicios de Juan de Mazariegos y de Diego de Mazariegos, su padre," Gracias de Dios, 4 de enero de 1547, AGI, Justicia, 281-1; "Probanza de Méritos y Servicios de los principales y del común de Zinacantán," Ciudad Real de Chiapa, 23 de abril de 1625, AGI, Audiencia de Guatemala, 123; "Probanza de Méritos y Servicios de Juan de Morales y de Cristóbal de Morales," Ciudad Real de Chiapa, 13 de enero de 1573, AGI, Audiencia de Guatemala, 57.

39. AGI, Audiencia de Guatemala, 118.
40. See "Probanza de Méritos y Servicios de Baltasar Guerra," Ciudad Real de Chiapas, 17 de septiembre de 1554, AGI, Patronato, 60-3-1; "Real Merced de un Blasón de Armas a favor de Baltasar Guerra," Madrid, 19 de enero de 1571, in López Sánchez, *Apuntes históricos*.
41. "Probanza de Méritos y Servicios de Baltasar Guerra," San Cristóbal de los Llanos, 10 de septiembre de 1532, AGI, Justicia, 281.
42. AGI, Justicia, 281, 10 de septiembre 1532; "La Real Merced de un Blasón de Armas a favor de la Villa de San Cristóbal de los Llanos," 1 de marzo de 1535; "La Real Merced de un Blasón de Armas a favor de Baltasar Guerra," 19 de enero de 1571.
43. AGI, Patronato, 60-3-1; "Probanza de Méritos y Servicios de Rodrigo Ponce de León Cabeza de Vaca, cacique de Mayola, calpul de Chiapa de los Indios," Guatemala, 1609, AGCA, A1.1-6935-57603.
44. "Proceso de Jn. de Mazariegos y Jn. Guerra sobre el derecho a la encomienda de Chiapa de los Indios," Gracias a Dios, 4 de enero de 1547, AGI, Justicia, 281-1.
45. AGCA, A1. 18-6074-54880.
46. AGCA, A1. 18-6074-54880.
47. Cruz Robles, *Sumidero*.



Historical Perspectives on Maya Resistance

The Tzeltal Revolt of 1712

KEVIN GOSNER*

In the first week of August, 1712, Mayas from twenty-one indigenous towns in the central highlands of Chiapas gathered in the Tzeltal village of Cancuc to proclaim, “¡Ya no hay Dios ni Rey!” (“Now there is neither God nor King!”).¹ A stunning, unequivocal denunciation of Spanish rule, the pronouncement initiated a regional conflict that would last until the following year. In the early weeks, rebel bands overran Spanish estates, ousted Dominican curates from their rural parishes, and humiliated the provincial militiamen mustered against them. Their leaders ordained a native priesthood, aggressively imposed their will on Mayas reluctant to support the uprising, and gradually created a political chain-of-command designed to subject local village authorities to their power. “This,” a rebel from Ocosingo would say, “was the beginning of a new world.”² Only after the president of the *audiencia* himself arrived with reinforcements from Guatemala was the rebellion effectively put down. The last Maya insurgents were rounded up in February 1713.

In January 1994, barely a week after the *Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional* (EZLN) marched into the *zócalo* of San Cristóbal de las Casas, *La Jornada*, a Mexico City daily that has provided some of the best press coverage of the uprising, published a brief narrative of the 1712 Tzeltal Revolt written by Enrique Florescano, one of Mexico’s leading historians.³ The account was offered without any interpretative text, but the drama of the story effectively drew readers’ attention to the long history of Maya resistance in Chiapas and implicitly invited them to examine recent events in broader historical contexts. This is our invitation to readers of this volume, as well.

I would like to begin by emphasizing the need for caution as we take the long view and look for continuities over time. The temptation to

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romanticize the past, especially perhaps for Mayanists, can be very strong. Today as you drive up the steep, curving highway that links the Grijalva Valley and the state capital of Tuxtla Gutiérrez with San Cristóbal de las Casas and the *altiplano*, your first glimpse of highland Maya peoples might well be of *zinacanteco* farmers in *traje*, the customary, almost iridescent striped tunics and beribboned straw hats still worn by men from Zinacantán and its affiliated hamlets. The *Guía Roji*, a popular tourist map, invites you to visit Chamula along the way: "*Se trata de un interesante pueblo tzotzil, lleno de atractivos debido a las costumbres de sus habitantes, quienes conservan arraigadas tradiciones católicas y prehispánicas.*"* This timeless image of picturesque Maya peasants living in bucolic, communal mountain villages is, of course, an idealized, romantic fiction that masks a complex, often violent history. But it is a powerful and enduring image not only in the popular imagination but also in the work of serious academics—and also, perhaps, in the consciousness of serious revolutionaries.

John Watanabe has cast studies of Mayan cultural continuity as a contrast between essentialist and historicist conceptual frameworks.⁴ Essentialism dominated the field from the 1940s through the 1960s, as represented in Sol Tax's 1952 edited book, *The Heritage of Conquest* and in the volumes on social anthropology and ethnology in *The Handbook of Middle American Indians*, published in 1967.⁵ Contemporary Maya identity was equated with the persistence of certain diagnostic cultural traits of pre-hispanic origin: the use of indigenous languages and dialects; distinctive local weaving and embroidery patterns in women's and men's clothing; adherence to the 260-day ritual calendar; and belief in nagualism, traditional agricultural and earth deities, and the sacredness of the natural landscape. To be a Maya was to be a *costumbrista*. A recent book by David Freidel, Linda Schele, and Joy Parker, *Maya Cosmos: Three Thousand Years on the Shaman's Path*, gives the essentialist position renewed currency.⁶ Rigorously researched and elegantly conceived, it is a book to be reckoned with.

The historicist view poses a radical alternative. Rejecting the very notion of cultural continuity or cultural survival, postconquest ethnic identities are seen as unhappy products of brutal colonial exploitation and capitalist hegemony. The Guatemalan historian, Severo Martínez Peláez, has advocated this position especially aggressively. In the conclusion of *La Patria del Criollo*, he offered a bitterly sarcastic polemic:

"The enthusiasm with which some are in the habit of seeing certain modalities of Indian culture—its antiquity, its 'authenticity,' its simplicity in certain aspects and its 'profound esoterica' in others, its colorfulness—must suffer a rude blow when it is seen that these modalities have been sustained and integrated by a concrete process of several centuries

* "Experience an interesting Tzotzil pueblo, full of charming attractions based on the customs of the inhabitants, who preserve long-standing prehispanic and Catholic traditions."

of colonial oppression. They reveal the oppression itself."⁷

Watanabe, as well as Kay Warren, Sheldon Annis, and others have effectively staked out a middle ground between the poles in this debate.⁸ Because Maya peoples themselves clearly recognize and articulate in profoundly moving ways their own sense of connection to the distant past, the processes by which they reconstruct continuities of form and meaning continue to deserve serious study. But we no longer conceive of these cultural processes as static, or as dependent upon consensual social and political relations within communities, or as taking place behind barriers to the outside world. Factional loyalties, rank inequalities, class differences, gender hierarchies and other fields of political contention have been rife among Maya societies throughout their history, and have always shaped strategies of accommodation and resistance.

Now, a second caution. Though it is true that the history of Chiapas is marked by several dramatic incidents of indigenous revolt, organized armed rebellion nonetheless has been a rare occurrence. This truism also applies comparatively to the phenomenon of peasant rebellion in other parts of the world. Political obstacles to the mass, regional mobilization of rural peoples are always imposing. Opportunities to overcome those obstacles are uncommon in history, even though poverty and political exploitation have been endemic to rural populations. We have recognized for a long time now that 'everyday forms of resistance,' to use James Scott's familiar term, are a far more 'naturalized' response to colonial exploitation than organized revolt.⁹

If there are cautions to take with the long view, there also, of course, are benefits. Cross-cultural, historical studies of indigenous revolt and peasant rebellion have generated an important and sophisticated body of social science theory. My own work has been shaped by E.P. Thompson's notion of *moral economy*, a conceptual framework that James Scott broadened to apply to modern peasant societies, and one that Ward Stavig, in particular, showed can be useful in trying to understand colonial rebellion in Latin America.¹⁰ Thompson, of course, introduced the term in an essay on eighteenth-century food riots in England. These riots, he argued, were not simply protests against high prices during a period of famine, but a reaction to the erosion of a paternalist code of conduct in which government acknowledged certain moral obligations to protect the poor. Scott built on Thompson in a book on early twentieth century rebellions in Burma and Vietnam. In it, he wrote:

*"How, then, can we understand the moral passion that is so obviously an integral part of the peasant revolt we have described? How can we grasp the peasant's sense of social justice? We can begin, I believe, with two moral principles that seem firmly embedded in both the social patterns and injunctions of peasant life: the norm of reciprocity and the right to subsistence."*¹¹

In sixteenth and seventeenth century Spanish America, these two moral principles also were embodied in legislative codes introduced with the New Laws and other royal directives that followed.

These laws established controls on the use of indigenous labor, courts in which communities could air their grievances and petition for legal redress, and officeholding structures for local government that codified the system of indirect rule. The Church, too, especially the mendicant friars, assumed a paternalist stance toward indigenous people that embraced these principles. However, creoles often resisted these measures, methods of enforcement often contradicted their intent, and norms for proper conduct were always contested or renegotiated as local conditions altered. In Chiapas, at the end of the seventeenth century, these kinds of challenges to the moral economy escalated as the *audiencia* of Guatemala confronted an economic and political crisis of some complexity. The resulting break-down of a long-standing status quo in the hinterlands north and east of Ciudad Real eventually led to a full-scale Maya uprising. Similarly, we might view the Zapatista rebellion in the context of a post-revolutionary moral economy codified in Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution, a moral economy that collapsed when the agrarian reform laws were rewritten by President Carlos Salinas de Gortari.

The Seventeenth Century Political Economy

The turmoil of the late seventeenth century in Central America broke an extended period of relative calm that was linked to a prolonged economic depression. We owe our understanding of this period to Murdo MacLeod, whose *Spanish Central America* first outlined the broad patterns of economic and social change that unfolded throughout the *audiencia*.¹² For Chiapas, the most telling indicator of the seriousness of the economic downturn is the sharp drop in the Spanish population of Ciudad Real from 280 *vecinos* in 1620 to only 50 by 1659.¹³ Sidney David Markman has added detail to this picture, describing 'a small nondescript town' that lacked a public fountain, whose houses were mostly roofed in thatch rather than tile, and whose most significant public buildings were yet to be completed or were falling into disrepair.¹⁴

With the decline of the provincial capital, colonial authorities who governed over highland villages grew neglectful. For much of the century, yearly *padrones* (censuses) were overlooked and tribute collection was poorly supervised.¹⁵ While lax, irregular government may periodically have led to arbitrary abuses by Spanish officials, administrative neglect seems to have given the Tzeltal, Tzotzil, and Chol some breathing room after the terrifying changes of the preceding century. Their populations bottomed-out around 1611, and, in many communities, began to show the first signs of recovery.¹⁶

And as MacLeod emphasizes, two key institutions that brokered economic and political relations between Spaniards and Mayas for the remainder of colonial rule, the town treasuries (*cajas de comunidad*) and religious sodalities (*cofradías*), became well-established in this period.¹⁷

These institutions served the Spanish state, but they also restored some regularity to village life and, over time, were adapted by Mayas for their own purposes. The solidarities, for example, were promoted by the Dominicans to create an alternative source of financial support as parish revenue declined along with native populations. But records suggest that initially local curates did not keep a close watch over the *cofradías*, and that the ceremonial rounds associated with the solidarities became important expressions of community identity.

The consolidation of these institutions enabled indigenous elites to stabilize village politics and in the process preserve their status and authority. It fell to them to negotiate with outsiders—with capricious tax-collectors, aggressive itinerant merchants, or strict Dominican clergymen—to defend their communities. Their investment in the moral economy of seventeenth-century government was considerable, and when Spanish paternalism deteriorated they would face reprisals from their own people as well as from colonial officials.

MacLeod labeled the years from 1685 to 1730 as a time of 'strain and change'; Miles Wortman, more cryptically, described it as a period of 'crisis and continuity.'¹⁸ Spain, crippled by an incompetent monarch in Charles II and bankrupted by decades of war with the Dutch, English and French, was swept up in the collapse of the Habsburgs, the War of the Spanish Succession, and the arrival of a Bourbon king with new ideas about government. For its American colonies, this turmoil spelled more aggressive taxation, bitter quarrels among rival governing authorities, and great uncertainty altogether.

In Guatemala, a revival of indigo production and Honduran silver mining foreshadowed a decisive economic upswing, but also set regional interests against one another in sometimes violent contests for conscripted Indian labor and equally fraught debates over tax policy. The *audiencia*, confronted by intrigues among rival factions throughout the 1680s and 1690s, was devastated by open warfare at the turn of the century.¹⁹ The political infighting in this period centered on a reformist *oidor*, Joseph de Escals, who in 1696-97 accused the *audiencia* president, Jacinto de Barrios Leal, of criminal acts that included extortion, tax evasion, nepotism, contraband trading, and even rape. Escals linked *alcaldes mayores* in Salvador, Sonsonate, and Nicaragua to Barrios Leal, and depicted a complex criminal conspiracy that also included the dean of the cathedral in Santiago. His own allies were mining and merchant interests in Honduras, whom Barrios Leal's faction accused of similar wrongdoings. The quarrel continued after Barrios Leal stepped down and Escals was called home by the Royal Council. In 1699, a royal *visitador*, Francisco Gómez de la Matriz arrived in Guatemala, and with the support of Escals' old allies tried to oust the new president, Gabriel Sánchez de Berrospe. Both sides in the dispute raised an army, and when Gómez de la Matriz fled to Soconusco, the war took on regional dimensions.

These events provide an interesting and revealing backdrop to the

history of civil unrest in Chiapas during the same period. Our picture of economic conditions here remains clouded and the subject of some disagreement. Juan Pedro Viqueira, for example, points to the arrival of the Jesuits in 1695 to make the case that this was a time of new commercial opportunity and relative vitality.²⁰ However, the fact that many Spanish citizens continued to abandon the city through the 1720s suggests that at least in the highlands the depression lingered. And in 1704, the province was again beset by epidemic disease, creating labor shortages and tribute short-falls that drastically lowered productivity and weakened local markets, conditions that persisted under the impact of the rebellion into the 1730s.²¹

Evidence of considerable regional variation also complicates the picture. Some of the Spaniards who left Ciudad Real (later: San Cristóbal) remained in the province, settling to the west in the Grijalva Valley among *Chiapanecos* and *Zoques* near Chiapa de Indios, Tuxtla and Tecpatlán. This lowland economy does seem to have been more dynamic, with commercial opportunities in ranching, cacao and cochineal production, and regional trading along the routes that led north to Mexico and east to Tabasco and a thriving clandestine trade along the Gulf Coast.

Questions about larger economic trends aside, Chiapas also confronted renewed bureaucratic activism of the kind personified by Joseph de Escals that provoked similar kinds of quarrels among Spanish administrators and local citizens, and also imposed heavier burdens on native populations. Two broad initiatives, one by the State and the other by the Church, were in retrospect especially significant. The first was the settlement, early in the 1690s, of a jurisdictional dispute between the *alcalde mayor* and royal officials known as *jueces de milpa* that confirmed the former's authority over the collection of Indian tributes.²² The second was the attempt to secularize Dominican parishes in Chiapas, an effort that reflected a renewed activism on the part of provincial bishops that extended to new anti-idolatry campaigns, the reorganization of *cofradías*, and more frequent pastoral *visitas*. For Mayas and other indigenous peoples, the ramifications of both these developments were complex and multi-faceted, and bore directly on the causes of the Tzeltal Revolt and other episodes of agrarian unrest. Both require closer scrutiny.

The case that led to the ruling regarding Indian tribute had been initiated by the *alcalde mayor* Manuel Maisterra y Atocha. Maisterra seized upon his new authority to consolidate and expand a well-established system of coercive commerce, the *repartimiento de mercancías*, also known as the *reparto de efectos*. The system compelled indigenous peoples to purchase certain commodities, often raw materials such as cotton or agave fiber, and make payment in finished products, such as cloth or thread, at extravagantly unfair rates of exchange. Indians also were forced to accept grossly unfair payments in currency for products like cacao, cochineal, and cotton fabric that were in demand in local and regional markets.

The element of coercion in these exchanges was often pretty crude. The governor's henchmen might threaten to cudgel village authorities or have them arrested if they refused to go along. But the more significant element of coercion was much more subtle, and linked the repartimientos in important ways to other mechanisms of colonial exploitation. In Chiapas, by the end of the seventeenth century, a hefty portion of the bi-annual tribute was required in coin, this despite the fact that the province, indeed all of Central America, suffered a chronic currency shortage.²³ With wage labor opportunities limited in Chiapas, the repartimientos figure to have been the primary source of cash for many Indian tribute-payers, especially Mayas in the poorer districts of the highlands. Consequently, when Maisterra gained control of the tribute, *alcaldes mayores* gained a powerful instrument for imposing the repartimientos. Mayas forced to pay tribute in coin had few choices but to accept larcenous purchase prices for the goods that the *alcaldes mayores* required in trade.

As it happened, Maisterra paid dearly for his avarice. On May 16, 1693, he was struck down and killed by a mob in the Zoque town of Tuxtla who had gathered to protest his repartimientos.²⁴ Tuxtla was a center for cacao and cochineal production, and so an especially lucrative source of profit for the *alcalde mayor*. Killed with Maisterra were his lieutenant, Nicolás de Trejo, and Tuxtla's Indian governor, don Pablo Hernández, who had helped in Maisterra's schemes. The incident also was sparked by fierce rivalries among leading *principales* in the town, one of whom, don Julio Velásquez sought the governorship for himself. The intensity of these factional disputes is highlighted by the fact that Hernández died when the mob set afire his house, as well as those of allied *principales* nearby, in one *barrio* of the town.²⁵ On May 19, a small contingent of militiamen, supported by some 300 native troops from Chiapa de Indios, marched unopposed into Tuxtla, and order was restored. Arrest were made that eventually led to the execution in July of sixteen men and five women.²⁶ Forty-eight others were given two hundred strokes (*azotes*), sentenced to ten years of forced labor, and sent into exile.

After the Tzeltal Revolt nearly twenty years later, the repartimientos of one of Maisterra's successors, Martín González de Bergara, were cited by the Dominican chronicler, Fray Francisco Ximénez as a major provocation, and in the aftermath of the revolt, the *audiencia* undertook a lengthy judicial review of the whole history of the system of coerced commerce.²⁷ There can be little doubt that the repartimientos were the most significant single factor that provoked rebellion in colonial Chiapas. However, we should remember that the incident in Tuxtla did not flare up into a regional uprising. And in 1712, the Tzeltal Revolt was confined to the northeastern corner of the highlands. The rebels would fail to gain support from Tzeltal communities in the valleys southeast of Ciudad Real, or, with a few exceptions, the Tzotzil towns just northwest of the capital. Moreover, in 1712, the Zoque governor of Tuxtla sided

with colonial authorities, and supplied the Spanish army with horses, corn, and other provisions during the campaign to quell the revolt. During both episodes, then, many pueblos that played every bit as significant a role in the regional commercial network built around the repartimientos remained pacified. It's worth asking why.

As a working hypothesis, the impact of the repartimientos seems likely to have been a function of three variables. The first was the relationship between subsistence agriculture and the commodities demanded in trade. In Chiapas, the same ecological conditions that favored the production of cash crops like cacao, cochineal, or raw cotton—moderate yearly temperature variations; more reliable water sources—also favored higher corn yields, and even, in some places, two annual harvests. We might conjecture, therefore, that even though demand for certain cash crops might be very intense, if subsistence was still relatively secure, the likelihood of organized violence was significantly lower than in zones where corn yields were lower and of poorer quality. This may explain, for example, why Tzeltal communities like Amatenango, Pinola, and Teopisca, located in the upland valley district known as los Llanos where cotton was grown, never joined the rebellion.

A second critical variable was the impact of the repartimientos on indigenous modes of production, especially the organization of family and household labor. In *Class and Society in Central Chiapas*, Robert Wasserstrom documented claims that by the 1760s and 1770s, demand for cacao had reached a level that forced at least some Zoque farmers to abandon foodcropping altogether, a situation that worsened the periodic famines associated with locusts and bad weather.²⁸ Just how widespread such conditions might have been, and just when the repartimientos reached such a critical intensity remains very uncertain. In general, we know surprisingly little about how indigenous men and women coordinated the production of subsistence staples with the cultivation and manufacturing of commercial commodities. Presumably, at least in the early years, pressure to produce certain kinds of goods could be accommodated more easily than others without significant reallocations of land or redeployment of labor. Rebellion seems less likely under these conditions, and more likely when existing modes of production had to be radically reordered.

For the highland Tzeltal, one dimension of the repartimientos' impact is certain. Here, the chief demand was for cotton cloth. Cloth also was the one item in village tribute assessments that *alcaldes mayores* did not require in cash. As a result, the trade was especially hard on Maya women, for they were the weavers. The work also required them to clean sticks and seeds from raw fiber and spin thread, tedious, time-consuming tasks in and of themselves. In addition, women were required to provide menial labor during the actual visits by Spanish authorities. They were pressed to cook, launder clothes, and provide other domestic services, and must sometimes have been subjected to sexual harassment and rape. Margaret Villanueva has linked incidents of re-

bellion in eighteenth century Oaxaca to the abuse of women weavers there.²⁹ Consequently, it seems reasonable to suggest more broadly, that when the repartimientos disrupted household modes of production, which were always highly gendered, the likelihood of violence increased. The Tzeltal Revolt, of course, was precipitated by the actions of a young woman.

Finally, a third variable that shaped the impact of the trade was the private interests that local *caciques* and *principales* (indigenous nobles) themselves had in cashcropping and craft specialization. Among the Zoque, for example, native elites controlled much of the land devoted to cacao and cochineal, either as customary entitlements attached to their *cacicazgo* or as private property. In theory, as entrepreneurs in their own right, they should have suffered from the monopolistic practices of the *alcalde mayor* and would have been better off with an open market. In practice, they seem to have reconciled themselves to partnerships in the trade, and been beneficiaries rather than victims. As a result, in the more commercialized zones of the province, where we might expect sharper social inequalities to have produced higher levels of political conflict, local government seems to have been more stable and the colonial system of indirect rule more effective.³⁰ In contrast, in the poorer districts of the province, and in the heartland of the Tzeltal Revolt, native elites were weaker and more vulnerable, and local government seems to have been less stable.

In the highlands, only one *cacicazgo* is known to have survived into the eighteenth century.³¹ Centered in Ixtapa, a Tzotzil town west of Ciudad Real, it included Zinacantán, San Gabriel, and Soyaló. Elsewhere, power rested with the descendants of lesser nobles, the *principales*, who controlled the municipal offices of *alcalde* and *regidor*. At the end of the seventeenth century, local politics in these communities seem to have been increasingly volatile and native elites especially vulnerable to outside interference. In Cancuc, the meddling of the *alcalde mayor* in 1665, and the village priest in 1677, provoked bitter divisions over *cabildo* elections.³² And in 1679, the entire village council in Tenejapa, along with their immediate predecessors, were arrested by the *alcalde mayor* for habitual drunkenness and incompetent government.³³ Eventually, alienated Maya elites such as these would lead their people into rebellion.

Now let's turn to the second field of bureaucratic activism. As emphasized above, the commercial and administrative energy of the *alcaldes mayores* in this period was matched by the bishops and Dominican curates who revitalized the provincial Church during these same years. Between 1658 and 1712, four bishops, Fray Mauro de Tobar y Valle, Marcos Bravo de la Serna y Manrique, Fray Francisco Núñez de la Vega, and Fray Bautista Alvarez de Toledo promoted a variety of projects that created new burdens for indigenous communities. Of the four, thanks to the account of Francisco Ximénez, Alvarez de Toledo is the most notorious.³⁴ He founded the Hospital de San Nicolás in Ciudad

Real, and imposed a new parish tax on highland communities to fund it. His *visita* in 1709, depleted *cofradía* funds by half throughout the highlands, and left such bitterness that the announcement of a second *visita* in the summer of 1712 was a decisive factor in the outbreak of the revolt.³⁵

But his predecessors had done their share, too, to unsettle conditions in the hinterland of their diocese. Tobar y Valle had redrawn parish boundaries and established new parish seats (*cabeceras*), reforms that tightened ecclesiastic administration. Bravo de la Serna founded a seminary in Ciudad Real in hopes of pushing secularization, and also set new constitutions for Maya *cofradías* that resulted in closer supervision of their finances.³⁶ Bishop Núñez de la Vega compiled a new handbook for the Dominican missions that promoted an aggressive campaign against idolatry and shamanism. Like Alvarez de Toledo, he carried out two pastoral *visitas* within a two year interval. During one, he destroyed painted images of two Tzeltal deities that had been nailed to a beam in Oxchuc's church, and confiscated, there and in other towns, the calendar boards used by Maya shamans.³⁷

Like the interferences of the *alcaldes mayores*, the bishops' actions disturbed village elites and alienated old allies. In 1709, Lucas Pérez, the *fiscal* or parish assistant in Chilón, refused to pay a fee imposed by Bishop Alvarez de Toledo during his notorious *visita*, and was deprived of his office and imprisoned.³⁸ In Bachajón, around the same time, the *fiscal*, Gerónimo Saroes, was booted out of the pueblo after a fight with his priest.³⁹ Both would go on to become major figures in the Tzeltal Revolt, as would another former parish assistant, the sacristan in Cancuc, Agustín López. The crackdown on shamanism and idolatry also must have upset village politics. The whole construction of power among Maya peoples was linked to indigenous beliefs about the super-natural, including the efficacy of ritual, the constant presence of spiritual guardians, the revelations of dreams and hallucinatory visions. Mayas, then, would have viewed an attack on the ritual specialists as a threat to the well-being of the whole community.

Early in the eighteenth century, a wave of popular religious cults swept through highland Chiapas, testaments to Maya belief that material misfortunes were intertwined with the sacred. In 1708, crowds gathered in Zinacantán to hear the preachings of a mestizo hermit, who was said to have a miraculous statue of the Holy Mother hidden in a tree. During the Lenten season in 1712, just months before events began to unfold in Cancuc, authorities learned of another cult, this time in Santa Marta. A shrine had been built that housed another miraculous image of the Virgin, who had appeared to a young Tzotzil woman named Dominica López sometime the previous fall.⁴⁰ The woman's husband, Juan Gómez, told Fray Joseph Monroy of Chamula that he had discovered the effigy at the site of the visitation, a form originally made of human flesh that had changed inexplicably into wood.

Both cults drew Mayas from all the districts of central Chiapas, and

even some Zoques from the western highlands. Both were suppressed by Dominican and diocesan authorities without violence from either side. The Tzeltal Revolt began much the same way, with a miraculous apparition, but this time the confrontation led to a regional war.

The 1712 Rebellion

The rebellion originated as a conspiracy among a small group of dissident Maya principales who promoted a new cult in Cancuc. María López, the thirteen year-old daughter of their leader, Agustín López, claimed the Virgin Mary had appeared to her on the outskirts of town. Her father, Cancuc's sacristan, was joined by Gerónimo Saroes, Sebastián García, Gabriel Sánchez, and Miguel Gómez.⁴¹ Saroes was the exiled fiscal and *escribano* from Bachajón. Sebastián García and Miguel Gómez, both of Cancuc, were former regidores. All four, Agustín López later told a Spanish court:

*"were men of authority and all the Indians had much respect for them. In this time and occasion they were poor; myself and the others could scarcely put our hands on a single manta."*⁴²

In the simplest of language, this remains the most revealing and moving explanation for the rebellion to appear amongst the thousands of pages of reports and testimony the event would generate. A former ally of local Spanish rule, López' bitterness is palpable, and the idiom he invoked to describe their poverty draws our attention directly to the *repartimientos*.

By late June or early July, the conspirators had recruited support for the cult from the standing *alcaldes* and *regidores* as well as the two *fiscales* who served the village priest.⁴³ *Fiscales* from Chilón and Tenango soon arrived to pledge their support, too, and the movement began to grow.⁴⁴ However, one of Tenango's *fiscales*, Nicolás Pérez, remained loyal to the Church.⁴⁵ He helped Cancuc's parish priest, the Dominican Fray Simón de Lara, escape to the capital shortly before the *cancuqueros* declared themselves in open rebellion.

In the first week of August, letters written in Tzeltal by Gerónimo Saroes were sent out to villages all over the highlands summoning local *alcaldes* and their townspeople to Cancuc for a great convocation, and instructing them to bring *"all the cajas and drums, and all the books and money of the cofradías."*⁴⁶ At least twenty-one Tzeltal, Tzotzil, and Chol pueblos sent representatives to the gathering:

- Tzeltal: Bachajón, Cancuc, Chilón, Guaguitepeque, Moyos, Ocosingo, Petalsingo, Teultepeque, Oxchuc, Sibacá, Sitalá, Tenango, Tenejapa, and Yajalón;
- Tzotzil: Hueytiupán, Huistán, Mitontic, San Pedro Chenaló, and Santa Marta;
- Chol: Tila, Tumbala.

At this point in the political narrative, it is tempting to view the rebellion as an inexorable force that spread like proverbial 'wild fire.' As

Robert Wasserstrom first emphasized, a closer look reveals a more complicated story. Principales in many of the villages resisted turning over their community's assets to the *cancuqueros*. Instead, they buried ledgers and strongboxes in caches hidden in the mountains.⁴⁷ The alcaldes of at least one village, Chilón, refused to come at all.⁴⁸ Two early casualties of the revolt were fiscales in Tenango and Oxchuc who were killed for refusing to participate, Nicolás Pérez and Fabian Ximénez.⁴⁹ And soon after the August convocation, Cancuc confronted a rival cult in Yajalón, where a woman named Magdalena Díaz claimed she had been visited by the true Virgin.⁵⁰ Rebel soldiers put a quick end to her challenge. Finally, Simojovel suffered a vicious raid that left hundreds dead, when tzotziles there refused to join.⁵¹ Facts like these must temper more idealized accounts of the uprising, but they should not overshadow the impressive efforts of rebel leaders to build solidarity and create an effective fighting force.

These men and women appropriated the rituals and practices of the Catholic Church, the nomenclature of the Spanish militia ranks, and the office structures of royal government, and set out to turn the colonial world upside down. Cancuc was styled *Ciudad Real Cancuc de Nueva España*; Hueytiupan was cited as *Guatemala*, Spaniards were denounced as 'Jews' and the real Ciudad Real as 'Jerusalem.' These were powerful rhetorical plays, designed to assert the legitimacy of the movement in language that Spaniards would understand.

The actual structures of rebel government did not replicate Spanish forms so literally, and the balance of political power among rebel leaders remains the subject of some disagreement. Throughout the rebellion, the shrine in Cancuc, where María López (more commonly known as María de la Candalaria, her *nombre de guerra*) preached and consulted with the Virgin, remained the both the symbolic and active headquarters for the uprising. She was attended by her father, who seems to have had a hand in nearly all the major political and military decisions taken by the rebels. But as the movement developed, others arrived to play critical roles.

None has received more attention than Sebastián Gómez de la Gloria, who came to Cancuc after the initial conspiracy was underway. He arrived with a fantastic story, an account of a visitation with San Pedro himself, who invested him with the authority to act as bishop. At the August gathering, in Cancuc's church, he ordained the first rebel priests, the fiscales who had supported the cult early on, along with three newcomers, Sebastián González of Guaguitepeque, Francisco Pérez of Petalcingo, and Francisco de Torre y Tobilla of Ocosingo.⁵² Francisco de Torre y Tobilla later testified that Gómez "*baptized him, pouring water on his head and placing his hand on it, lowering it from his forehead to his nose saying in his mother tongue [Tzotzil], 'in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.'*"⁵³ Some weeks later, at least thirteen more fiscales were recruited to the rebel priesthood.⁵⁴ These men wore the vestments left behind by their curates, preached inside village churches, and even con-

secrated marriages that they dutifully registered in the *libros de matrimonios*. But like their Spanish role models, they also would charge fees for their work. This aroused such discontent that leaders were forced to send an angry letter among the pueblos reminding townspeople of the important of obedience.⁵⁵

That letter came not from Sebastián Gómez de la Gloria, but from Nicolás Vásquez of Tenango, who boasted later, "*I was superior and had command over all the other captains, vicarios, and curas.*"⁵⁶ Vásquez was one of four captains general named to head the rebel army. The others were Jacinto Domínguez of Sibacá, Juan García of Cancuc, and Lazaro Ximénez of Hueytiupán.⁵⁷ Vásquez emerged as their leader, and the account of Agustín López suggests that he worked hand-in-hand with López and Gómez de la Gloria in what can best be described as a leadership collective. Rebel captains were named in each town to recruit soldiers, muster supplies, build defenses, and lead their townsmen when the war started in earnest. Surprisingly few of them seem to have been current or former officeholders, suggesting that the cancuqueros did not trust local principales to sacrifice their own interests for the good of the movement.

Now, as for the war itself. At the start, provincial Spaniards were caught at a disadvantage. The alcalde mayor Martín González de Vergara had died just before the crisis began, leaving the office of regional governor vacant. Local militias mustered in Ciudad Real and Ocosingo were slow to mobilize and their officers were inexperienced and indecisive. Consequently, authorities in the province were unable to suppress the rebellion in its initial stage. In September, an army of mestizo and mulatto conscripts from Guatemala led by Spanish officers under the command of audiencia president, Toribio de Cosío, arrived in Ciudad Real to lead a new campaign. Their offensive began in earnest in November, with aid from the indigenous governors in Chiapa de Indios and Tuxtla. The alcalde mayor in Tabasco opened a second front in Maya territory to the east.

Descriptions of the fighting recall accounts of the wars of conquest, with Spanish officers on horseback, backed by cadres of crossbowmen, musketeers, and pikemen. The Mayas defended their territory with ambushes, impeding audiencia forces with pits lined with sharp sticks and mud barriers, and pummeling them with stones from hidden troop placements. During the sieges at Huistán, Oxchuc, and finally Cancuc, these adversaries fought hand-to-hand, the Mayas armed with pikes, axes, and throwing stones. Remarkably few Spanish soldiers lost their lives in these encounters, though hundreds of Maya rebels and non-combatants perished. Cancuc was taken on November 21, 1712. María López (de la Candelaria) and Agustín López managed to escape. She died in childbirth some four years later, just two weeks before her family's hideout near Yajalón was exposed and her father arrested. Sebastián Gómez de la Gloria escaped, too, and was never caught. Nicolás Vásquez and a handful of other captains held out until February of

the following year.

Conclusion

During the final siege in Cancuc, María López had prophesized that some day the Virgin would return and the Tzeltal would rise again. In June 1727, the fifteenth anniversary of her original vision, Spanish authorities feared her prophesy was about to be fulfilled. The *justicia mayor* of Tabasco, Andrés de Arze, called out his militia when a revolt was reported in three Zoque villages along the frontier with Chiapas.⁵⁸ His would claim to have exposed not one, but two conspiracies. The first was led by a Zoque principal from Tecomaxiaca, and included Tzeltal supporters from Chilón, who migrated seasonally to the frontier to work in the cacao orchards. The second, he linked to the return of the Cancuc Virgin, who was reported to have reappeared in Bachajón, where Francisco Saroes, a kinsmen of one of the original Cancuc conspirators, served as fiscal. Arze tortured two of the alleged leaders of this new rebellion, Antonio Vásquez of Cancuc and Marcos Velásquez of Bachajon. He also sent an alarm to the governor of Chiapas, Martín Joseph de Bustamente, who immediately sent out inquiries to officials in his province. Even under torture, neither Vásquez or Velásquez admitted to any wrongdoing, and Bustamente found no evidence of unrest among the Tzeltal and Tzotzil pueblos near Ciudad Real. In the end, Arze's conduct was condemned by royal authorities for needlessly enflaming public tensions.

The Arze incident highlights a pervasive and deep-seeded fear of the Maya among *ladinos* (non-Indians) in the frontier towns of southern Mexico, a fear that has persisted to the present-day. Distant from centers of state power, non-Indians in towns like San Cristóbal, Comitán, or Ocosingo have felt vulnerable and endangered by the indigenous populations that surround them. These conditions have promoted intense, racist hatred of the Maya, and made *ladinos* themselves prone to initiate violence in the first-place. Cultivating fears of endemic Maya rebellion has enabled reactionary landowners and others to justify unprovoked attacks on settlements of Maya peoples periodically throughout the history of the state. Movements like the Tzeltal Revolt, or the Zapatista uprising, largely began as defensive reactions to these and other forms of *ladino* violence.

Just how the social memory of contemporary Mayas in Chiapas integrates these historic revolts and periods of unrest is a question that lies beyond my expertise. We may be tempted to assume that the Maya view these episodes with deep pride, as heroic moments that foreshadow or prophesize an end to oppression and a new age of Maya sovereignty. Drawing from Victoria Bricker's *Indian Christ, Indian King*, and work by Dennis Tedlock and James Sexton on Maya folktales in Guatemala, I suspect that alongside any mythic representations are sober, hard memories of death and famine, of disorder and dislocation, of families

torn apart and people disappeared.⁵⁹ As we admire the grit and courage of a new band of Maya insurgents, and celebrate the wit and ingenuity of their *subcomandante*, we must not lose sight of the heavy cost that ordinary men and women will bear, nor forget that these events engender nightmares as well as dreams.

Endnotes

1. Included in this essay are reworkings of material included in Gosner, *Soldiers of the Virgin*. Other secondary works on the Tzeltal Revolt include: Bricker, *Indian Christ, the Indian King*, Chap. 5; Klein, "Peasant Communities"; Martínez Peláez, *Sublevación*; Saint-Lu, "Poder colonial"; Thompson, *Maya Paganism*; Viqueira, *María de la Candelaria*; and Wasserstrom, "Ethnic Violence".
2. Archivo General de las Indias (AGI), Audiencia de Guatemala (AG), Vol. 295: Cdrno 6: Testimonio de Francisco de Torre y Tobilla, folio 10-11, February 19, 1713.
3. *La Jornada* Newspaper, January 9, 1994.
4. Watanabe, *Maya Saints*, pp. 5-11.
5. Tax (ed.), *Heritage of Conquest*; Wauchope (ed.) *Handbook*.
6. Freidel, Schele & Parker, *Maya Cosmos*.
7. Martínez Peláez, *Patria del criollo*.
8. See Warren, *Symbolism of Subordination*; Annis, *God and Production*.
9. See Scott, *Weapons of the Weak*.
10. Thompson, "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century" and "The Moral Economy Reviewed" in *Customs in Common*; Scott, *Moral Economy*. Useful critiques of moral economy approaches include: Adas, "'Moral Economy' or 'Contest State'?"; Bohstedt, "Moral Economy"; and Hunt, "From the Millennial." See also, Stavig, "Ethnic Conflict"; and De Jong, "Community Discourse," for other examples of moral economy approaches in colonial Latin American history.
11. Scott, *Moral Economy*, p. 167.
12. MacLeod, *Spanish Central America*, Part Three.
13. MacLeod, *Spanish Central America*, p. 218; Gerhard, *Southeast Frontier*, p. 161.
14. Markman, *Architecture*, pp. 63-69.
15. AGI, Contadura, 971 (1622); Archivo General de Centro América, Guatemala City (AGCA), A3.16 (I) 37648 2566, Padrones 1665.
16. Gerhard, *Southeast Frontier*, pp. 158-161; MacLeod, "Outline," p. 8.
17. Archivo Histórico Diocesano, San Cristóbal (AHDSC), Libros de cofradías, Chilón, Sibacá, Yajalón. 1677-1827; MacLeod, "Papel social y económico."
18. Wortman, *Government*, pp. 91-110.
19. For the best overview of these conflicts, see Wortman, *Government*, esp. pp. 94-99.
20. Viqueira, "Tribute y sociedad," pp. 248-249.
21. AGCA A3.16 (I) 4753 367 (1705).
22. See MacLeod, "Dominican Explanations," p. 43; and Viqueira, "Tributo," pp. 238-240.
23. For a more complete account of tribute practices, see Gosner, *Soldiers of the Virgin*, Chapter 3.
24. AGCA A1.15 559 49: Autos sobre la motin habido en Tuxtla fue asesinado el alcalde mayor, 1693. The best account of the riot in Tuxtla is MacLeod, "Motines."
25. MacLeod, "Motines," p. 237.
26. MacLeod, "Motines," pp. 241-242.
27. Ximénez, *Historia*, III, pp. 257-259; AGI, AG, 312: Expediente sobre la averiguación de los fraudes por los alcaldes mayores, 1718-1729.
28. Wasserstrom, *Class and Society*, pp. 47-48.
29. Villanueva, "From Calpixqui to Corregidor," p. 32.

30. Among the Tzeltal, for example, the cotton-producing towns in los Llanos, and among the Tzotzil, Simojovel, where tobacco was grown, and Zinacantán, where salt was harvested, were conspicuously unresponsive to the rebels in 1712.

31. AGCA A1.24 10216 1572 folio 100: Título de gobernador de los pueblos de Istapa, Zinacantán, San Gabriel, y Soyaló a Don Cristóbal Sánchez. March 16, 1701. In the seventeenth century, heirs claimed titles to cacicazgos in Chamula (1601) and Bachajon (1630), but no references to *caciques* in these towns have been found for the eighteenth century, AGCA, A3.16 4516 355: Tributos, 1601; Breton, *Bachajon*, pp. 249-259; and Calnek, "Highland Chiapas," pp. 93-94.

32. AGCA A1.14.21 908 119: Autos sobre una elección en Ocotenango, April 9, 1675; Petición de las justicias del pueblo de San Juan Enavgelista Ocotenango piden aprobación de elecciones. January 1, 1677.

33. AGI, AG, 29: Carta del Capitán Don Juan Bautista Gonzalez del Alamo a la Audiencia, 1682.

34. Ximénez, *Historia*, III, p. 257.

35. AHDSC Libros de cofradías. La cofradía de Santa Cruz, Sibacá, 1677-1716; La cofradía del Santísimo Sacramento, Chilón, 1677-1827; La cofradía de la Parroquia de Santo Domingo, Chilón, 1677-1827.

36. AHDSC, Libros de cofradías, Chilón, 1677-1827.

37. Núñez de la Vega, *Constituciones diocesanas*, 9th Pastoral Letter, Section 10.

38. Ximénez, *Historia*, III, pp. 257-258.

39. AGI, AG, 296: Testimonio de Agustín López, folio 63, 1716.

40. AGI, AG, 293: Testimonio de los autos fechos sobre decirse que hace aparecido la Virgen Santísima Nuestra Señora a una india del pueblo Santa Marta, May 1712.

41. AGI, AG, 296: Testimonio de Agustín López, folios 87-88, 1716.

42. AGI, AG, 296: Testimonio de Agustín López, folio 88, 1716.

43. AGI, AG, 296: Testimonio de Agustín López, folio 64, 1716.

44. AGI, AG, 296: Quaderno 5, folios 294-295, 1713.

45. Ximénez, *Historia*, III, p. 270.

46. Ximénez, *Historia*, III, pp. 269-270.

47. AHDSC, Libro de la Cofradía, Santo Domingo Chilón, August 4, 1715.

48. Ximénez, *Historia*, III, pp. 272-273, 278-279.

49. Ximénez, *Historia*, III, pp. 273-274.

50. Ximénez, *Historia*, III, pp. 286-287.

51. Bricker, *Indian Christ*, p. 64; AGI, AG, 295, Qdrno 5, folio 208, March 1713.

52. AGI, AG, 296: Quaderno 5: Testimonio de Gerónimo Saroes, folio 294, 1713; AGI, AG, 295: Quaderno 6: Testimonio de Francisco Torre y Tobilla, folios 10-11, 1713.

53. AGI, AG, 296: Quaderno 6: Testimonio de Francisco de Torre y Tobilla, folio 10, February 19, 1713. Translation from Bricker, *Indian Christ*, p. 61.

54. AGI, AG, 293: Testimonio de los autos contra diferentes idios de diversos pueblos por haber administrado los santos sacramentos, 1713.

55. Ximénez, *Historia*, III, p. 283.

56. AGI, AG, 295: Qdrno 5, folio 202, March 1713.

57. AGI, AG, 295: Qdrno 5, folio 202, 1713, and, folio 294, 1713.

58. AGCA, A1.15 176 13, 1727: Autos fechos sobre las noticias dadas por el alcalde mayor de la provincia de Chiapa a su Señoría el Señor Presidente Gobernador y Capitán General de este reyno.

59. Tedlock, *Breath on the Mirror*; Sexton, *Mayan Folktales*.

Whose Caste War?

Indians, *Ladinos*, and the Chiapas 'Caste War' of 1869

JAN RUS*

Between 1868 and 1870, the people of Chamula and several related Tzotzil speaking communities of the Chiapas highlands rose in a savage and cruel war of extermination against their *ladino* (non-Indian) neighbors. Mobilized by an unscrupulous leader who fooled them into believing he could talk to a set of crude clay 'saints,' they first withdrew to the forest, where they built a temple to their new religion. Here the leader, in order to increase his power, had a young boy crucified on Good Friday, 1868, as an Indian Christ.

Conscientious ladino authorities, horrified by such barbarity, strove for more than a year to make the Indians see the error of their ways and return to civilization. Unfortunately, all of their efforts were finally in vain: joined by a mysterious ladino outcast who trained them in military maneuvers, the Indian hordes swept out of the mountains in June 1869, pillaging and slaughtering all not of their own race. Their first victims were the very priests and school-teachers who had gone among them to enlighten them. In short order, they also massacred the families of small ladino farmers who had dared to take up vacant lands on the borders of their territories. Finally, they attacked the nearby capital of San Cristóbal itself, retreating only when driven back by ladino reinforcements spontaneously rallied from throughout the state. Although soundly beaten in

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every subsequent engagement, such were their fanaticism and cunning that it was still to be almost a year before the state militia was able to run the last of their renegade bands to earth.

Introduction

This version of the *Caste War of 1869*, essentially that handed down to us by nineteenth-century ladino journalists and historians,¹ is still invoked today in the highlands of Chiapas to prove the precariousness of civilization's hold on the Indians and to demonstrate the danger of allowing even the slightest autonomous activity in their communities. Although anthropologists and others have worked it over in recent years, often with the stated purpose of telling the Indians' side of the story, none seems to have questioned either its specific details or the overall impression it creates that the energy for the 'Caste War' was drawn entirely from the Indians' own peculiar religious transformation of their hatred for ladinos.

What makes this unfortunate is that almost none of the story appears to be true.

Originally, the purpose of this paper was to review the history of Indian-ladino relations in the decades leading up to the 'Caste War' in an attempt to develop a more satisfying picture, perhaps even an explanation, of the Indians' behavior. What I hoped to establish was that the Chamulas did indeed have objective reasons to rebel and that the 'Caste War,' far from being a sudden explosion, was actually the culmination of years of unrest. I also hoped to show that it was not sufficient to attribute the rebellion simply to religious hysteria—that calling it a 'revitalization movement' not only obscured the fact that a vigorous tradition of native Christianity existed before and after 1869, but begged all of the interesting questions about why the Indians should have risen at this particular moment in this particular way. What in fact emerged

Although the text has held up surprisingly well in the intervening years, over time friends have passed on new documents, suggested alternative interpretations of old ones, and shared previously unknown (at least to me) stories about the rebellion that still circulate in native communities. The cumulative effect has been to shade and even change outright some aspects of my earlier interpretation. The most striking of these changes—those involving the variety of modern Indian tellings of the events of 1868-70—were incorporated into a subsequent article ("The Caste War of 1869 from the Indians Perspective: A challenge for Ethnohistory," *Memorias del Segundo Coloquio Internacional de Mayanistas*, Mexico DF, 1989), and will not be belabored here. However, some adjustments have been made, particularly in the concluding section. In addition, I have taken advantage of this opportunity to update the endnotes and bibliography to reflect materials not available in the 1970s.

Acknowledgments. In particular, I would like to thank Diane Rus, Andrés Aubry, Mariano Collazo Panchín, Justus Fenner, María Elena Fernández Galán, Salvador Guzmán López, Angélica Inda and Ulrich Köhler for their generosity. Alas, as all historians know, no historical study is ever definitively finished, nor, as a result, definitively correct. In spite of my friends' contributions, then, I alone am responsible for the errors and misjudgments that most assuredly remain in the following pages.

from this review, however, was something quite different. As it now stands, what took place in Chiapas in the late 1860s was not a 'caste war' at all, at least not to the Indians. Instead, the provocation and violence were almost entirely on the side of the ladinos; the Indians, far from having been the perpetrators of massacres, were the victims!

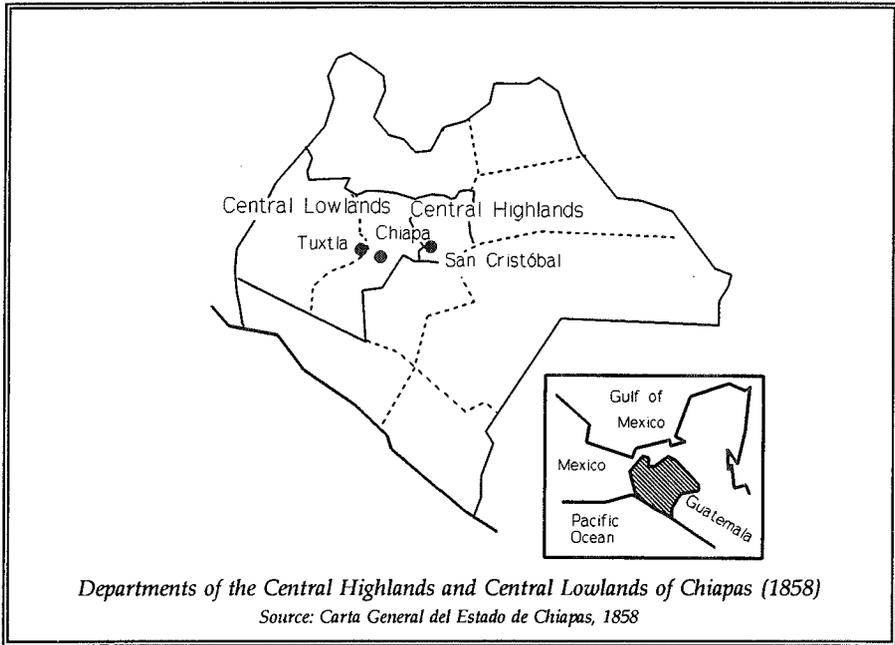
Obviously, such a sharp reversal of the 'traditional' history calls for substantiation. In attempting to provide it, the present chapter departs from earlier treatments of the 'Caste War' in two ways. First, given what seem to be misrepresentations in the classic sources—many of them written long after the facts—it attempts to build strictly from primary materials: diaries, official reports, and the recently discovered correspondence of the parish priests in the 'rebel' communities. Second, and more important, it attempts to locate the 'Caste War' in an overall history of Chiapas's development from independence in the 1820s through the first establishment of a national Mexican state in the late 1860s.

Seen in this larger context, the attacks on the Indians in 1869-70 appear to have been little more than the final act of a drama that began when Chiapas's ladinos began competing among themselves for control of the state's land and labor following independence. Through the decades, this competition led both to increasingly bitter confrontations within ladino society itself and to the progressive impoverishment of the state's Indians—a fact on which the liberal, lowland-based ladino faction attempted to capitalize in the mid-1860s by turning the Indians against its conservative rivals and their allies in the church. Realizing only afterward that the Indians' receptivity to this politicization jeopardized their own control of them as much as the conservatives', the liberals then joined the conservatives in the punitive expeditions that came to be known as the 'Caste War.'

Unfortunately, the Indians have been victimized twice by these events: once by the violence itself, and a second time by the myth that they, not the ladinos, were to blame. In a final section, then, this chapter will attempt to trace the myth of the 'Caste War' through the last century and a quarter, looking both at the interests it has served and the elaborations and distortions it has collected as it has gone along. Ironically, in the wake of the Zapatista Uprising of 1994, journalists and even some scholars sympathetic to the Indians have given the myth new currency, repeating it uncritically in all of its detail as a precedent for current events. Perhaps by demystifying the events of 1868-70 it will be possible to restore some balance to the current discussion of the nature and possibilities of Chiapas's native societies.

The Competition for Chiapas, 1821-1855

To Chiapas's ladino elite, the end of the colony in 1821 marked the beginning of a protracted, and increasingly violent, struggle for local power. Although stable political parties did not form until much later, two broad class and regional tendencies were apparent from the begin-



ning: on one side were the 'conservatives' of San Cristóbal and the highlands; on the other, the 'liberals' of Tuxtla, Chiapa, and the lowlands.²

San Cristóbal was the traditional capital of Chiapas and the seat of its diocese. Its elite were civil and religious bureaucrats and the owners of large estates: men who lived on the rents and taxes of the large surrounding Indian population. Following independence, such people saw themselves as the natural heirs of the power and privilege that had belonged to the colonial church and crown. Accordingly, they campaigned for a government of continuity after 1821—a centralized, paternalistic regime that would not only preserve the status quo but deliver it into their hands.

The lowlands, on the other hand, were already by the 1820s becoming host to a vigorous commercial agriculture. Their natural leaders were ranchers and merchants: men who, as they became successful, became hungry for more land and, especially, more Indian laborers. Under the centralist government favored by San Cristóbal, however, access to such resources would be controlled by a self-interested administration of highlanders. Hoping, then, for the local autonomy that would at least permit them to reorganize and develop their own region, such men opted after 1821 for a liberal, federal form of government.

Conflict between these two factions, whatever the appearances, was never so much over ideals or future models of society as over division of the spoils left by the Spaniards. Chief of these was land—particularly, at first, Indian land. This was followed closely by labor and, what was

essentially the same thing, tax revenues. Office-holding being the one proven route to a share of these, opportunities for 'public service' were avidly sought by ambitious men on both sides—so avidly, in fact, that the continual *pronunciamientos* and revolts gave Chiapas more than twenty-five governors before 1850.³ Meanwhile, through all of this instability, the one constant was a steady decline in the position of the Indians.

Table 1. Chiapas population by region, 1819

Region	Ladinos	Indians	Share of total Indians
Central Highlands	5,677	56,389	54%
Central Lowlands	4,706	7,312	7%
Other	12,315	40,461	39%

Source: "Informe rendido por la Sociedad Económica de Ciudad Real sobre las ventajas y desventajas obtenidas con ... el sistema de intendencias," 1819 in *Documentos históricos del estado de Chiapas* (Tuxtla, 1956)

Of greatest consequence to native peoples was the loss of their lands. At the close of the colonial period, a great deal of Chiapas's territory was tied up in *terrenos baldíos*, or 'vacant lands'—vast expanses that had been held in trust by the crown as a buffer around the Indian communities. Although these lands were technically part of the Indian townships, the Indians themselves were legally excluded from them, being limited instead to the *ejidos* laid out around their churches. However, they were also off limits to ladinos. Arguing after independence that to leave such an immense resource unexploited would unnecessarily retard the state's development, successive governments between 1826 and 1844, liberal and conservative alike, progressively simplified the process by which private citizens could 'denounce,' or claim, them. As a result, by 1850 virtually all the state's Indian communities had been stripped of their 'excess' lands.⁴

The effects of this land-grab cannot be over emphasized. Lowland communities, invaded during the 1830s and 1840s by aggressive farmers who actually intended to use their lands, found themselves driven out of their townships altogether during this period. Their communal ties broken, many melted into the deculturated lower classes of nearby ladino towns and 'assimilated.' In the highlands, on the other hand, where denser populations, less fertile soils, and a more torpid economic tradition prevented the kind of development that would have dissolved communities, the land-grabbers instead folded whole townships—always with the exception of a small central *ejido*—into great feudal estates. Of the twenty-five intact Tzotzil and Tzeltal townships that existed at independence, all suffered this fate to one degree or another.⁵ Such, for example, was the case of Chamula.

Although attempts had been made to expropriate its *terrenos baldíos* as early as the 1830s, it was not until 1846 that the Larráinzar family succeeded in 'denouncing' the three-quarters of Chamula's land—476 *caballerías* (47,600 acres) out of a total of 636—not protected by its *ejido*. This tract, together with those in two adjacent townships expropriated at the same time, formed the estate of Nuevo Edén, containing a total of some 874 *caballerías*.⁶ Although it had not been strictly legal for Chamulas to be living in these lands before their denunciation, population pressures had in fact forced many to take up residence there as early as the mid-eighteenth century.⁷ Faced after denunciation with the choice of moving off or remaining as serfs, most of these clandestine settlers stayed, becoming laborers on sugar and tobacco plantings belonging to the Larráinzars in lower elevations. It can be calculated that by the early 1850s a minimum of 740 families were in this situation, each adult male of whom furnished three days of labor per month to keep his plot—a total of 26,640 man-days of unpaid labor a year for lands where their ancestors had lived without fee for generations.⁸

Although certainly one of the more spectacular depredations of its kind, Nuevo Edén was hardly unique. On the contrary, highland ladinos of more modest means and ambition also took advantage of the new laws, with the result that by 1850 practically every township in the region had acquired a permanent settlement of ladino 'farmers' and 'merchants.' Through land denunciations, usurious loan practices, and sales of alcohol and over-priced commodities, such 'homesteaders' were able in the barely twenty-five years from 1826 to the 1850s to transform more than a quarter of Chiapas's Indians from 'free' villagers into permanently—and legally—obligated peons and laborers.⁹

This, in turn, partially accounts for the fate of native labor after independence: much of it simply went to those who got the land. The question, however, is more complicated than that. Although direct competition for land between liberals and conservatives was muted, at least at first, by the fact that there were *terrenos baldíos* in both highlands and lowlands, competition for control of native labor and taxes was not so easily dampened. On the one hand, the overwhelming majority of Indian workers lived in the highlands; on the other, the expansion of commercial agriculture in the lowlands made that region the one with the greater demand for laborers. Unfortunately, highland conservatives were loath to turn over control of 'their' Indians to meet this demand, with the result that competition for Indian labor early became one of the great sources of interregional conflict.

In the years immediately after independence, Chiapas's conservative government had granted day-to-day control of Indian affairs throughout the state to the church. Through its parish priests it was thus empowered, as it had been under Spanish rule, to register vital statistics, provide census (and thus tax) rolls, oversee the collection of native taxes, and defend the Indians' persons and property. In exchange, the government agreed to permit the church to collect its traditional emoluments,

authorizing the use of civil force if necessary.¹⁰

The problem with this arrangement, from the liberals' point of view, was that it virtually cut them off from access to highland workers. First, it made the highland clergy, ever protective of its own interest in stationary, paying parishioners, gatekeepers of Indian labor.¹¹ Second, in a state where the head tax frequently accounted for more than ninety percent of the government's revenues, and where a disproportionate share of the heads belonged to highland Indians, it gave that same clergy a virtual veto over the state budget.¹² Accordingly, when the liberals came to power in 1830 one of their first acts was to secularize administration of the Indians, naming municipal secretaries to handle all civil affairs in the native communities.¹³

For a decade and a half, that was where matters remained. In 1844, however, the conservatives' last major alteration of the state's agrarian laws—the one that permitted them to denounce even those *terrenos baldíos* already occupied by permanent Indian settlers—suddenly threatened the liberals' access to labor all over again. With denunciation of lands like those of Chamula, highland conservatives suddenly acquired almost exclusive control of the labor of entire communities. In response, liberal governments of the late 1840s, in an effort to 'liberate' the Indian workers they needed, outlawed serfdom and even tried retroactively to enlarge the Indians' *ejidos* and force the return of lands to fill them.¹⁴ Unfortunately, such efforts had little effect: before they could be enforced, Mexico was overtaken by yet another political crisis and the conservatives regained control of the state government.

While ladinos thus maneuvered among themselves for a better grip on the state's land and labor, the effect of the changes of these first decades on the Indians was little short of devastating. The condition of Chamula by the early 1850s is again perhaps typical of the highland Tzotzils and Tzeltals in general: by 1855, the community was providing the equivalent of twenty thousand man-days of labor a year to the government as its head tax.¹⁵ At the same time, the value of the taxes, provisions, and personal service it rendered annually to its priests and their superiors—all of which continued to be required by law—came to another seventeen thousand man-days, a figure that does not even include the cost of the actual religious celebrations themselves.¹⁶ Add to these exactions the labor on Nuevo Edén and the stipend the community was forced to pay both its secretary and schoolteacher, and the men of Chamula, numbering at most three thousand in the mid-1850s, were providing almost a month of labor per man per year to their various overlords, an almost intolerable burden for a people already on the lower edge of subsistence.¹⁷

In spite of the harshness of this regimen, however, the Indians of the central highlands seem to have been remarkably restrained and orderly in their protests during this period. Surviving records of the years 1840-59 tell of communities occasionally refusing to pay their priests what were considered unfair charges (eleven cases); of native leaders

disputing the authority of secretaries and other petty officials (two cases); and of community members disagreeing with ladino settlers over land boundaries and wages (four cases).¹⁸ What is perhaps most interesting about these cases, however, is that they are known at all only because they were eventually resolved by the superior civil and ecclesiastical authorities to whom the Indians themselves appealed. Essentially the Indians continued to respect—or at least obey—the laws and procedures to which they had been subject under Spanish rule even while ladinos trampled them in their headlong race to enrich themselves.

Indeed, given their relative positions, it is ironic that the insecure, unstable element of Chiapas society during the first thirty years after independence was not the Indian one but the ladino. In addition to political factionalism, ladinos were also tortured by the conviction that a race war with the Indians was both imminent and inevitable, a fear that seems to have become particularly pronounced from the mid-1840s on—not coincidentally the period of greatest escalation in exploitation. Thus, for instance, a *leitmotif* of the bishop's letters to the parish priests in the 1840s became his questioning about the Indians' physical and moral condition, their particular vices, and, especially, the degree of their acceptance of the status quo.¹⁹ Thus again the widespread panic that ensued in 1848 when news of the Caste War of Yucatán was quickly followed by rumors that Tzeltal Indians from several townships were meeting in secret, perhaps to plan a caste war right in Chiapas. Although no ladino was attacked, even verbally, in this 1848 'uprising,' such was the hysteria that fifty Indian 'ringleaders' were arrested and sent to San Cristóbal, and many settlers fled their new lands to return permanently to civilization.²⁰

Breakdown and Civil War, 1855-64

By the mid-1850s, fear of the Indians, so prominent just a few years before, was being pushed aside as ladinos became ever more preoccupied with developments in their own society. The political and economic squabbles of the 1830s and 1840s had by this time hardened into bitter regional factionalism. Conservatives, in retaliation for what they considered unreasonable attacks on their interests in the serfdom and *ejido* laws of the late 1840s, had tried in the early 1850s to wreck the agricultural economy of the lowlands by prohibiting the export of cattle and threatening to rescind titles to former *terrenos baldíos*.²¹ Lowlanders, in turn, having no recourse locally, were driven by such measures to identify ever more closely with the national liberal opposition, adopting even its anticlericalism as it became clear in the middle of the decade that San Cristóbal's ecclesiastical hierarchy had thrown itself behind the conservatives.²² The result was a dizzying escalation of hostility between highlands and lowlands, liberals and conservatives. Any resolution short of war seemed increasingly unlikely.

The explosion finally came with the national liberals' overthrow of

the government in Mexico City in 1855. In an effort to break once and for all the 'colonial institutions' they blamed for Mexico's distress, the resulting liberal government embarked almost immediately on a series of reforms designed to submit them to 'popular,' 'democratic' rule. Foremost of their targets was the church, and within months they had not only undermined the authority of religious courts but nationalized church lands and abolished the civil enforcement of religious taxes. Ecclesiastics, of course, condemned these measures, and national conservatives, thus provided with the excuse they needed, pronounced against the government. The resulting War of Reform raged in central Mexico through 1860, finally ending with the liberals' re-entry into Mexico City in January 1861. Even then, however, the fighting did not end. Die-hard conservatives, unwilling to accept the liberals' triumph, now looked outside of Mexico for aid to continue their resistance. They soon found it in England, Spain, and France, which, using unpaid debts as an excuse, invaded Mexico on the conservatives' behalf in late 1861. Although England and Spain soon withdrew, the French remained until mid-1867, trying, in league with Mexican conservatives, to impose a European, Catholic monarchy.²³

Events in Chiapas during this period closely paralleled those in central Mexico, the principal distinction being that Chiapas's wars were fought not by national armies, but entirely by bands representing the state's own sharply-defined regional factions. Thus, for instance, the War of Reform in the state began with the adherence in July 1856 of one Juan Ortega to the anti-Reform pronouncements that had emanated from central Mexico a few months earlier. In a matter of weeks, other highland dissidents had joined him, and by the fall of 1856 they were carrying on a running guerrilla war with the state's constitutional liberal authorities. Indeed, so hostile did they make the atmosphere in the highlands that in October the liberals withdrew from the region, taking the state capital to Chiapa until its safety in San Cristóbal could be guaranteed. Ortega's revolt continued until late 1860, when, with the defeat of the national conservative forces, further resistance became pointless. Peace re-established, the state capital was returned to the highlands in February 1861.²⁴

The record of this first war's effect on the Tzotzils is fragmentary and contradictory. On the one hand, they seem to have welcomed the liberals' rise in 1855 because many of the leading conservative politicians—among them the owners of Nuevo Edén—sold their lands back to the native communities (the only ones who would buy them) and fled the state.²⁵ On the other, led by their priests, they also apparently provided bearers and supplies to the conservative rebels during those periods when they were operating in their territories.²⁶ Wherever their sympathies actually lay, however—and the fact is they had little reason to favor either side—the war itself seems to have benefitted the Indians: no head tax was collected from 1856 to 1861; commerce was interrupted, thus relieving them of the burdens of long-distance cargo-bearing and

mule-skinning; and religious taxes, although they were paid through 1858, were suspended after mid-1858 because many of the priests who had collaborated most actively with the conservatives fled when the balance in the highlands began to tip in favor of the liberals.²⁷ As a result, the years 1856-61 were probably among the Indians' best since 1821.

Unfortunately, such relatively good times were not to last. With the resumption of liberal control over the highlands in 1861, the 'benign neglect' of the late 1850s suddenly came to an end. New municipal secretaries were appointed, and through them the liberals set out to rebuild the state treasury by reviving the head tax. However, in 1862, before this effort could bear fruit, the need for troops to send against the French came to overshadow all other concerns. Chiapas was ordered by the federal government to provide and maintain a battalion of a thousand men in the central Mexican campaigns, and conscription for this purpose fell especially hard on the poor. Chamula, for instance, was required to supply a hundred soldiers—a demand that caused the pueblo to be virtually deserted during the first half of 1862 as families fled into the forest to avoid the draft.²⁸ Eventually, of course, the government would get its soldiers anyway, but no one was about to 'volunteer' by making himself conspicuous.

Meanwhile, highland conservatives, alarmed by the liberals' inroads into 'their' Indians, and encouraged by news of interventionist triumphs in central Mexico to try to counteract them, began trying to re-establish themselves in the native communities in mid-1862. The reception of the priests who were their emissaries was, however, at best wary. On the one hand, the Indians recognized their control of native religion, and thus their indispensability as religious practitioners. On the other, they also knew that the return of the priests meant the resumption of religious taxes—taxes their liberal secretaries had been assuring them for a year were no longer legal. Something of the resulting ambivalence comes through in the July 1862 report of Chamula's new priest, Manuel María Suárez, on his first interview with the community's leaders: "*I exhorted them to comply with their ancient obligations and duties to the Church, to which they replied that it was only a shortage of grain that had prevented them from doing so in recent years, but that, their harvest completed, they will again begin to pay.*"²⁹ In fact, this supposed 'shortage of grain' was probably an evasion: during the same period, the Indians of other communities, prompted by their secretaries, refused outright to pay the church. In Cancuc, for instance, officials informed their new priest in early 1863 that not only were they not obliged to pay him but that neither did they intend to give him anything to eat unless he could buy it!³⁰ In Chamula, however, such flat rejection was apparently still not possible in 1862. Indeed, parish records for 1860-63 indicate that all religious taxes due in those years were eventually—though retroactively—paid.³¹

This retroactive payment is probably explained by the sudden

reversal of liberal-conservative fortunes in the highlands in late 1862 and early 1863. During the second half of 1862, liberal setbacks in the war against the French led Chiapas's conservatives to feel ever more confident in their efforts to regain control of at least their own region. Local liberals, on the other hand, their mastery of the situation fading, again withdrew their capital to the lowlands, this time to Tuxtla, on January 1, 1863. For a few months, competition between the two parties for control of the Indians was closely contested, but then, in April, Ortega again pronounced, and within a month attacked and took San Cristóbal. Although soon driven out on this first attempt, he returned in August at the head of a force of six hundred men and this time succeeded in investing the city. In spite of a bombardment that, in the process of defeating the small liberal garrison, destroyed the city hall and much of the center, he and his troops were enthusiastically received by the church and the local elite, all of whom quickly pledged loyalty to the 'Intervention' and new 'Mexican Empire.'³²

Through the fall of 1863, Ortega and his allies organized the highlands and raised an army to subdue those parts of the state that chose to remain 'in a state of rebellion' against the empire. Finally, in late October, leading a force of some twelve hundred men—two hundred of them Chamulas 'recruited' by their parish priest—the *imperialistas* set off to attack Chiapa.³³ Despite superior numbers and the element of surprise, however, they were beaten back by the local liberal militia, suffering grievous—mostly Indian—casualties in the process. Within ten more weeks, liberal forces had besieged San Cristóbal, and after an eleven-day fight that left the center of the city in ruins, the Orteguistas were driven back into the hills.³⁴

If anything, the material demands placed on the Indians by the brief imperial government were even harder than had been those of the liberal regime of 1861-62. Whereas the liberals had asked contributions and then levies of men, the conservatives took not only soldiers—and more of them than the liberals—but also forced labor crews for the building of extensive fortifications in San Cristóbal.³⁵ In addition, the Indians were also forced to pay religious taxes, the priests making free use of imperial forces to support their authority.³⁶

Even harder on the Indians than the material exactions to which they were subject between 1861 and 1864 were the conflicting political pressures. As much as each party wanted for itself the Indians' numbers and taxes, it seems to have wanted at least as much to deny those resources to its opponents. This explains the efforts of secretaries and priests alike to turn the Indians against their opposites. Not surprisingly, however, these efforts were profoundly traumatic for the Indian communities themselves. Whereas traditionally such communities had maintained strong chains of command firmly attuned to the dominant ladino authorities, now they were being forced to choose among competing authorities, none of whom could offer much certainty even of its own tenure. As a result, no matter what choice the Indians made, the other

side was bound to disapprove and, perhaps, retaliate. This explains the caution of Chamula's officials when, with a liberal secretary still in the community, they demurred at the priest's first requests for payment in 1862. It also explains their eventual contributions to both sides, each during its respective period of dominance.

Under such contradictory pressures, it should not be surprising that discipline within communities, sustained even through the most exploitive days of the 1840s and early 1850s, was beginning to break down. In Chamula, for example, there were disturbances in September 1862 and again in January 1863—"half the community turning against the other half," with twenty-three killed in a single day during the first.³⁷ Given the ladinos' hypersensitivity to inter-ethnic violence just a few years before, however, what was even more striking was that now, through their own efforts to politicize the native communities, they themselves were unraveling the social controls that had formerly made such violence almost unthinkable. On September 22, 1863, for instance, in the midst of his efforts to mobilize Chamula for the empire, the parish priest was briefly threatened by disgruntled community members who actually killed three of his Indian companions. Far from reflecting on his own activities, however—on the implications of preparing Chamula soldiers for a war against the liberal state government—he thought only of avenging himself on his assailants: "*Although I miraculously escaped with my life, I beg the ecclesiastical government for permission to testify against the perpetrators before the imperial authorities, advising you in advance that Señor Ortega has promised me they will be shot. I thus ask dispensation so as to incur no irregularity for this effusion of blood.*"³⁸

Politicization of the Indians, 1864-67

With the final defeat and expulsion of Ortega in early 1864, the liberals were for the first time undisputed masters of Chiapas. San Cristóbal, its army dispersed, its public buildings destroyed, and many of its leaders in exile in Guatemala and central Mexico, was not only beaten politically but ruined economically as well. Gone were most of its prewar sources of income: serfs, church estates and possession of the state capital. In decline, as more and more Indians came to understand the meaning of the recent wars and reforms, was income from religious taxes. As a result, commerce in the city also suffered, and many merchants and artisans, unable to make a living in the highlands, migrated to the lowlands and coast between 1864 and 1870.³⁹

Unfortunately, the conservatives' loss was not entirely the liberals' gain. For one thing, the war with the French continued in central Mexico for three more years—years during which, the national economy being disrupted, there was almost no demand for Chiapas's agricultural exports. This, in turn, retarded the lowlanders' efforts to assert control of the highland labor force that should have been their 'prize' for winning the wars: having no markets for their products, they had little incentive

to organize migrant workers to produce them.⁴⁰

There being no other outlet for liberal energies after Ortega's defeat, the lowlanders soon took to quarreling among themselves for control of the state's government and armies. Finally, in December 1864, with a complete breakdown of public order a real threat, Porfirio Díaz, commander of the liberal forces in central Mexico, declared that a state of war existed in Chiapas and appointed Pantaleón Domínguez its military governor. Domínguez belonged to no local faction: his following consisted entirely of members of the Chiapas battalion he had commanded against the French in 1862. Instead of placing him above petty squabbles, however, this status seems to have made him a special target for the wrath of local liberals, many of whom now united to denounce his 'usurpation' of the state's 'democratic traditions'! As a result, between 1864 and 1867 he had to contend not only with conservative guerrillas in outlying districts but with two *pronunciamientos* by fellow liberals and the indignity of a brief arrest at the hands of mutinous subordinates. In spite of these trials, however, when the imperialists were finally driven from Mexico in 1867 Domínguez succeeded in having himself chosen Chiapas's constitutional governor.⁴¹

Among the few things on which liberals could agree during the first part of Domínguez's tenure was the necessity of punishing San Cristóbal and the conservatives for their 'treason' of 1863-64. Many, for example, thought that the *ex-imperialistas*, already deprived of their rights to vote and hold office, should also be forced to pay reparations for the costs of the war.⁴² Given San Cristóbal's impoverishment, however, and the lowlanders' own lack of unity, such payments were never collected. Instead, Domínguez settled on more bureaucratic, passive means of revenge: public expenditures in the highlands were virtually suspended, lowlanders were appointed to all civil offices, and efforts were made to block access to arms and ammunition. As for replacing the church and conservatives as gatekeepers of Indian labor, here the government's distraction was perhaps most obvious, its measures most half-hearted. Some efforts were made through the secretaries to inform the Indians of their new rights under the reforms and to discourage them from paying religious taxes.⁴³ In addition, the head tax, already in abeyance since mid-1862, was suspended, ostensibly as an offering for the Indians' loyalty, although in fact there were no officials in the highlands capable of collecting it.⁴⁴

Considering the relative leniency of these measures (lenient when compared to what the more radical lowlanders would have liked to demand), it is perhaps ironic that the national government's attempts after mid-1867 to heal the nation's wounds and reconcile former enemies should actually have had the opposite effect in Chiapas, aggravating liberal-conservative antagonisms rather than soothing them. First, in the late summer of 1867 the national government decreed that former *imperialistas* were to be amnestied. Their civil rights restored, they would thus be eligible to participate fully in the elections planned for later in

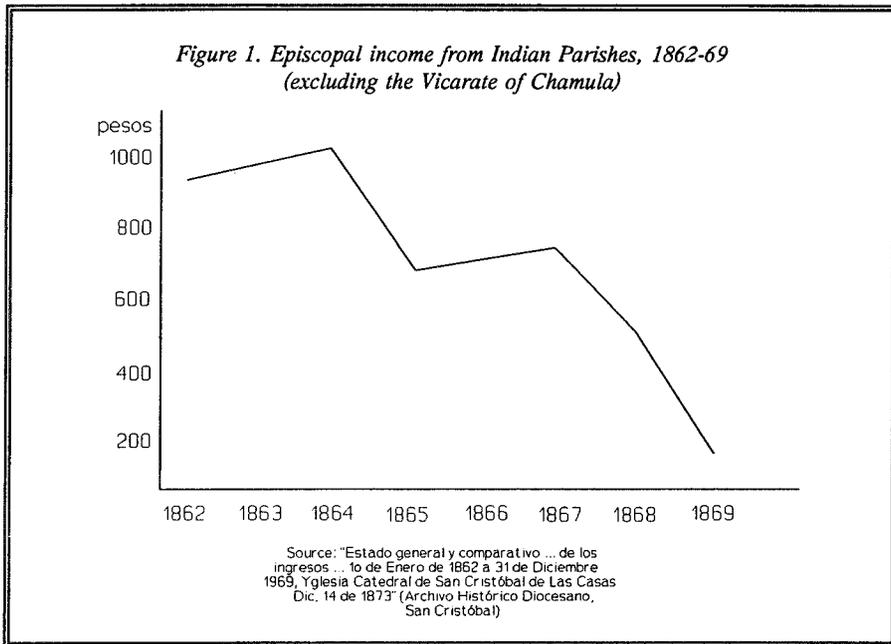
the fall.⁴⁵ Then, in November, it was announced that all state capitals displaced by the war should be returned to their original sites.⁴⁶ Taken together, what these 'conciliatory gestures' meant in the case of Chiapas was that just as normal economic activity was about to resume, just as the lowlands were again going to need highland labor, the highlanders were to be restored to full control over that labor.

Domínguez's reaction was swift. In an attempt to 'obey without complying,' he moved the capital not to San Cristóbal but 'part way'—from Tuxtla to Chiapa—vowing that there it would stay "*until funds permitted the organization of sufficient forces to give it security*" in the highlands.⁴⁷ At the same time, to make sure the church and conservatives would never again threaten that security or block access to highland labor, he embarked on an all-out campaign to break their hold on the Indians.

To some extent, the persuasion of the secretaries between 1864 and 1867 had already begun to loosen this hold: reports from various communities during this period indicate that the movement against paying church taxes was slowly but steadily gaining momentum. Beginning in late 1867, however, liberal attacks were aimed not just at the church's financial arrangements in its Indian parishes but at its very grip on native religion itself. The assault began with the reiteration of earlier guarantees of religious tolerance and immunity from the forced collection of religious payments. Then, in November, a decree was issued abolishing the offices of *mayordomo* and *alférez*—religious *cargos* that were at once the pinnacle of native religious participation and the means by which parish priests collected funds from their Indian congregations.⁴⁸ Acting through the secretaries, the government went so far as to encourage the Indians to abandon the churches altogether if necessary to avoid such service—to practice Catholicism without the priests and their temples!⁴⁹

The success of these initiatives seems to have taken even the liberals by surprise. For more than three centuries Indian religious observance—the core of native communal life—had been controlled by a non-Indian clergy. By the mid-1860s, however, the conduct of this clergy, as of ladinos generally, had become so exploitive, so destructive, that given the chance to free themselves of any part of it the Indians leapt to take it. From throughout the highlands letters flooded into the ecclesiastical government from late 1867 through early 1869 telling of communities spurning the priests' services and worshipping on their own. If any priest dared complain, or even question the new laws, the communities, backed by their secretaries, immediately carried the case to the liberal government in Chiapa and had him reprimanded. Such repudiation of the clergy was reported from Zinacantán, Oxchuc, Huistán, Tenejapa, Chalchihuitán, Pantelhó, Chenalhó, Mitontic and Chamula during this period—this in addition to Cancuc, which had made a similar choice several years earlier.⁵⁰

The course of native religion after these breaks varied from commu-



nity to community, apparently depending as much on the character of the priests as on the nature of the communities themselves. In Oxchuc and Huistán, for instance, where the priest—Francisco Gordillo—was weak, community members continued to frequent their parish churches, simply ignoring the impotent father's nagging requests for money.⁵¹ In Tenejapa, where the priest—Manuel Suárez, late of Chamula—was more interested in his own standard of living than in religion, parishioners also continued to worship in the church, while the priest occupied himself with complaining to his superiors about his declining income and requesting permission to make it up by peddling the church's ornaments, in particular a "*chalice of very ancient manufacture that nobody will miss because it is kept in a locked chest anyway.*"⁵² In Zinacantán, on the other hand, where the priest was more conscientious, the Indians partially withdrew from the church, celebrating many of their services away from the pueblo rather than face constant scoldings. Meetings at the shrine in the hamlet of Atz'am, for example, became important during this period.⁵³ Finally, in Chamula and its annexes (Mitontic, Chenalhó, San Andrés, Magdalenas, Santa Marta, and Chalchihuitán), the vicar and his assistants, rather than accept the new conditions of the mid-1860s and moderate their demands, had actually tried between 1865 and 1868 to reimpose the taxes and controls of the early 1850s. In response, many of the Indians under their charge, when given the chance, withdrew from their churches and pueblos altogether, establishing an independent religious and marketing center of their own. It was this withdrawal, and ladino reactions to it, that finally led to the violence of 1869.

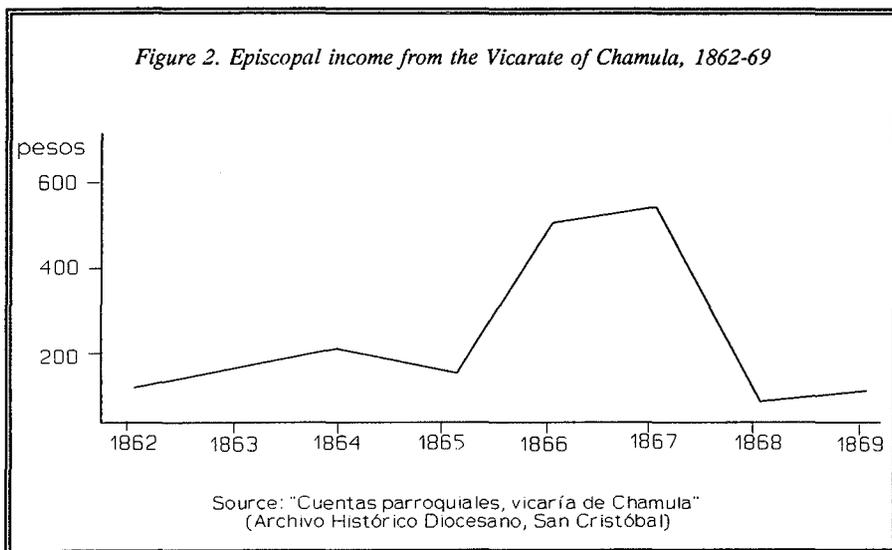
The Separatist Movement, 1867-69

Against the trend in the highlands as a whole, religious income from the vicarate of Chamula actually rose after 1865, for a while even rivalling that of the pre-reform period. In part, this was due to the piety—and uncertainty—of the Indians themselves: given doubts about who would finally emerge in control of the highlands, they seem, at least for the time being, to have been willing to accept a return to the *status quo ante*. Equally important, however, was the rigor of their new vicar after mid-1865, Miguel Martínez. In a period when the rest of the highland clergy seems to have been in retreat, Martínez was almost uniquely zealous in his efforts to restore the Indian parishes to their former profitability. According to later allegations, he extracted funds improperly from the native *cofradías* (lay brotherhoods), withheld religious services from those too poor to pay for them, and even flogged native officials who failed to meet their tax quotas.⁵⁴ In the uncertain period from 1865 through 1867 such excesses were apparently possible; after the anticlerical decrees of late 1867 they most certainly were not.

The first sign of unrest came in late 1867 with news that people from a large area of the townships of Chamula, Mitontic and Chenalhó had begun gathering to venerate a set of magical 'talking stones' discovered near the hamlet of Tzajalhemel by a Chamula woman, Agustina Gómez Checheb.⁵⁵ So important had this phenomenon become by the end of the year that Pedro Díaz Cuzcat, a *fiscal* from Chamula, journeyed to Tzajalhemel to investigate. After a brief inspection, he announced that he too, like Checheb, could 'talk' to the stones, and almost as quickly declared that they represented the saints and had asked that a shrine be built for them on the place of their appearances. By the end of January 1868, the crowds at Tzajalhemel had become larger than ever, attracted now not only by the stones but by the regular sermons of their 'priest,' Cuzcat.⁵⁶

It is significant that Cuzcat was a *fiscal*. According to an 1855 document describing Chamula's religious structure for future priests, the *fiscales* were the principal brokers between the church and the local community: in addition to acting as translators for the priests, they also kept all parish records, taught catechism to the young, and even led religious services themselves in the priests' absence.⁵⁷ For this they were paid a small stipend, and often served for a decade or more at a time.⁵⁸ They were, in fact, the closest thing to a native clergy. Not only, then, did Cuzcat undoubtedly know of the government's decrees with respect to Indians and the church when he set out for Tzajalhemel, but he also had the religious authority necessary to attract others to the new cult he intended to found.

So quickly did worship at the shrine grow after Cuzcat's arrival that, by mid-February 1868, Father Martínez himself was forced to visit Tzajalhemel to try to put a stop to it. What he found there was a small native house, a box-altar with candles and incense burning on it, and a



small clay 'saint' that worshippers tried at first to hide from him. Perhaps mindful of the government's decrees, his reaction on this first occasion was relatively mild: after lecturing those present about the perils of idolatry, he ordered them to disperse and, apparently convinced they would, returned forthwith to Chamula.⁵⁹

In fact, however, the next two months proved to be one of the new religion's periods of fastest growth. Having been mistreated by ladinos of all parties, especially during the preceding civil wars, many Indians seemed to find in the isolated shrine a kind of sanctuary, a place where they could not only pray in peace but could meet and trade with their neighbors without fear of ladino interference. By March, Indians from throughout the vicarate of Chamula and from such nearby Tzeltal communities as Tenejapa had begun to attend regularly, making Tzajalhemel not only an important religious center but one of the highlands' busiest marketing centers as well.

All of this, of course, had profound effects on the ladinos. As attendance at Tzajalhemel increased, religious income and commerce in the surrounding ladino towns necessarily decreased. To the lowlanders, this was a great triumph. Since their reason for attacking the church in the first place had been to strike at the power of the highland conservatives, these economic side-effects were an unexpected bonus. To the highlanders, on the other hand, the new developments appeared in a much more ominous light. If it continued, the growing Indian boycott could only mean one thing: utter ruin. Their anxiety became particularly acute in the weeks following Easter (April 12), 1868, then for the first time in memory Indians were almost completely absent from the ceremonies—and businesses—of San Cristóbal. Crying that the long-feared 'caste war' was finally upon them, the city's ladinos organized them-

selves into self-defense companies and sent out urgent pleas for aid to the rest of the highlands.⁶⁰

Finally, on May 3—the *Día de Santa Cruz* (Day of the Holy Cross), another important Indian celebration that San Cristóbal passed without native commerce—the new conservative *jefe político* of the highlands struck. Accompanied by a force of twenty-five men, he raided Tzajalhemel, seized Checheb and the ‘saints,’ and ordered the Indians to go home. Much to the highlanders’ consternation, however, the liberal state government—seeing in this raid proof that its anti-conservative policies were working—promptly ordered Checheb released and the Indians’ freedom of worship respected. In attacking the separatists directly, the conservatives had inadvertently strengthened them.

Their hands thus tied politically, the highlanders tried a new tack. On May 27 they sent a commission of three priests to reason with the Indians, to try to talk them back into paying religion. Finding the masses gathered at Tzajalhemel ‘sincere’ in their beliefs—that is, still Catholic—but nevertheless ‘deluded,’ the members of this commission blessed a cross for them to worship and warned them in the direst terms of the dangers of praying before unconsecrated (that is, ‘unfranchised’) images. Convinced that their superior theology had won the day, they returned triumphant to San Cristóbal that same afternoon.⁶¹

Whether due to this commission’s persuasiveness or something else, activity at the shrine did in fact decline during the next two months, a normal crowd attending the fiesta of Chamula’s patron saint, San Juan, on June 24. In August, however, before the feast of Santa Rosa, Tzajalhemel became busier than ever. Emboldened by the continued, tacit support of the state government, the Indians enlarged their temple, purchased a bell and trumpets, chose sacristans and acolytes to care for the building and altar, and named a *mayordomo* of Santa Rosa to organize the festivities.⁶² Indeed, they showed every intention of making ceremonies in Tzajalhemel as full of pomp and satisfaction as those in the traditional pueblos themselves.

After Santa Rosa, life in Tzajalhemel settled into a routine closely modeled on that of the older pueblos in other ways as well. By this time, Cuzcat had begun to assume more and more of the duties of the parish priests with whom he had formerly had such close contact. On Sundays, he donned a robe and preached at dawn and vespers—services announced by the sacristans with a touch of the bell. On other days, there were petitions to hear, sacraments to dispense, and always the cult of the saints to tend. In addition, there were small daily markets to supervise, and larger, regional gatherings on Sundays and feast days. Although imitation may be the sincerest form of flattery, however highland ladinos were far from pleased. Aside from the few alcohol sellers and itinerant peddlers who had begun to frequent the new pueblo, Tzajalhemel remained for most anathema.

Finally, on December 2, 1868, they could stand it no longer: concerned more with their own economic survival than with legal niceties,

San Cristóbal's leaders dispatched a force of fifty men to put an end to the 'separatist movement' once and for all. Although the Indians tried briefly to resist this invasion and defend their shrine, the ladinos fired into their midst and easily set them to flight. Checheb and several others were arrested, the images and implements were impounded, and the shrine itself was stripped of its decorations. Although Cuzcat escaped, he too was captured as he passed through Ixtapa on his way to beg the state government for relief. He was sent on to Chiapa in irons, and it was to be almost two months before he could prove his innocence of any wrongdoing—at which point the governor, instead of releasing him unconditionally, merely returned him to San Cristóbal, where he was promptly re-arrested by the conservatives on February 8, 1869.

The 'Caste War,' 1869-70

In order to understand what happened next, it becomes necessary to review developments in ladino society itself during late 1868 and early 1869. In the highlands, on the one hand, the local economy, already weak at the end of 1867, had, if anything, declined even further during 1868. Although the Indian boycotts and accompanying strife had hurt the region economically, they also seem to have shaken it out of the political lethargy that had afflicted it since 1864. The decisive suppression of the Tzajalhemel movement was one sign of this change; another was the founding, in early 1869, of a weekly newspaper, *La Brújula*, to press the case for restoring San Cristóbal to its former political and economic position. Through its pages, the city's leading ex-imperialists now demanded not only return of the state capital but arms and munitions for a highland militia and public funds to repair buildings damaged and destroyed in 1863-64. Undaunted by their own history of *pronunciamientos* and insurgency, they also indulged in the most extravagant polemics about the state government's 'disrespect' of federal law and authority in denying them these things.⁶³

In the lowlands the situation was just the reverse: economically the region had begun to recover during 1868, but politically it was more divided than at any time since the mid-1860s. According to many, the government had taxed the region unfairly (perhaps because it was the only one capable of paying), and yet had failed to provide such basic services as repair of the roads and ports now needed for continued economic growth. Even more damning, it had failed to extend positive control over the Indian communities of the highlands, and with the revival of lowland agriculture the 'negative control' represented by Indian separatism now threatened lowland interests almost as much as highland ones.⁶⁴

Realizing that unless he could consolidate his power quickly he would soon lose it, Domínguez set out in late 1868 to quiet the complaints of the state's two dominant regions while at the same time tightening his grip on its administrative apparatus. He began in Decem-

ber by quietly acceding to the suppression of the Tzajalhemel movement. Then, in early 1869, he announced his intention to begin enforcing the state tax code, particularly the head tax, counting on it not only to provide the funds for needed public services but also to win the support of local officials throughout the state who were to be granted eight percent of what they collected in commissions. The new taxes were to be paid quarterly, the first installment coming due May 30—and, to make them more compelling, the collectors were authorized to jail indefinitely the *ayuntamiento* (town council) of any township that failed to cooperate.⁶⁵

Unfortunately, Domínguez, his attention fixed on ladino society, does not seem to have given much thought to the effect his decrees might have on the Indians. From December 1868 through mid-April 1869 there had been no activity in Tzajalhemel, and apparently he assumed that the Chamulas and their neighbors would continue to accept meekly whatever new conditions were imposed on them. The assumption, however, was wrong—tragically so. When the new secretaries and schoolteachers began detaining people in their pueblos in April and early May to charge them the first quarter's head tax, the Indians, led this time by dissident members of their own *ayuntamientos*, simply returned to their refuge in the forest. Again commerce with non-Indians fell off, again church attendance declined, again ladinos throughout the vicarate of Chamula complained to the regional authorities in San Cristóbal.⁶⁶

Events moved rapidly toward a showdown. By mid-May, feeling in San Cristóbal was running strongly in favor of another raid—one that promised to be even more violent, more of a 'lesson,' than that of the preceding December. Before such an attack could take place, however, Ignacio Fernández de Galindo, a liberal teacher from Central Mexico who had lived in San Cristóbal since early 1868, and who on several occasions had defended the Indians' rights in public debates, slipped out of the city on May 26 with his wife and a student, Benigno Trejo, to warn the Indians of their danger.⁶⁷

What happened next is largely a matter of conjecture. Those who would see the separation of 1869 as a simple continuation of that of 1868—and both as the result of a conspiracy between Galindo and Cuzcat—claim that Galindo convinced the Indians he was a divinely-ordained successor to Cuzcat and then organized them into an army to make war on his own race. According to his own later testimony, on the other hand, he merely informed the Indians of their rights and offered to help them turn aside raids on their villages—and that only with the intention of preventing bloodshed.⁶⁸

Whichever of these explanations is the more correct, the one that was believed in San Cristóbal in 1869 was the former. Under its influence, the Indians' withdrawal was by early June being seen not as just another annoying boycott but as the concentration of forces for an all-out attack on whites. Finally, in what appears to have been a last

attempt to talk the Indians into submission (and perhaps simultaneously to survey their forces), Father Martínez and the secretaries of Chamula, Mitontic and Chenalhó arranged to meet in Tzajalhemel the morning of June 13. As it happened, Martínez and his escort from Chamula—the secretary-teacher, the secretary's brother, and Martínez's own Indian servant—arrived early for this appointment. Finding only a few Indians at the shrine, they nevertheless went ahead and tried to persuade them to abandon their 'rebellion' and go home. The Indians, for their part, are reported to have received these representations respectfully, even asking the priest's blessing before he left. Unfortunately, they were so respectful that they turned over the shrine's new religious objects when he asked for them. With that the die was cast: before Martínez and his companions could return to Chamula, they were overtaken by a body of Indians who, learning what had happened in Tzajalhemel, had pursued them, determined to retrieve their possessions. In the ensuing struggle, Martínez and the ladinos with him were killed. The 'Caste War' was on.⁶⁹

Ladino blood having been spilt, panic swept the highlands. In the city, the self-defense companies, certain an Indian attack was imminent, prepared for the siege. In the outlying villages and hamlets, those who had no immediate escape route gathered at a few of the larger hamlets and prepared to fight. Perhaps the Indians saw in these gatherings potential acts of aggression; perhaps, one set of killings having been committed, some among them felt they no longer had anything to lose. In any case, on June 15 and 16, in what were arguably the only Indian-initiated actions of the entire 'war,' men from the southern end of the vicarate of Chamula attacked and killed the ladinos sheltered in Natividad, near San Andrés, and La Merced, near Santa Marta.⁷⁰ At about the same time, the people of Chalchihuitán assassinated their schoolteacher and his family and their priest as they fled toward Simojovel, and the Chamulas dispatched five ladino peddlers on the road to San Cristóbal.⁷¹ Even at its height, however, the violence does not appear to have been indiscriminate: eleven cattle-buyers from Chicoasén seized near Tzajalhemel on June 13 were released unharmed a day later, and ten ladinos and their children resident in Chenalhó during the entire 'Caste War' emerged unscathed in mid-July.⁷² Apparently most of the Indians' rage was directly at those with whom they had old scores to settle or who had in some way threatened them.

Finally, on June 17, Galindo, in what was evidently an attempt to redirect the Indians' energy, led several thousand of them to San Cristóbal to secure the release of Cuzcat. Despite the terror this 'siege' seems to have caused San Cristóbal's already edgy citizens, however, the Indians' behavior was not what might have been expected of an attacking army: not only did they come under a white flag, but they came at dusk, when fighting would be difficult. What Galindo offered in their behalf was a trade: Cuzcat, Checheb, and the others in exchange for himself, his wife, and Trejo as good-faith hostages.⁷³

Explaining this apparent capitulation has always called for the greatest ingenuity on the part of those who would see the events of 1869 as a premeditated 'caste war': why would Galindo, 'general' of a 'force' typically described as overwhelmingly superior, have delivered himself voluntarily into the hands of his 'enemies'? The answers have ranged from cowardice to stupidity to the belief that the Indians would soon attack to free him.⁷⁴ In fact, however, none of the suggested solutions makes as much sense as that he simply thought he had done no wrong; that in acting as an intermediary between the Indians—inflamed by recent tax measures and the unjust imprisonment of a popular leader—and the ladinos—fearful of a race war—he was actually defusing the situation and performing a service to both. Indeed, after the exchange had been consummated, he not only showed no fear of his fellow ladinos but actually "*headed for his house as though nothing had happened*"!⁷⁵ San Cristóbal's leaders, however, were not so complaisant: no sooner had the Indians withdrawn than they invalidated the agreement, claiming it had been made under duress, and arrested Galindo, his wife, and his student.⁷⁶

From June 17 to 21, the Indians celebrated Cuzcat's release in Tzajalhemel. Expecting reprisals at any moment, however, they left some six hundred of their number camped above the roads leading from San Cristóbal as sentries—sentries whose digging sticks and *machetes* would be of but little use if a ladino attack did come. Nevertheless, this continued Indian presence played right into the hands of *La Brújula's* editors, who now wrote that there could "*no longer be any doubt that the Indians were sworn enemies of the whites,*" that their most fervent desire was to "*ravish and kill San Cristóbal's tender wives and sisters, to mutilate the corpses of its children.*" The only solution, they wrote, was a "*war to the death between barbarism and civilization,*" a war in which—and here was the key—Chiapas's ladinos would for the first time in decades recognize their essential unity.⁷⁷

In spite of the passion of this appeal, however, San Cristóbal's situation at first aroused little sympathy in the lowlands. Indeed, as late as June 18 news of Father Martínez's death was carried in the official newspaper under the restrained heading 'Scandals.'⁷⁸ On the morning of June 20—however—more than a month after the crisis had begun, and a week after the first killings—Domínguez suddenly activated the lowland militia and set off to relieve San Cristóbal. What had happened? First, news of the continuing 'siege' of San Cristóbal after June 18 does seem to have aroused many in the lowlands, who now feared that the Indians were escaping any ladino control. Second, and perhaps even more important, there had been elections for local office throughout the lowlands on June 11. When the results were announced the evening of June 19, Domínguez's party had been resoundingly defeated, and, since the elections had been widely regarded as a vote of confidence, a pronouncement against the governor was expected momentarily. By mobilizing the forces that would have carried out such a coup, Domínguez

neatly sidestepped his own ouster.⁷⁹

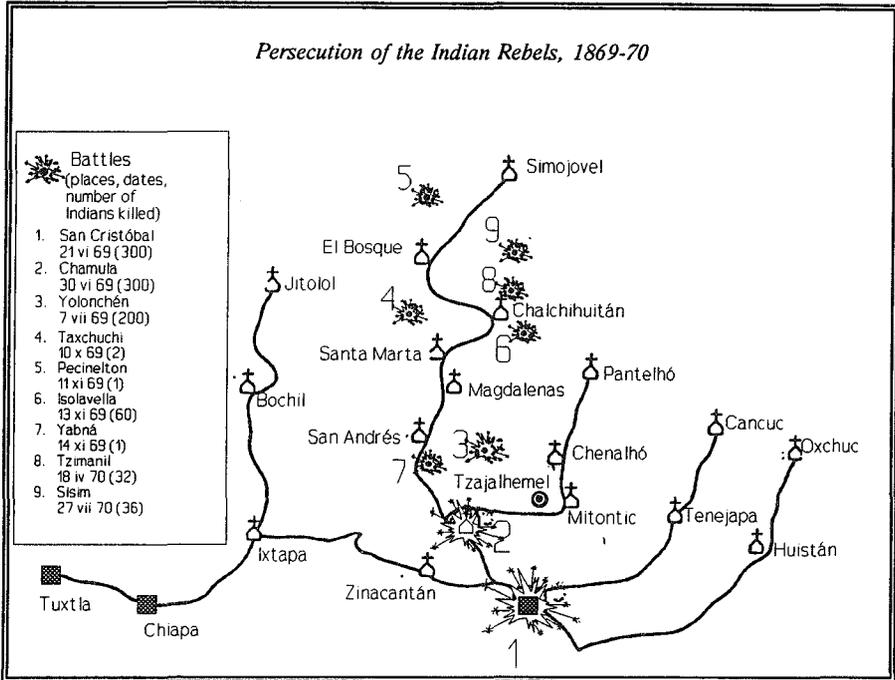
From the moment Domínguez and his three hundred heavily-armed troops marched into San Cristóbal in the mid-afternoon of June 21, the Indians' fate was sealed. Within minutes they had attacked those camped north and west of the city—people who in almost a week had taken no hostile action—leaving more than three hundred of them dead by nightfall. Forty-three ladinos also died in this 'glorious battle,' most of them apparently local men who turned out to watch the sport and got in the way of their own artillery.⁸⁰

After this first engagement, Domínguez and his new conservative allies looked to their own affairs in San Cristóbal. Fear of the Indians now lifted, San Cristóbal tried Galindo and company on the twenty-third, the 'defense' attorneys being the very ex-imperialists who had fanned the flames of the 'Caste War' during May and early June. Naturally Galindo could not win, and he and Trejo were executed June 26.⁸¹ Domínguez, meanwhile, his government penniless, his expulsion from office delayed only by the 'Caste War,' occupied himself with composing urgent appeals to local authorities around the state for volunteers and contributions to the cause of 'civilization versus barbarism.' Within a week, these requests brought him more than two thousand pesos and seven hundred men, more than enough to preserve his government and provide for the coming military campaign.⁸²

Finally, on June 30, their ranks swelled to over a thousand men, the ladino forces set out for the definitive attack on Chamula (see map on next page). According to *La Brújula*, they arrived in that *pueblo* to find the Indians "arrayed in a truly advantageous position atop a hill," a circumstance that forced them to fight "a valiant hand-to-hand battle to gain the higher ground." In spite of these difficulties, however, and in spite of the fact that the Indians outnumbered them three to one, the government forces somehow prevailed, killing more than three hundred Indians while suffering only eleven minor injuries of their own!⁸³ Indeed, in light of the very numbers, a more realistic account of this 'battle' is probably that offered by one of the lowland soldiers present, Pedro José Montesinos:

"When we first spied the Chamulas, hundreds of them were scattered in disordered groups on the hillsides, and before we were within rifle distance all, women and children as well as men, knelt on their bare knees to beg forgiveness. In spite of the humble position they took to show submission, however, the government forces continued to advance, and they, undoubtedly hoping they would be granted the mercy they begged with tears of sorrow, remained on their knees. At a little less than 200 meters, the soldiers opened fire on their compact masses—and despite the carnage done to them by the bullets, despite their cries for mercy, continued firing for some time.

When the government forces finally reached the Chamulas, their thirst for the blood of that poor, abject race still not slaked, there were suddenly such strident yells that even knowing nothing of what they



*said one knew their meaning: with those shouts they threw themselves against the government forces with an almost inhuman valor. These poor men, unable to secure the clemency they implored with tears and prostration, charged with a barbaric bravery.*⁸⁴

Following this triumph of 'civilization over barbarism,' Domínguez repeated a call he had first made several days earlier for the 'rebellious' communities to present themselves and surrender. Almost immediately, what was left of the *ayuntamientos* of Chamula and Mitontic sent word through the teacher of Zinacantán that they wished to make peace. Their suit was accepted on July 4. Meanwhile, on July 3 a squadron of soldiers had been sent to reconnoiter Tzajalhemel. Although they found the site deserted, they also found a note, written on official paper, nailed to the door of the shrine. It was a plea from Cuzcat to Governor Domínguez that he be forgiven, that he was innocent of any part in a plan to attack ladinos. Considering that he had been in jail for the half-year before June 17, this claim is not hard to believe. The soldiers burned the temple and returned to San Cristóbal.⁸⁵

Ladino leaders now turned to a discussion of what to do next. The highlanders, having suffered for a year and a half the Indians' boycott of their churches and businesses, wanted revenge and argued for further military action. In addition, they proposed that armed garrisons of highland soldiers be stationed in all Indian communities, whether they had rebelled or not.⁸⁶ Clearly, the ladino leaders intended to use the 'Caste War' to strengthen their hold at least on the highlands.

Domínguez, however, chose a course more in keeping with the

longterm interests of the lowlands—and himself. First, he placed at the head of each of the pacified communities a native functionary loyal to the state government, enjoining them to prove their loyalty by leading their constituents in the pursuit of the remaining 'rebels.' Then he ordered the bulk of the state militia—lowlanders unlikely to bow to highland interests—to remain in San Cristóbal to lead this pursuit while he himself returned to Chiapa with the core of professional soldiers "*to preserve order*" (and thus strengthen his own hand) in the lowlands.⁸⁷

Meanwhile, survivors of the attacks of June 21 and 30 had by this time fled back into the forests north and east of their communities. On July 7, the militia remaining in San Cristóbal had word that one of the 'mobs' of these refugees was camped in the hamlet of Yolonchén, near San Andrés. Immediately a force of 360 men was dispatched to deal with it, engaging the Indians—men, women and children—in a fight that left two hundred of them dead as against four ladinos.⁸⁸ Following this raid, on July 16 an army of 610 infantry, thirty cavalry, and one crew of artillery left San Cristóbal to begin the tour of the Indian townships prescribed by Domínguez (see map above). Through July 26, when they returned to the city, they tramped through all the communities as far north as Chalchihuitán—650 ladinos foraging on Indian lands, routing from their homes hundreds of terrified natives who, thus deprived of their livelihoods, were forced to join the refugees from the south in pilfering the stores and butchering the cattle of the abandoned ladino farms that lay in their path. Perversely, the soldiers' descriptions of these ruined farms were then published in *La Brújula* as further evidence of the destruction being wreaked on the state by the 'Indian hordes!'⁸⁹

Perhaps most sadly, however, Indians themselves participated in all these persecutions. Irregular militiamen from Mitontic and Chenalhó took part in the July 16 expedition, and when a second one left San Cristóbal on August 7 it took with it several hundred men from Chamula itself. In their eagerness to prove themselves, these 'loyal' Indians were even more ruthless than their ladino masters at hunting down and killing their fellows. Indeed, after mid-September primary responsibility for restoring order was left in their hands, the only direct ladino participants being a squadron of sixty infantry and fourteen cavalry stationed in San Andrés.⁹⁰

Through the fall, there continued to be occasional 'contacts' with the 'rebels'—from their descriptions, cases in which individual refugees, or at most small family groups, were run down by the soldiers and their native allies and killed. Then, on November 13, the government forces finally caught up with one last camp of exhausted fugitives north of San Andrés. Rather than waste munitions on them, the ladinos sent in 250 Indian lance-bearers, an action that produced the following glowing report from Cresencio Rosas, the expedition's commander: "*After an impetuous attack that yielded sixty rebel dead, we retrieved lances, axes, machetes and knives from the field, and took many families prisoner. I send my congratulations to the government and the entire white race for this great*

triumph of the defenders of humanity against barbarism."⁹¹

Following this battle, pacification of the central highlands itself was finally judged complete. Some resistance did continue just to the north among bands of highland Indians who had taken advantage of the confusion to flee the haciendas where they had been held as laborers. However, on April 18, 1870, and again on July 27, volunteers from Simojovel attacked the camps of these people, killing thirty-two on the first occasion and thirty-six on the second.⁹² With that, the great 'Caste War' was finished.

The Myth of the 'Caste War,' 1871-1994

After 1869, the lowlanders finally had what they sought for decades: effective control of the highland Indians. Although the church resumed its activities in the native communities as soon as they were secured, it never regained the power it had before the 1860s. Highland conservatives, on the other hand, did recover some authority over the Indians, though nothing like what they had previously enjoyed: in 1872, the state capital was returned to San Cristóbal, and through resumption of their roles as merchants and civil servants the *Cristobalenses* were able to indebt the Indians, and so dispose of their labor. This was an arrangement apparently acceptable to the lowlanders through the 1870s and 1880s. Assured of access to Indian labor, they seemed for the time being to have been willing to leave to highlanders the tasks of organizing and administering that labor at its source.

Meanwhile, there was very little mention of the 'Caste War' in ladino society after 1871. When it was introduced, as for instance in Flavio Paniagua's 1876 geography of the state, it was treated as simply one of many interesting facts about the Chamulas and their neighbors, people who were otherwise credited with being very "*industrious and hardworking.*"⁹³ The repression having been successful, and ladino society itself being prosperous and harmonious for the first time in half a century, no one had any particular interest in reopening the wounds of the 1860s.

Among the Indians, on the other hand, the violence of 1869-70 was not so easily forgotten. Whether they had participated in the separatist movement that preceded it or not, the fighting had profoundly affected all of them, and all now had to come to grips with it. Judging from oral histories from throughout the highlands, the consensus in most communities seems to have been that the break with ladino society represented by the Tzajalhemel movement was, at best, a tragic mistake. In some communities, the tales blame Cuzcat himself for the suffering that followed, in others the talking saint for bringing down divine punishment. Significantly, however, none seem to hold either the ladinos or their native allies responsible for the massacres of 1869-70 and the repression that came after. The reasons for this are not hard to find. First the leaders imposed on the participating communities in 1869 continued for several years to use the 'Caste War' to justify their rule. In Chamula,

for instance, the new *ayuntamiento* was still in late 1870 executing its opponents on the grounds that they had led, or tried to revive, the 'Caste War.'⁹⁴ Not surprisingly, this had a chilling effect on those who might otherwise have spoken in favor of Cuzcat and Tzajalhemel. Then too, many who had taken part in the separatist movement of 1868-69 emigrated from the highlands during the repression and immediately after, some as refugees who never returned, others as forced exiles to Gulf and Pacific coast plantations, and still others as fugitives from the imposed, too 'loyal' *ayuntamientos*.⁹⁵ This tended to remove from the communities those who might have passed on a favorable view of the Tzajalhemel movement. Unfortunately, those who remained, in order to survive, accepted—and passed on as 'ethnohistory'—a version of the events of 1868-70 not so different of that of the conservative highland ladinos of the time: Cuzcat and his followers were religious fanatics bent on destroying traditional highland society, and the persecution and repression they brought down on their community were justified measures of ladino self-defense.⁹⁶

In the late 1880s after almost twenty years of neglect, San Cristóbal's elite suddenly rediscovered the 'Caste War,' two books on the subject being published within a few months of each other in 1888-89—Vicente Pineda, *Historia de las sublevaciones indígenas habidas en el estado de Chiapas* (1888), and Flavio Paniagua, *Florinda* (1889)—and articles and flyers appearing regularly for the next several years.⁹⁷ What had happened was that the lowlanders, with the approval of the national government, had begun to talk about moving the state capital permanently from San Cristóbal to Tuxtla. The coffee and fruit plantations of Chiapas's southern Pacific coast—up to three hundred miles from San Cristóbal—had begun to boom by this time, and the cattle, cane and cotton of the central lowlands were also flourishing. There had even begun to be talk of connecting Chiapas to the rest of Mexico by rail. Tuxtla, closer to the center of these developments, was already the state's commercial capital, and the liberals who controlled the state government saw no reason why it should not be the political capital as well.

Against these arguments, all the *Cristobalenses* could offer were their city's supposedly 'aristocratic' traditions and its position at the center of the state's Indian population. The first being a point hardly likely to influence the liberal politicians who would decide between the two cities, they concentrated on the second. What they now claimed was that the peace and prosperity of the highlands, and with them of the entire state, depended on the capital's remaining where it could best "*impose respect on the numerous Indian pueblos*" of the central plateau. The last time the capital had been removed, the *Cristobalenses* argued, the Indians had taken advantage of its remoteness to stage a rebellion that had threatened the very existence of the state's whites. Who knew what might happen if it were moved again?⁹⁸

With time and the demands of politics, this retelling of the story of the 'Caste War' had acquired some interesting new twists. Not wishing

to blame the violence on the very liberals they hoped to sway, the highlanders now made Galindo not a liberal from central Mexico but an exiled imperialist who had hoped to destroy Chiapas's 'decent liberal society.' Indeed, according to one, he had even had the Indians address him as 'monsieur'! (Considering that Flavio Paniagua and Vicente Pineda, the authors of the two books, had themselves at least sympathized with the imperialists in the 1860s, this was a particularly cynical distortion.) Second, the Indians' religion—actually a tame, if native, variant of Catholicism—was made as outlandish as possible to emphasize the savagery into which the natives would sink if not closely supervised. Thus the invention of the crucifixion of an Indian boy on Good Friday, 1868, an event not mentioned in even the most virulently racist newspaper stories of 1868-71—stories that otherwise exulted in exaggerating the Indians' cruelty and inhumanity. Finally, the actual battles of the 'Caste War' itself were magnified until it seemed that the Indians had actually been on the point of overrunning San Cristóbal and slaughtering its inhabitants. In this new telling, the encampments on the edge of the city between June 17 and 21 became a bloody siege; the 'battles' of June 21 and 30 became closely-fought confrontations from which the ladino soldiers had been lucky to escape with their lives; and the persecution of July-November 1869 became a merciless guerrilla war in which Indian fanatics managed to hold off the entire state militia.⁹⁹

But for all the effort that went into this elaborate justification for keeping the capital in San Cristóbal, in 1892 the federal government authorized its transfer to Tuxtla anyway. If the highland revisionists did not accomplish their first purpose, however, they did permanently blacken the reputation of the Indians. Ironically, when the state government decided a few years later to by-pass San Cristóbal and manage the highland work-force itself, it fell back on the conservatives' own argument that the Indians needed to feel a strong, direct authority to remain peaceful. Using this as an excuse, in 1896 the lowlanders removed all the communities north of San Cristóbal from the city's control and placed them under administrators dependent on Tuxtla itself.¹⁰⁰ To further insure the preservation of peace—and the enforcement of labor contracts—lowland troops were stationed in all the major communities and native government, such as it was, was truncated.

This was the situation when Frederick Starr, in 1901, became the first American anthropologist to visit Chiapas. One of the many bits of information he collected to accompany his accounts of the Indians' brutal exploitation at the hands of the state's ladinos was Paniagua's and Pineda's account of the 'Caste War,' complete with crucifixion.¹⁰¹ The horror of his story, providing as it did 'objective' proof of the Indians' low level of civilization, was by this time an accepted justification of the system of debt and plantation labor to which they were being subjected.

And so it has continued through the more than ninety years since. Unfortunately, modern anthropologists, collecting tales of the 'Caste War' from native storytellers, and then looking to the 'classic' sources to

check their accuracy, have only compounded the problem. Influenced by the post-'Caste War' repression, many of the Indians' tales actually seem to confirm the racist accounts of the nineteenth century conservatives. Indeed, by this time many of these stories may be little more than native retellings of the ladino accounts that have filtered back into the communities through priests, ladino merchants and, most insidiously, native bilingual teachers who have read Paniagua and Pineda in an attempt to learn their own history. Unfortunately again, however, so seductive has been the 'window on the native soul' offered by these stories that some scholars, instead of treating them skeptically, have simply repeated them, lending the imprimatur of their science to what appears to be only a myth.

This brings us, finally, to the latest use of the 'Caste War' myth: its revival by those seeking parallels to the Zapatista Uprising of 1994. To the extent such comparisons color the way the Zapatistas are perceived by the government, by Mexican civil society, and even by people beyond Mexico, this is an enterprise that cannot be dismissed lightly. Let us review briefly its chief tenets. In both the 1860s and the 1990s, it is said, substantial numbers of native people moved away from their traditional pueblos into the forest where they established autonomous, pan-Maya societies; in each case a ladino leader appeared who helped organize the separatists into a military force; and finally, both the '*Cuzcates*' of 1869 and the Zapatistas of 1994 attacked San Cristóbal and, at least for a time, had the ladinos on the run.¹⁰²

Aside from the fact that the second and third of these comparisons cannot be valid because they are not true for 1869, the effect of repeating them is to strengthen the insinuations that, first, the Indians can only emerge from the forest if they have a ladino to lead them; and second, that the Indians' 'ancestral' goal, their purpose whenever they begin uniting across traditional boundaries of community and language, is the overthrow of non-Indian society. From outside, it seems, it has simply not been possible to imagine the 'new' Indian communities of 1869 and 1994 as they have re-imagined themselves: as safe, autonomous spaces within which the Maya could direct their own lives.

And with that we come back, in turn, to the first of the comparisons that have been made between 1869 and 1994: the attempt in each case to found a separate, native society beyond the control of the non-Indian state. Even here there are problems with the equivalence: Cuzcat and his followers based their community on a traditional, religious model, while the Zapatistas have a secular organization and political demands; the 1869 rebels wanted to be left alone, whereas those of 1994 protest precisely that they have been ignored and neglected, and demand their rights as Mexican citizens; and, finally, the earlier rebels were quickly isolated from any outside support, moral or otherwise, while the Zapatistas' success so far has depended in great measure on their ability to connect to wider social and political networks. To the extent, then, that those drawing the comparisons are attempting to suggest that the

Zapatista movement is somehow local and self-limiting like that of 1869, they appear to be mistaken.

All of that said, however, there is a profound similarity between the two movements as 'utopian societies' that does indeed have something to tell us about continuities in the position of Indians in Chiapas and Mexico. Economically exploited and politically dominated by non-Indians, the Mayas of 1994—like those 1869—seem to yearn above all for a new society in which they control their own lives within their own territory. What most worries the state about the Zapatistas, in turn—as Tzajalhemel worried its predecessor—is not just that a few Indians have taken up arms, or that they might continue to live in the forest and escape its control, but that their movement energizes people across traditional barriers of community, and in the Zapatistas' case even ethnicity and class. The state's response to that challenge in the nineteenth century was a massacre. Let us hope that its modern successor acts with more wisdom and humanity.

Endnotes

1. Pineda, *Historia*; Paniagua, *Florinda*; Molina, *War* (Molina's book is an English translation of a contemporary memoir of the 1869 rebellion). Also see the serialized account in *La Brújula*, newspaper of the San Cristóbal conservatives (Aug.-Oct. 1869), Tulane Collection, Latin American Library, Tulane University, New Orleans (microfilm of nineteenth-century Chiapas newspapers; hereafter: TC).

2. For political aspects of the lowland-highland division, see Trens, *Historia*, books 3-7. Although there is as yet no reliable modern history of nineteenth-century Chiapas, the socio-economic history of the highlands is covered in broad outline by Wasserstrom, *Class*, pp. 107-155; and the political history of the last decades of the century for the state as a whole by Benjamin, *Rich Land*, pp. 7-92.

3. Paniagua, *Catecismo elemental*, in the Colección Moscoso at San Cristóbal, Chiapas (hereafter CM).

4. CM, *Colección de leyes agrarias y demás disposiciones que se han emitido en relación al ramo de tierras* (San Cristóbal, 1878); Archivo General de Chiapas, Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas (hereafter AGCH), "Prontuario del inventario del ramo de tierras" (Tuxtla, 1891). Like Guatemala, the term *ejido* was used in Chiapas in the late colonial period to designate all communally-held native lands. Elsewhere in Mexico this usage might not have been that common at the time.

5. The transformation of the lowlands is reflected in the remarkable growth of the region's ladino population between 1819 and 1860 (see Table 1). For the highlands, it is easily traced through the entries of the "Prontuario del inventario del ramo de tierras" (AGCH).

6. Archivo Histórico Diocesano de San Cristóbal, San Cristóbal, Chiapas (hereafter AHDSC), Enrique Mijangos, *párroco* of Chamula, to the *provisor* of the diocese, May 7, 1855, and "Plan de Chamula," Saturnino Rivas, *agrimensor*, June 1855. Also see CM, *La Voz del Pueblo*, Dec. 8, 1855, and Feb. 2, 1856. (*La Voz del Pueblo* was the official newspaper of the state government.)

7. AHDSC, Enrique Zepeda, *vicario* of Chamula, to the Ecclesiastical Government (hereafter: EG), San Cristóbal, Oct. 27, 1804.

8. CM, *Voz del Pueblo*, Feb. 2, 1856. There were 637 families of non-Chamulas on the 44 percent of the estate not Chamula. Assuming an even population density on the entire property—actually a conservative assumption, since the Chamula density was undoubtedly higher—this would give approximately 740 families on Chamula's 56 percent.

9. TC, *El Espíritu del Siglo*, Oct. 12, 1862.

10. Chiapas's legislature ratified the national decree of April 28, 1823, which specified many of the duties of the clergy, in 1826. Soon after, measures were adopted for each of the state's own religious sub-divisions, as for instance the "Arancel de cobranzas y mensualidades autorizadas para el vicario de Chamula," promulgated on Aug. 10, 1827, AHDSC.

11. Wasserstrom, *Class*, pp. 110-145.

12. Trens, *Historia*, p. 591, gives complete figures for 1856, one of the few years for which comparisons are possible.

13. Trens, *Historia*, pp. 328-330. AGCH, Decreto del 20 de julio, 1831, Gobierno del Estado de Chiapas.

14. Trens, *Historia*, pp. 441-443. Also, AGCH, *Baldiaje*, Decreto del 9 de junio, 1849; and, *Tierras*, Decretos del 28 de enero, 1847, 24 de marzo, 1847, and 24 de mayo, 1849.

15. Chamula, with 12,000 inhabitants, would have constituted 31 percent of San Cristóbal's total departmental population of 38,000 in the 1850s. Its share of the head tax of 11,552 pesos paid in the department in 1855 would therefore have been approximately 3,600 pesos—or, at 1,5 reales a day for native labor, something more than 19,200 man-days of labor. See population sources in Table 1; in Trens, *Historia*, p. 591; and in CM, *Voz del Pueblo*, Feb. 2, 1856.

16. 1,460 man-days in personal service, and 15,500 in cash and kind. AHDSC, "Cuadrante de San Juan Chamula" (1855) and "Estados trimestrales de Chamula" (July 14, 1855, and January 14, 1856).

17. In addition to the payments already enumerated, Chamulas were also providing an undetermined amount as stipends for their schoolteacher and secretary. In 1856, these were described as one of the most onerous of the Indians' burdens in *La Voz del Pueblo*, Jan 19 (CM).

18. Cases involving priests and secretaries were compiled from AHDSC; land cases were compiled from AGCH, "Prontuario del inventario del ramo de tierras."

19. Reflected in AHDSC, "Estados trimestrales de parroquias" (1848-57). This was a kind of report first required of priests in 1848 and discontinued in most of the diocese during the War of Reform in the late 1850s.

20. Wasserstrom, *Class*, pp. 128-134.

21. The abolition of serfdom was repealed by the Decreto del 22 de mayo, 1851, and the controls on agricultural exports established by the Decreto del 8 de noviembre, 1853 (AGCH). For information about the land laws, see Trens, *Historia*, pp. 522-531.

22. Trens, *Historia*, pp. 515-560.

23. For general background of the Reforma, see González, "La Reforma," pp. 104-114.

24. Trens, *Historia*, pp. 565-583.

25. According to *La Voz del Pueblo*, Feb. 2, 1856, (CM), Mitontic, Chenalhó and Tenejapa were asked to pay 3,000 pesos to redeem their shares of Nueve Edén in 1855—a total of some 16,000 man-days of labor. Chamula reportedly made a deal for some 5,000 pesos—26,666 man-days—slightly earlier (AHDSC, "Estado de Chamula," 1855). Whether any of these amounts were ever paid is unknown.

26. The case for the Chamulas helping the conservative insurgents is largely circumstantial. From the start of the War of Reform in Chiapas near Ixtapa in mid-1856, through Ortega's final defeat near Chanal in June 1860, most of the fighting took place across the Indian townships of the central highlands, and the priests of several of these communities were among the conservative sympathizers who fled to Guatemala in 1859 (see Trens, *Historia*, pp. 601-624). There is also some evidence to suggest that Chamulas served in the liberal armies during the same period, although it is uncertain whether the charges that the liberals were using 'chamulas' referred to the people of that township or to poor and Indian troops in general. See CM, *La Bandera Constitucional* (Tuxtla), Oct 9, 1858.

27. Trens, *Historia*, pp. 608-609 (compare to Paniagua, *Salvador Guzmán*, pp. 90ff.). The drop in religious taxes between 1858 and 1861 was recorded in "Cuentas Parroquiales" (AHDSC). At this early date, the decline was undoubtedly due more to the flight of the priests than the 1857 decree outlawing church collections from the poor—a decree unenforceable in Chiapas until the mid-1860s (AHDSC, Decreto del 11 de abril, 1857, México; also Trens, *Historia*, p. 617).

28. CM, Decreto de 21 de noviembre 1861, Tuxtla ("Recaudación de capitación"); CM, Ley reglamentaria de la administración pública de los dtos. y municipios, Chiapas, Jan. 15, 1862. The number of soldiers required of the state is from Trens, *Historia*, pp. 627, 630; and of Chamula, from the letter from Manuel María Suárez, *vicario* of Chamula, to the EG, July 28, 1862 (AHDSC).
29. AHDSC, Suárez to EG, July 28, 1862.
30. AHDSC, Pueblo of Cancuc to the EG, April 12, 1863; AHDSC, Juan M. Gutiérrez y Aguilar, *párroco* of Cancuc, to the EG, April 19, 1863.
31. AHDSC, "Cuentas de Chamulas, varios años."
32. Trens, *Historia*, pp. 661-688, and, *Imperio*; Villafuerte, "Diario."
33. Trens, *Imperio*, pp. 18-27, 33; CM, "Noticias de las personas que ... prestaron servicios a la facción intervencionista," *El Espíritu del Siglo*, May 21, 1864.
34. Trens, *Imperio*, pp. 33-43, and *Historia*, pp. 661-665.
35. Trens, *Imperio*, p. 39; AHDSC, Enrique Mijangos, *párroco* of Zinacantán, to the Secretary of the EG, Oct. 19, 1863.
36. AHDSC, Superior Gobierno Eclesiástico to Prefecto Superior, Gobierno Imperial, Nov. 10, 1863; AHDSC, J. Agustín Velasco, *párroco* of Tenejapa, to the EG, Oct. 12, 1863.
37. AHDSC, "A los habitantes del departamento de San Cristóbal Las Casas" (a flyer), Manuel Arellano, San Cristóbal, Jan. 26, 1863.
38. AHDSC, Manuel María Suárez, *vicario* of Chamula, to the EG, Sept. 22, 1863.
39. TC, *La Brújula* (San Cristóbal), April 23, May 28, and Sept. 24, 1869.
40. Cumberland, *Mexico*, pp. 163-166; Trens, *Historia*, p. 675.
41. Trens, *Historia*, pp. 672-692. Domínguez was elected on Oct. 29, 1867, and took office constitutionally on Dec. 1.
42. CM, "Correspondencia interceptada a los traidores y mandada publicar de orden del c. Gobernador," *Espíritu del Siglo*, April 9, 1864. *Espíritu del Siglo* also carried lists of 'traitors' "con expresión de sus bienes sobre las cuales debe recaer la pena de confiscación" on April 21, May 28, and June 4, 1864.
43. TC, *La Brújula*, April 23 and Sept. 17, 1869; AHDSC, Enrique Mijangos, *párroco* of Mitontic and Chenalhó, to Manuel Suárez, *vicario* of Chamula, Sept. 16, 1864; AHDSC, J. Agustín Velasco, *párroco* of Oxchuc and Huistán, to the EG, June 21, 1865.
44. During 1863-64, the government had been able to collect only regular head and property taxes in the departments of Chiapa, Tuxtla and Pichucalco. With Ortega's defeat in 1864, it also began to extract revenues from the highlands in the form of forced loans, but when the head tax was again enforced in the region in 1869 it was decried as a 'new' tax (Trens, *Historia*, pp. 674-675; CM, Villafuerte, "Diario," pp. 28-29; TC, *La Brújula*, April 23, 1868).
45. Sierra, *Juárez*, pp. 428-432.
46. Supremo Decreto del 22 de julio, 1867, México (reported in Pineda, *Chia-pas*).
47. Trens, *Historia*, p. 692. Domínguez took office on Dec. 1, 1867, and ordered the capital moved on Dec. 31.
48. The escalation of these measures is reflected in the following: AHDSC, Bruno Domínguez, *párroco* of Zinacantán, to the EG, June 4, 1867; AHDSC, Domínguez to the EG, Feb. 26, 1868; and AHDSC, Enrique Mijangos, *párroco* of Mitontic, Chenalhó and Chalchihuitán, to the EG, May 15, 1868. In his letter of Feb. 26, the priest of Zinacantán wrote: "The ayuntamiento and maestro of this pueblo have just informed me for the second time that the state has decreed, among other things, the complete dissolution of the mayordomos who serve in this holy church, as well as the abolition of the position of alférez, and since without these it will not be possible to preserve organized religion, much less provide for the subsistence of the minister, and since it is possible to see behind the decision the purpose of driving the priest from the town, I ask that I might be removed from here as soon as possible in order that this community might understand how sorely it will feel the absence of a priest."
49. AHDSC, M. Francisco Gordillo, *párroco* of Oxchuc and Huistán, to the EG, Oct. 27 and Nov. 15, 1868; AHDSC, Enrique Mijangos, *párroco* of Pantelhó, to the EG, Feb. 13, 1869. In the last of these letters, Mijangos reported that in Pantelhó "the native justicias rejected me, demanding to know who had sent for me. After calming down a bit, they unanimously confessed that the maestro had instructed them to act as they did."
50. See previous notes, as well as AHDSC, Manuel Suárez, *párroco*, to the EG, Nov. 21, 1868.

51. AHDSC, M. Francisco Gordillo, *párroco* of Oxchuc and Huistán, to the EG, Oct. 27 and Nov. 15, 1868. In the second of these letters Gordillo wrote: "I am just returning from a fiesta where the damned Indians acted vilely, refusing even to pay twelve pesos for the active service without threats. I wanted to raise the prices for baptisms and marriages to compensate, but saw that if I did they would not baptize anybody."

52. AHDSC, Manuel Suárez, *párroco* of Tenejapa, to the EG, Nov. 21, 1868.

53. R.F. Wasserstrom, personal communication.

54. AHDSC, Anselmo Guillén, *párroco* of Chamula, to J. Facundo Bonifaz, Secretario of the EG, April 8, 1870; "Cuentas de Chamula, varios años," AHDSC, contains both accounts and notes for 1865-69; TC, *El Baluarte* (Tuxtla), Oct. 1, 1869.

55. According to Paniagua, *Florinda*, pp. 4-10, the cult was started by Checheb in October 1867 and by the time of Cuzcat's first visit was already flourishing. But Pineda, *Historia*, pp. 71-72, says that Cuzcat and Checheb made a clay idol together in late 1867 and that their intention throughout was to start a lucrative new religion.

56. Molina, *War*, pp. 365-366.

57. AHDSC, Enrique Mijangos, *vicario interino*, "Estado trimestral de Chamula," July 14, 1855.

58. AHDSC, Mijangos, "Estado trimestral."

59. The version of events in this and the next four paragraphs comes from Molina, *War*, p. 367; Villafuerte, "Diario," pp. 31-32; and TC, *La Brújula*, June 11, 1869.

60. According to Villafuerte, San Cristóbal began frantic preparations for an expected Indian attack on May 1, 1868, all able-bodied men being organized into military companies under *jefes militares*.

61. The three priests were Manuel Suárez, Bruno Domínguez, and Enrique Mijangos (Molina, *War*, p. 367).

62. Melchor Gómez, a scribe from the *ayuntamiento* of Chamula, was named *mayordomo*—an office outlawed in the Indian *pueblos* by the state government. (The reconstruction of this and the next two paragraphs is based on Molina, *War*, p. 368.)

63. TC, *La Brújula*, April 23 and May 28, 1869. In answering to the carping of the highlanders, the liberal newspaper of Chiapa, *El Baluarte*, ran a long series during 1868-69 on the political 'crimes' of the conservatives during the 1860s: "La lucha contra el llamado 'imperio mexicano' en Chiapas."

64. TC, *Espíritu del Siglo*, May 9, 11, and 23, and Dec. 3, 1868.

65. TC, *Espíritu del Siglo*, March 27, 1869; TC, *La Brújula*, April 30, 1869.

66. TC, *La Brújula*, May 28, 1869; TC, *El Baluarte*, Oct. 1, 1869.

67. Galindo's history and motives are discussed in Molina, *War*, p. 360; TC, *La Brújula*, Dec. 17, 1869; and TC, *El Baluarte*, Sept. 22, 1870. San Cristóbal's mood during this period can be detected in *La Brújula*, April, 11 and June 11, 1869—indeed, the issue of June 11 was already talking about a 'caste war,' this several days before the outbreak of violence that supposedly started the 'Caste War of 1869.'

68. Paniagua, *Florinda*, pp. 32-34; Pineda, *Historia*, pp. 78-79. Galindo's construction of the facts is from his testimony at his trial, "Proceso instruido contra Ignacio Fernández de Galindo, 23 de junio, 1869," reprinted as Note F in Paniagua, *Florinda*.

69. Villafuerte, "Diario," p. 33; Molina, *War*, pp. 372-373. At Galindo's trial, it was reported that he had been present at three killings, to which he replied that he had only gone along to try to restrain the Indians, to prevent killing ("Proceso," in Paniagua, *Florinda*).

70. Molina, *War*, p. 375; Villafuerte, "Diario," pp. 33-34. From other sources it can be calculated that a total of sixteen ladinos died in these two fights. How many Indians were killed is unknown (see note 80).

71. TC, *La Brújula*, July 25, 1869; Molina, *War*, p. 375.

72. TC, *El Baluarte*, *Alcance* 5, June 2, 1869; Villafuerte, "Diario," p. 34. Paniagua (*Florinda*, Note C) and Pineda (*Historia*, p. 82) later claimed that many more ladino civilians were killed in 'brutal attacks' that lasted through June. Paniagua even provides a list of supposed 'victims,' although he provides no dates or places of death, or even, in most cases, complete names. From the lists of casualties published in *La Brújula* (July 9 and 25, 1869), however, it appears that 79 ladinos were killed in the entire 'Caste war,' of whom 47 were combatants, sixteen were accounted for individually (see notes 78 and 79), and sixteen were apparently killed in the attacks on Natividad and La Merced in mid-June.

73. Molina, *War*, p. 375.

74. Pineda (*Historia*, pp. 87-93) argues that Galindo was tricked by the 'ex-treme cleverness' of San Cristóbal's *jefe político* into turning himself over. Paniagua (*Florinda*, p. 48) has it that he thought the Indians would soon attack to free him —though why he, the supposed military leader, would have turned over the army to Cuzcat if an attack was eventually going to be necessary anyway is never explained. Finally, a lowland commentator, José M. Montesinos—an enemy of Governor Domínguez—claims that Galindo was an agent provocateur of the governor and fully expected the governor to ride to his rescue (*Memorias*).

75. TC, *El Baluarte*, July 9, 1869.

76. TC, *El Baluarte*, July 9, 1869; TC, *La Brújula*, Dec. 17, 1869.

77. TC, *La Brújula*, June 25, 1869; Molina, *War*, p. 376. From the internal evidence, it appears that *La Brújula* was often published up to a week earlier than the date it bore, so the number if June 25 may actually have come out any time between June 18 and 25.

78. TC, *El Baluarte*, June 18, 1869. Later it was claimed that Domínguez had begun organizing a force to defend San Cristóbal as early as June 14—and, indeed, among the forces that bargained with Galindo on June 17 were twenty-five troops sent from Chiapa as observers three days earlier. There is no evidence that he intended to take any further action (*La Brújula*, June 18, 1869).

79. Montesinos, *Memorias*, p. 66; see also the letter from Tuxtla correspondent of *La Brújula*, July 16, 1869 (TC).

80. Molina, *War*, p. 377; TC, *El Baluarte*, July 9, 1869; and, *La Brújula*, July 2, 1869. From contemporary sources, it appears that the Indians actually fled when confronted by the lowland soldiers and that the only ones who fought back were those who were cornered against steep hills with no escape possible. One such group, in its desperation, ran directly toward the lowland cannons, causing the wild firing that accounted for most of the ladino casualties. (Even Pineda, *Historia*, p. 101, concedes most of these facts.)

81. TC, *La Brújula*, July 2, 1869.

82. Reported in *La Brújula*, July 9 and 16, 1869 (TC). Domínguez's circular to the officials around the state was dated June 26.

83. TC, *La Brújula*, July 9, 1869.

84. As reported to his nephew, J.M. Montesinos (*Memorias*, pp. 61-62).

85. Molina, *War*, p. 379; Villafuerte, "Diario," p. 33.

86. Paniagua, "Guerra de castas," in *La Brújula*, July 1869 (TC). As evidence of the tone of the discussion, an unsigned editorial in *La Brújula*, July 9, 1869, suggested exiling the highland rebels to the Soconusco region in the south, where they could become a permanent work-force, and still, a third piece, on July 16, 1869, argued that the rebels should be defeated utterly, killed to the last man, as an example to those who remained.

87. Some lowland troops were disengaged after July 3, but most were assigned to the highlands indefinitely as of that date. This probably accounts for the 'dissatisfaction' noted in the lowland paper *El Baluarte* on July 23, 1869 (TC).

88. TC, *La Brújula*, Sept. 17, 1869. *La Brújula* of July 16, 1869, says the Indian dead were too numerous to count, and Villafuerte ("Diario," p. 34), says there were no fewer than 300.

89. "Informes del comandante militar," July-December, 1869 (collected in Paniagua, *Florinda*, Note G-J). In a letter to *La Brújula*, published Sept. 24, 1869, Victor Domínguez, owner of one of the ruined farms, described the Indians as 'monsters of ingratitude.'

90. "Informes," in Paniagua, *Florinda*, Notes I-J; TC, *El Baluarte*, Aug. 13, 1869. On August 24, a crowd of fugitive Indians from Chamula, San Andrés, and Santiago took their revenge on one settlement of such 'loyal' Indians in San Andrés, killing twenty of them and burning their houses (TC, *La Brújula*, Sept. 3, 1869).

91. Rosas to the state government, Nov. 13, 1869, published in TC, *La Brújula*, Nov. 19, 1869.

92. TC, *La Brújula*, Dec. 24, 1869; "Informes," in Paniagua, *Florinda*, Note K.

93. Paniagua, *Catecismo*.

94. Molina, *War*, p. 379, reports executions of 'rebel leaders' turned over by Chamula's *ayuntamiento* on July 26, 1869 (five), and October 3, 1869 (three). In addition Villafuerte, "Diario," p. 35, reports that the presiding officer of Chamula brought the head of one rebel to San Cristóbal on July 10, 1870, and two more on August 4. Ladino forces also intervened directly in the native communities through 1870, attending all the major fiestas, and on July 7 arresting and summarily executing a Chamula scribe who had tried to arouse a protest against the head tax (Molina, *War*, p. 383; Villafuerte, "Diario," p. 35).

95. Many of those who fled during the summer of 1869 settled in San Juan Chamula El Bosque, a settlement north of Chalchihuitán that also became a refuge for emigrés in 1870-71. That groups of 'rebels' were also exiled by the government is known from the letter from Agustín Velasco, *párroco* of Chamula, to Dr. Feliciano Lazos, rector of the EG, Jan. 15, 1884, in which he inquired about religious jurisdiction over the children of exiles from the state of Veracruz (AHDSC).

96. The first steps of this process can be detected in the "Manifiesto del indígena c. Domingo Pérez" (*La Brújula*, November 26, 1869), in which Pérez, apparently a Chamula, refers to the 'rebels' whom he was then pursuing as "*barbarians whose wish it is to eliminate the ladino class and sow their own deprived vices among their fellows.*" A century later, by the 1970s, the surviving stories in Chamula had it that Cuzcat and his followers were entirely to blame for the violence they brought down on the community (see Gossen, "Translating"), whereas in Chalchihuitán, for instance, Chamulas in general were blamed (Ulrich Köhler, personal communication). Only in such out-of-the-way villages as Magdalenas did versions of the events survive in which Cuzcat and his followers were depicted as 'good' and the persecution of them as unjust (Past, "Lo que cuenta").

97. Pineda, *Historia*; Paniagua, *Florinda*. Vicente Pineda also wrote the most important of the subsequent articles, "La traslación de los poderes públicos del estado" (San Cristóbal, 1892), a pamphlet (AGCH).

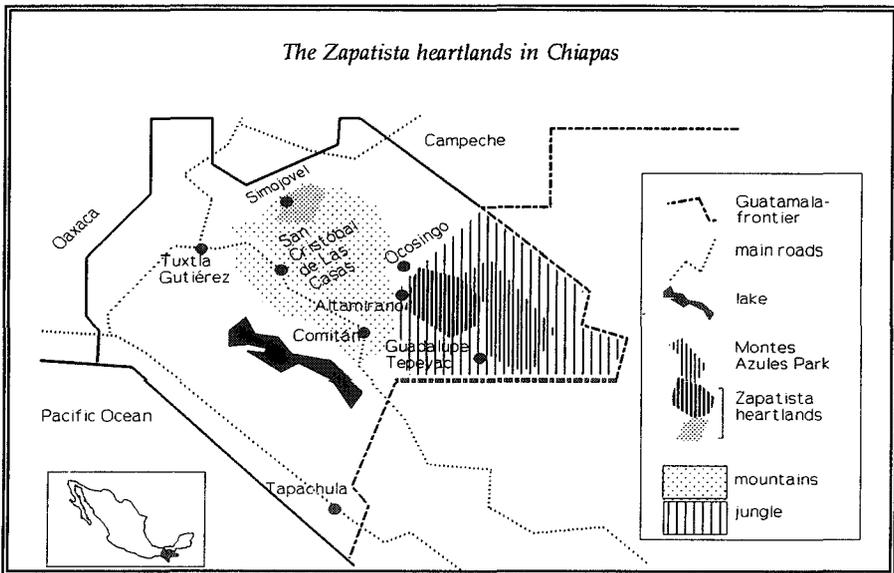
98. The citation is from a pamphlet by Pineda ("Traslación"), who went on to argue that "*the capital must remain where there are the most individuals to govern, direct, repress, educate, civilize and enlighten.*" The first two appendices of Paniagua's, *Florinda* were about the transfer of the capital to Tuxtla in 1867 and its supposed consequences (Note A) and the cultural and educational advantages of San Cristóbal (Note B).

99. Galindo is identified as an imperialist in Paniagua, *Florinda*, p. 12. The first mention of the supposed crucifixion is in Pineda's *Historia* (pp. 76-77), and the exaggerated battles are to be found in Paniagua, *Florinda*, pp. 48-74, and, Pineda, *Historia*, pp. 94-116.

100. Transfer of the capital in AGCH, Decreto del 11 de agosto 1892, Tuxtla. Formation of the Partido de Chamula in AGCH, Decreto del 24 de abril 1896, Tuxtla.

101. Starr, *In Indian Mexico*.

102. Some of the sillier comparisons—which shall go uncited—have even carried this search for parallels between 1869 and 1994 to the point of 'predicting' that when the Zapatista uprising is finally over we shall surely learn that behind every-thing was a new religious icon!



Away From Prying Eyes The Zapatista Revolt of 1994

ARIJ OUWENEEL*

Yes, We Have No Guerrillas

Let me begin by setting out the limits of this contribution. Though not a specialist of the history and anthropology of Chiapas, I followed the events in the state during the year 1994 with more than the usual interest. For a few years I have been writing a history of the Maya for Dutch travellers. Anything that happens in the state where Palenque, Yaxchilán, Chamula and Zinacantán are found attracts the attention of the international media and thus affects the planning of travellers: I had to say something about it in my book. Consequently, I left for Mexico in February, only a few weeks after the occupation of the city of San Cristóbal de Las Casas by masked guerrilla-fighters and gathered all the material about the uprising I could lay my hands on.¹ The following text is the summary of my experience.

However, my view cannot be other than preliminary. All the documentary sources consist of articles in Mexican newspapers and journals. The authors of these texts have based their work on oral testimony of some kind and in most cases I was not able to verify the statements with other material. Like many historians, I am pretty sceptical about the value of oral sources in reconstructing the past, even of a past so

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I am very grateful to Jan Rus, Jean Carrière and Kevin Gosner for their generous comments on an earlier version of this paper. Especially Jan Rus will recognize some of his own words. He read a paper in Mexico City shortly before the CEDLA Seminar which contains his vision on the revolt; see Jan Rus, "'*Jelavem Skotol Balamil*' / 'The Whole World Has Changed': The Reordering of Native Society in Highland Chiapas, 1974-1994" (Paper IX Conference of Mexican and North American Historians, Mexico City, 1994). His piece was published later on in the *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies* 58 (1995), pp. 71-89. He also bombarded me kindly with essays, articles and manuscripts before the CEDLA Seminar of November 18th, 1994. Although Rus correctly points out that the problems in Chiapas are not specific for the recently colonized northern lowlands where the Zapatistas have their base, I do tend to limit my scope to this area in particular.

recent as the Zapatista movement. Moreover, Mexico is a hegemonic society, which means that the main sources of information are controlled actively and passively by one social group, members of the ruling party PRI. And although the Zapatistas denied access to their territory to the most important government media, their audience of the so-called 'opposition press' also is educated within the Mexican system. In general, all are instructed in the 'official history' of exploitation before the Revolution of 1910 and the 'process of liberation' that set in afterwards. They color their articles with the conviction that to continue that process, the country should do without the PRI.²

In short, the country's 'official historical narrative' still dominates political discussions. Commentators and participants saw in the Zapatista movement legacies of the heroes of the Independence Movement of 1810—Miguel Hidalgo and Vicente Guerrero—and of the Revolution of 1910—Emiliano Zapata and Pancho Villa. Foreign observers tend to follow this course too. Even Neil Harvey chose to include a few paragraphs on Mexico's 'rebellious tradition' in his small book *Rebellion in Chiapas*. No doubt, when the historical revisions of the presentday gain in significance *and* new sources on the Chiapas uprising show up, the interpretation of the movement will be very different. I have tried to look in that direction and to refrain from mirroring the events with the Zapata legacy.

Though it is still too early for far-reaching conclusions I think we witness the end of an era, and with it the beginning of something completely different. But, as I will try to show, at the same time, we return to a tradition long thought to be lost. The end of the Maya peasants' hope of eventual improvement in their condition rather than economic deprivation led to the explosion of January 1994. In the Declaration of January 6, 1994, the Zapatista leadership expressed this prospect as follows: "*Here we are, the dead of all times, dying once again, but now with the objective of living.*"³ Mexico, as a country favoring peasant's life, is finished. In response, something entirely new, and yet very old, seems to manifest itself in Chiapas, and perhaps all over the country: the re-assertion of native people's right to their own form of organization.

On New Years Eve the Zapatistas took Mexico, and Mexicanist scholars, by surprise. This is rather curious, for as recently as June 1993 the weekly magazine *Proceso* had published an article claiming that guerrilla groups had attacked some targets near Ocosingo, a small town on the road from San Cristóbal de Las Casas to Palenque. The Minister of Interior was interviewed live on radio and stated:

*"There are no guerrillas in Chiapas. To say that there are causes grave damage to the state's development."*⁴

He referred to the North American Free Trade Agreement NAFTA negotiations with the U.S.A. and Canada. However, he dissembled, for the army had found six guerrilla camps after dropping about one thousand paratroopers in the Lacandón jungle near Ocosingo. For years, Mgr Sam-

uel Ruiz García, Bishop of San Cristóbal de Las Casas, had reported that the miserably poor peasant communities of the Chiapas highlands (called *Los Altos*) were increasingly frustrated by government neglect of their needs: "We spoke out, but there was no echo. It took a suicidal peasant insurrection for anyone to pay attention."⁵

Of course, the rebellion was intrinsically linked to the presidency of Carlos Salinas de Gortari (1988-94). Until the uprising, the president was talking tall, basking in the apparent success of a bold program of economic reforms and preparing to hand over power after elections in August that same year. In only a few days, with all the violence in the southern state, Salinas' apparent popularity was being undermined. He had stated that he was leading the country out of the 'Third World wilderness.' His economic reforms were credited with reducing inflation from 150 percent to about ten, consolidating the country's economy as the world's thirteenth biggest. The moment of Mexico's entry into the promised land of industrialized nations after January 1 by means of the NAFTA, would have been his finest hour. Therefore, for most analysts the rebellion signals a crisis of legitimation both for the process of economic liberalization and for the *PRI-ista* state.⁶

For that reason the events in Chiapas after New Years Day 1994 were in general understood in a context of macro-economic changes. Most observers locate the rebellion in the multiple context of current global restructuring and the long tradition of Mexican peasant uprisings, as Harvey and Barkin did. We know that the free-market reforms of the De la Madrid (1982-88) and Salinas Administrations have excluded Chiapas peasants from markets in and outside Mexico. We also know that for some years peasants all over Chiapas were in great discontent. The so-called *caciques*—local political bosses, members of the indigenous township elites—rule the villagers by keeping order with terror. The *caciques* arrange the voting of the peasants, own the stores where they shop, and buy their corn. Cattle-ranchers to the north and east of the Chiapas highlands—*ganaderos*—had taken over high jungle land that was promised for Indian *ejidos*—collective agricultural communities, fruits of the reforms of the 1930s and 1940s which followed the 1910 Revolution—and existing *ejidos* became concentrated in the hands of an ever smaller portion of their members. We knew about the agricultural industry with its large landowners, who wield quite a bit of power in the state. Landhungry peasants had invaded hundreds of hectares of agricultural land in the state, while the cattle-ranchers whose land was threatened muttered about their willingness to take up arms themselves.

Typically, political analysts would repeat, the Mexican government deals with such opposition in two ways: First it tries to bribe the leaders into abandoning their deviant ways, and if that fails, it tries to frighten them. Some state governors would do both at the same time. In Chiapas from the late 1970s the state governors Jorge de la Vega Domínguez (1976-78), Salomon González Blanco (1978-80), Absalón Castellanos Domínguez (1982-88) and Patrocinio González Garrido (1988-93) did

both. They sent army units into one indigenous community after another. The respect for human rights got worse than ever before. In fact, Absalón and Patrocinio presided over an army campaign that was similar to the Guatemala case of the early 1980s, including selective assassination of Indian leaders. As a result military-style weapons came in during the 1970s and 1980s, sold by Guatemalan army officers and the Guatemalan revolutionaries both to armed indigenous groups (some led by caciques) and to cattle-ranchers. At the same time Patrocinio allowed government programs to be introduced "to pay the opposition off," until the state and federal budgets fell by ninety percent during the crisis of the 1980s. Curiously, the state government facilitated the distribution of land in Chiapas' central valleys and the northern parts to loyal Indians from 1986 or so,⁷ but such distributions were often done at the same time that neighboring groups were being repressed just to demonstrate to everyone that it was better not to dispute government policies.

There is one point that needs to be stressed here: the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) came from the Lacandón lowlands and not from the highlands. Therefore, I will concentrate mainly upon the fighters coming from the Lacandón jungle and their personal grievances over Salinas' Administration. Apparently, the guerrillas received very little support on the highlands during the first weeks of the uprising, and, indeed, seen from the highlands the Zapatistas should be considered outsiders in Chiapas.⁸ Some highland communities seized the opportunity with land seizures, political demands, attempts to get PRI-mayors out of office, etcetera, but these actions represented people following their own needs, not systematic solidarity with the EZLN per se.⁹ That came only later. However, I will not neglect the obvious fact that a lot of Zapatista penetration of the highlands has been going on. In fact, there appears to be one specific area around Simojovel that had been Zapatista long before the uprising, see the map on page 78.¹⁰

The Zapatista Rebellion should be seen as a modern, indigenous and rural uprising. I have divided the chapter in three sections to discuss its background and explain these characteristics. First there is the struggle for the land. This makes the uprising 'rural.' Second, there is the struggle for greater political autonomy. This makes the uprising 'indigenous.' Third, there is the utopian vision—expressed by most Zapatistas in interviews with Mexican and foreign journalists as well as in their texts. This makes it 'modern' uprising. And, because they call themselves 'a product of 500 years of struggle,' some historical digging has to be done.

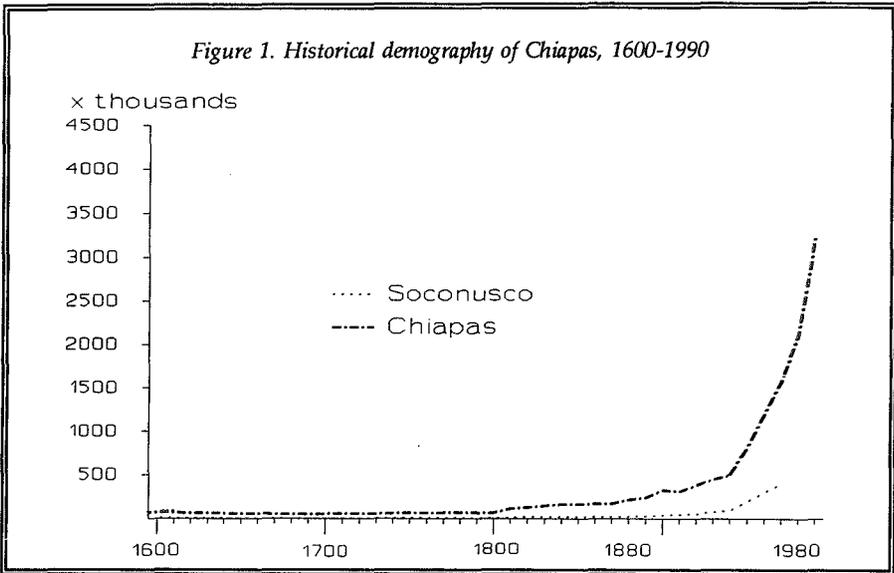
Land

The unequal distribution of land has long been viewed as the main reason for peasants to revolt: the *agrarian question*.¹¹ It has generally been assumed that in Latin America in general and in Mexico in particular an unequal distribution of land has been the historical reality since the Spanish conquest of the early sixteenth century. Recent research has

documented a more complex development of ownership and possession of land throughout Mexican history in general. Few of the traditional generalizations are accepted by historians today. In fact, by now it is generally recognised that colonial rule confirmed important characteristics from the period immediately prior to the conquest.

Although a transposition of the Central Mexican experience may have problems, the history of *mercedes*, *composiciones* and *fundo legal* so characteristic for the *pueblos* of Central Mexico seems to be shared by Chiapas and other Guatemalan regions. However, I have to be prudent. Any long term view of developments in Chiapas runs up against problems, because very little research has been carried out for the region.¹² In fact, *pueblo* landownership continued to be the rule in some way or another and colonial township titles in Chiapas were sometimes officially re-entitled in the early republican years. By the mid-1840s, some towns had taken advantage to entitle all their major tracts.¹³ Later in the nineteenth century, however, after the Liberals issued the *desamortización* of 'communal' lands into private property, lands required to be held individually could be purchased piecemeal from impoverished Indians. The *desamortización* became an issue in that period and the impression occurs that the land was bought by *ladino* outsiders who consolidated their holdings. According to anthropologist Jan Rus, in the Maya areas of the state little—if any?—traditional *pueblo* land was alienated. This is in line with findings for other Mexican regions.¹⁴ However, what was alienated through sale were the *terrenos baldíos*—unused lands—between the Indian *pueblos*. This means that the developments in Chiapas did not culminate in the *agrarian question* before the last decades of the nineteenth century. But since then, all over Mexico, including Chiapas, conflicts over land have increased dramatically because the Indians faced growing shortages of land.

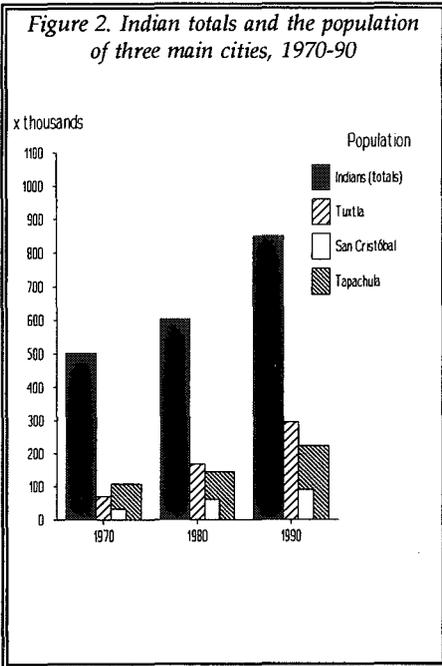
One of the main causes of the shortage of land should be found in population growth. After decades of decrease, by the end of the eighteenth century the population of Chiapas started to grow again. During the nineteenth century and especially the twentieth century it skyrocketed, see Figure 1.¹⁵ Without any economic adaptation, this kind of population growth must have had strong adverse effects upon the agricultural economy of the state, causing the subdivision and fragmentation of farms, underemployment and unemployment, falling real wages and falling crop yields.¹⁶ Also, this movement causes usually a decline in the number of livestock that can be kept because of a general increase in arable land at the expense of grazing land. The last feature, however, cannot be found in Chiapas, because powerful landlords in the tropical lowlands—traditional cattle-economies—and the *caciques* of the highlands impeded the cultivation of their grazing lands.¹⁷ In fact, they even expanded their flocks, causing a doubling or more of the number of heads within a few decades prior to the 1980s. It had two important consequences. First, the arable land needed for a growing population was thus further reduced. Second, the laborers were driven off the lands



and try their luck in the jungle area as colonists. Especially in a section called Las Cañadas most of the settlers came from former agricultural *fincas*.

The consequences will be clear. If we think of the municipal borders as a fence, the peasant population 'ran up to it' during the 1960s or 1970s and started to 'jump over it' in search for land.

All available figures indicate that by 1990 the number of peasants in Chiapas had clearly out-numbered the surface that can be used for agricultural purposes. It could inspire us to a chilling diagnosis of imminent calamity, including political violence.¹⁸ The subdivision of land inside the 'fence' affected subsistence needs severely and the peasants that 'jumped over the fence' migrated to areas like the Lacandón jungle or to cities like Tuxtla and San Cristóbal (see Figure 2 for an impression), or they invaded the lands of great estates. On the other hand, it is well-known that population growth could have positive consequences for the state's econo-



my.¹⁹ Evidence suggests that it did spur economic development in the past in several regions of the world, enforcing adaptations in land use intensity and changes in the implements used. Sometimes, to cope with the problems of unemployment, industrialization would set in. And indeed, in most Chiapas communities agriculture gave way to alternative sources of income like industry and transport.

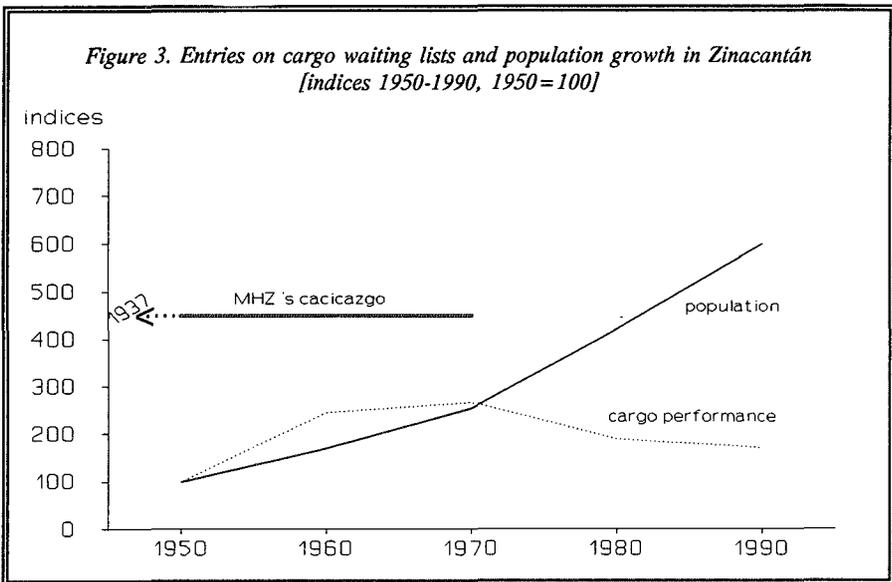
This process is described in full detail by Frank Cancian in his recent book.²⁰ In the 1960s Zinacantecos were corn farmers—they made milpa. Only the young and the poor took wages from others on a regular basis. But in the 1980s many Zinacantecos seeded no corn at all. Most men were involved in wage work all over the state (as renters on lowland cattle and corn estates, oil-industry), commerce, government jobs, and various other economic activities like trucking. In just two decades cash income and cash expenditures had increased because fewer and fewer men were farming corn. In fact, many became dependent on wage work, some as ‘proletarians’ the majority as ‘semi-proletarians.’ A classical conclusion can be drawn: the rich got richer while many others stayed poor.

Cancian labelled it ‘the decline of community’ and thought world-market forces had been at its root. He suggested that the impact of the expanding world capitalist system changed the rural peasant community. Judging his own data, I think we should disagree. Indeed, the period of ‘community’—the 1950s and 1960s—was characterised by close control of internal conflict by the village elite. During their period of control and afterwards, internal stratification was reproduced. Cancian acknowledges that *“the new rich are the sons of the old rich, and the new poor are the sons of the old poor.”* The participation or willingness to participate in ‘community government’—the so-called cargo-system—was great. However, Rus points to the close relationship between local government and the revolutionary regime in Mexico City. By creating new offices to deal with labor and agrarian matters and favoring at the same time mostly young men from the communities to occupy these key positions, by the mid-1950s, *“what anthropologists were just beginning to describe as ‘closed corporate communities’ had in fact become ‘institutionalized revolutionary communities’ harnessed to the state.”*²¹ The *cacicazgo-system* had recreated itself, and once again in close relationship with national state policies.

In Zinacantán, from the 1940s onward Mariano Hernández Zárate (MZH), a local indigenous cacique, controlled much of what happened in this respect. He controlled the redistribution of sources in the township, especially land. His influence weakened as he grew old in the 1960s and open trouble began in 1976 when one person was named PRI candidate for mayor against the will of others. Internal splits occurred, tax collection for fiestas broke down and there were fights, jailings and continuous disputes over the control of the town hall. The willingness to accept cargos decreased rapidly, see Figure 3 (note the congruency with the

period of the 'MHZ'S CACICAZGO'*). Cancian acknowledges that the events may be seen "as a struggle to fill the power vacuum left by the demise of Mariano Hernández Zárate."²² In short, population growth had caused alternative employment possibilities and this, I think, decreased the need to accept cargos. I suggest the 'subordinates' had formerly accepted to 'please' the cacique in exchange for access to the resources—especially the distribution of land which the cacique had controlled in the town for three decades. The 'decline of community' was in fact the 'crisis of traditional community control,' a crisis in the basic unit of indigenous social organization and state control. It was the demise of personal power bonds within the community after the death of the *patrón*, which in itself had little to do with the forces of the world-market.

Besides such changes in economic life, intensification of agricultural



resources hardly took place in Chiapas. First, landowners impeded the expansion of peasant agriculture on their lands. Second, the agricultural sector was too poor. Agriculture was generally practiced by rainfed, shifting cultivation. According to recent data about one million persons occupy a little over three million hectares of land, of which only about forty percent is classified as good for agricultural use.²³ Though some intensification took place only one new profitable cash crop could root: coffee.

Can peasants create an economic *take-off* purely by themselves? Sure.

* Data in Figure 3 from Cancian, *Decline of Community*, Table B.2 pp. 218-219 (population), Table D.2 pp. 235-236 (cargos), with 1950=1952, 1960=1961, 1970= 1971, and 1980=1980; see also pp. 87ff.

It was done in several European regions, for example, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and without any interference from outside. But in our time the world economy had such an impact and the pace of population growth has been so high that the solution for developing a modernizing sector must include state intervention and large scale financing. The infrastructural and economic assistance for highland Chiapas was hindered by a strong lack of interest from the Mexican government and private capital. In 1988 only one tenth of the *ejidos* reported to have paved roads to their community center. Electricity and drinking water were absent in half of the ejido communities. Harvey calculates that during the period 1985-89 only twenty-two percent of the *ejidatarios* and communal agriculturalists had access to a yearly credit. The number even fell in 1990 to some sixteen percent and not more than six percent of producers received credit for machinery in 1985-90.²⁴

During the 1980s, in the tropical lowlands private capital developed commercial enterprises to produce soy beans, peanuts, sorghum, tobacco, bananas, cacao and sugar in greater amounts than before. The production of meat quadruppled in just a decade. But the market for coffee collapsed. The Instituto Nacional Mexicano del Cafe INMECAFE, established in 1958, had supported the expansion of peasant and farmer cultivated coffee exports during the 1970s. With the all-over economic crisis of the late 1980s the position of this state agency declined. Its share in the market fell from about forty percent in the early 1980s to less than ten percent at the end of the decade. Privatization during the Salinas government (1988-94) undermined INMECAFE's position even further. In June 1989 the International Coffee Organization failed to agree on production quotas and the world price fell by fifty percent. In the end, as Harvey shows, both productivity and total output in the sector fell strongly between 1989 and 1993. Small producers suffered a seventy percent drop in income without much possibility of climbing out of their debts and poverty.

We should realise that Chiapas is Mexico's principal coffee producing state: some seventy thousand of the 190 thousand coffee growers in the country live in Chiapas, and seventeen thousand alone in the Lacandón Jungle. This last figure is remarkable and crucial for our theme. Land reforms might have brought some relief, but it is well-known that in Chiapas the 'Revolution passed by.'²⁵ Local elites and the central government in Mexico City allied to pacify the rural areas of the state without imposing agrarian reform. Even during the Cárdenas presidency (1934-40), peasants received generally marginal land of low productivity. The redistribution of land in the state was based on the colonization of unused areas. The government encouraged the landless peasants to colonize what was then seen as a promising agricultural frontier: the forest region of the Lacandón Selva. Already by 1970 an estimated 100,000 migrants had settled in the area. These settlers came as the losers of the agrarian struggle, affirms Mexican sociologist Luis Hernández,²⁶ as people who had been unable to recover land from large land-

owners or to take over the towns of origin from the caciques. They had undertaken a real exodus, also obeying to the unspoken but clear message: "*try your luck in the jungle.*" There they joined the migrants from the haciendas who had turned into cattle-producers.

It could have worked well. If intensification of agricultural techniques and enterprises hardly is possible and political change to impose land reforms do not bring sufficient room to cope with population growth, migration usually offers the way out. Indeed, during most of the nineteenth century migration from the central highlands to the Mexican West and North brought considerable overall relief.²⁷ And in the time under review for Chiapas, peasants migrated away from the highlands, into the tropical lowlands and into the Lacandón Selva. There, they started to clear the fields in a kind of pioneering agricultural communities. It was their Promised Land, the only future landless migrants from the highlands felt they had.

But soon the jungle was filled up. The colonists became enmeshed in constant struggles, competing for space with the timber industry and even with one another. Slash and burn farming deforested the jungle and degraded its fragile soils. Then, entrance to the Promised Land was cut off as the result of two government decrees. One decree was issued to protect the Lacandón Selva from further exploitation and destruction. The other decree consisted of the much debated revision of Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution early 1992.²⁸ Both decrees were issued by the Salinas government. The first was intended to create an ecological haven for rainforest flora and fauna. It obstructed the younger peasants in the jungle—children of the first colonists—from finding new opportunities for agriculture near their parent's homes. The second aimed to 'modernize' Mexican agriculture and abolish the ejido-system of collective agriculture. In the eyes of Salinas' technocrats, by the end of the twentieth century the ejido was considered an anachronism, impeding economic progress in the countryside. Here then, indeed, is an important link to world-market developments and Salinas' claim on entering the First World. The withdrawal of credits was a deliberate choice of the Salinas' Administration. We can label this 'the collapse of economic support for the peasants.'

The need for a solution to the problem could not have been more acute. The pressures were compounded mainly by one external and two internal factors. The drop in international coffee prices has been mentioned. Equally important was the deterioration of maize yields after decades of uncontrolled expansion into the jungle. This resulted in the reduction in slash-and-burn farming cycles from thirty to two years.²⁹ Thirdly, because the Article 27 had encompassed the possibility of a fruitful claim on latifundio-lands for redistribution among peasants, its modification cut off peasant expansion to the areas bordering the Lacandón Selva, where a considerable number of the latifundios in Chiapas could be found. The landless peasants found themselves without much

future. Not that their petitions had always been answered. Some villagers from the jungle area had pressed their demand for expansion of their ejido for more than a decade without any quick solution. One villager stated:

"But they always lied to us. They would tell us to go home and get a certificate of this or that and then come back on such-and-such a date. So we would go back on the appointed date, and they would say, 'Oh, no, El Señor isn't here, he had to leave, come back another day.' And we would come home again, thinking, Well, it couldn't be, and now we've spent our compañeros' money on the trip. And then the government changed Article 27, and now we can't file a claim on that land anymore, and we'll never be able to take out a loan, because the interest rates are very high, and if we don't pay our debts on time the bank can take the land we have away from us. The end of Article 27 was what made us decide we'd had enough."³⁰

Salinas closed a door that always had stood open. In January 1994 the Zapatistas would demand the reparation of Article 27. They attacked the cattle producers' offices and occupied the town of Ocosingo in the center of the latifundista-area. It was their hope to reopen the entrance to this last resort for the landless.

Political Rights

This struggle makes the Zapatista movement also a political one. In their first *Declaration from the Lacandón Jungle*, dated December 1993,³¹ they stated that the armed attack was above all a desperate way of making themselves heard. The Zapatista military leader, the ski-masked *subcomandante* Marcos, stated that armed struggle only came "*after trying everything else.*" Patrocinio's terror was a major factor. They could get a hearing with the right authorities in the national capital, a stop to the repression remained within reach, but with Patrocinio presiding over the Interior this hope was lost. The Zapatistas quoted Article 39 of the Mexican Constitution: "*The people have, at all times, the inalienable right to alter or modify their form of government.*" Remarkably, this statement goes back to John Locke's philosophy on government, dated 1690, written after the English Revolution of 1688.³²

But there is more to it: the history of "*500 years of struggle*" and some three hundred years of political autonomy. For example, in Anáhuac the indigenous townships were able to maintain a strong (semi-) autonomous position throughout the colonial period, with political and juridical self-government. This autonomy was based on the administrative principle of the two republics, the *república de españoles* and the *república de indios*. The pueblos in Anáhuac (central Mexico) were controlled by caciques who served as *gobernadores* and *alcaldes* of a semi-autonomous juro-political unit called the *pueblo de indios*. These caciques belonged to a group of 'nobles' who had profitted from the collapse of traditional cacicazgos in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Lower nobles, the *principales* and caciques of lesser importance, recreated the traditional cacicazgo within Spanish legal requirements.³³ This *nouveaux noblesse* called itself *caciques y principales*. However, it is not clear to what extent the *principales* in Chiapas, who came into power after the fall of traditional *caciques* there as well, performed the same role. Historian Kevin Gosner briefed me about his research and pointed to the control of the Dominican order in Chiapas.

However, some parallels can be drawn. Until more research will be published we seem to have to line up with the statements of anthropology. For example, George Collier states that “[t]here is good evidence that Indians in highland Chiapas took advantage of [their] special status in a manner similar to that of Indians elsewhere in Mexico.” In fact, “[a]rchives of court litigation show that, time and again through the colonial period, Tzotzil and Tzeltal groups could articulate their ethnic status into sanctions and action on their behalf against colonist exploiters and even clerics.”³⁴ In much the same way I interpret Gosner’s work on the *repartimiento*-trade. He describes governmental practices which I recognize as similar to Anáhuac’s, especially the historical circumstances after 1690 when in Chiapas the authority to collect tribute was given to the *alcalde mayor*. The pueblos were assessed as one body, with the native *justicias* or governors responsible for the collection of tribute goods. Precisely as in Anáhuac, the *repartimiento*-trade was executed by these *justicias*—described by Gosner as *alcaldes*, *gobernadores* or caciques—acting as middlemen. Gosner notes that Spanish officials “preferred to coopt local civil authorities rather than strong-arm them” with the obvious result that “many caciques and [Indian] *alcaldes* in Chiapas were able to use the more intensive production of cash crops to enhance their rank and status.”³⁵ However, among the highland Tzeltal, where the *repartimiento*-trade was less profitable for traders and middlemen, the local caciques complained bitterly of their personal poverty. Nevertheless, rich or poor, the caciques here performed the same role as their counterparts in Anáhuac; they controlled crucial aspects of local government much the same way. This brings me to conclude that also in Chiapas the separate institution of the *república de indios* gave the indigenous groups a kind of ‘privileged position’ that should be labelled (semi-)autonomous (see also the appendix).

Although their privileges were lost during the nineteenth century, the so-called *gobierno indígena* in Chiapas, mainly based upon Church cargos and *cofradía*-tasks—described over and over again by anthropologists—, was a well-arranged alternative for the caciques. This kept the spirit of autonomy alive for more than a century after the abolition of the *repúblicas*. Even in the twentieth century the legal system had kept its relative, ‘colonial’ autonomy. Persons involved in a quarrel had various options, from hamlet hearings for settling minor disputes, through informal but legally recognized hearings at the town hall, to the formal courts of the Mexican state government. Nevertheless, like in colonial times, the indigenous community of Chiapas should not be viewed as a ‘closed’ autonomous community operating outside the

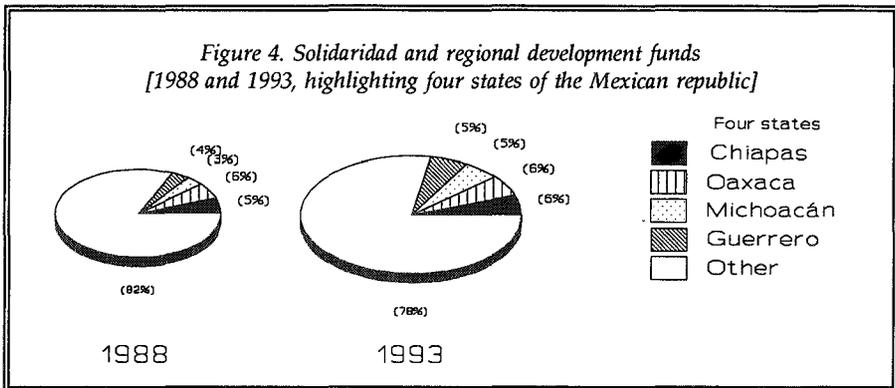
wider framework of the national state, for a place like Zinacantan is only a restricted social field, able to appear as it does because of its embedded position. "*Zinacanteco law will survive as a system apart from Mexican law,*" writes Jane Collier, "*only so long as Indians continue to use native ideas of cosmic order to justify procedures and outcomes.*"³⁶ Because the conceptions of cosmic order are subject to change, precisely in a period of extreme population growth and economic change, the endurance of the separate law system is presently at stake.³⁷

The position of the cacique in his function as governor or any other cargo is a typical case of 'reciprocal dominance,'³⁸ personalized and concrete relationships of authority and power, rooted in customary law—or sometimes written down—that entailed reciprocal obligations. Domination was understood concretely, as control over land, over labor, over the local economy, or legal courts. Although each of these authorities included the right to extract certain surpluses, like rents, dues, labor services, or the right to command obedience and loyalty from those under a jurisdiction, as Robisheaux affirms, "*lords had always to provide protection in exchange for these rights, or their authority could be called into question.*"³⁹ The legitimacy of reciprocal dominance is embodied in specific historical symbolic public forms and discourses; thus in acts as well as speech. Where legitimacy broke down—as in cases of population growth when the 'lords' could no longer provide a clear distribution of resources—the subjects developed a discourse of resistance based on these same historical forms and discourses, but this time expressed in rumours, in unflattering folktales and stories about the lords, in 'upside-down' festivities like carnival, and, eventually, in open, violent rebellion. Disregard of power structures or deviant behaviour were other expressions.

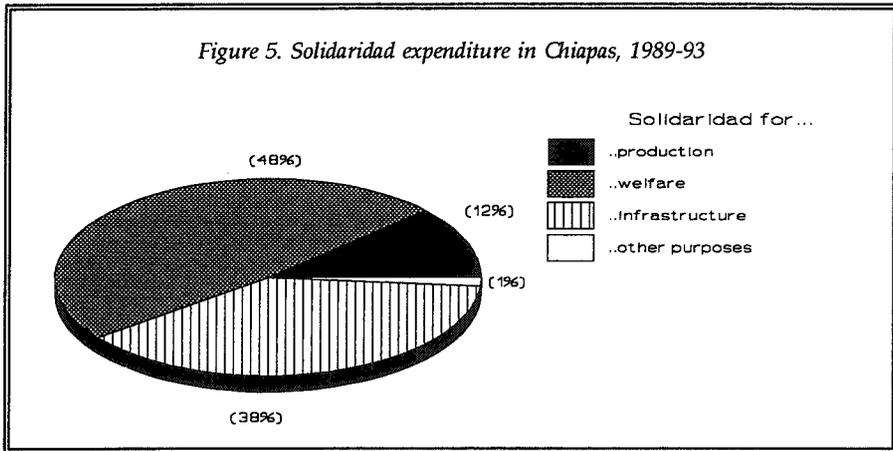
This problem brings me to the diminishing power of the traditional caciques in the communities. For decades, perhaps for centuries the traditional order was controlled by the caciques. In 1976, Vogt stated that civil officials in Zinacantán—who served three-year terms—were selected at annual political meetings attended by the important caciques of the township. They became PRI officials and controlled the distribution of ejido lands and had performed as mayors before, some were schoolteachers.⁴⁰ The officials collected money for and supervised construction of public works, carried out a few ritual functions, appointed committees to organize for *fiestas* and settled disputes of any kind. They could profit from their position. In about the same period Jane Collier concluded: "*Zinacanteco ideas of cosmic order survive in the modern world because the present structure of the regional political system encourages ambitious Indians to convert wealth and expertise in handling Mexican officials into collecting Indian followers.*"⁴¹ But, as Cancian found out, when political factionalism became intense in the late 1970s, the caciques' authority—he speaks of 'elders'—was gradually undermined.⁴² Apparently, in the past decades the traditional cargo system of the Zinacanteco caciques was lost as alternative forms of employment broke the link be-

tween the control of resources and participation in 'community.' Only, in some places, like Chamula and Chalchihuitán, did caciques maintain their traditional position, though with violence and aggression toward deviant subordinates. This drove many inhabitants to escape cacique-power, particular into the Lacandón jungle. Or they were sent away, like the members of the protestant minorities.

In fact, protestantism could easily be seen as political protest against *caciquismo*, since loyalty to 'community' and the traditional cargo-system was expressed by Catholicism and traditional rituals presided and sponsored by the caciques. Until very recently the alliance between the PRI and local Indian elites has been highly effective. It has enabled a number of municipalities in the highlands to maintain a strong Indian identity and semi-autonomy from the national government. Anthropologist Gary Gossen affirms that these "side benefits of the cacique system have [in January 1994] created the apparent paradox of some Chiapas Indian communities asking the Mexican army for protection from Indian insurgents."⁴³



Nevertheless, poverty increased during the late 1980s. Obviously, seen from a *moral economy* point of view (*buen gobierno*), something had to be done. The ruling elites in the indigenous parts of the country were in desperate need of government programs to support their subordinates and hold on to their legitimacy. In the late 1980s the Salinas Administration announced the National Solidarity Program (PRONASOL, better known as *Solidaridad*) to 'combat rural poverty.' *Solidaridad* had a significant, though not extraordinary budget: from \$547 million pesos in 1989 to \$2.5 billion in 1993. There is little doubt that *Solidaridad* functioned as a political agenda to generate greater support among peasants and the poor for the government. It served its purpose for the ruling powers in Chiapas, small though its contribution was (see Figure 4).⁴⁴ Most money was invested in schools and municipal funds, basically to construct assembly halls and to improve some roads (see the distribution of the budget illustrated by Figure 5, on next page).⁴⁵ These funds were funnelled to the caciques once again ('welfare' and 'infrastructure'



in Figure 5), with no particular link to any type of educational, cultural, economic or social agenda. Economist Julio Moguel concludes:

*"The program has a clear political-clientelistic character. [...] The formation of the committees mostly has to do with political-electoral necessities rather than any specific anti-poverty requirements."*⁴⁶

But it did not have any economic impact beyond comparable programs provided as early as 1982, and it would not be sufficient to allow the caciques to regain control of their clients.⁴⁷

In the colonists' communities of the Lacandón, *Solidaridad* fueled anti-caciquismo even further. The EZLN *subcomandante* Marcos expressed their feelings most clearly:

*"Pronasol has the mentality of a son of a bitch that sees the indigenous people as children, as ill-bred children. Instead of giving his kids a spanking like they deserve, the father—who is so understanding and generous—is going to give them candy after getting them to promise not to misbehave again, right? A dictator, then, a dictatorship."*⁴⁸

The *Solidaridad*-program was conceived as humiliation and failed to curtail poverty in Chiapas. Of the State's three million people, in 1992, two-thirds were registered as without education; eighty percent earned way below the official minimum salary. Half of the population lived in houses with mud floors and no drainage, toilets or water. About thirty percent of the people younger than fifteen years could not read and write. Two thirds of the population lived in very small communities with less than five thousand inhabitants.

In his address to the Conference of Mexican and North American Historians in Mexico City, autumn 1994, Rus made a very astute observation about the influence of the 'new communities' in Chiapas; the 'new communities' being founded by migrants—economic and political refugees—in the jungle areas as well as in the major cities and *ladino* towns of Chiapas. These migrants have acquired their new status without having had to forego their native identities (e.g. languages).

Traditional caciques had no influence on these groups and were even looked upon as state-linked oppressors. As time has gone on, affirms Rus, a pan-Maya ethnicity seems to have been adopted, as the basis of higher levels of organization and opposition to the *PRI-istas*. After a few decades every traditional community has former members who live in the 'new communities' at the edge of the cities and in the jungle, with the result that there is probably not a family in the highlands that does not have relatives participating in 'new' organizations. All of these people are in contact with each other, exchanging information and ideas. In fact, because most traditional communities are conflict ridden—fraught, as indicated before, with factionalism in which parties contend for the power to designate who belongs to the community and what are its traditions and customs—the political prospects before the 'new communities' sound more promising.⁴⁹

Anti-caciquismo opened the possibility for alternative strategies. One of these—consisting in fact of the major option—came from other indigenous groups in Latin America, in countries where similar processes of political and social change were halted by the recognition of separate, autonomous indigenous enclaves. In Colombia the state recreated recently, as I see it, the system of separate *repúblicas*, while in Bolivia it is on the verge of doing so.⁵⁰ Where the traditional caciques had tried to form a *gobierno indígena* inside the Mexican political system—all started as the local *PRI-istas*—the alternative strategy of indigenous self-rule offered new ways of government, even in a more democratic form. No wonder in 1994 the Zapatistas demanded the same kind of autonomy for the Mexican indigenous peoples and afterwards continued to strife for the recognition and acceptance for the fact that Mexico is a pluricultural and multiethnic society. They did so carrying heavy weaponry, because after the promotion of Patrocinio to Mexico City—to become the Secretary of *Gobernación*, the Interior—all possibilities of arranging such a program by talks were over.

The Utopian Project

In its political stance, the Zapatista movement is certainly utopian. The colonists in the Lacandón jungle fled overpopulation or the dominant rule of the caciques in the highlands looking for their Promised Land, where a traditional way of *campesino*-life could be continued. Since the 1940s the number of migrants that were anti-cacique in this area grew steadily. The bitterness about the failure of the *PRI*-government also was growing, mainly because the jungle was left outside most government programs. There was no education, few medical care, no credit facilities. Mexico's economic and social policies were incapable of mitigating this extreme poverty. "*The Zapatista rebels*," Gossen concludes,⁵¹ "*are thus Indians who have believed in Mexico's public Revolutionary rhetoric, but who now feel utterly betrayed by the nation's revised priorities.*"

One answer was offered by Bishop Ruiz.⁵² In the late 1960s he

decided to join liberation theologians by preaching a radical gospel in favor of the indigenous poor. In fact, in putting the tenets of the Medellín Conference of 1968 to work he was one of their leaders right from the beginning. Like the indigenous colonists, the Bishop saw the Lacandón forests as their promised land. He commissioned a translation of the *Book of Exodus* into Tzeltal. In October 1974 he organized an Indigenous Congress in San Cristóbal to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the birth of Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas. Furthermore, the Bishop set up a network of lay preachers, deacons in general, because there were very few priests who could minister to the area. Later on, the lay preachers became more radical and went even beyond the Bishop's policies to revolutionize the peasants' ideology. Nevertheless, the church remained the protective umbrella for indigenous groups, giving legitimacy to their demands for land and for the protection of human rights. A further rift between the state government and Bishop Ruiz developed in the years shortly before the Zapatista uprising, when the military intensified their repression.

The lay preachers in the Lacandón Selva were assisted by a group of Maoist political activists. These men and women had worked in the Mexican north (Monterrey) and in Mexico City. Some had been invited to go to North Korea for guerrilla-warfare training,⁵³ although it should be stressed that from the mid-seventies onwards the Mexican Maoists, followers of university professor Adolfo Orive Berlinguer, did not promote armed struggle any longer.⁵⁴ Instead, the Maoists spent the decade from 1974 to 1984 organizing the colonists' communities to fight the government by winning bureaucratic battles, pressing for credits, subsidies, education and land. In vain, the Lacandón became overpopulated without much relief of the poverty. Some communities sent the Maoists away during the mid-1980s (although they returned within a few years), because they had felt that a part of the Maoist-bred leadership in their own ranks had become too close to the Mexican bureaucracy, even negotiating behind their backs or 'selling them out.'⁵⁵ Other communities have had continuous contact with Orive since the late 1970s. Anyway, by the mid-1980s the Maoists had succeeded in the reorganization of local decisionmaking. Since then, small assemblies (*asambleas chicas*), consisting of some five to ten leaders, worked out proposals to the community councils. And they had built up a network of information exchange at the grassroots level all over the Lacandón area.

However, the indigenous leaders soon realised that peaceful communication with the state governor was very difficult. Peasant organizations all over Chiapas suffered from heavy repressions. State police and members of the National Peasant Confederation CNC—a PRI-linked institution—were involved in numerous attacks on these organizations. Demonstrations organized by radical unions, like the Organización Campesina Emiliano Zapata (OCEZ) or the Central Independiente de obreros Agrícolas y Campesinos (CIOAC), were violently broken up. Some lea-

ders disappeared, others were murdered. Or were shot during demonstrations. Significantly, in July 1991 a protest march by 300 Indians from the Lacandón jungle was broken up by the police in Palenque, using clubs and tear gas grenades; the peasants' leaders were arrested.

Meanwhile another group of political activists—coming from the central highlands around Mexico City—had entered the Lacandón with their own vision of a radical peasant utopia. Among them was *subcomandante* Marcos. They sought a new armed revolution and thought that the Promised Land of the Lacandón colonists was the perfect place to begin. The bureaucratic battles had not brought too many victories. The new radicals convinced the peasants that they never would: *"More than anything, it's like an aspirin; when your head aches, it doesn't cure the illness, but only relieves the pain for a little while."*⁵⁶ They offered to train the peasants in armed struggle and awaited in the Lacandón mountains near the Guatemalan border. In the beginning, few peasants showed up but during the late 1980s almost all communities had boys and young men, even women sent to the Zapatista training camps. A Clandestine Revolutionary Indian Committee (CRIC) was set up to govern the communities.

Remarkably, all these political activists could develop their projects in the Lacandón area because the Mexican government let them free to do so. Governors Absalón Castellanos and his successor Patrocinio González seemed to have had an agreement with the Guatemalan guerrilla forces—who found refuge for themselves and their families on the Mexican side of the border—not to intervene with each others interests.⁵⁷ The idea was that the Mexican army would stay out of the jungle if the guerrillas did not organize a Mexican guerrilla movement. The possibility of any operation of the Mexican army was severely restricted by the NAFTA negotiations: the Mexican government wanted to keep up the image of tranquility within its borders. The army, of course, kept remote control, and left in practice political control in the area to the Guatemalan guerrilla leaders. But in the years before the Zapatista uprising, the Mexican government began to press the refugees to return to Guatemala. Perhaps knowledge of the EZLN training camps lay at the root of this change in attitude. Anyway, after New Years Day 1994 Patrocinio declared that he felt betrayed. He was ready to send the army to the jungle area to kick the guerrillas out. President Salinas stopped him, no doubt because of fear of national and international condemnation. To avoid confusion, it should be stressed that I believe the Guatemalan guerrilla leaders had nothing to do with the EZLN uprising.

For the EZLN the year 1992 was decisive. First, the reform of Article 27 was announced. In response, the CRIC to held a secret referendum in their communities. The mestizo leadership of the EZLN was told that the indigenous fighters were ready to prepare for war. Their basic lists of demands consisted of land, health care, education, housing, work, and, above all political liberty in the form of indigenous autonomy: *"This is*

what all the Indian campesinos of Mexico want and until we get it we won't stop fighting." Second, on October 12 indigenous and peasant organizations organized a march through San Cristóbal. Thousands of peasants belonging to different groups pointed to 500 years of indigenous resistance. They toppled and ritually destroyed the symbol of the Spanish conquerors, the statue of Diego de Mazariegos. At least half of the protesters belonged to the recently founded radical union Alianza Nacional Campesina Independiente Emiliano Zapata (ANCIEZ). To many participants, this was the beginning of armed struggle. Most ANCIEZ members joined the EZLN.⁵⁸

Whether Maoists or liberated Catholics, we should not forget that indigenous militancy came on the heels of decades of varied experiments in Latin America. Reacting to overpopulation and commercial expansion into the rural areas, indigenous peoples tried to reformulate their role in society. To maintain traditional way of lives or even to control the pace of change Indians started to organize themselves as *indígenas* during the 1970s. This had not been done before. Critical also in this development of international solidarity were the 1992 commemorations of Columbus' landing in the Americas. The 500 YEARS OF RESISTANCE MOVEMENT took the vindication of demands from the hands of urban intellectuals into their own.⁵⁹

Increasingly, during the past decade the Maya speaking population of Chiapas and Guatemala started to call themselves *mayas*. In Chiapas in 1988, for example, I did not run across many locals who claimed to be *maya*. But this was changed fundamentally in 1994! To call yourself Maya has become a political statement. Revolutionary education certainly appealed to the people's desperation with a glorious past, a terrible present and a non-existent future, to anger at recent defeats and humiliation, and to a utopic desire of recovering, as I see it, the lost *república de indios* of the Spanish period. Like the Colombian Indians did.

The persistence of Maya groups in maintaining themselves in the contemporary world as a distinct ethnic group is beyond question. Their specific culture, including language, myth, dress, the 260-day calendar, the concept of co-essence and the sacred Earth, has survived until our time. Especially time continues to be calculated and interpreted according to ancient methods.⁶⁰ Most Maya still believe strongly in the fate of predictable, astrological cycles which were once designed by their Classic or even pre-Classic ancestors and in the meantime have hardly been modified. Interestingly, for some Indians of the EZLN the ancient gods appeared to be with them. According to their calendrical cycles—the so-called *Short Count* of 260 years—the year 1992 meant the end of chaos and the beginning of a new order. All signals were thought to be in their favor: the successful protests against Columbian festivities all over America and the decision to go to war to fight the Mexican government. Moreover, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Guatemalan Indian Rigoberta Menchú. According to their calculations, one of the main cycles ended on December 24, 1993. To the Zapatistas it was all

too clear: the decision to go to war at precisely that time had the support of the Gods.

The Lacandón Selva, their habitat, is also at the heart of 'Maya-land.' Anthropologist Barbara Tedlock believes that the uprooting and dispersion during the Cold War may lead to a cultural and political regrouping into an ethnic nation that transcends the boundaries of established nation-states like Mexico and Guatemala.⁶¹ No wonder a fusion took place in the Lacandón area where Mexican Tzeltals, Tzotziles, Tojolabals, Zoques and Mams, and Guatemalan Cakchiquel, Tzutuhil, Kekchi and Quiché refugees try to make a living. In the Maya diaspora to the jungle they found themselves in resistance to Western domination and control. In the next Chapter, Gossen argues that much of the traditional Maya characteristics survived in this area. These characteristics, he thinks, must not be sought in particular variants of Maya cultural identity, but, in stead, in general principles of values and conduct that all might share, be they Tzotziles, Tzeltals, Tojolabals or Zoques.

However, in the long run the Zapatistas would find it difficult to transform Mexican society in the way they are looking for. Only rarely does political ideology move Mexicans to stand shoulder to shoulder. Mostly, religion does.⁶² All towns in indigenous Mexico have a Catholic chapel of some kind. But priests do not read mass often there, not even a 'liberated' one. Protestant missionaries came instead. Whole communities split into factions, Born Again Christians in one camp, Pentecostals in another, Catholics off to the side. The chief obstacle that the Zapatistas face in organizing the peasants will be uniting men and women who disagree about God. Here the utopian stance could blind their leaders for a more plural, realistic political bond between repressed groups in the countryside.

"Irreversible, the Autonomous Community"

Curiously, in the end, the EZLN got most of what it wanted. First, President Salinas took some of the wind out of the rebellious' sails by appointing Manuel Camacho Solís—a leading figure of the PRI,⁶³ and Salinas' major political companion during much of his administration—as 'personal peace commissioner' and calling for a ceasefire just twelve days after the takeover of San Cristóbal. Camacho, EZLN/CRIC negotiators and the visionary mediator Bishop Ruiz worked out specific solutions to all but two of the Zapatistas' thirty-four demands. And this within a few weeks: the negotiations, which began on February 22, were concluded on March 2 with the publication of the 34 demands of the EZLN and 32 replies from Salinas' negotiator.⁶⁴ Camacho had realized that it was the indigenous peasants who were in charge of the CRIC and not *subcomandante* Marcos. He had turned to them and their demands directly.

The solutions included budget provisions and several administrative measures approved by the relevant government ministries. All the

demands that could be satisfied with money were quickly agreed upon. The solutions further included political and juridical autonomy as well as reforms of the state's electoral law to curtail the power of the *caciques*. But other demands did not meet an open commitment. Camacho would order an 'analysis' of the consequences of the NAFTA-agreement for the specific indigenous groups. Also a 'study' would be undertaken to break up large land holdings, considering reforms to 'constitutional articles that deal with land tenure.' In later peace-talks, during the summer of 1995, they agreed to discuss similar points.

But an eventual peace-treaty probably will not be enough to solve all the problems. Overpopulation still hangs over the country and causes visions of impending doom. Peasants were inspired by the uprising to seize more farmland than ever before. Perhaps as much as ninety thousand hectares were occupied after the seizure of San Cristóbal. The squatters have infuriated the cattle-ranchers, who have threatened to throw the squatters off their land if the government does not do something. Around twenty thousand landless Tzotziles live in San Cristóbal. Most of them were sent away from San Juan Chamula after embracing Protestantism. (But not all Chamulas in San Cristóbal are protestants.) In July 1994, conflicts ran high, erupting in a ten-minute gun battle in the streets of San Cristóbal between Chamula-militants.

The Zapatistas have pulled back to the Lacandón jungle again. The CRIC carried out an internal referendum about the agreement—called the *consulta*—which took several months because the text had to be translated into all the Maya languages and then discussed to everyone's satisfaction. "*We've been at this for years. Why rush for the sake of a few months?*" Any agreement had to be a lasting one. On June 10, 1994 the Indians rejected the agreement. According to their statement 2.11 percent of the consulted had been in favor of signing the treaty, while an Eastern European like percentage of 97.88 percent expressed to be against it. Almost everybody spoke out in favor of continued resistance (96.74 percent according to the Zapatistas). The answer to their basic list of demands was considered insufficient. The reparation of Article 27 was not negotiated, leaving the door to the promised land closed. And NAFTA was not re-negotiated, leaving the peasants in an unequal position: "*Farmers in the US have tractors and machinery, and we are planting our corn with a stick and using slash-and-burn methods.*"⁶⁵ The CRIC felt to be sent away with nothing but the *promise* of highways, hospitals, schools and political reform. The Salinas Administration was again accused of trying to impose its will by fraud, violence and repression.

During much of the Summer of 1994, the Zapatistas were still open to dialogue and proposed a National Democratic Convention to be held for the creation of a new constitution. They declared that they will not put aside their demands nor their arms until Mexico has "*democracy, freedom and justice for all.*" On October 12, now the symbolic day of '500 years of resistance,' the indigenous communities issued a Declaration of Autonomy, and proceeded to form 'regional parliamentary groups.' By

then, the initiative was taken over by a recently founded organization, the Frente Independiente de Pueblos Indios (FIPI, Independent Front of Indigenous People). To reform the Mexican Constitution, the FIPI launched one proposition after another. All around the country 'indigenous peoples' declared autonomy from Mexico City, sent PRI governments home and formed 'multi-ethnic' councils to take over.⁶⁶ Of course, after some 75 years of revolutionary governments Pandora's box is being opened. If municipalities all over Mexico group together in 'autonomous regions,' according to FIPI's wishes, then the dualistic organization of the colonial period has been recreated, adapted to modern twentieth-century democratic structures. At the same time, it is the end of the traditional *PRI-ista* project of national unity.

Despite the wider scope, I think it is more realistic that a solution will be worked out separately for Chiapas. Political autonomy and the creation of an 'indigenous jurisdiction' is only one element of this. Indeed, FIPI has worked out a proposal to constitute several 'autonomous regions' in the state, including 58 municipalities. However, the real problem in Chiapas is poverty, not political emancipation. Indeed, overpopulation demands a redistribution of the holdings of the *latifundistas*. Subsequently, credit should be given to stimulate profitable agriculture by family farms. A broad plan for regional development, including a substantial flow of resources, should be designed to reduce extreme poverty. Local organizations have to be invited to participate in the planning of all of this. The new 'regional parliamentary groups' might be the first to be so.

And, of course, population growth itself has to be slowed down. I do not belong to those who think that people in the South should be forced to restrict their familysize. After all, the increase of the African, Asian and Latin American population during the past decades has only been a *restoration* of the balance which was disturbed earlier on. Previously, about 1650, the share of Asia and Africa, for instance, was some eighty percent of the world population. Then the balance was lost because of rapid growth in Europe which coincided with industrialization there. Even today, despite the recent growth figures, the combined share of Asia and Africa is still below the 1650 level: seventy percent. The point to make here is that industrial development in Europe can be linked to increased security, education and health care. This has stimulate people *voluntary* to reduce the birth rate. Economist Amartya Sen stated recently:

"There can be little doubt that economic and social development, in general, has been associated with major reductions in birth rates and the emergence of smaller families as the norm."⁶⁷

In short, population growth should be halted by increasing security, education and health care. This is precisely what the Zapatistas demanded. But, of course, it will be a long term remedy. No doubt, population will double again if any reforms could begin to affect the reproductive behavior of the people.

The Zapatista movement, limited though it originally was to the specific situation in the Lacandón jungle, has made national impact in Mexico. It is one of the most successful utopian movements ever.⁶⁸ The regional forces that are proposing social, economic and political rehabilitation in all of the Mexican republic are no longer based in the cities only—as was previously thought—but include the indigenous CRIC of the Lacandón jungle and the peasant and popular organizations with their own bases of development elsewhere in Mexico. A wave of national joy and solidarity at their appearance has given the Zapatistas one of their primary positions. This impact is illustrated by a recent testimony of an Indian scribe, a member of the indigenous elite (caciques) of the township of Chilchota in Michoacán, who stated somewhat crestfallen, that before the events in Chiapas the commoners of his town resigned themselves to the rule of the caciques. *"They knew that they needed more attention to their demands,"* he said, *"but they stayed cool."* After the revolt everything was changed. They wished to change the fate of their poor life and they wanted this fast. *"And now we [the ruling elite] are really concerned, because they stand firm to reach their goal anyhow."*⁶⁹ Another illustration comes from Duncan Earle, who quotes an Indian from Tenejapa, called Xun Mesa. Mesa, president of one of the numerous new indigenous organizations in Chiapas, gave a lecture in Austin Texas and answered a question about the EZLN identity:

*"No, we do not know who they are. They came, made their list of demands and then they left. But we are with them because those demands are ours too. It is why I am here now. Without them, we would not have a voice."*⁷⁰

In short, after the Zapatista uprising, Indian social identity and political stance has shifted from the prior localist perspective to a new national and pan-Indian identity, forged from the mixing of the indigenous.

Of course, in this change of attitude, Marcos' role was a key. He—a *ladino* and *kaxlán*—wrote letters to the newspaper *La Jornada*—discussing about every topic he wished to—talked with all journalists he wanted and within a few weeks he had become a national hero. He pleased the intellectuals with his ability to speak with them on equal terms. He answered Francis Fukuyama's *End of History*-thesis, which suggested that after the fall of the Soviet Empire the time for socialist experiments is over. He communicated internationally through the E-MAIL INTERNET, which proved to be a good way of escaping from the control executed by the Mexican government of the national media. Within a few hours after the takeover of San Cristóbal, computer screens around the world sparked with news of it. By January 3, the *subcomandante* himself was on-line. According to Deedee Halleck,⁷¹ he became the first super hero of the INTERNET. His television interviews also made him a public figure: I even found out that he was extremely popular with women, who sought to marry him. To some Indians, Marcos was a messenger of the gods. They said he escaped from *ladino* military groups by transforming himself into a cat, or even into an eagle and fly away. However, let us

not forget that all this happened at the same time shaman from five Maya groups in Chiapas climbed the steps of the Temple of Inscriptions at Palenque to set up a sacred shrine with multi-colored candles, copal incense, and wild plants. They prayed to Lord Pacal (entombed there in A.D. 683) for peace and 'recognition.' They saw their rituals on the Temple as the beginning of the Sixth Sun, the new era of the *pueblos de indios*.

Despite the forces of the world-market and NAFTA, some of the decisive actors in Mexico's rural transition process will be internal rather than external. The 'decline of community' seems to be a 'decline of cacique-power,' the poor Indians are now demanding a *real* dialogue. This has had international appeal as well. The indigenous phoenix is far more serious than most observers imagined after the events in San Cristóbal. The EZLN received displays of solidarity and sympathy from indigenous peoples in Chile, the Andean countries, Argentina, Canada, the US and Central America. However, nothing has been concluded seriously yet. I will not end with the impression that we should be so enthusiastic and optimistic from the *indígena* perspective. The Zapatistas could still be wiped out. In fact, on February 9, 1995, President Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León—who during the first two months of his administration experienced a devaluation, two cabinet reshuffles and an international bail-out—issued warrants for the arrest of the leading Zapatistas and sent in the army to recover a good part of the territory controlled by the EZLN. But Zedillo's vacillating policy in Chiapas failed. His hard line was soon tempered with a series of conciliatory moves. The military avoided fighting with the guerrillas and agreed to solve the conflict politically. After the attacks, the main thing was that the EZLN will not be able to strike back again.

In March, peace-talks began afresh, the warrants were cancelled and the necessary measures were taken to guarantee the free transit of Zapatista leaders and negotiators. The federal government and that of the state of Chiapas offered guarantees for the return to their place of origin of all Zapatistas and indigenous refugees. The talks between representatives of the Zedillo Administration and the Zapatistas lasted most of the spring and the summer of 1995, and took place in the Tzotzil town of San Andrés Larrainzar. After the first round of peace-talks the EZLN signed an agreement on indigenous rights. The next round of talks lasted most of 1996. Both sides were unhappy with progress but refused to break off the negotiations. However, despite difficulties, optimism prevails. Even the projected separate status of *comunidades indígenas* could work out positively for the PRI if this status is granted to the communities individually and the power of the caciques will be unbroken. The PRI has proven to be brilliant in absorbing oppositional groups and themes. It might do so again. Nevertheless, for the first time in several decades, the Indians' organizations are back on the political scene and this with some utopian projects. The EZLN had already achieved its main goals: Marcos has driven home to Mexicans that they

must take account of Indian culture and sensibilities if they want to build a modern political system. His accomplishment brought him to conclude:

*"I believe the fallacious notion of the end of history has finally been destroyed."*⁷²

Endnotes

1. My reading of the newspapers and review articles resulted in my book *Alweer die Indianen*. Full references of all statements and 'facts' presented in this essay are given in this book. After its publication I received Neil Harvey's essay *Rebellion in Chiapas* (with additional essays by Luis Hernández Navarro and Jeffrey W. Rubin). Also, Barkin, "Specter"; Moguel, "Salinas' Failed War"; G.A. Collier, "Background"; Aubry, "Lenta acumulación de fuerzas"; Rus, "Jelavem Skotol Balamil."; and a special issue of *Cultural Survival Quarterly*, 18:1 (1994), with short essays by R. Nigh, G.A. Collier, G.H. Gossen, D. Earle, J.D. Nations, E.Z. Vogt, and F. Cancian & P. Brown. All data concerning the Zapatista Revolt come from the daily newspaper *La Jornada*, from some other daily newspapers like *Excelsior*, *El Periódico de la Vida Nacional*, and above all *El Financiero* and *UnoMásUno*. Also the new *Reforma*, *Corazón de México* offered news, as well as other publications like the weekly *Proceso*, or the review *Nexos*. *Sociedad, Ciencia, Literatura*. Smaller reviews with articles were *Época* and *Memoria*. From the world of the indigenists were *Ce-Acatl*, *Revista de la Cultura de Anáhuac* and *Ojarasca*. *Ojarasca* was particularly useful, as was *La Jornada*, which reserved for weeks in a row about a third of its pages to the rebellion. Furthermore, one book served as a source, written by the journalist (*Época*) Romero Jacobo, *Altos de Chiapas*.

2. True this conviction might be, its basic historical foundation is not in line anymore with recent interpretations of the Mexican Revolution or the colonial past. For a summary of this paradox, see the essays and references in Pansters & Ouweneel (eds.), *Region, State and Capitalism in Mexico*; Ouweneel & Miller (eds.), *Indian Community of Colonial Mexico*; and, Ouweneel, "What Was Behind Mexico's Peasant Revolution?"

3. This is a statement published in several journals, books and articles.

4. Quote from *Mexico and Nafta Report*, RM-94-01 (1994), "Oops," p. 5.

5. Quote from Bishop Ruiz interviewed by *The Times*, January 7 1994, "Overseas News," p. 9.

6. Harvey, *Rebellion in Chiapas*; also the essays in *NACLA Report of the Americas* 28:1 (1994), pp. 17-51 ("Mexico Out of Balance").

7. Information provided by Jan Rus in one of his letters to me.

8. See several issues of *La Jornada* from January 1994; full references in Ouweneel, *Alweer die Indianen*. This is a point some observers missed: they picture the Zapatista rebellion as a 'typical' Chiapas case in general.

9. See the message anthropologist Mike Salovesh of Northern Illinois University sent around via E-MAIL INTERNET: MULTIPLE RECIPIENTS OF LIST on the Chiapas rebellion, May 11, 1994.

10. Personal communication of Jan de Vos.

11. For one way of argumentation, see De Janvry, *Agrarian Question*.

12. G.A. Collier, *Fields of the Tzotzil*, pp. 138-154; Wasserstrom, *Class and Society*; Gosner, "Tribute, Labor, and Markets."

13. G.A. Collier, *Fields of the Tzotzil*, pp. 143-144.

14. On Chiapas, I was once again informed by Jan Rus. On central Mexico, see Schenk, "Desamortización"; Halverhout, "Macht van de cacique."

15. Based on the figures collected in De Vos, *Vivir en frontera*, Cuadro 3, p. 62; see also De la Peña, *Chiapas económico*, pp. 211-212 (1600-1940); and, Rus, "Jelavem'," p. 24, CUADRO 1 (1970-90).

16. This is critical. As is well-known, historically population pressure has led to innovations which caused yields to rise not fall. The yields fell because of overexploitation and loss of soil nutrients.

17. I use the word *cacique* in the colonial form, because I believe that the *ladinos* and current Indian political bosses who are called *caciques* nowadays, mostly pejoratively, recreate the traditional inheritance of the colonial power structure.

18. See for example, Hardin, *Living Within Limits*. Curiously, there was no large-scale out-migration as in El Salvador to El Norte, e.g. the US. The peasants had no means for travelling *and* they were convinced that more radical solutions could be found.

19. For an overview, Grigg, *Dynamics of Agricultural Change*; also, Sen, "Population."

20. Cancian, *Decline of Community*. See also the illustrative work of George Collier, "Seeking Food," and "Reforms."

21. Rus, "'Comunidad Revolucionaria Institucional'," p. 267.

22. Previous quote from Cancian's book, p. 193. Wasserstrom, *Class and Society*, p. 173.

23. Harvey, *Rebellion in Chiapas*, p. 7.

24. Harvey, *Rebellion in Chiapas*, pp. 7-17.

25. See for example Reyes Ramos, *Reparto de tierras*.

26. Hernández Navarro, "Chiapas Uprising."

27. Ouweneel, "What Was Behind Mexico's Peasant Revolution?"

28. It is said to be designed by technocrat Luis Tellez and anthropologist Arturo Warman, since 1994 both on high posts in the Zedillo Administration.

29. Hernández Navarro, "Chiapas Uprising," p. 51.

30. Guillermprieto, "Letter From Mexico," p. 54. On this topic also, Benjamin, *Rich Land*, pp. 95-143, 223-243. Collier, "Reforms," p. 119, makes some interesting observations on the effect of the Reforms of the Agrarian Code:

"Thus, I see the revisions of Article 27 more as a modernization of the agrarian code to conform to realities of agrarian productive relations already to be found in the peasant sector than as a change that will inaugurate unprecedented consolidation and capitalization of rural production or new despoliation of peasants of their resources. I think, rather, the changes in the code will affirm and legitimate differentiation of the peasantry that is already ongoing, a differentiation in which capitalist relations of production have already penetrated the countryside and have begun to despoil some peasants' resources to the benefit of others."

31. They issued a Second Declaration on June 11, 1994.

32. See the remarks of Robert W. Benson, "War Talk in Mexico", on E-MAIL INTERNET: MULTIPLE RECIPIENTS OF LIST on the Chiapas rebellion, July 14, 1994.

33. Ouweneel, "From Tlahtocayotl."

34. G.A. Collier, *Fields of the Tzotzil*, p. 147.

35. Gosner, "Tribute, Labor, and Market," p. 21-22. In his "Élites indígenas," Gosner compares his findings on the indigenous elites of Chiapas with the findings of Charles Gibson for the central Mexican highlands and concludes that there were important differences. However, ten years later, we know that Gibson's findings are outdated, prejudiced, and sometimes even wrong. Despite the differences that can be found between Chiapas and Anáhuac, for example, I do think the similarities between the two regions in the early eighteenth century were much more notable. His conclusion on p. 415 of his paper is valid for Anáhuac: "Así pues, aun en los Altos, donde las circunstancias no permitían mayores diferencias económicas entre los indígenas, se conservaba una estructura jerárquica con la que algunos miembros de la comunidad ejercían privilegios que se negaban a los demás."

36. See J.F. Collier, *Law and Social Change*, for quote see p. 264.

37. Therefore, reading Rus' essays I have the impression that the indigenous communities were striving for a recreation of their own *república* continuously. Rus, "Whose Caste War?" and, "'Comunidad Revolucionaria Institucional'." See also Rus & Wasserstrom, "Civil-Religious Hierarchies."

38. Ouweneel, *Shadows over Anáhuac*, Chapter One.

39. Robisheaux, *Rural Society*, p. 9.

40. Vogt, *Tortillas for the Gods*, p. 26.

41. J. Collier, *Law*, p. 265.

42. Cancian, *Decline of Community*, pp. 156-161.

43. Gossen, "Comments," p. 21. Also, for the same argument my, *Alweer die Indianen*.

44. In fact, the state of Chiapas has the larger number of committees to deal with the *Solidaridad*-funds.

45. Data from Harvey, *Rebellion in Chiapas*, Table 6 p. 19.

46. For details, Moguel, "Salinas' Failed War," p. 41. Also, Moguel, "Solidaridad." Collier states, in his "Reforms," p. 121:

"I think that the state's use of PRONASOL to promote agrarian change under the revised agrarian legislation signals an intention to restructure (rather than abandon) the historic political relation to the peasantry through new political actors without necessarily forsaking old ones at the level of community. [...] In landscapes such as southeastern Mexico, where peasant leaders have engaged an ever-changing succession of agencies channeling state services to them, it seems unlikely that the dismantlement of Reforma Agraria in favor of the new judicial agencies will truly alter the fundamental character of peasants' political relation to the state."

True this might have seem at the end of 1993, the symbolic weight of the Article 27 was too heavy to neglect. And nevertheless, that is what has happened in Mexico City, by the Salinas Administration.

47. Besides the fact that all this counted mainly for the highlands and the area of coffee production, the Salinas Administration in fact progressed in dismantling social security for the peasants while embracing free trade. This exposed even favored crops like coffee to falling prices. Although poverty, exploitation and anger over the Salinas Administration were not unique to the eastern areas of Chiapas, the peasants of the Lacandón jungle did have reasons to feel abandoned by the state. This brought them to realize the background of the *Solidaridad*-programme.

48. "An Interview with Subcomandante Marcos," by Michael McCaughan in *NACLA Report on the Americas* 28:1 (1994), pp. 35-37, quote from p. 37.

49. Rus, "'Jelavem'," p. 18, believes that it "seems likely that the more open, democratic nature of the new communities is eventually to flow back and change the social structures of the traditional communities as well. [...] Many members of these same supposedly 'loyalist,' 'traditional' communities also expressed admiration for the Zapatistas, thrilling to their victories over the 'kaxlanetik,' or ladinos." Also Gossen, "Comments," p. 21, thinks that the grassroots support for the Zapatistas derives, in part, from the great concentration of displaced individuals. "Many of them have nothing to lose, and perhaps something to gain, through political activism." A similar argument is developed in my *Alweer die Indianen*.

50. Ströbele-Gregor, "From Indio to Mestizo . . . to Indio."

51. Gossen, "Comments," p. 20.

52. Among others, Guillermoprieto, "Letter from Mexico," p. 54.

53. Interviews with Zapatista-leaders in *La Jornada*, see my *Alweer die Indianen*, p. 208.

54. See *Proceso* 880 (Sept. 13, 1994), pp. 12-15; Romero Jacobo, *Altos de Chiapas*, pp. 75-89; Melgar Bao, "Utopias indígenas."

55. The brother of President Salinas de Gortari was an associate of Orive's and his uncle was Orive's mentor at the UNAM University. When Salinas became Secretary of *Programación y Presupuesto* in the 1980s, the Orive group did seem to have attempted to capitalize on the connection. Later on, many of the original *orivistas* went to work for the Salinas Administration.

56. "Interview with Subcomandante Marcos," pp. 35-36.

57. Stated by Guatemalan guerrilla-leaders in several *La Jornada* and *El País* editions, see my *Alweer die Indianen*, pp. 192-193. It could have been that the government had turned a blind eye to the guerrilla-leaders living there. It should be clear, however, that I do not mean to tell that the guerrilla-leadership was actively operating in the open in Mexico.

58. Hernández, "Chiapas Uprising"; Aubry, "'Lenta acumulación de fuerzas'."

59. For the problem of identity see Ströbele-Gregor, "From Indio to Mestizo ... to Indio"; Baud *et al.*, *Etniciteit als strategie*, pp. 13-46, 49-53; Evers, "Identity"; *Latin American Special Report, SR-94-03 — Indians: New Factor on the Latin American Scene* (London, 1994). Also Hernández Navarro, "Chiapas Uprising," p. 51.

60. B. Tedlock, "Mayans"; also the revised edition of her *Time and the Highland Maya*. I realize this paragraph seems to treat Maya-ness as something essential. I am not afraid from essentialistic stances, as long as they are well-argued. Some Maya studies are. Nevertheless, it should be pointed out that this paragraph equates the survival of specific Mayan 'cultural' traits with the survival of ethnic boundaries and a separate ethnic identity.

61. Tedlock, "Mayans," pp. 172-173.

62. Reaves, *Conversations with Moctezuma*, see p. 224. The existence of religious divisions among native communities is an important theme for analysis. In Frans Schryer's *Ethnicity and Class Conflict*, dealing with the Huasteca, there is a section discussing the role of religion and the relationship between Protestant sects and secular left-wing political parties who often received the support of the same agrarian peasants.

63. Camacho was appointed the mayor of Mexico City and served until 1993. He resigned indignant that Salinas had not designated him the PRI Presidential candidate, but Luis D. Colosio.

64. Published as "Compromisos por la Paz," *Perfil de la Jornada* 3 de marzo 1994.

65. Guillermprieto, "Letter From Mexico," p. 55.

66. See *Proceso* 939 (1994), pp. 20-25; *La Jornada*, 28 de octubre 1994, p. 19, and, 29 de octubre, p. 14.

67. Sen, "Population," p. 64; also, Easterlin (ed.), *Population*; or, T.P. Schultz, *Economics of Population*.

68. See on this, among others, Elguea, "Sangriento camino." This is a summary of his forthcoming book *The Bloody Road to Utopia. Development Wars in Latin America*.

69. Testimony published in *Ojarasca*, March 1994. For more impact of the Zapatistas on indigenous movements elsewhere in Mexico see my *Alweer die Indianen*, pp. 219-224, based on reports in *La Jornada* and *Proceso*, published between February and June 1994.

70. Earle, "Indigenous Identity," p. 26, also p. 27.

71. Halleck, "Zapatistas On-Line."

72. "Interview with Subcomandante Marcos," p. 37. For Moguel, his "Salinas' Failed War," p. 41.

Who is the Comandante of Subcomandante Marcos?

GARY H. GOSSEN*

The title of this chapter is intended to challenge us to reflect on a number of mysteries that surround the persona of Subcomandante Marcos and also, through him, the metapersona of the Maya Zapatistas whom he represents. This is of great interest to me as a Mayanist and as an admirer of modern Mexico, for—even as the government has sought to dilute his charisma, in March, 1995, by identifying him as Rafael Sebastián Guillén Vicente—Marcos's popularity in virtually all sectors of Mexican society can be compared easily with that of JFK in the U.S. in the 1960s. He and the Zapatistas with whom he is associated seem to be articulating something fundamental about the whole Mexican national idea and its ever-ambivalent ties to its Indian past and present.

Although I am tempted to plunge into this large topic, wisdom dictates trying to say something much more limited about the Zapatista movement. In particular I shall try to identify what is Maya about this dramatic insurrection movement. From this, I will propose a core of persistent patterns of Maya world construction, group and personal identity, and political legitimacy that have been expressed with vitality for some two thousand years—including the current events in Chiapas. I will finally identify patterns in the Zapatista movement that suggest the newly emergent character that Maya ethnicity may assume in the multi-cultural Mexican and Guatemalan nations of the twentyfirst century.

Mexican Spring, 1994

Few events in recent Latin American history have so captivated the attention of the international media as the Zapatista rebellion. However, it has been almost universally interpreted as a peasant rebellion focused on agrarian issues and as a violent critique of Mexico's political system,

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which has systematically marginalized Indians and other underclass groups in the quest for economic growth.¹ Both of these appraisals are undoubtedly true, as we have seen in relentless media coverage and abundant written commentary, including the Zapatistas' own public statements. However, much less has been written or said, by either the Zapatistas or by outside commentators, about what may be distinctively Maya about the Zapatista rebellion. In my view as a long-time observer of Chiapas, the Zapatista movement has been but one dramatic move in a general pan-Maya cultural affirmation movement that is already well underway in Mexico and Guatemala.

The Zapatistas themselves raised the general issue of Indian political and cultural autonomy in Chiapas at the initial round of peace negotiations in San Cristóbal de las Casas in February, 1994. Indeed, as of December, 1994, more than forty Maya communities, both within and outside of the Zapatista-controlled area, had already organized themselves into four autonomous regions. I am not aware of what rights and privileges they claim. Certainly, the Chiapas State and Mexican federal governments have ceded no authority to these self-declared autonomous regions. Locally, however, leaders of the movement claim to have more legitimate authority than the duly elected state-recognized municipal officials and are prepared to function in the event of political vacuum if civil order breaks down. The spirit of the Zapatista demands as articulated in February went well beyond the region; they are seeking nothing less than systematic teaching of Indian history and culture in all of Mexico's schools. Mexico's negotiators have apparently yielded on this issue, although EZLN has not yet, to my knowledge, responded.

While the prospect of this acknowledgment may be cause for celebration, it raises the question of just what constitutes the shared culture and identity of Mexico's many and diverse Indian communities. Beyond laundry lists of 'culture traits' and centuries of shared oppression and marginalization in the shadow of Western colonial culture and the modern world system, was there ever, is there now, any essential 'soul' of Mesoamerican Indian culture? More specifically, how is such an Indian identity, Mayan or other, manifest in the current Zapatista movement?

On the surface, at least, it is not difficult to understand why the Mayan rebels have chosen Emiliano Zapata as their paladin. Although he was of relatively modest, though not impoverished, rural mestizo origin, he did speak Nahuatl well. He championed agrarian reform in both symbolic and substantive ways, and today remains one of the few 'undeconstructed' heroes of the Mexican Revolution. While the link with the symbol of Zapata himself does not seem difficult to understand, other aspects of the Zapatista rebellion's Indian identity are harder to comprehend. For example, why have the Zapatistas chosen Subcomandante Marcos as their spokesperson and most visible leader? He is, after all, a fair-skinned *criollo* who, by his own testimony, bailed out of the gilded upper-middle-class culture of Mexico City. Furthermore, one of the first and most widely publicized martyrs of the first days of the

Zapatista revolt was Janine Pauline Archembault Biazot, a white ex-nun known as 'La Coronela' (the Colonel). She was of French birth and Canadian residency and is said to have died heroically as she led the Indian troops in the siege of the town of Las Margaritas on January 1, 1994. The Zapatistas' collective Indian leadership itself—said to consist of a directorate of Tzeltals, Tzotzils, Tojolabals, and other elders, male and female, from various Indian communities—has thus far remained relatively silent and invisible insofar as any direct contact with the media is concerned. Whatever the political, pragmatic, or symbolic reasons for the low profile of the Indian leadership in the movement, there can be little doubt about its strong Indian constituency, both within Chiapas and outside.

Although Mexico and Guatemala now have dozens of individuals and institutional entities that are currently working toward the goal of pan-Indian solidarity in the areas of literacy, literature, the arts, and social policy, it is nevertheless worthy of note that the symbolic and ideological force behind the growing Indian politicization in Mesoamerica, as in the Zapatista movement itself, does not have an easily identifiable Indian 'center.' What is the nature of this empty center? Who or what is the Comandante of Subcomandante Marcos?

In this chapter, I will identify three themes in the events of the past year that may guide us in thinking about both the Maya past and Maya future. What constitutes the core of how Maya people have thought and acted in history over the past two thousand years? And, from these deep roots, even through them, how is change—such as that sought by the Zapatistas—being effected in the Maya universe today?

Breath on the Mirror: the Opaqueness of Events

In a recent extraordinary book, *Breath on the Mirror* (1993), Dennis Tedlock discusses a central idea, perhaps the central idea, in Maya epistemology. It concerns the opaque nature of human access to reality. As recorded in the *Popol Vuh*, the founding epic of the Quiche people, both the downfall of our proto-human ancestors and the ascent modern human beings involved the drama of the loss of vision:

"The gods were displeased with the fact that their newly created beings could see everything just as the gods could; their vision penetrated all parts of the cosmos, through the mountains and heavens. The gods were not pleased that humans were their equals; their knowledge reached too far:

'And when they changed the nature of their works, their designs, it was enough that their eyes be marred by the Heart of Sky. They were blinded as the face a mirror is breathed upon. Their eyes were weakened. Now it was only when they looked nearby that things were clear.

And such was the loss of the means of understanding, with the means of knowing everything, by the four humans. The root

*was implanted.*¹⁷²

Such, then, is the human condition, that in the great scheme of things, people are never to have easy access to the true scheme of things. Such is this the case that virtually all human perception and related experiences respond to an approximation of reality. The opaqueness of reality in the Maya world is not, as in Plato's parable of the shadows on the cave wall, a preferred, derivative access to reality; the Maya version of this is an obligatory and given aspect of the human condition.

The corollaries that flow from this basic principle in the ancient and modern Maya world are numerous. In the first place, nothing except that which is nearby is ever what it seems to be according to our sense perception. There is always something beyond and outside of the apparent reality that is understood to affect the perceived reality. Such unseeable generative forces have expressed themselves in the everyday life of the Maya for two thousand years. The greatest of these outside forces in the Ancient Maya world was the tyranny of time. The divine mandate of solar, lunar, and Venus and the 260-day calendar cycles intimately affected the unfolding of each day for each individual and for the community in the ancient Maya world.

This so-called chronovision was not a deification of time, but an acknowledgment that all things, human and natural, were programmed with shifting valences of cause and effect as divine cycles located outside the body dictated. Variants of these ancient beliefs persist today in the form of divine solar cycles, individual co-essences and ancestor cults; they figure centrally in the complexity of the extrasomatic configuration of causality. Humans have no choice but to adjust their behavior accordingly. There emerges here an almost unlimited opening for the interpretive skills and political control of shamans and secular leaders who claim to have a less opaque vision than ordinary people. It is probable, in my view, that such clairvoyant skills are attributed to, if not claimed by, the clandestine Indian leadership of EZLN.

Related to the interpretive dimension of the opaqueness of reality are two other strains of Maya thought: inequality and complementary dualism. All things—human, natural and divine—are structured in relational terms such that absolute equality does not exist. Rank and hierarchy permeate Maya thought. Everything that is, at a given moment, belongs to a relational matrix in which forces that are dominant and submissive prevail, often in patterned, predictable forms. Related to this is the concept of complementary dualism such that two aspects, sometimes polar opposites, of a phenomenon, work together to produce what we experience and see. For example, the power of ancestors to affect the lives of the living derives in part from their double gender—the word for them in most Maya languages is 'mothersfathers.' They are neither male nor female, nor equal to each other, but both at the same time.

Surely related to this pattern of complementary dualism is the prevalence of twins and other pairs and multiples thereof in Maya sacred

narrative, ancient and contemporary. Hunahpu and Xbalanque, heroes of the mid-sections of the *Popul Vuh* who eventually become the sun and the moon, whom we conventionally refer to as twins, are not really identical twins, but older and younger brother, respectively. To this day, when Tzotzil Maya see the sun and moon in the sky, they are seeing complementary divine ancestors (in this case son and mother) whose relative powers fluctuate to produce what we experience as day and night.

And so on.... The point is, I hope, made. What we have seen in the Lacandon jungle during 1994 in Chiapas appears opaque to our own eyes, for it has undoubtedly been constructed and understood by the Maya as an effort to act in history in such a way that human uncertainty, the givenness of outside causal forces, and the effort to engage in instrumental behavior to effect change in a hostile environment mesh together in a plausible, credible, and cautious pattern of counterbalances.

The movement cannot have been conceived by a few and delivered as a plan of action to change history and destiny without being cast as something that was somehow destined to happen in the first place, yet for which no single Indian leader wished to assume responsibility as the *principal* leader, for all ethnic groups involved came from different communities of origin in which various readings of legitimate authority were operative. It would therefore have been inappropriate for any one individual to presume to conceive and direct an enterprise of such complexity and uncertainty.

Perhaps this is the central reason that a relatively invisible pan-Maya directorate of men and women provide diffused Indian leadership, while conferring upon a non-Indian, Subcomandante Marcos, the role of spokesperson. This is also, undoubtedly, why the movement is tied emblematically to Emiliano Zapata and to the epic agenda of the Mexican Revolution itself; these are icons that link their own political aspirations with the charter myth of modern Mexico. Given the Zapatistas' own Maya heritage of understanding history as a programmed, divinely ordained process, it is not unreasonable for them to attach their wagon to a well-known and powerful mythical star. The Myth of the Mexican Revolution is surely such a star.

The Extrasomatic Location of Self and Destiny

The quasi-mystical link of their own agenda and destiny with that of Mexican 'democracy' and other principles of the Mexican national idea is laid out eloquently in a communiqué, dated February 26, 1994, from the Clandestine Indigenous Revolutionary Committee High Command of the Zapatista National Liberation Army. The following excerpt constitutes the first paragraphs of this document. We of course do not know from whose pen these words come; however, the poetic and opaque language bears the clear mark of contemporary Maya oratorical style, perhaps mingled with the romantic imagery of Spanish-speaking colla-

borators:

"When the EZLN was only a shadow, creeping through the mist and darkness of the jungle, when the words 'justice,' 'liberty' and 'democracy' were only that: words; barely a dream that the elders of our communities, true guardians of the words of our dead ancestors, had given us in the moment when day gives way to night, when hatred and fear began to grow in our hearts, when there was nothing but desperation; when the times repeated themselves, with no way out, with no door, no tomorrow, when all was injustice, as it was, the true men spoke, the faceless ones, the ones who go by night, the ones who are in the jungle, and they said:

'It is the purpose and will of good men and women to seek and find the best way to govern and be governed, what is good for the many is good for all. But let not the voices of the few be silenced, but let them remain in their place, waiting until the thoughts and hearts become one in what is the will of the many and opinion from within and no outside force can break them nor divert their steps to other paths.

*Our path was always that the will of the many be in the hearts of the men and women who command. The will of the majority was the path on which he who commands should walk. If he separates his step from the path of the will of the people, the heart who commands should be changed for another who obeys. Thus was born our strength in the jungle, he who leads obeys if he is true, and he who follows leads through the common heart of true men and women. Another word came from afar so that this government was named and this work gave the name 'democracy' to our way that was from before words traveled.'*³

Where does the individual stand in the opaqueness of the Maya universe that has just been described? The best short answer is 'not alone,' as the Zapatista communiqué I have just cited reiterates unequivocally. Since at least the time of Christ, the Maya world has evolved a variant of the broader Mesoamerican idea of the co-essence, which, briefly stated, is a fundamental principle of personhood or self which asserts that each individual and his or her destiny are linked to one or a set of co-spirits or co-essences that reside outside the body. These co-essences are typically identified with animals in the Maya area, but may also take the form of other spirit companions. They are often revealed to people in dreams and are therefore known in some parts of the Maya regions by terms related to the proto-Maya *way* ('sleep' or 'dream'). These spirits are given at birth and share with each individual the trajectory of his or her life, from birth to death. These co-essences confer destinies upon individuals that range from power and wealth (most typically associated with jaguars) to humility and poverty (usually associated with small animals such as the rabbit or squirrel).

Since these forces lie outside the body, they are not easy to manipu-

late. One must therefore live within the general parameters of one's given destiny. These co-essences typically have several parts, all of which are fragile and may become lost, frightened or injured, singly or in various combinations. These afflictions of the soul may cause sickness or misfortune in the persona of the corresponding individual, whereupon the afflicted person often engages other supernatural forces (often the souls of shamans and witches who are available for hire) to intervene to restore equilibrium to one's charted destiny. Thus, these beliefs lie at the core of many traditional curing, divination, witchcraft and sorcery practices that are found throughout the Maya region.⁴

These beliefs, which I consider to form the core of the native metaphysics of personhood in Mesoamerica, have been around for at least two millennia in the Maya area, dating from before the time of Christ, and were apparently centrally linked to statecraft and its underlying charters. The iconography of the Olmec civilization, for example, has as its diagnostic feature a jaguar/human being, the features of which merge human and feline traits. This iconographic tradition goes back to at least 1000 B.C., and can plausibly be interpreted as an early expression of the link of the co-essence with theocratic authority. Epigraphers have recently made enormous strides in documenting this concept as it was expressed in the inscriptions and iconography of the late pre-Classic and Classic periods in the Maya and contiguous areas. Justeson and Kaufman have recently deciphered an epi-Olmec text that appears on the Tuxtla statuette (State of Tabasco), dating to 162 A.D. On this piece, the hieroglyphic text specifically says, in relation to the peculiar figure that is being discussed, that *"The Animal Soul is Powerful."*⁵

In the great florescence of the Maya Classic culture, the hieroglyphic inscriptions routinely used a glyph that reads *way* (discussed above, meaning 'sleep' or 'dream') to signify the link between humans and co-essences, both animal and other. (By the way, the diagnostic motif in this glyph is a masked god.) Steve Houston and David Stuart conclude their important report on this topic as follows:

*"In our judgement, the way decipherment fundamentally changes our understanding of Classic Maya iconography and belief. It indicates that many of the supernatural figures, once described as 'gods,' 'underworld denizens,' or 'deities,' are instead co-essences of supernaturals or humans. More than ever, then, Classic Maya beliefs would seem to coincide with general patterns of Mesoamerican thought [...] . Our final point concerns the certainty with which Maya lords identified their co-essences [...] . For the Classic Maya, such self-knowledge may well have been an important marker of elite status."*⁶

This concept therefore appears to lie not only at the very center of Maya thinking about self, society and destiny, but also at the center of their theories of statecraft and political legitimacy via shamanic power. See for example the major recent work by Freidel, Schele and Parker: *Maya Cosmos. Three Thousand Years on the Shaman's Path* (1993). In this work, as the title suggests, the concept we are discussing is shown to have an im-

pressive life history spanning almost three millenia.

Even as it is true that the political and shamanic practice of these ideas occupied an important place in the public rituals of the ancient Maya, it is also true that the colonial and modern governments of Mexico and Guatemala, and the missionaries who have operated under their patronage, drove these practices and beliefs underground into the privacy of Indian homes and scattered outdoor shrines. It is primarily in this non-public location that they persist in hundreds of Maya Indian communities today. And yet they remain vitally important as an identity marker. In her recent autobiographical commentary, *I, Rigoberta Menchú*, the Maya Nobel laureate of Guatemala testifies to the studied privacy of these beliefs and practices among the Maya people of her country:

*"We Indians have always hidden our identity and kept our secrets to ourselves. This is why we are discriminated against. We often find it hard to talk about ourselves because we know we must hide so much in order to preserve our Indian culture and prevent it being taken away from us. So I can only tell you very general things about the nahual. I can't tell you what my nahual is because that is one of our secrets."*⁷

Indeed, virtually all modern ethnographies of the Maya region agree not only on the importance of some form of these ideas to the maintenance of individual and community integration, but also on the studied privacy that is appropriate for any discussion pertaining to these ideas. Thousands of Maya Zapatistas undoubtedly bear such cognitive baggage in their languages, hearts and souls. These ideas cannot be irrelevant to an understanding of recent events. This raises the interesting question of all the masked faces in the Zapatista guerrilla army. Obviously, there is more than security or guerrilla theatre going on here. This will be discussed further in the conclusions.

The Community and Other

A third enigmatic theme that underwrites the Zapatista movement is expressed in their elegantly constructed communiqués that seem to place their own goals within the framework of Mexico's own stated goals about itself. Zapatistas are, on the surface of it, simply demanding to be included in the Mexican national idea that states that Mexico embraces all of its people. This has been a centerpiece of Mexican Revolutionary rhetoric for at least sixty years. How could a Maya indigenous insurrection movement be so charitably inclined toward the ideology and symbols of its stated adversaries? Indeed, the maximal hero of the Mexican Revolution, Emiliano Zapata, who is also the paladin of the Maya rebels, was, himself, a mestizo, not an Indian. Who are Sub-Comandante Marcos and the martyred Coronela Janina, but incarnations of the enemy? Where are the Maya gods, heroes and leaders in this Maya insurrection?

I have attempted to comprehend a very similar pattern among the

contemporary Tzotzils. I was concerned with this very paradox: Why should one of the most demographically significant, politically self-confident, and ethnically conservative Indian communities in Mexico live in the very center of a cosmos populated by white-skinned deities and adversaries and black-skinned demons and life forces? Where is the 'Indian' in their cosmological, spiritual, and historical landscape? After all, Chamulas are, by their own self-identification, "*the true people.*"

On examining Chamula oral historical accounts sacred narratives, and ritual practice, I found that virtually all beings, human and supernatural, who have influenced their lives and destiny in major ways are not 'ethnic Indians' at all. Their principal deities—the Sun/Christ, Moon/Virgin Mary, and the saints—appear, both iconographically and poetically, as 'white.' Their major historical allies, such as Miguel Hidalgo (the traditional father of the Mexican Independence Movement from Spain) and Erasto Urbina (a pro-Indian local hero), are classified as Ladinos, bearers of Mexican national culture. Earth lords, who are cast as both *good* (bringers of rain, agrarian fertility, and other forms of wealth, such as money) and bad (sources of bondage and slavery), are also ethnically Ladino. So is Saint Jerome, the keeper and patron of people's animal soul companions. Major historical adversaries, such as Mexican and Guatemalan soldiers, are cast as white. Furthermore, Tzotzils unambiguously associate white soldiers with predatory and antisocial behavior through their word for the common Norway rat: *caransa*, after Mexican Revolutionary 'hero' Venustiano Carranza. However, La Malinche herself, known by all Mexicans as the Indian mistress of Cortez, appears as a *ladina* campfollower of Ladino soldiers in Chamula ritual drama. Known as Nana María Cocorina, she wears a Ladino wedding dress and is ritually addressed as *xinulan antz*, 'stinking Ladino woman.'

Black-skinned characters also figure prominently in the creation of, and threats to, Chamula life, destiny, and identity. For example, the black demon Pukuh taught the first people to reproduce and to enjoy sex, just as he is said, even in our time, to make shady deals in which Indians exchange their loyalty and labor for wealth. Furthermore, these demons have been around for a long time: they and their monkey associates, also black, preceded human life itself in the time before the Moon and the Sun acted to create the First World. Thus, the non-Indian Other appears to be a necessary precondition for collective identity within the Chamula pattern of historical memory and being in the present.⁸

A close examination of the *Popol Vuh* reveals that the ancient Quiché themselves linked their own political legitimacy to an ancient, powerful eastern city state, known in legend as Tolán or Tulán, which, in terms of the ethnic identity of its inhabitants, was unlike the Quiché kingdom itself. In fact, it is represented as an imperial polity to which their own ancestors once paid tribute. There are at least a dozen surviving place names in Mesoamerica that bear names related to Tulán or Tolán, and most of them in fact lie outside the Maya area. The most

famous of these is Tula Hidalgo, an early post-Classic site in the Central Valley of Mexico. This was the seat of the Toltec kingdom (non-Maya-speaking) and home of the legendary god/king Topilzin Quetzalcóatl, who was associated with arts, learning, peace and prosperity. According to legends current at the time of contact and even into our time, he is said to have fled into the Eastern Sea at the time of his defeat 987 A.D. and the fall of Tula at the hand of the god of destruction and war. From the tenth century onward, Topilzin Quetzalcóatl was remembered in legend as a messiah who would one day return from the eastern sea to bring a new period of peace and prosperity to the entire region. In a recent, poignant testimony (1993) from one of the last surviving veterans of the Mexican Revolution, this ancient man from a village in Morelos said that Zapata had not died in 1919, but that he had, like Quetzalcóatl, gone off to the east (to Arabia) to return one day to help his people.⁹ Such commentary is reportedly heard these days in Chiapas as well. It is highly likely that the Quiché narrators of the *Popol Vuh* were aware of this same tradition, and found it plausible to tie their own political aspirations and legitimacy to this foreign god/king (the plumed serpent, presumed to be Topilzin Quetzalcóatl's co-essence, the source of his legendary power, is in fact often mentioned in the *Popol Vuh*) and to the power of a distant polity that was not Maya at all.

My point is simple. Maya ethnicity, cosmology, historical reckoning and political legitimacy have always drawn freely from symbolic and ideological forms of other ethnic and political entities—particularly those perceived to be stronger than themselves—in order to situate and center themselves in the present. Therefore, what I have identified above as the apparently anomalous and peculiar link of the Zapatistas to foreign alliances and symbolic affiliations—including Marcos, white foreign martyrs, the paladin of Zapata and the Mexican Revolutionary ideology that he embodies—is not at all strange to the Maya imagination. In fact, such alliances appear to have been a centrally important strategy for Maya cultural affirmation and political legitimacy since well before the contact period.

Zapata and Marcos in the World of the Sun

I have sketched above three fundamentally Maya ideas about the nature of reality and of the place of individuals and groups within the cosmos. Briefly summarized, these are:

- a. that reality is opaque; what can be experienced by human perception is seldom the whole picture of what is actually going on; hence, trusted interpreters and leaders are indispensable;
- b. that the destiny of the individual self is always linked to extrasomatic forces that are beyond one's direct control; therefore, the exercise of free will and acting only in one's own self interest are probably doomed to failure;
- c. that expressions of Maya collective identity, such as community

membership and ethnic affirmation, depend heavily on concrete and symbolic acknowledgment, even inclusion of, other identities, in order to situate themselves in an ever-evolving present; the idea of a pure lineage of Maya identity is, I believe, foreign to the way Maya people have thought and acted in history.

What do all of these principles share? Quite simply, they encourage actors to account for and act sensibly in relation to their own moral community and 'selves' by moving beyond themselves. Neither self, nor society, nor reality itself can be understood by focusing only on what is local, tangible and immediately accessible to the senses.

In a rather surreal manner, all of these traditional Maya, also Mesoamerican, ideas about self and destiny came together in the odd configuration what was witnessed by hundreds of millions around the world in February, 1994, at the Cathedral of San Cristóbal de las Casas on the occasion of peace negotiations with the Mexican government. Subcomandante Marcos, ski-masked, flanked by members of the secret Indian directorate, also masked, met the negotiating team from the Mexican government and the international press to register a list of demands that ranged from nation-wide electoral reforms, to educational reforms (including a public school curriculum that would ideally acknowledge Mexico's 10,000,000-strong Indian minorities), to land reform, to a charter of women's rights. Why should a blond, European, cosmopolitan Subcomandante Marcos preside over this extraordinary forum on behalf of Indian leaders, male and female, representing at least five of the major linguistic and ethnic groups in the state?. Why was there no 'Indian leader.'

Some part of the answer, I believe, lies in the content of this essay. Sub-comandante Marcos is utterly plausible as a spokesperson for an Indian cause precisely because he is outside of, extra-somatic to, the Indian community. This 'other world' of destiny that is symbolized by Marcos (perhaps also by the emblematic memory of Zapata himself) is one of the several non-Indian places from which co-essential power and causation in the Maya universe emanate from to start with, be it for individuals or for groups.

The masked, incognito mode of self-representation of the parties in these events cannot be dismissed as guerrilla theatre, nor merely understood as a military security measure. It is, rather, a logical strategy of caution in the arena of instrumentality (read 'revolutionary change') whose goals are not yet achieved and whose benefits to the larger Indian community are not yet manifest. Thus, individual identities had best be masked, lest the leaders be accused of self-aggrandizement and self-gain. If they were so perceived by others—without solid evidence for the overriding legitimacy of their exercise of power—they could easily become potential targets for malevolent supernatural action, as in the casting of sickness, as discussed above. It is perhaps also for these reasons that the members of the Indian directorate of the Zapatista Movement have opted for a secret lateral organization of co-equals

rather than a hierarchical chain of authority. If the unusual unfolding of the Zapatista Movement can be partially understood within the matrix of ancient Mesoamerican ideas about self and society, I think these events have another quality that represent something relatively new if not utterly revolutionary in the modern era. I refer to the pan-Indian composition of the leadership and constituency of the Zapatistas.

Only on rare occasion in colonial and modern Chiapas history (notably, the Tzeltal Rebellion of 1712 and the War of Santa Rosa in 1867-1870; see some preceding chapters) have Indian political and religious movements in Chiapas crossed ethnic and linguistic lines in terms of their constituencies and military mobilization; and when they have done so in such a manner as to become active and visible, these movements have been promptly crushed by the state. Indeed, the Spanish Crown created administrative institutions, settlement patterns and local civil and religious organization that would, in effect segregate Indians from Spanish and mestizo communities and also from one another. In functioning to encourage local identities, languages, customs and loyalties, these policies served the Crown's purpose in that they discouraged pan-Indian opposition to state policy. In many respects, this configuration of ethnically and demographically isolated Indian townships that are indirectly controlled by the state through the *cacique* system has continued largely intact well into the late twentieth century, and is particularly characteristic of municipios in Highland Chiapas and Highland Guatemala.

However, the demographic portrait of the region that spawned the Zapatista Movement is *unlike* what I have just described, and this dissimilarity matters a great deal in making sense of the background of the rebellion. The Zapatista homeland, in the Lacandon jungle lowlands of Chiapas, is actually a pioneer settlement area. Within the last few decades, tens of thousands of displaced individuals have emigrated there as refugees from poverty and political and religious persecution in their Indian townships of origin. The region is also home to thousands of Guatemalan Maya refugees who fled there to escape political violence in their own country. The region therefore has no established social order that is dominated by any one Maya ethnic or linguistic group. This is also a region of great religious diversity, comprised of thousands of newly converted Protestants and recently evangelized 'progressive' Catholics who were, over the last two decades, the subjects of intense proselytizing by lay catechysts and priests who were associated with Liberation Theology. There are, no doubt, also 'traditional Mayas' who do not feel attracted to either Protestant or liberal Catholic teachings.

It is therefore not surprising that the composition of EZLN, although generally Maya, is actually fairly diverse in terms of ethnic, linguistic and religious backgrounds that are represented. Tzotzil, Tzeltal, Zoque, Chol, and Tojolabal speakers, as well as Mexican mestizos and ethnically 'white' Mexicans, are all united in pursuit of common political and social goals. What is Maya about the Zapatista movement must therefore

be sought not in particular variants of Maya cultural identity, but rather, in general principles of values and conduct that all might share, be they Tzotzil or Zoques. This common ground is what I have tried to identify in this essay.

While the immediate goals of the Maya Zapatistas appear to be primarily of an economic and political nature to outside observers, I believe that the pan-Maya nature of this enterprise has a powerful component of post-colonial ethnic affirmation that goes well beyond political action. Any serious observer of modern Guatemala, Chiapas or Yucatan will be aware that well-organized pan-Maya cooperation now extends into many arenas of activity. The nature of these pan-Indian groups ranges from intellectual, educational and religious organizations to crafts guilds (for example, textile and ceramic cooperatives) catering to the tourist and export trade. There are also numerous writers' and artists' cooperatives whose members are working even as we speak to create a corpus of literature in Maya languages, as well as graphic and performing arts that express the traditional and contemporary Maya themes. Guatemala is moving, even as we speak today, to the creation of a parallel Indian education system, designed by the Mayas themselves (*Centro de Estudios de la Cultura Maya*), that recognizes, perhaps grudgingly on the part of the government, that literacy in Indian languages is in the national interest. Certainly, Mexico cannot be far behind.

The governments of both countries now realize that the pan-Indian voice in these *de facto* multicultural nations is here to stay. Governments can no longer crush this voice with military action or buy it off with conciliatory 'things' alone. They must enter into dialogue with it and add the contemporary Indian voice to the national idea. There is evidence, therefore, that Mesoamerica's 'collective Indian soul' has already emerged in the late twentieth century as an active and public voice in the modern nations of the region. And, most important, the Indian voice is commanding a broadly based respect in the national communities of both Mexico and Guatemala that has not been known for 450 years. The Zapatista Movement is part of this pattern of increasingly honest dialogue between mestizo and Indian sectors of these nations.¹⁰ Therefore, the Comandante of Sub-Comandante Marcos is surely none other than the emerging collective soul of the modern Maya as full participants in a multi-cultural Mexican nation.

Endnotes

1. Although analytical literature on the Zapatista Movement is just beginning to appear. The following are major works and collections of essays on the subject: George Collier's (with Elizabeth Lowery Quaratiello) monograph, *Basta!; Cultural Survival Quarterly's* Volume 18:1, which contains eight essays on various aspects of the Zapatista Movement by anthropologists and historians who have worked in the region for many years; and the Summer, 1994, number of the *Akwé:kon: Journal of Indigenous Issues*, which is entirely devoted to the Zapatista Movement.

2. Tedlock, *Breath on the Mirror*, pp. 166-167.

3. Originally published in Spanish in *La Jornada*, Sunday, February 27, 1994, p. 11; translated into English by Ron Nigh, "Zapata Rose in 1994," p. 12.

4. See Gossen, "From Olmecs to Zapatistas."

5. Justeson and Kaufman, "Decipherment," p. 1703.

6. Houston and Stuart, *Way Glyph*, p. 13.

7. Menchú, *I, Rigoberta Menchú*, pp. 18-20.

8. On this, see Gossen, "Other in Chamula Tzotzil Cosmology."

9. Lloyd, "Last Zapata," p. 11.

10. As I complete the final draft of this essay in mid-March, 1995, Chiapas once again edges to the brink of civil war, as wealthy ranchers and farmers blame the Zapatistas and their supporters for destroying the status quo. Mexico itself finds itself in the midst of a catastrophic political and economic crisis that is shaking the nation to its very Revolutionary foundations. Although the army has driven the Zapatistas from their jungle stronghold and Marcos is currently in hiding, they remain almost larger than life in Mexican political discourse; the government does not dare destroy them outright; indeed, an amnesty offer is currently on the table. The Zapatistas' symbolic capital remains strong, so strong that they are being credited with everything from directly precipitating the current national crisis to being a key symptom of what was wrong to start with. Either way, their place in twentieth century Mexican history seems secure.

The First Two Months of the Zapatistas

A Tzotzil Chronicle

MARIÁN PERES TZU

Translator's Note

Marián Peres Tzu is a member of the Tzotzil-Maya community of Chamula, which lies immediately to the north of San Cristóbal de Las Casas in the Chiapas Highlands. In his childhood and early youth, he worked as a coffee picker on the plantations of Chiapas's southern Pacific coast, and as a cane-cutter in the state's Central Valley. Since the early 1980s he has lived in a mostly Protestant *colonia* on the outskirts of San Cristóbal and earned his living re-selling on street corners the vegetables that he buys at the end of each day from fellow Chamulas forced to unload their unsold produce before boarding trucks to return home.

As the following pages attest, Marián is also a lively story-teller. Over the last eight years, he has contributed a steady stream of his own stories and the transcribed oral histories of his neighbors to the Tzotzil Publishing House ("Taller Tzotzil"), which has included them in a number of its books. In addition, whenever my wife and I have been outside of Chiapas, Marián has written to us regularly in Tzotzil to keep us up with the latest news, tell jokes, and just gossip.

What follows is a selection from Marián's first letter after New Year's Day, 1994. In it, he describes the complex reactions to the Zapatista Uprising of Indians in the area of San Cristóbal who did *not* rebel. Clearly, there was a lot of fear early on, especially among the inhabitants of established, traditional communities who have been engaged for almost two decades in the violent persecution of an emerging Protestant minority in their midst. Even among many of these *tradicionalistas*, however, this fear seems to

have given way within a few weeks to a dawning sense of pride at what other Indians—the Zapatistas—had accomplished. By mid-February, the mood seems clearly to have turned around, becoming almost festive as it became obvious that the Army and police had orders to avoid further conflict, thus permitting even Indians who had not rebelled to redress old grievances.

Marián's latest letters, during the last months of 1994 and the first of 1995, describe how since the giddy euphoria of the first half of 1994 people have become increasingly anxious about the escalating tensions between Indians and non-Indians, between those who are struggling for the rights of the poor and the private armies being raised by the rich, and, among Indians themselves, between dissidents of all sorts, Zapatistas or not, who oppose the government, and *tradicionalistas*, who still tend on the whole to support it. Everyone is aware that the current situation is unstable, and there is great fear about how it will finally sort itself out. Nevertheless, at the same time, the new consciousness of—and joy in—a wider Mayan identity and its potential political strength that became apparent during the first months of 1994, and that is so evident in the following letter, continues to be strong.

Jan Rus
March, 1995

Just a note about style: Tzotzil custom dictates that no one talk too long before surrendering the floor, so native stories tend to be short, and, if well told, to build up to a clear punch line or moral. In part, this is an expression of a deeply-felt sense of democracy among Tzotzil-speakers: nothing is ever decided until everyone has had a say, so no one should monopolize 'the word.'

In part, however, it is perhaps also an outgrowth of the fact that stories often have to be told quickly, on the run, as it were, to friends one meets in the market, passes on the trail, or pauses to talk to at the end of a row while working in the fields. Longer speeches are of course possible, but Marián's letters, if long, tend to be strings of short, discrete anecdotes like the pages that follow.

Early January: Preparations and Visits

Before the invasion of San Cristóbal, everyone always talked about how the soldiers at the army base overlooking the southern approach to the city had spread booby traps all around their land, how they had fixed it so no one would ever dare attack them. If the poor Indians ever came to make trouble, everyone said, the soldiers would finish them off right there, before they even got out of the forest. The army officers are *maestros* of killing, they said, and all they have to do every day, their only chore, is teach the young soldiers how to kill. And as if all of that weren't enough to scare away a bunch of raggedly peasants, all the people said, the soldiers also have mounds of bombs stored behind their fort. Nothing but special bombs for killing Indians!

K'elavil, look here: According to what people said, the soldiers had strung a special wire around their barracks that was connected to a bomb every few steps. If the damn Indians ever did come around, they said, all the soldiers would have to do was lean out of their beds and touch the wire with a piece of metal—like, say, a beer can—and the bombs would all blow up. And if the Indians tried to cut the wire, it would also blow up. But of course, the soldiers are famous for never sleeping, so the Indians would never even get close to the bombs in the first place. No one, the soldiers figured, would ever get past them.

But after all those preparations, what happened? On January first, the soldiers were asleep when the Zapatistas arrived in San Cristóbal! But snoring! They didn't see the Zapatistas go by their check-points with the other passengers on the second-class buses! They didn't notice the Zapatistas get out of their buses at the station and walk into the center of town! They didn't see anything! And when the soldiers woke up, the Zapatistas had already seized the *Palacio de Gobierno* and set up their own guards around the city! After all, it was the Army that was left outside of town, safely holed up in its barracks! The Zapatistas won by just ignoring them! Not until the next day, when they had finished their business in town, did the Zapatistas finally go to pay a visit on the soldiers!*

* The Zapatistas attacked the army post at Rancho Nuevo on January 2nd, as they were retreating from San Cristóbal.

The Zapatistas are only Indians, but what the army officers forgot is that Indians too are men. And since they are men, they also could be armed and trained, just like the army. All they needed was the idea. And as it turned out, their thinking was better than the army's! They fooled the officers, who are *maestros* of killing! Since that day, all of us, even those who are not enemies of the government, feel like smiling down into our shirts.

If there is a sad part to all of this, it is that even though the Zapatistas are men, they will have to live in hiding from now on. They won't be able to sleep in their own beds in their own houses, but will have to stay hidden in caves in the jungle. If they want to make babies like everyone else, they'll even have to screw in the caves. Like *armadillos*!

Early January: Uncertainty in Chamula

When word first came that the Zapatistas had occupied San Cristóbal, all the Chamulas said that they weren't afraid. But that was a lie; they were. Just to keep up appearances, though, everyone said that the only one who really had anything to be scared of, the single person responsible for all the bad things that have happened in Chamula, was the municipal president. In truth, of course, all of them knew that they too had participated in the round-ups and expulsions of their Protestant neighbors, and they were all afraid the Zapatistas were going to come and exact justice. They had heard that the Zapatistas were well armed and figured they wouldn't waste a lot of time listening to excuses, that they would just kill all the Chamulas who had beaten the Protestants and burned their property. And what could the Chamulas do about it? They didn't have any good weapons, just some .22 rifles, a few pistols, and one or another old shot-gun—enough to scare their unarmed neighbors, maybe, but against real soldiers they wouldn't have a chance. Instead of fighting, they all said, everyone in the whole town would be better off if they just stayed in bed and screwed one last time.

As you can imagine, however, if everyone else was worried, the municipal president himself was terrified. He was so scared about what the Zapatistas and Protestant exiles would do to him if they ever caught him that he walked around for a week with a hard-on. But stiff! He better than anyone knew all of the terrible things that had been done. But he wasn't alone. To tell the truth, the whole town was afraid.

Finally, since there was no other defense, the *presidente* announced that the whole town should offer candles and incense at the sacred caves and mountain tops and ask for the protection of God and the saints. Since Chamula's *j-iloletik* [shamans] are famed for their power, this seemed like such a good idea that the officials of the *municipios* of Zinacantán, Amatenango, Mitontic and Huistán decided to join in as well. Together, they thought, maybe their prayers would be powerful enough to keep the Zapatistas away.

On the appointed day, scores of officials and dozens of chanting

shamans, all dressed in their ceremonial clothes and many carrying candles and *yavak'aletik* of burning incense, assembled at the church in Zinacantán. From the church and sacred mountain of Zinacantán, they proceeded together to the sacred cave at the border of the *municipio* of San Andrés, and then to the mountain of Chaklajun on the road between the *cabecera* of Chamula and San Cristóbal. They prayed for more than an hour at each site. *Kajval!* [Lord]: There was so much incense it was like a fragrant fog, and the whole entourage seemed to hum like bees as each man murmured somberly in his own prayers:

Have Mercy, *Kajval*,
 Have Mercy, Jesús.
 Make yourself present among us, *Kajval*,
 Make yourself present in our incense, Jesús
 With us, your daughters,
 With us, your sons.

We have brought you food, *Kajval*,
 We have brought you drink, Jesús,
 To awaken your conscience,
 To awaken your heart,
 That you might lend us your feet,
 That you might lend us your hands,
 That you might discharge your rifle,
 That you might discharge your cannon.

What sin have we, *Kajval*?
 What guilt have we, Jesús?
 Don't you see that we are here,
 sacred lightning?
 Don't you see that we are here,
 sacred thunder?
 We beg that you close the roads to
 your sons who are coming,*
 We beg that you close the roads to
 your daughters who are coming,
 That you bind their feet,
 That you bind their hands,
 That you silence their rifles,
 That you stifle their cannons,
 If only for an hour,
 If only for two hours, *Kajval*,
 Although they come at night,
 Although they come in the day,

* i.e. the Zapatistas.

Although they come at sundown,
 Although they come at sunrise.

Holy guardian of the earth,
 Holy guardian of the sky,
 Because we come on our knees,
 Because we come bent over,
 Accept this bouquet of flowers,
 Accept this offering of leaves, *Kajval*.
 Accept this handful of incense,
 Accept this offering of smoke,
 That we come to offer at your feet,
 That we come to offer to your hands,
 Holy Father of sacred Chaklajun,
 Holy Mother of sacred Chaklajun.

As the days passed and the Zapatistas never came, it seemed that the prayers had worked...

Early January: The Evangelicals' Prayer

The traditional officials and *j-iloletik* were not the only ones who were afraid during the siege of San Cristóbal, however. The Chamula evangelicals—the *expulsados*—were also scared. Since they live in colonies on the outskirts of the city, it might even be true that at the beginning they were even more frightened than the traditionalists. But even later, when they saw that the Zapatistas meant them no harm, they continued praying because now they were afraid the national army was going to kill them. Their prayers sound just the same as the traditionalists, but if you listen to the words they say different things. Here's the prayer of the pastor of the colony *Paraíso*:

Our Lord Jesus Christ,
 God, who is in Heaven,
 Lord, we are your daughters,
 We are your sons,
 Look, Lord, at the thoughts of
 those who are invading,
 Look at how they don't want
 the good you bring,
 How they are coming with arms,
 How they are coming with machetes,
 But listen to our words,
 Eternal Father,
 You alone decide what will be,
 You alone prepare what will be.
 We, Lord, without you can do nothing,

We, without you, are not complete.
 Listen, Lord Jesus Christ,
 You who accompany us on your path,
 You who accompany us on our walk,
 There is nothing we can do without you,
 There is nothing we can start
 without you, Lord.

Look at us,
 See us,
 On your path,
 On our trip, Lord.
 We only ask your favor, Lord,
 That they not come to hit us,
 That they not come to fight us,
 In our houses,
 In our homes.
 You, Father,
 You, Lord,
 Accept our thanks,
 That what you say will be done,
 That your children will do
 only what you have thought.
 Look, Lord, pardon us,
 That we do not know how to
 communicate with you more
 respectfully,
 That we are not worthy to
 address you, Lord.
 This is the only way we know,
 Only like this,
 In our own language,
 With our heads bowed, Lord.
 Hallelujah,
 Hallelujah,
 Hallelujah.

Late January: Toward a Free Market

For the first two weeks or so after the seizure of San Cristóbal, not a single *kaxlan** official showed his face in public—not a policeman, not a parking officer, not a collector of market fees. Not one. They disappeared! They were so terrified of the Zapatistas that they hid. But the moment they were sure the Zapatista Army was gone and wasn't coming back, Ha!, immediately the parking officers were back unscrewing

* The word *kaxlan*, pronounced 'kashlan,' is a corruption of the Spanish word *castellano*, Castilian, and is the Tzotzil word for non-Indians.

license plates, the municipal police beating up drunks, and the market collectors chasing away poor women trying to sell tomatoes and lemons on street corners. With the Zapatistas gone, suddenly they were fearless again. But when the Zapatistas were here, they stayed in their bedrooms with the shades closed, quaking with fear. They couldn't even get it up with their wives they were so scared.

You see what that means? They were afraid of *Indians*, because that's what the Zapatistas were, Indians. When we other Indians realized that, we felt strong as well. Strong like the Zapatistas. The *kaxlanetik* of San Cristobál have always pushed us around just because we don't speak Spanish correctly. But now everything has begun to change.

One example of this is that in mid-January, when the *kaxlan* officials were all still hidden, the Indian charcoal sellers got together and formed the '*Organización Zapatista* of Charcoal Sellers.' Then, without asking anybody's permission, they moved from the vacant field where they had always been forced to sell in the past to the street right next to the main market. The thing is, *ak'al* is really dirty—everything around it gets covered with black dust—so the market officials had always kept it far away from the part of the market frequented by 'decent people' and tourists. With no one to stop them, however, the charcoal sellers came to be near everyone else.

But there are a lot of other Indians who have always been relegated to the edges of the market too. When these people saw that the charcoal sellers had changed their location without asking anyone's permission, they started coming around and asking if they could change as well. *Hí-jole!* Suddenly there were a couple of hundred people sitting in orderly rows selling vegetables and fruit and charcoal in what used to be the parking lot where rich people left their cars! The first day they gathered there, the leader of the charcoal sellers gave a speech. "*Brothers and sisters!*" he cried, "*Don't be afraid! There are too many of us selling here in this street now! Let all of those who have been forced to sell out of the backs of trucks, all of those who have been driven to the edges of the market, come sell right here in the center with us! Let them come and take a place here in these rows we have made, and then we'll see if the kaxlan officials dare say anything! Only one thing to all of those who join us: I don't want to hear anyone talking about being afraid! If we remain united and firm, we have nothing to fear!*" All the Indian peddlers jumped to their feet. "*We're with you!*" they responded joyfully.

So every morning early all of these people came and formed themselves into neat rows and spread their goods out on the ground. But then the day finally came when the Market Administrator returned. Since he's the boss of the market and all the surrounding streets, he stomped up to the first charcoal seller he saw and demanded "*Who gave you permission to sell here?*" "*No one had to give us permission because we belong to an organization.*" "*What fucking organization? Pick up all this shit and get the hell out of here before I lose my temper,*" the Administrator screamed, "*I don't want to hear another word from any of you assholes! Are*

you going to fucking obey or not?" Mother of God! He seemed pretty mad. *"No, we're not going to move. We're poor and hungry, and we have to sell to eat,"* the Indian said stubbornly. Then the leader of the charcoal sellers spoke. *"You sound brave now,"* he said evenly to the Administrator, *"but when the Zapatistas were here you didn't say anything because you were hiding behind your wife's skirts. Not until now have you had the balls to talk. So who's the asshole? Maybe it would be better for you if you kept quiet, because if you run us off we're going to make sure the sub-comandante of the Zapatistas gets your name, and then we'll find out how much of a man you are. You might win today, but maybe you ought to think about what it's going to cost you in the long run."*

Hijo! The Administrator had never been talked to like that by an Indian before! He started to tremble, who knows whether from fear or rage, and then he turned and fled without saying another word, taking all of his fee collectors with him.

And that's where things remain at the beginning of March. Thanks to the Zapatistas, the Indians are learning to stand up for themselves...

Early February: The Governed Do Not Consent

Then there's what happened in Teopisca.* In February, some Indian squatters from outside the town seized the *kaxlan* municipal president. They said he hadn't kept his campaign promises, and just grabbed him. He tried to make excuses for himself. *"I already spent my entire budget on you,"* he begged, *"I paved your streets, I brought electricity to your houses, I brought you water faucets, I made new roads for your trucks... What more do you want?"* But according to all of the people, none of what he said was true. The streets aren't paved, there's no electricity, no faucets, no roads; nothing. In truth, the president and his friends just stole all the money.

Well, the squatters almost lost their heads and killed the president. Some wanted to hang him and they say someone even took a shot at him. But eventually others calmed the crowd down, and in the end all they did was truss him up like a pig, throw him in a pick-up truck and send him back to the state government in Tuxtla.

The thing is, those squatters were Indians, Chamulas! There was a handful of poor ladinos among them too, but most were Chamulas! And they managed to capture and depose the president of a *kaxlan* town! Of course, it was the president's own fault; no one forced him to steal the municipality's money. But now all the politicians have to be careful. We 'poor dumb Indians' aren't afraid the way we used to be. Now we've all learned from the Zapatistas how to meet our collective problems: with unity. Obviously, the squatters didn't have machine guns and grenades like the Zapatistas—just .22's and shotguns. No; it was their unity that gave them strength!

* i.e. the next ladino town south of San Cristóbal.

Mid-February: The Festival of Games

Since everyone in Chamula was still afraid at the beginning of February that the Zapatistas were coming, *K'in Tajimol* didn't go well this year. Instead of coming and staying two or three days as in the past, visiting with their friends and sleeping on the ground, everyone came down from their hamlets to watch for just a few minutes before scurrying back to their houses and closing the doors. Nobody wanted to be part of a crowd in the town center.

As if that weren't enough, the army had forbidden fireworks. No one could have sky-rockets [*cohetes*], fire-crackers or pin-wheels. Nothing. The head religious officials were able to have just a few *cohetes* for the celebration itself, but only by getting a special permit from the army. The municipal president had to go ask in person, and only won out after explaining that the religious officials had been saving for twenty years each to put on the fiesta, and that it—and their lives—would be ruined without rockets.*

In San Cristóbal, on the other hand, fireworks are absolutely prohibited. No exceptions. But *cohetes* are just as much a part of their traditions as ours, so all their fiestas are very sad. Of course, there are still marimba bands, games, and always a little bit of liquor. Nevertheless, the fiestas are sad and fearful. The soldiers don't even want anyone to drink; if they catch a drunk, they beat him up. They don't want anyone to be noisy or out of order.

After all, though, neither the army nor the Zapatistas came to Chamula's *K'in Tajimol*. Not many other people came either, for that matter. The fiesta didn't go well.

Mid-February: Mayan Justice

When the negotiations with the government began in mid-February, the Zapatistas, as a sign of good faith, freed the former Governor, Absalón Castellanos Domínguez, whom they had captured at his ranch at the beginning of the revolt. They say he got sick at the end, that he wouldn't eat anything. Maybe it was because his hands were tied behind his back for six weeks, who knows... Personally, I think he got sick because he couldn't stand the Zapatistas' cooking! It was nothing but Indian food: corn and a little beans. No meat. There is no one in the Zapatistas' camp in the jungle but Indians, and Indians aren't used to eating meat. We can never afford to buy it, and even if an animal dies we have to sell it. Poor old *don* Absalón: since he's rich, he's not accustomed to going without meat every day...

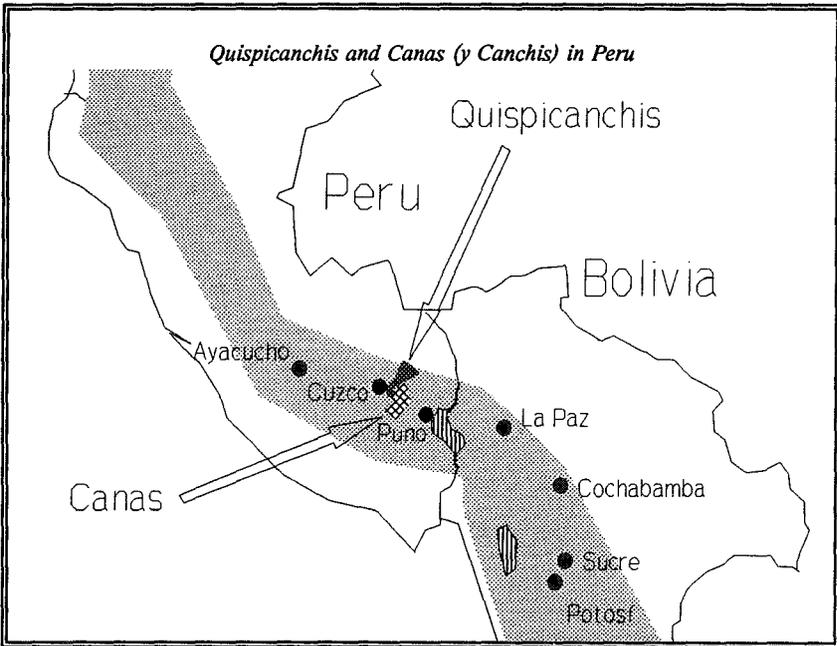
Still, when they freed him, outside of his hands, which were a little swollen, he seems to have been okay. That's more than you can say for

* 'Festival of Games': the Mayan New Year, celebrated at Carnaval.

Indians who are arrested by the authorities, rebellion or no rebellion. When Absalón was Governor, they were always beaten, whether they were guilty or not, even before they were questioned, 'so they would learn to have respect.' All the Zapatistas did to Absalón, on the other hand, was take his ranch away from him and divide it among peasants who have no land. Who knows whether they will get to keep it...

Part Two

The Andes



Face-to-Face with Rebellion

Individual Experience and Indigenous Consciousness in the Thupa Amaro Insurrection

WARD STAVIG*

"The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living. And just when they seem engaged in revolutionizing themselves and things, in creating something that has never yet existed, precisely in such periods of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirits of the past to their service and borrow from them the names, battle cries and costumes in order to present the new scene of world history in this time-honoured disguise and this borrowed language."

—Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*—

The Context of Rebellion

Having decided that corregidor Antonio de Arriaga was to be hanged, José Gabriel Thupa Amaro called on his trusted old friend and teacher, the creole priest of Pampamarca, Antonio Lopez de Sosa, to inform the corregidor of his fate. Handing Arriaga a picture of Christ, the priest conveyed the sentence of death. On November 10, 1780 Arriaga, dressed in a penitential habit, was led to the gallows in Tungasuca. The corregidor asked Thupa Amaro's pardon for once having called him a 'fraudulent Indian.' Then Antonio Oblitas, a black selected to be the executioner, carried out the Inca's order and hanged Arriaga, but the leather rope broke and both the executioner and victim tumbled to the ground. The corregidor's death was only temporarily delayed. Another rope was obtained and while several men secured the rope that encircled Arriaga's neck, others, including the executioner, pulled on Arriaga's feet

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until the corregidor was dead.

The gathered Indians and residents of Tungasuca watched along with Thupa Amaro and several priests as the corregidor was hanged and the insurrection made public. These witnesses and the use of a penitential habit added to the formality and 'legality' of the situation. They also helped confirm the authority of Thupa Amaro, adding to the mystique the rebel leader already had as heir to the Inca throne. As Leon Campbell noted,

*"the rebel's elaborate use of ceremony and ritual in publicly stripping Arriaga of his sash of office and sword, as well as his bastón, [vara], or authority stick signifying his position as corregidor, dressing the fallen official in sackcloth and ashes and as [in?] the penitential habit of the Franciscans, was a visible effort to gain the support of the people also. Witnesses to the event noted the hanging certified Túpac Amaru's charismatic authority: the people who cordoned off the plaza appeared to be 'entranced' and firmly under the sway of the leader."*¹

Thupa Amaro envisioned broad changes and reforms that he knew would not be acceptable to viceregal officials. The colonial government might tolerate the execution of a corregidor, particularly one such as Arriaga who had been abusive and excessive, without resorting to reprisals. However, it would never accept the changes he demanded nor the appropriation of the twenty-two thousand pesos of tribute that Thupa Amaro had taken from the Canas y Canchis treasury after having coerced or forged the signature of Arriaga. The crown's tribute, the product of the sweat and toil of Indians, would provide the initial funding for the rebellion.

Yet, at least publicly, Thupa Amaro took his actions in the name of the king of Spain. Even though people in the communities were experiencing increasing tensions by 1780, they were not necessarily disposed to rebel, or, if they rebelled, to reject the Spanish crown. By rising against colonial officials in the name of Charles III, Thupa Amaro sought to win support from those who would have hesitated or shied away had they seen their actions as part of an open rebellion against the king rather than against unjust authorities and laws. Even to the condemned Arriaga, the rebel leader claimed to have in his possession royal orders for the corregidor's execution.² Thus, as the flames of rebellion began to spread, Thupa Amaro's followers were led to believe that they were taking up arms in the name of the king to rid themselves, and the crown, of bad government.

The capture and execution of Antonio de Arriaga was the opening salvo by Thupa Amaro (also known as Túpac Amaru³) in a rebellion that swept like wildfire across the southern Andes in 1780 and which is generally known by his name. This insurrection, the most serious challenge to Spanish colonial rule in the Andes since the sixteenth century, is the subject of this chapter. I will first place the rebellion in its colonial and, especially, its eighteenth century context. Then I will examine ways in which face-to-face relations affected participation, or the lack of

participation, by indigenous peoples in the movement. In so doing I will focus primarily on events in the two Cuzco provinces, Quispicanchis and Canas y Canchis, where the rebellion was centered and where Thupa Amaro was a *curaca* (ethnic leader).

There were actually several uprisings, Thupa Amaro and his followers constituting the largest and most successful rebellious force. The movements that have been subsumed under the name of the Thupa Amaro rebellion were complex. They shared some characteristics, but their participants also had different agendas, different goals. Thupa Amaro sought to incorporate *criollos* to a much greater degree than did the movements in Upper Peru or what is now Bolivia. The indigenous peoples themselves were separated not only by their own cultures and ethnicities and by certain differences in regional economic and political circumstances, but by language. The people near Cuzco were Quechua speakers while many of those in the rebellious zones of Bolivia often spoke Aymara. Indeed, as Leon Campbell argues, there were,

*"profound differences between neo-Inca nationalism as it was expounded by the elitist Túpac Amarus of Cuzco, whose purpose was to unite everyone who was not a 'Spaniard,' and the radical, populist, and separatist views held by the commoner, indigenous Kataris of Upper Peru, whose ideas were shaped by the strong presence of native community leadership."*⁴

Though one may dispute the implications of Campbell's definition of the Thupa Amaros as 'elitist' and argue that Cuzco communities, like those under the influence of the Kataris *"were shaped by the strong presence of native community leadership,"* the regional variations were strong.

The execution of Arriaga, though it was Thupa Amaro's entrance on to the revolutionary stage, was not the first act of rebellion in 1780. In the province of Chayanta in Upper Peru fighting had broken out in August and September of 1780. The leader of this rebellion was Tomás Catari, but by January of 1781 he had been captured and executed. His brothers, Dámaso and Nicolás assumed control of the rebellion, but they shortly met their brother's fate. While the Chayanta revolt found roots in many of the same factors that drove the peoples of rural Cuzco to rebel, the Chayanta rebels were different. They more often turned against their own curacas, as well as the Spanish, and what resulted was an inner civil war as well as a rebellion against colonial rule. In this region close to Potosi there were also many *forasteros* who added to the complexity of the ethnic composition of the region and which provided a basis of conflict between *originarios* and *forasteros* in this zone. Spaniards also had a very strong influence in this region and controlled considerable lands. This is in relatively sharp contrast to the home provinces of Thupa Amaro where there were relatively few *forasteros* or Spaniards, except in the zone of Quispicanchis closest to the city of Cuzco.

After the defeat of the Catari brothers, Julián Apasa, better known as Túpac Catari (borrowing names from Túpac Amaru and Tomás Cata-

ri), emerged as the leader of indigenous rebel forces in the Aymara speaking regions of Upper Peru which by this point were strongest in the zone near La Paz. Túpac Catari, though acting with a great deal of independence and in control of a more popular movement, did accept the Thupa Amaros, at least in name, as leaders of the rebellion. However, by November of 1781 he too had met his end at the hands of colonial justice, and many of his followers had grown wary or tired of the movement.

Operating out of Quispicanchis and Canas y Canchis, Thupa Amaro survived barely seven months after initiating the rebellion. He, his wife, and other family members and rebels were executed in a most brutal fashion in the plaza of Cuzco on May 18, 1781. Parts of their bodies were sent throughout the region to serve as very grim reminders to others who might consider rising up against Europeans. The rebellious forces then came under the control of the Inca's cousin, Diego Cristóbal Thupa Amaro. The rebels fought on but eventually accepted the viceroy's offer of pardon. By early 1782 Spanish rule was no longer threatened. For over a year, however, the viceroyalty had been shaken to its foundations.

The events of 1780 had been preceded by the Juan Santos Atahualpa rebellion which had been fought in the central *montaña* region of Peru during the 1740s and early 1750s and which was strengthened by the belief that its leader was the returning Inca. Juan Santos, claiming descent from the Inca Atahualpa and armed with a Jesuit education, struggled to restore the Inca kingdom and to remove Europeans from the realm he and his followers controlled. When Juan Santos and his troops marched on Andamarca,

*"the defense preparations organized by Andamarca's respectable 'citizens' fell apart. Only two shots were fired before an Indian voice shouted: 'This is our Inca, come over here.' Juan Santos then peacefully entered, marched toward the plaza, and accepted the homage of his new vassals. As a horrified eyewitness later recalled, the Indians and mestizos who betrayed Andamarca's defense kissed the Rebel's hands and feet."*⁵

For these people the idea of an Inca, the acceptance of an Inca ruler, had cultural resonance.

Identification with, and glorification of, the Inca past was not new, but such tendencies reverberated with increasing strength in the eighteenth century. The desperate present made the rebirth of the past a source of hope as well as providing an alternative vision to the Spanish dominated world. Throughout the colonial period there were those who believed in *Gran Paititi*, an Inca society in the jungle where survivors of Cuzco had fled and rebuilt their empire after the Spanish conquest. A millenarian belief, that of *Inkarri*, also grew after the collapse of Tawantinsuyu and the death of the Inca. According to the *Inkarri* belief the Inca would return and bring order and justice to the world. In the late colonial period many *naturales* (a colonial term for indigenous peoples)

were attracted to the cultural renewal and identity offered by *Gran Paititi* and *Inkarri*. However, as Alberto Flores Galindo cautioned, one should not see in *Inkarri* and *Gran Paititi* "a mechanical response to colonial domination." He also noted that while by the eighteenth century such ideas were widespread they were not continuous, and were probably best thought of as "small islands and archipelagos."⁶

The growing identification of the Inca past as a more harmonious world also stirred pride in some of the remaining indigenous nobility. This is reflected in the colonial portraits of Inca nobles who chose to have themselves painted not in Spanish clothes, their everyday dress, but dressed as Inca royalty. During the rebellion Thupa Amaro not only donned Inca apparel and symbols, such as the loose fitting outer garment or *uncu*, and a gold sun, but he and his wife, Micaela Bastidas, had themselves painted as an Inca royal couple.⁷

Flores Galindo argued that this interest in the Inca even carried over to certain Europeans and served as a potential unifying force between the indigenous and non-indigenous worlds,

"the return of the Inca, as an alternative to colonial oppression, was born of the approximation of the Indian and Spanish republics, those two seemingly impassable worlds. A plain biological fact: the increase of the mestizos (22 percent of the population) over the course of the [eighteenth] century. Andean culture moved from repression and clandestinity to tolerance and into public ambits: fiestas and processions exhibited images of the Incas; similar themes appeared on the keros (drinking cups), canvasses, and even murals. The reinstatement of the Inca Empire would seem then to constitute a principle of identity: this utopia would not be a product solely of the indigenous sector, but would encompass other social sectors as well.

*The approximation of these two republics (Indian and Spanish) followed several routes. At times the creoles and mestizos would opt to express themselves in Quechua, composing yaravies (indigenous folk songs) like 'Mariano Melgar' or dramas with Incaic personages in the style of Ollantay. On other occasions, the Indian might 'employ European elements to better express himself.'"*⁸

The collective memory of the Incan world and its glories was also enhanced, perhaps created, through the reading of Garcilaso de la Vega's *Royal Commentaries*. Indigenous nobles and peoples of European or mixed heritage pored over the work of this first generation mestizo who sought to redeem his mother's people. Again Flores Galindo informs us:

"Comentarios Reales, that book of Renaissance history, came to be read much as a pamphlet by figures such as Túpac Amaru, who took as emphatic denunciation the comparison of the Incas and the Romans, the criticisms of Viceroy Toledo, the veiled suggestion that a just and equitable empire ought to be reconstructed. Garcilaso turned the Inca era, Tawantinsuyo, into a golden age. The Inca believed the past could fill a moralizing function by offering models for the present: his

*historical conception was infected by utopia in the strictest European sense of the word. He was a Platonic historian. The eighteenth-century indigenous elite, which had easy access to Spanish language and to the printed word, understood this inner message of the book; they in turn, transported it orally to other social sectors. We know 'a work by Garcilaso' accompanied Túpac Amaru in his travels."*⁹

While this growing consciousness or Inca nationalism was important, one should be careful to not read too much into this movement. John Rowe cautions that it is necessary "to maintain a clear distinction between the mass of the tributary population and the aristocracy of the caciques; both groups served part of the old tradition, but a different part."¹⁰ However, even if the concern with Inca heritage was not 'the unifying factor' for caste or racial consciousness, it was important in the larger awareness that developed among certain *naturales* in the complex and contradictory years just before the 1780 rebellion.

One of the leading scholars of eighteenth century rebellion in Peru, Scarlett O'Phelan Godoy, argues that the Thupa Amaro rebellion erupted in the southern Andes because it was precisely in this region where "the colonial contradictions accumulated."¹¹ O'Phelan had in mind dislocations created by colonial demands, changes in the colonial structure which disrupted trade and the increased economic hardship such burdens placed on *naturales* in the region. However, contradictions within the indigenous communities, often spurred by colonial demands, were also pronounced. In Canas y Canchis and Quispicanchis, where the population remained overwhelmingly Indian, the way of life of the *naturales*, though significantly altered over the course of more than two centuries of colonial rule, still allowed people in the communities to preserve a strong sense of themselves. By the late eighteenth century, however, population growth, economic demands, and shortages of land had eroded the *naturales'* security. With their way of life threatened, the difficulties of being both Indian and a subject of Spanish colonial rule began to be exacerbated. For many people in the southern Andes, but certainly not all, these contradictions had become too great by 1780. In this situation the legitimacy of, and linkages to, viceregal officials and Spaniards, if not the crown, were susceptible of being severed when Thupa Amaro, heir to the Inca throne, provided the leadership, direction, and insurrectional spark.

Over the course of the eighteenth century the Bourbon monarchs of Spain, like other colonial rulers, sought to exert greater control over their colonies and to make the colonies yield increased revenues. As a part of these changes, the crown and individual government officials augmented demands and imposed policies that made life much more difficult for many Andean peoples in the decades prior to the Thupa Amaro rebellion. This, in turn, caused many indigenous people (and some people of European decent), to question the legitimacy of those who governed as well as their own ability to socially reproduce themselves under the altering conditions.

Indigenous peoples had long been subject to a variety of colonial demands such as tribute and forced labor. The peoples of Quispicanchis and Canas y Canchis, as well as those of the Chayanta region, were subject to the much dreaded labor draft or *mita* for the silver mining industry of Potosí. For nearly two centuries they had complied with these demands. However, in the mid eighteenth century new demands began to be added to the older burdens. In the 1750s the *reparto* (forced distribution and sale of goods by the corregidor to indigenous peoples and sometimes Spaniards and mestizos), which had been functioning informally, was fully legalized. Instead of improving their situation, legalization made the lot of the people in the communities more difficult. Though official *reparto* demands in Quispicanchis and Canas y Canchis were lower than in many regions of the Andes, Corregidor Arriaga provoked tensions in the years just prior to the rebellion by distributing goods far in excess of the established quota. Instead of the one legal *reparto* of 112,000 pesos which the corregidor of Canas y Canchis was allowed to make in his five year tenure, Arriaga made three *repartos* and was accused by Thupa Amaro of collecting some 300,000 pesos.¹²

The situation was further complicated when in 1776 the division of the Viceroyalty of Peru and the creation of the new Viceroyalty of Río de la Plata disrupted trading patterns and economic life in the southern Andes. Economic tensions also increased when the *alcabala*, or sales tax, rose from 4 to 6 per cent and a number of items *naturales* produced which had previously been exempt became subject to the tax. At the same time custom houses or *aduanas* were established that sought to collect taxes with an efficiency never before possible. These changes, in addition to rapid population growth which diminished the per capita resource base, weakened the social glue which secured the relationship of *naturales* to colonial society.

Alone none of these factors was significant enough to incite rebellion, but in conjunction they formed the basis of a growing economic crisis that contributed, in turn, to an even broader crisis in the communities. O'Phelan refers to these economic changes and demands as "*the feather that broke the camel's back,*" arguing that "*if the Bourbon fiscal reforms had not been applied with such rigor in this region, the great rebellion probably would not have broken out, or, in any case, it would not have manifested itself with the same intensity.*"¹³

Perceptions and Personal Relations

In their daily lives most indigenous peoples reacted to others on the basis of their personal relations with them. However, just as non-Indians sometimes showed little respect for indigenous peoples, some *naturales* went so far as to demonize or 'otherize' the non-indigenous peoples, referring to the Spanish as *puka kunka* or 'red necks.'¹⁴ In the region of rural Cuzco, however, a close reading of the documents indicates that

while indigenous peoples may have held prejudices against non-indigenous peoples, in their day-to-day affairs they tended to deal with others on an individual and face-to-face basis. The reverse seems to have been at least partly true. People of European descent often supported indigenous individuals and communities against the claims of other Europeans. In this world, dominated as it was by *naturales*, other people living in the region were treated as they were known. If they deserved respect they got it, however if they were held in low esteem respect was not forthcoming. For instance, a mestizo who was believed to be a thief by the indigenous peoples in one Canas y Canchis community was referred to by these people not as a mestizo, but derisively as a 'cholo dog' and they assaulted him and "grabbed him by the testicles and squeezed them so hard from which he was suffering more than a year."¹⁵ However, these *naturales* did not paint everyone of a different racial category with the same broad strokes.

Similarly, Thupa Amaro, though a descendant of the Inca, was a mestizo with many *criollo* and mestizo friends. He did not share the prejudices towards non-Indians, or at least not with the same intensity, as did more radicalized *naturales*. He had his own vision of the world that was to be both restored and created and it included people other than just the *naturales*. Besides a normal reluctance to risk all in rebellion, the individual experiences of *naturales*, even within the same community and region, were often quite different. This understanding of themselves as specific peoples with specific identities, and the relationships formed on the basis of this identity, had a great deal to do with the participation, or not, of indigenous peoples in the rebellion. To better understand the importance of this sense of identity I would like to turn our attention away from the larger conjunctures of demand and exploitation which have received considerable attention in recent years (as they deserve), and focus more on ways in which individual and *ayllu* and community consciousness affected the course of events.

In the fluid situation of the mid to late eighteenth century changing conditions could make what were once tolerable situations and demands intolerable. What was once viewed as acceptable or legitimate could come to be viewed as excessive. Thus, demands that had been begrudgingly complied with in certain circumstances caused tumults in different situations. At the same time *naturales*, and even some *criollos*, were hesitant to believe that oppressive or exploitative changes in policy came from the crown rather than from local officials who wished to enrich themselves. There was good reason to harbor such suspicions as the crown often passed more humane or protective legislation that was not enforced at the local level and indigenous peoples often found relief from abusive or exploitative treatment by individuals and local officials by appealing to higher authorities. Even if such arguments were a ruse designed to warn the crown while not directly attacking it, the stratagem was not only effective but was widely believed. For instance, Bernardo Gallo, the man in charge of the *aduana* in La Paz who was later

killed by rebels, complained that both Spaniards and Indians “believed that the new alcabala [sales tax] was my own invention, it being impossible to make them understand that this was not the case.”¹⁶ At the same time, as colonial circumstances made it more difficult for *naturales* to meet exactions, the behavior of state officials who enforced the demands was increasingly perceived as excessive and abusive. Indeed, *abusos y excesos* was the term used in legal documents to describe the actions of individuals who exceeded the understood cultural and legal limits that guided acceptable behavior.

When the degree of *abusos y excesos* was severe enough to not only transgress the *naturales'* sense of justice but their limits of tolerance, the legitimacy that a representative of the state—such as a *corregidor* or *cobrador* (tax collector)—may have enjoyed was stripped away, leaving the offending individual open to attack. And, in fact, colonial officials may have increasingly resorted to threats and force as it became more difficult for people to meet the heavy demands and they, therefore, became more resistant to the demands. In this situation the harsher character of some individuals may have led to attacks on their person, while others who were enforcing similar demands and confronting similar problems were not assaulted. Not all *cobradores* or *corregidores* were alike, just as the circumstances under which they operated were not always the same.¹⁷ In fact, Jürgen Golte argues that the forced distribution of goods was a primary cause of local rebellions and, indeed, the *reparto* does seem to have been at the center of many local upheavals along with the collection of other debts. The question remains, however, if it was the debt or the manner of collecting the debt (or both) that was the source of violence.¹⁸

A typical case is that of a *cobrador* in Quiquijana, Quispicanchis, who was killed after trying to collect a tribute debt.¹⁹ At first glance the incident appears to be an attack or protest against tribute, but when looked at carefully from the ground level the revolt seems less a protest against colonial demands than a lashing out against an especially abusive official. Don Carlos Ochoa, a mestizo *cobrador*, went to collect tribute owed by Lucas Poma Inga, the cacique of Cusipata (Quiquijana). Poma Inga could only pay sixty pesos and offered the *cobrador* a note for the remainder. Though Poma Inga was known for being reliable in meeting his obligations, this was not good enough for Ochoa who had a reputation for ferocity. The *cobrador* and his friends hauled the curaca from his home, tied him up, beat him with a whip, and took him to Ochoa's home where he was again beaten and then locked in a storage room (*troje*).

In desperation, Poma Inga's wife, whom the *cobrador* had also beaten, asked the priest to intervene on her husband's behalf. The priest told her that Ochoa was “a very fearsome man and that he was not able to intervene with him,” but after a second request from the desperate woman the priest wrote a note to Ochoa. The *cobrador* not only ignored the message, but verbally abused the person who delivered it. With no reso-

lution in sight and aware that their cacique was in very bad shape, and fearing for his life, the people of Poma Inga's *ayllu* met and decided to rescue him "for the great love [they had] for their cacique." At night they entered Ochoa's house, removed Poma Inga, and killed Ochoa for having treated their cacique badly and with 'ignominy.' After the incident the priest cared for Poma Inga, who was "almost without movement," in the church and later testified both to his good character and to the bad character of the *cobrador*.

Other people of European descent also supported the actions of the community. Pascual Antonio de Loayza, an *arriero*, stated that he knew Poma Inga well, considered him a friend, and also knew that he was well respected by his *ayllu*. It was also reported that Poma Inga, even after being beaten, had told his people "not to riot and to try to calm themselves." The corregidor summoned the caciques from Quiquijana and took testimony, but no action was taken by the state or any of its representatives against those involved in Ochoa's death. In view of the excesses committed, the incident was either viewed as a provocation by the *cobrador* or it was deemed unwise to punish community members given the circumstances.

While it is true that Ochoa was a *cobrador*, and that his office had put him in the position to abuse the cacique, the people of Poma Inga's *ayllu* killed Ochoa not because he was a *cobrador*, but because he was an abusive *cobrador*. His abuses delegitimized his authority because they went beyond the bounds that governed Indian-Spanish relations in the colonial world. Neither the *naturales* nor the Europeans saw the killing as a challenge to colonial authority as a system. Violence was not directed at other representatives of the state nor at Europeans in general and it did not go beyond the borders of the community. After the incident Cusipata settled into its former routine, its moral economy restored.²⁰

As the case of Ochoa indicates, at the local level *naturales* perceived, and acted upon, differences in the behavior of individuals. Face-to-face relations were important in determining the course of events. For instance, Juan Antonio Reparaz, a corregidor of Canas y Canchis, dealt fairly with the *naturales* he governed in the day-to-day matters that came before him. He even donated 13,000 pesos out of his own funds to build bridges for certain communities, including Tinta (the provincial capital of Canas y Canchis where Arriaga was executed), after his term as corregidor ended.²¹ It does not follow that the system Reparaz was enforcing was just. He collected colonial exactions, like the other corregidores. Indeed, his contribution towards the building of the bridge most likely came from his profits in the *reparto*, but his treatment of the people of Canas y Canchis was perceived as fair by Thupa Amaro and others within the context of an increasingly exploitative system. Thus, violent confrontation between *naturales* and Reparaz was unlikely.

The majority of corregidores in Quispicanchis and Canas y Canchis were not as considerate as Reparaz in their behavior. Excessive or new

demands, violations of traditional arrangements, or treatment not in keeping with normative behavior were among the factors that strained or broke Indian-corregidor relations. For instance, in 1767, Corregidor Pedro Muñoz de Arjona worsened the conditions of the communities of Pichigua and Yauri when he issued orders forcing them to haul dried llama dung to the silver mines of Condoroma. Several of the people obliged to serve this *mita* had previously hauled llama dung, burnt in the refining process, to the mines and had also transported metals from the mines in order to earn money, some of which undoubtedly was used to meet state demands. However, under the new orders of the corregidor the burden on the *naturales* was increased and community members were no longer free to decide if they wished to earn money transporting dung up to the rocky, cold, and windswept mines of Condoroma. Moreover, mine owners now compensated the *naturales* with coca, clothes, food, and silver, and not exclusively with the much needed silver as had previously been the practice.²²

The differences between colonial officials, the way they were perceived, and the responses they evoked from *naturales* were apparent in the attitude of Thupa Amaro towards the last four corregidores who governed Canas y Canchis prior to the 1780 rebellion. While he grew increasingly impatient with the system the corregidores enforced, he clearly recognized differences between individual corregidores. Of these four men, according to John Rowe, Thupa Amaro disliked two, had mixed feelings about one, and "got along well" with the other. Corregidor Gregorio de Viana "harassed him greatly with the repartimiento" and treated him badly in business dealings. The next corregidor, Muñoz de Arjona, confirmed him as curaca (*curacazgo* of Pampamarca, Surimana, and Tungasuca), something that Viana had not done. Muñoz de Arjona and Thupa Amaro coexisted in harmony for a while, but when the corregidor had the curaca jailed over a dispute with a *cobrador* the relationship soured. Thupa Amaro "got along well" with the next corregidor, Reparaz. In commenting on how the actions of Reparaz influenced him, the rebel leader informed captors that "the rebellion had been thought of for many years, but he had not determined to rebel because Corregidor Reparaz, Arriaga's predecessor, had treated him very well and looked on the Indians with compassion."²³ Thupa Amaro had been swayed by the actions of an individual corregidor to set aside the idea of rebellion against the colonial state. Personal relations and behavior had made a difference. However, Thupa Amaro did not hold a similar opinion of the next corregidor, Arriaga, whom he hanged.

The reliance on close personal relations made kinship ties especially significant. It was only natural that when Thupa Amaro needed people he could trust implicitly he looked to his family. Some of his relatives were fellow muleteers and shared Thupa Amaro's knowledge of places and people beyond Quispicanchis and Canas y Canchis, but with or without this knowledge the inner circle of advisers and confidants were primarily family members. The authority of family members was also

enhanced by their being so closely related to the Inca, their being part of the royal family. Micaela Bastidas, the rebel's wife, enjoyed respect and a position of leadership within the movement, man and wife being a unit and complementing one another. Her status, like that of other family members, was not just ascribed however, it was also achieved. She shared many of her husband's responsibilities and exercised broad authority on her own.

The Spanish clearly recognized the importance of the kinship network in the rebellion. The Thupa Amaro family was nearly annihilated in public and brutal executions that made manifest the consequences for those who attacked the colonial system. Thupa Amaro was not only beheaded, but his body was quartered and parts placed throughout the rebellious countryside. One colonial official commented:

*"Neither the King nor the state thought it fitting that a seed or branch of the family should remain, or the commotion and impression that the wicked name of Túpac Amaru caused among the natives."*²⁴

In this vengeful manner the Spanish attested that they fully understood the importance of close familial relations in Andean society, particularly the family of the Inca.

As important as Thupa Amaro's other attributes were in initiating the rebellion, perhaps the most important factor in gaining the adherence of the *naturales* of Canas y Canchis and Quispicanchis to the cause, in addition to his being heir to the Inca throne, was his personal relationship with other local curacas. With few exceptions, people in the Cuzco region followed the lead of their curacas in supporting or opposing the rebellion, in sharp contrast to Catarista regions where many curacas were the first victims of the rebellion. More caciques in the Catarista zone of operations seem to have abused their ties with their communities, making them, as well as Spaniards, the focus of rebel violence.²⁵ In Cuzco, with many curacas of royal Inca blood still in authority and setting the example for curaca behavior, this was not the case. With few exceptions, the *ayllus* followed the lead of their curacas.²⁶ In fact, out of twenty-five regional curacas who supported the rebellion, twelve were from Canas y Canchis and another five from Quispicanchis (see the table on the next page).²⁷ The curacas from these two provinces were key in gaining initial support for the rebellion. Because their relationships with their *ayllus* were strong, the curacas were able to command the respect and support of their people. When the curacas decided to follow Thupa Amaro this translated into a swelling of the rebel ranks.

However, not all curacas in the Cuzco region supported the rebellion, and the people in the *ayllus* they governed also followed the lead of their non-rebellious curacas. The powerful, well-to-do noble curaca of Azángaro, Diego Choqueguanca, fought against Thupa Amaro. Rebel forces, in turn, burned haciendas and killed people in the zone controlled by Choqueguanca.²⁸ From Chinchero, to the north of Cuzco, another powerful curaca, Mateo Pumacahua, led his people into battle

against the Thupa Amaro army and was instrumental in the royalist defense of Cuzco. The depth of the differences between the two curacas was symbolized in a painting that Pumacahua commissioned after Thupa Amaro's capture:

*"The art depicted a puma [Pumacahua] defeating a snake [Amaru] beneath the benevolent gaze of the Virgen of Monserrat, Chinchero's patron saint. In the background stood Pumacahua and his wife, both dressed in Spanish garb, affirming their territorial sovereignty. Beneath the painting was inscribed Ceasar's dictum: Veni, Vidi, Vici, commemorating the defeat of this rival faction, an action which brought the house of Pumacahua renewed respect."*²⁹

Curacas who supported Thupa Amaro		
Name	curacazgo	
	Canas y Canchis	Quispicanchis Other
Pedro Bargas	Combapata	
Francisco Guambatupe	Yauri	
Francisco Guamaticlla	Checacupe	
Carlos Herrera	Combapata	
Crispín Huamani	Coporaque	
Josef Mamani	Tinta	
Ramón Moscoso	Yanaoca	
Crispín Ramos	Pitumarca	
Catalina Salas Pachacuti	Yanaoca	
Bentura Saravia	Layo	
Tomás Soto	Yanaoca	
Miguel Zamalloa	Sicuani	
Lucas Collque		Pomacanchis
Puma (I)nga		Quiquijana
Marcos Torres		Acomayo
Tomasa Tito Condemaita		Acos
Pedro Urpide		Pirque
Pablo Guamansulca		Carabaya, Carabaya
Antonio Gualpa		Belén, Cuzco
Juan de Dios Inca Roca		Santa Ana, Cuzco
Jacinto Inगतुपा		Santa Ana, Cuzco
Francisco Tallana		Betanzos, Azángaro
Pascual Díaz Calisaya		Lampa, Lampa
Santos Mamani Anco		Macari, Lampa
Blas Pacaricona		Lampa, Lampa

Source: Scarlett O'Phelan Godoy, *Rebellions and Revolts in Eighteenth Century Peru and Upper Peru*, (Köln, 1985), p. 214.

This is not a complete list of rebel caciques.

The situation surrounding the decision of Eugenio Sinanyuca, the curaca of Coporaque, to not join the rebellion is most interesting and

makes apparent the importance of personal considerations and face-to-face relations in determining perceptions and the consequent loyalties. Sinanyuca and the *naturales* of Coporaque were at loggerheads with their parish priest. The growing tensions between the priest and the community led Sinanyuca to rupture the traditional ties of support between the community and its priest. Eventually the situation became so serious that the people of Coporaque rose in a *motín* and paraded in front of the priest's house carrying a coffin and singing an Inca war song:

*"We will drink from the skull of the traitor, we will use his teeth as a necklace, from his bones we will make flutes, from his skin a drum, afterwards we will dance."*³⁰

In addition to being curaca, Sinanyuca also functioned as the *cobra-dor* for the ill-fated corregidor Arriaga. When the priest brought charges against Sinanyuca the cacique turned to the corregidor for help. Arriaga, who was himself at odds with the church over questions of jurisdictional authority and who had been excommunicated by the bishop, came to the aid of Sinanyuca and the community of Coporaque just when they learned that the bishop had excommunicated all of them for defying the priest. This was in late October of 1780, just a couple of weeks before Arriaga was detained by Thupa Amaro. The corregidor began legal proceedings against local priests and promised to send them to the proper authorities in November, a proposition with which his impending hanging made it impossible for him to comply.

In light of this struggle with the priest and bishop it is less puzzling why Sinanyuca and his people, who had been supported by Arriaga and excommunicated by the church, remained aloof from Thupa Amaro who was a friend of the bishop and who executed the corregidor while priests like his friend Lopez de Sosa watched. Sinanyuca and the people of Coporaque, and other indigenous peoples like them, were not behaving in a manner contradictory to their interests. They acted out of their own circumstances, their own experience, their own self-interest. They were not part of a generic indigenous mass. They were not united with other communities or region just because they were of the same race. They were the people of the *ayllus* of Coporaque and their leader was Eugenio Sinanyuca. In these very personal matters they did not share Thupa Amaro's experiences or interests. Thus, out of reasons grounded in their own personal experience many of them remained aloof from the rebellion.

Conclusion

The world view of indigenous peoples in the Andes was complex and contradictory. By the late eighteenth century colonial policies combined with population pressure had exacerbated divisions within indigenous society and native peoples began to question their ability to maintain their way of life. When changes in political administration and economic

policy further heightened tensions,

*"a conjuncture was produced in which the relations and assumptions that collectively formed the moral economy began to come under doubt, and compliance with its norms no longer seemed to assure the social reproduction of the Indian communities."*³¹

It was in this situation that the "lid the Spanish had successfully kept over the simmering tensions" of indigenous society finally blew off.³² One of the factors that led people to rebel, or not, was their face-to-face relations. In Chayanta it was not just Spanish policies, but negative face-to-face relations with local curacas that led indigenous peoples to revolt under other ethnic leaders. While Thupa Amaro's position as heir to the Inca throne was very important, in Quispicanchis and Canas y Canchis it was also the positive face-to-face relations with curacas that led *naturales* to join the curacas in rebellion. And, in turn, it was at least in part the curacas' personal relationship with Thupa Amaro that led them to follow the Inca.

In the province of Cuzco, not including the city and surrounding zone (the *cercado*), it has been calculated that out of a total population of 174,623 people some 28,495 were aligned with rebel curacas, while some 36,775 followed loyalist caciques. The overwhelming bulk of rebel support came from Thupa Amaro's home province, Canas y Canchis, and from neighboring Quispicanchis. These provinces contributed approximately 85 per cent of the Cuzco rebels. In contrast, all the other Cuzco provinces contributed roughly 15 per cent of the rebel forces. The percentage of *naturales* under loyalist curacas in Canas y Canchis and Quispicanchis was 25 percent and 11 percent, some 64 percent coming from the other *partidos*. These figures, inevitably not as precise as they seem, do give an indication of Thupa Amaro's strengths and weaknesses in Cuzco and reflect, I believe, the importance of personal ties.³³

Cultural tradition, reciprocal relations, communal solidarity and hope for a more just order under an Inca were among the factors that led *naturales* to follow their curacas in joining the insurrection, but they would not have followed—as the situation in Upper Peru shows—if their ties had not been strong. The length of the conflict, the misfortunes of war, and personal concerns, however, ultimately meant that both Indians and non-Indians reevaluated their commitments. Micaela Bastidas noted the fragile adherence to the movement when she commented that the rebel troops might begin to desert because "*they act mainly out of self-interest.*"³⁴ Such personal convictions and self-interests were powerful motivating factors for rebels and loyalists alike. Thupa Amaro even fell into royalist hands due to the personal motives of his captors. Two women from the Canas y Canchis community of Langui, one who had lost a husband in the rebellion and the other two sons, grabbed the bridle of his horse and held him as he sought to escape.³⁵ In the Andean world where personal actions and relations counted for so much, these women held Thupa Amaro responsible for the deaths of their loved ones. In turn, *naturales* in Langui later killed one of the women.

They held her responsible for the capture of their Inca.

In seeking to understand peoples and events in situations as complex as the Thupa Amaro rebellion it is very difficult to analyze the significance of both the broad issues and forces that shaped their lives and the local or short term forces in which their lives were immersed. The diversity and complexity of the latter make them difficult to analyze, but they form a vital component of people's consciousness. This is especially true in the Andes where ethnicity and divisions created by the rugged terrain, to mention but a couple of factors, led to a situation in which people maintained strong local identities and face-to-face relations. Thus, it is especially important to keep the personal and local—human agency—in mind in our broader analysis of revolts and rebellions.

Endnotes

1. Campbell, "Ideology and Factionalism," p. 122; and Fisher, *Last Inca Revolt*, pp. 45-48; Vega, "Sacerdotes." For a similar use of formal legal structure in an uprising see Langer "Andean Rituals of Revolt."
2. Fisher, *Last Inca Revolt 1780-1783*, p. 46.
3. For the correct spelling of the revolutionary's name see Rowe, "Thupa Amaro."
4. Campbell, "Ideology and Factionalism," pp. 114-115.
5. Stern, "Age of Andean Insurrection," p. 53.
6. Flores Galindo, *Europa*, pp. 50, 67. For a discussion of *Inkarri*, see Ossio A., *Ideología mesiánica*.
7. Rowe, "Colonial Portraits"; Campbell, "Ideology and Factionalism," p. 125; Fisher, *Last Inca Revolt*, p. 30.
8. Flores Galindo, "In Search of an Inca," pp. 194-195.
9. Flores Galindo, "In Search of an Inca," p. 202.
10. Rowe, "Movimiento nacional inca," pp. 21, 25.
11. O'Phelan Godoy, "Reformas fiscales borbónicas," p. 353, and, *Rebellions*, pp. 256-273.
12. Golte, *Repartos*, p. 95; Fisher, *Last Inca Revolt*, p. 39; Stavig, "Ethnic Conflict," p. 744.
13. O'Phelan Godoy, "Reformas fiscales borbónicas," pp. 342, 353.
14. Campbell, "Ideology and Factionalism," p. 121.
15. ADC. Corrg. Prov. Crim. Leg. 81, 1776-84. 1776.
16. O'Phelan Godoy, *Rebellions*, p. 184.
17. Stavig, "Ethnic Conflict," pp. 747-748.
18. Golte, *Repartos*.
19. Golte, *Repartos*, pp. 141-147.
20. ADC. Corrg. Prov. Crim. Leg. 80, 1773-75. 1774. Don Lucas Poma Inga, cacique ... de Cusipata de Quiquijana contra don Carlos Ochoa.
21. ADC. Intend. Prov. 1786. Expediente relativo a que se verifique la fabrica de puentes en Tinta poniendo una cantidad de pesos que dejo ... el corregidor Reparaz (is a 1785 case with 1786 materials). There are several cases that give this picture of the daily decisions of Reparaz. For a case that gives a different view, see Corrg. Prov. Crim. Leg. 79, 1745-73. El Común de Indios del ayllu Lurucachi del Pueblo de Marangani. Interestingly, in this case it was Corregidor Arriaga who found a judicious solution to community complaints.
22. ADC. Corrg. Prov. Leg. 67, 1766-69. [H]ucha a minas de Condorama, 1767; O'Phelan Godoy, *Rebellions*, p. 271.
23. Rowe, "Genealogía," pp. 74-76; also *Descargos del Obispo del Cuzco Juan Manuel Moscoso y Peralta*, p. 224.
24. Fisher, *Last Inca Revolt*, p. 379.
25. Campbell, "Ideology," pp. 115, 124; O'Phelan Godoy, *Rebellions*, p. 249.
26. One such exception occurred in Quiquijana where the cacique, Antonio Solis Quivimas, at first supported Thupa Amaro, but when his support faltered the people

drove him out of the community. See Mörner and Trelles, "Intento de calibrar," pp. 12-13.

27. O'Phelan Godoy, *Rebellions*, pp. 214-215.

28. Campbell, "Ideology," pp. 122-123.

29. Campbell, "Ideology," pp. 123-124.

30. Glave, "Comunidades campesinas," p. 72: "*Beberemos en el cráneo del traidor, usaremos sus dientes como un collar, de sus huesos haremos flautas, de su piel haremos un tambor, después bailaremos.*"

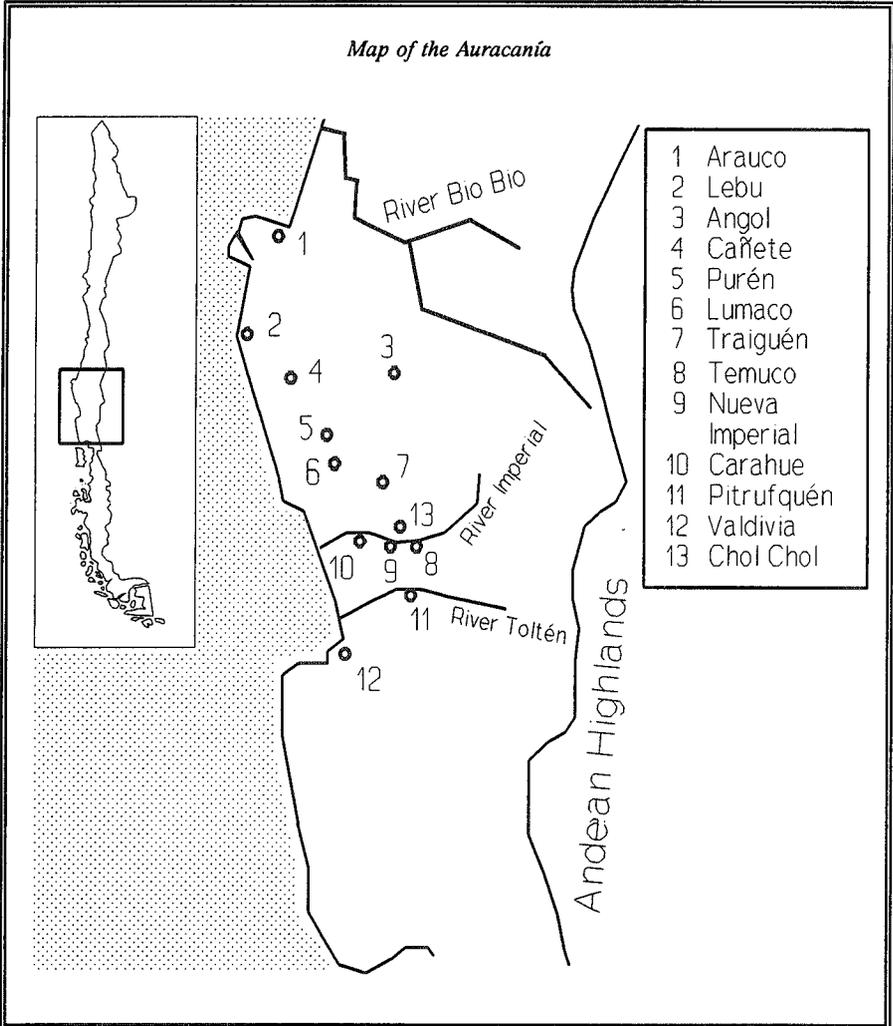
31. Stavig, "Ethnic Conflict," p. 767.

32. Stavig, "Ethnic Conflict," p. 769.

33. Mörner and Trelles, "Intento de calibrar," pp. 26-27. Mörner and Trelles have developed different models that produce different figures. I have selected the models that I think best represent the situation, but one should consider the numbers more as close approximations rather than exact figures.

34. O'Phelan Godoy, *Rebellions*, p. 240.

35. Valcarcel, *Túpac Amaru*, p. 243; Fisher, *Last Inca Revolt*, pp. 218-219.



Indigenous Rebellion in Chile

Araucanía, 1850-83

JOHN DAWE*

Introduction

Situated on the southern periphery of colonial Spanish America, beyond the fertile central valleys of Chile, Araucanía was a marginal area of little importance to the Spanish Crown. The inhospitable and densely forested valleys that lay to the west of the southern ranges of the Andes and the lower coastal Nahuelbuta *cordillera*, held few supplies of the precious metals that the Spanish coveted, while the area's remoteness, inclement weather, and poor communications limited the region's agricultural value. Despite this hostile environment, Araucanía was inhabited by the *Mapuche*, an indigenous people renowned in Spanish America for the ferocity with which they resisted Spanish ambitions of conquest.

Conflict of varying degrees had always characterised relations between the Araucanians and the Spanish. Initial attempts at conquest during the second-half of the sixteenth century provoked a state of virtually constant rebellion in the region between 1550 and 1656. In the later decades of the seventeenth century and throughout the eighteenth century, Sergio Villalobos insists that relations between the Mapuche and Spanish were markedly more peaceful and that commercial relations and *mestizaje* proceeded rapidly.¹ Despite these developments, Araucanía remained a region both nominally and effectively independent of Spanish domination. Conflict, however, persisted on the frontier and on several occasions before Chilean Independence was declared, rising tensions precipitated further rebellions.²

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The term *Mapuche* (meaning people of the land) will be used interchangeably with the term Araucanian. The success of Mapuche resistance to Spanish attempts at conquest was symbolized by the fact that the Spanish had never been able to establish a permanent foothold in Araucanía south of the river Bío-Bío, see map on preceding page.

If, as Villalobos claims, nonviolent relations characterised Araucanía in the eighteenth century, this peace lasted little longer than continued Spanish rule in Chile. Together with elements of the defeated royalist forces, the Mapuche again rose into open rebellion after the wars of Independence between 1819 and 1823, when the new republican regime reversed the treaties reached between the Araucanians and the Spanish and proclaimed sovereignty over Araucanía. Although the rebellion was followed by almost three decades of tranquillity, hostilities between the Mapuche and the Chileans increased dramatically between 1850 and 1883, resulting in uprisings in 1859, 1868 and 1881.

The subject of indigenous rebellion in Latin America has received much attention from historians and anthropologists alike and in recent years academics have incorporated broader frameworks of analysis into the study of rebellion. Still, it is surprising that the long history of indigenous rebellion in southern Chile has been all but ignored by scholars both within and beyond Latin America, who seem to have concentrated almost exclusively on the history of such protests in the Andean *sierras* of Peru and Bolivia.³ At the same time, little research in Chile has focused on the history of the Araucanía region. The objectives of this essay are therefore threefold: first, to reconsider the concept of rebellion in the light of recent research concerning broader contexts of social protest and resistance; second, to examine the existing literature useful for the evaluation of indigenous rebellion in Araucanía and to outline the history of Mapuche revolt, and third, to critically analyze indigenous resistance and rebellion in Araucanía between 1850 and 1883.

Social Protest, Resistance and Rebellion: Theoretical Frameworks.

In the past few decades, the debate concerning the role and importance of indigenous rebellions in terms of social protest and resistance in Latin America has evolved rapidly. The emphasis of much of the new work has been on placing rebellion firmly among a series of responses, or types of social protest and resistance, intended to deny or mitigate state claims not only on indigenous/peasant resources, but also on their ethnic and cultural identities. According to León Campbell in his review essay "Recent Research on Andean Peasant Revolts, 1750-1820," the majority of revolts in the colonial era occurred between 1700 and 1810 at the height of 'Bourbon enlightened despotism.'⁴ Campbell believes that while it is correct to highlight the political and economic causes of rebellions generated by the Bourbon reforms, these factors alone are insufficient to explain the great number of rebellions in this period and he stresses the importance of local and cultural factors.

Like Campbell, historian Steve Stern has also made an important theoretical and methodological contribution to the study of peasant rebellion in Latin America. Stern argues that to explain peasant rebellion you must: (a) analyze pre-existing patterns of resistance; (b) explicitly incorporate long-term frames of reference; (c) treat peasant conscious-

ness as problematic and examine it in relation to local cultural history, and (d) abandon 'ethnic blind' analysis as a point of departure.⁵ The thematic concerns of Stern and Campbell are evident. In addition to the more apparent economic motives of revolt, they repeatedly emphasise the importance of history, culture, consciousness, ethnicity and traditional patterns of defiance as determinants of the nature of social protest and resistance.

Other significant contributions to the study of indigenous rebellion have been made by specialists working on areas outside Latin America. Asianists Ranajit Guha and James Scott, for example, have also recently made valuable contributions to the study of social protest and resistance. Guha is best known for a monograph on colonial India and for having edited six volumes of the *Subaltern Studies* series between 1982 and 1987.⁶ This series is an attempt by Guha and his colleagues to rewrite the history of resistance and rebellion from the perspective of the rural poor on the Indian subcontinent by making the peasant "*a subject of history in his own right, even for a project that was all his own.*" According to Guha, insurgent peasants are too frequently excluded from their own history and considered only in terms of the elite's history, a process that now needs to be reversed. Guha's approach is important because it reintegrates peasant programmes into the debate on social protest, resistance and rebellion, which are perhaps too often viewed as 'knee-jerk' reactions to external conditions and fail to take account of peasant demands.

While concerned primarily with revolts and rebellions, Guha also considers that these are part of a "*broader, distinctly political spectrum of peasant protest*" which may include other social action labelled deviant or criminal by the state, but which the peasantry view as legitimate, for example social banditry. Here, Guha is influenced by Michel Foucault's analysis of power. In his work, Foucault investigates the structuring of and processes by which power is exercised to accomplish domination at the local level. Foucault believes that power is exercised using what he has called 'capillary forms of domination' and that developed in opposition to these forms of domination are analogous 'capillary forms of struggle.' Guha concludes as a result, that rebellion is only one of a range of tactics to which the peasantry might recur as part of a programme of resistance conditioned by and adapting to the forms and tactics of domination.⁷

James Scott, takes a rather different approach to the analysis of social protest and resistance. In his book *Weapons of the Weak*, Scott states that rebellion, revolt, insurrection and revolution are comparatively rare expressions of social protest and resistance.⁸ Scott argues that such events have received attention out of all proportion to their impact on class relations, while unorganised, individualistic and opportunistic acts of insubordination, such as pilfering, footdragging, flight, arson, feigned ignorance, false compliance, sabotage and theft, may cumulatively have a substantially larger, perhaps even revolutionary, impact on these relations. Scott contends that to ignore such apparently self-interested

acts is to ignore the determinate context of most lower class politics, based principally as it is on the struggle surrounding the appropriation of work, production, property and taxes, and adds that such forms of daily struggle may be the only option available to the lower classes who are rarely able to produce a uniform response to external pressures. Scott calls this type of struggle 'everyday resistance' and the modes by which it is exercised the 'weapons of the weak.' Scott's analysis raises important questions regarding the relative effectiveness of different tactics of social protest and suggests that rebellion is not only an infrequent tactic of resistance, but possibly not always the most expedient.

The value of these new approaches towards the study of indigenous rebellion is cumulative. Stern, Guha and Scott all concur that rebellion should be viewed not as the only expression of social protest and resistance, but rather as one of a range of possible responses to oppression and domination, and possibly even as part of an indigenous/peasant programme in its own right. Moreover, the research of these authors shows that rebellions are nodes in a more or less constant, but ever varying sequence of social protest and resistance, rather than the isolated and occasional events that they often appear to be when analyzed individually. For this reason, Campbell and Stern both argue persuasively that when examining rebellion long-term frames of reference, local cultural history and pre-existing patterns of domination and resistance must be taken into account.

Guha's insistence that the analysis of social protest and resistance should be peasant centred also strikes accord with Campbell and Stern and both the latter maintain that taking account of ethnicity and indigenous culture are pre-conditions for the examination of rebellion. The problem of conceptualizing indigenous/peasant consciousness is a theme further explored by Scott in *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*. According to Scott, the conceptualization of peasant consciousness is essential as it is this that instructs social action. Gaining access to this consciousness or discourse is, unsurprisingly, problematic. According to Scott, the discourse is located in a 'hidden transcript' that represents a critique of power which exists 'behind the back of the dominant,' its survival reliant precisely on its 'invisibility' and 'inaccessibility'. Despite this, both Scott and Guha argue that elements of the peasant discourse are present in a coded form in different modes of popular culture and are also visible in critical readings of archival sources and both advocate that cross-checking 'official' sources with alternative 'popular' sources will be productive in the reconstruction of indigenous consciousness. The conclusions to be drawn from this theoretical and methodological debate reiterate the necessity to take into account not only economic, political and social circumstances, but also historical, cultural and ecological contexts and their dynamics, as well as the broader backdrop of social control, protest and resistance. It is in this light, that the Mapuche rebellions of the late nineteenth century will be considered in this paper.

Literature on Mapuche Society and Rebellion

Until the 1980s, ethno-historical literature on Araucanía was scant. Apart from the accounts of a few nineteenth century travellers and the anthropological works of Mischa Titiev and Louis Faron, English language publications on Mapuche society and culture were non-existent and general Chilean history texts paid little attention to Araucanía and still less to its indigenous peoples.⁹ Nevertheless, a few texts published during the late nineteenth century and in the first decades of the twentieth century are of great importance for the insight they provide into pre-reduction Mapuche culture and society and their first-hand perspectives on the incorporation and integration of Araucanía into Chile.

Given the theoretical and methodological importance established by Guha and Scott of accessing indigenous discourse and consciousness, the work of Tomás Guevara is particularly significant. In his books *Las últimas familias i costumbres araucanas* (1913) and *Historia de la justicia araucana* (1922), Guevara makes extensive use of oral histories collected from Mapuche *caciques* and their families in the decades following the insurrection of the late nineteenth century. The fundamental importance of these two books lies in their depiction of Mapuche attitudes towards crime and justice. In *Historia de la justicia* Guevara writes:

*"There were two justices that coexisted without interfering with each other: the primitive one of community revenge that was continued until the end of Independent Araucanía through the means of the malón or armed attack, and the more recent one of the chief of the extended family, applied above all when requested to act as arbiter by the Indians of other communities [...] the failure to avenge oneself constituted a cowardice and a shame that no one desired [...] personal revenge was practised ordinarily with a refined cruelty, the victim injured with the same weapon with which he had been attacked and when he could in the same part of the body in which he had been wounded. Collective reprisals were performed without such attention to detail, because they were exercised in a tumultuous way, mostly in social or war meetings, when great quantities of alcohol had been consumed."*¹⁰

An appreciation of this rational is essential. The duty to take revenge (compensation) for abuses underwrote the violence and rebellion of the Mapuche and lends weight to Campbell and Stern's assertions regarding the importance of considering indigenous culture and ethnicity in any analysis of indigenous/peasant resistance. As Guha insisted however, such actions may not have been simple responses to external stimulus, for Mapuche culture also condoned and even encouraged violence and some criminal activities. Guevara, for example, also made the following observations with regards to robbery and murder:

"Theft was considered an odious and punishable act when it was executed against the family, but not when it harmed strangers, especially a rival tribe or foreigners. Then it assumed the importance of a

laudable act that extolled the person that committed it [...] Further, robbery had another value, as a licit and lucrative revenge for the damages caused by these enemies [...] The Araucanian conscience was not worried by the murder of a stranger, it only feared the revenge. If such revenge didn't materialize, the crime passed as an act of worth and usefulness. To kill the Spaniard was an act worthy of praise."¹¹

It is evident from the work of Guevara that Mapuche culture sustained violence as a social, economic, political and a cultural phenomena.

The traditional importance of oral history among the Mapuche, makes the lack of ethno-historical research undertaken on this region even more surprising, but we are fortunate that some of the oral tradition still survives despite the integration of Mapuche and Chilean culture. The most important text from the point of view of the anthropologist and the linguist must be Pascual Coña's book *Testimonio de un Cacique Mapuche*. Born sometime in the late 1840s and dying in 1927, the *cacique* Pascual Coña's accounts (dictated in Mapuche to a German missionary), provide a valuable indigenous vision of Mapuche society and culture in the late nineteenth century. The book is especially useful to the historian for its portrayal of Mapuche social organisation and the events of the general rebellion of 1881.¹²

Probably the two most important contemporary texts detailing incidents leading upto and during the incorporation of Araucanía into Chile are Cornelio Saavedra's *Documentos Relativos a la Conquista de Arauco* and Horacio Lara's *Crónica de la Araucanía*.¹³ Saavedra's text is of particular importance because as Intendent of Arauco in 1857, Commander-in-Chief of Operations and Intendent of Arauco between 1861-64 and 1866-70 and Minister of Defence during the War of the Pacific, Saavedra designed and oversaw almost every aspect of the final 'conquest' of Araucanía between 1850 and 1883. In these documents, Saavedra details Mapuche participation in the 1859 civil war and their subsequent rebellion. Saavedra also lists the motives of the Chilean advance south, but perhaps the most interesting aspect of the documents is their demonstration of the author's profound knowledge of Mapuche society and the guile with which he manipulated divisions among the Mapuche to his own advantage.

Saavedra's dexterity is also documented by Horacio Lara in *Crónica de la Araucanía*. Born in Concepción in 1860, Lara was a journalist and politician during the final Mapuche rebellion of 1881. Lara's first-hand experience and familiarity with Mapuche culture and the political debate surrounding the advance on Araucanía and the clarity and detail with which he describes the gradual conquest of Araucanía, lend the book a value we might not have otherwise expected.¹⁴ Moreover, although the text is essentially an elite historiography of the region, Lara's chronicle provides much evidence of the motives of Mapuche rebellion and often inadvertently repeats the indigenous discourse.¹⁵

Since 1980, the quantity of material published relating to the Araucanía region and Mapuche society and culture has increased considera-

bly within Chile. The reasons for this are fourfold. First, during the 1980s, much work on the regional history of Chile and its indigenous cultures was undertaken by Chilean academics exiled in Europe. The second factor of importance, was the establishment in Temuco (the regional capital) of the *Universidad de la Frontera*, which has directed and published a significant amount of research on Araucanian society and history since its inauguration in 1981. Thirdly, the formation of the *Comisión Especial de Pueblos Indígenas* (CEPI) has given further impetus to research on Mapuche culture and history, and finally, the quincentenary of the discovery of the Americas by Columbus in 1492, has also focused attention on Araucanía within Chile. Much of the new research on Araucanía undertaken since 1980 has made considerable use of the texts of Guevara, Coña, Saavedra and Lara, but recent investigations have also tended to be more theoretically centred and methodologically precise, making more extensive and systematic use of archive material now available in Chile.¹⁶

Because Mapuche social, economic and political organisation differed so substantially from that of other ethnic groups in Latin America, a detailed analysis of Mapuche society is a prerequisite to the examination of indigenous resistance and rebellion in Araucanía. According to Holdenis Casanova Guarda, Mapuche society dates to between 500-600 B.C., although it is known that the region was inhabited long before this time.¹⁷ Little is known of Mapuche society before the arrival of the Spanish, Mapuche society was semi-nomadic and decentralised in social, political and physical terms. Moreover, José Bengoa insists that the Mapuche economy prior to the arrival of the Spanish was 'pre-mercantile' and 'proto-agrarian,' with a hunter-gatherer economy increasingly supplemented by small-scale agricultural production.¹⁸ The extended family was the basic social unit and although by the sixteenth century complex systems of alliances between families had developed, none of these were permanent.

Bengoa estimates a native population of around one million inhabitants prior to the arrival of the Spanish, approximately one-half of these in Araucanía. Unlike the Incan and Aztec societies, however, Mapuche society lacked any effective central authority and did not form towns or cities. Holdenis Casanova indicates that while there were heads of tribes, heads of clans and heads of families, none of these had any authority over Mapuche society as a whole, a fact confirmed by Sergio Villalobos. Nonetheless, despite this lack of central authority, the development of relatively complex systems of alliances between families and clans did mean that certain *loncos* or *caciques* came to hold influence and a degree of authority over relatively large numbers of Mapuche from the sixteenth century onwards. Even as late as the nineteenth century, however, family and regional alliances demonstrated a remarkable fluidity.¹⁹

The peculiar social structure of Mapuche society is significant for several reasons. Unlike in Mesoamerica and the Incan Andes, the Spanish were unable to subjugate the Mapuche by substituting a central in-

digenous authority with the Spanish Crown. This inability is also accounted for by the disperse and semi-permanent nature of Mapuche settlement in which each family lived separately, even from others of the same clan and both these factors together must go some way towards explaining the Spanish failure to conquest Araucanía. The loose social structure of the Mapuche, however, provided no checks to limit conflict within Mapuche society itself and even before the arrival of the Spanish, intra-indigenous conflict was rife.²⁰ In the centuries after the Spanish arrival however, such conflict grew as Mapuche society entered a period of rapid transformation in which war and disease diminished the population and resources, the growth of cattle raising increased conflict over land and animals and commercial activity grew in importance.²¹

The arrival of the Spanish to Araucanía provoked virtually a century of near constant war in the region and early Spanish settlements in Araucanía were under almost permanent siege. According to Horacio Zapata by the first decades of the seventeenth century the Mapuche had destroyed all the 'cities' founded in Araucanía and forced a Spanish retreat to the north of the river Bío-Bío. During the first half of the seventeenth century, Villalobos contends that belligerent relations between the Mapuche and Spanish persisted in the frontier area of the Bío-Bío as a result of a vicious circle of raids and revenge attacks. Villalobos also notes that from very early on the Spanish took advantage of the divisions and rivalries in Mapuche society, employing *indios amigos* in their attacks on more distant Mapuche. Moreover, by as early as the seventeenth century, Zapata states that *mestizaje* and a degree of acculturation were clearly perceptible on the frontier, both factors that further facilitated Spanish-Mapuche cooperation.²²

Between 1654 and 1656, Spanish incursions into Araucanía to gather slaves for agricultural and other labours in the central valleys precipitated another rebellion in Araucanía. Again, the success of the uprising obliged the Spanish forces to retreat towards Concepción and the river Maule. Although violence persisted in the form of sporadic confrontations until the 1680s, however, relations between the Mapuche and the Spanish were quickly reestablished in the aftermath of the rebellion, underlining the degree to which the ties and inter-dependencies between the Spanish and the Mapuche outweighed the short-term causes of the rebellion and led to the growth of more stable and mutually beneficial relations. From the 1680s onwards, relations between the Mapuche and the Spanish continued to intensify and Mapuche society underwent some dramatic internal transformations. The agricultural sector, especially cattle-raising, was developed at a rapid pace and almost completely replaced hunter-gather activities. Such patently commercial activities strongly integrated the Mapuche into the regional and national economies, but also led to increasing violence as disputes over grazing territory grew. In socio-political terms, alliances between families were strengthened and extended on a regional level and the internal stratification and organisation of Mapuche society developed greatly.²³

As a result much larger and more stable alliances were formed and the heads of these alliances acquired high levels of status and power. By the nineteenth century, Bengoa argues that around 100 *caciques* dominated Araucanía and the most important fifteen to twenty of these (known as *ñidol loncos*) exercised a decisive influence over the others.* The process of acculturation also continued to develop and many *caciques* or their children were educated in the Franciscan *Escuela de Indígenas* in Chillán. As elsewhere in Spanish America, however, acculturation was a two-way process. The Mapuche selectively adopted certain Spanish religious and social practices, whereas these incorporated many indigenous practices and customs. While local, isolated violence was still endemic, much of this violence was associated to a great degree with frontier society itself. Duncan Baretta and Markoff, for example, contend that throughout Latin America cattle frontiers attracted, produced and sustained violence as class and ethnic conflict was articulated around the developing property rights and the rich targets presented by large herds of cattle. These findings are supported in the case of Chile by Mario Góngora in *Vagabundaje y Sociedad Fronteriza en Chile*.²⁴

During the eighteenth century, relations between Spaniard and Mapuche soured sufficiently to cause open rebellion on four occasions: 1712, 1723-24, 1766-70 and 1792-93. Holdenis Casanova uses a variety of primary and secondary sources to examine the revolts of 1723 and 1766 and finds that they were produced by the growing intensity of relations between the Araucanians and the Spanish rather than as a result of a break in these relations.²⁵ According to Casanova, by the eighteenth century trade on the frontier had developed to the point where for both the Spanish and the Mapuche it was a necessity.

Together with the religious missions, the Spanish forts were the focal point of trade and Spanish officials were heavily involved in local commerce. The so-called *capitanes de indios amigos* were instrumental in the region. The *capitanes* acted as messengers between and interpreters for the Spanish authorities and Mapuche *caciques*, as local authorities in their own right and most importantly as go-betweens in the regions trade. While some earned the respect and trust of the Araucanians, many abused their positions to their personal advantage. In 1723, such crimes precipitated another rebellion, which according to Casanova started with the murder of the *capitán de amigos* Pascual Delgado and attacks on the properties of other *capitanes* in the Púren area. Interestingly, Casanova notes that many *yanaconas* participated in the rebellion on

* For the purposes of this paper, it is necessary to be familiar with only the following groups: the *costinos*, inhabiting the coast strip to the west of the Nahuelbuta coastal range; the *abajinos*, occupying the area immediately east of this range; the *arribanos*, in the region south of the river Malleco as far as and beyond the river Cautín; the *pehuenches*, populating the inter-Andean valleys and the *pampas* or *puelches*, located on the extensive grasslands east of the Andes.

the side of the Mapuche, highlighting that the blurring of the lines between the Spanish lower-classes and indigenous society began very early.²⁶

The determinants of the 1766 rebellion were distinct to those of the 1723 revolt. This time Casanova, like León Campbell, identifies certain aspects of the Bourbon reforms as motives for revolt. Casanova also receives support from Leonardo León Solís, who also highlights the role of these reforms in generating indigenous disquiet. One major aspect of the reforms was the development of the town as the basis of socio-political order. The reduction of the Indians would facilitate their 'civilizing' through the more efficient application of justice and religion and, of course, would allow the Spanish to keep tighter control over the Indians and improve other aspects of public administration, such as taxation.²⁷

Although there had been growing pressure to undertake such reforms in Chile since the end of the seventeenth century, it was not until the mid-eighteenth century that these measures began to be implemented. Initially, the Mapuche appeared to acquiesce, agreeing in the 1764 *parlamento* to help construct towns in their territory at points which they deemed appropriate. The concept of such settlements was alien to the Mapuche culture and resistance to the plan soon grew, with the Mapuche charging that the Spanish wished to limit their freedom, enslave them and oblige them to pay *contribución de derechos o de encomiendas*. In December 1776, the Mapuche coordinated a series of attacks on the new towns, burning the buildings, desecrating churches and chasing out the *criollo* settlers. The authorities responded with armed reprisals and the conflict quickly escalated into a more generalised rebellion lasting several years. Although the revolt was less intensive and bloody than previous confrontations, it still had a severe and detrimental impact on regional trade. By early 1771, both parties were willing to make peace and agreed to meet in Negrete, where the Spanish conceded "*not to try and alter the way in which the Indians live, each one possessing his lands independent of the others [... (or)] to force them to form towns against their will.*"²⁸ The conclusions of Casanova lend weight to the arguments of Campbell regarding the non-economic causes of rebellion. The principal cause of the 1766 revolt appears to have been cultural, with only a secondary role ascribed to economic factors which perhaps, while justly feared, had not yet been realised.

By the turn of the nineteenth century, it is evident that Mapuche society had been profoundly modified by both the influence of the Spanish and the internal dynamics of frontier society itself. The declaration of Chilean Independence originally had an insignificant impact on the region. The struggle after all had little bearing on Araucanía which stood independent of Chile. The war however, drew closer to the Mapuche after the royalist defeat in Maipú scattered Spanish forces to the south and the new regime declared sovereignty over Araucanía. The Spanish were quick to manipulate these assertions and to remind the

Mapuche of agreements reached in previous *parlamentos* in which they had repeatedly agreed alliance with the King of Spain. Royalist Franciscan missionaries on the frontier also sought to provoke pro-Spanish indigenous agitation.

The conflict in the south lasted over four years and is probably the best documented case of indigenous rebellion in Chile. The emphasis of the literature is, nevertheless, on the importance of the rebellion vis-à-vis Chilean Independence and little serious examination has been made of the motives or nature of indigenous participation. Benjamín Vicuña Mackenna's 1868 tome, *La Guerra a Muerte*, for example, charts the conflict in great detail with extensive use of primary materials and first hand accounts, but barely mentions the diverse roles and motivations of the Mapuche. As a result, it is rarely mentioned in the traditional historiography that the conflict in the region was, to a great extent, based on intra-indigenous rivalries, with the *arribanos* and *pehuenches* pacted to the Spanish crown confronting the *abajinos* allied with the pro-Independence forces. The war was at its most intense between 1819 and 1821 and persisted in a more sporadic form until peace was agreed in January 1825.²⁹

Indigenous Resistance and Rebellion in Araucanía, 1850-83

With the conclusion of the *guerra a muerte*, relations on the frontier were normalized. Despite their declarations to the contrary, the new Chilean authorities were far too pre-occupied with the nascent questions of national politics to be concerned with the sovereignty of Araucanía. Nevertheless, during the following decades a number of factors would contrive to raise the question of dominion in Araucanía.

During the early decades of the nineteenth century, inter and intra-class conflict had left the economy of southern central Chile decimated and its haciendas abandoned to Chilean peasants and the bandits that roamed the zone.³⁰ During the latter years of the 1830s and the early 1840s, however, the landowning elite gradually regained control of the estates as intra-elite conflict subsided and the coercive powers of the state multiplied. Moreover, from the 1840s onwards, the Chilean rural sector underwent a dramatic process of cerealisation as Chile responded to growing world demand for wheat. The reincorporation of the central and southern valleys, coupled with the cerealisation of the sector and rapid rural population growth, precipitated mass migrations from the rural areas of the central valleys as peasants were pushed from the land and wheat and land prices rose rapidly. While many migrants vagabonded between the rural and nascent urban sector in search of work, the majority flooded south to the frontier. This stream of migrants was accompanied by speculators of every description, swelling the population of the small frontier garrisons and transforming them into bustling market-towns. From these towns, land speculators and migrants spilled out into the countryside and across the river Bío-Bío seeking land

on which to settle. This invasion and occupation of indigenous lands was the principal motive of Mapuche rebellion between 1850 and 1883.

Fraudulent land speculation and forceful usurpation quickly established Chilean title to much land south of the Bío-Bío as speculators invested in land and migrants sought land and work, either independently or on estates of the Mapuche or Chileans already established in the region. The crooked nature of early land transactions is amply demonstrated in the registers of land sales in the frontier. Arturo Leiva notes that almost none of the sales documented were made by important *caciques* in the zone.³¹

The response of the Mapuche to abuses by the Chileans was far from passive. From the early 1850s onwards there are repeated reports in the archives detailing a spectrum of legal and extra-legal indigenous counteractions. Mapuche *caciques*, for example, appealed repeatedly to the Chilean courts and the local and national authorities. In March 1853, the Montt government responded by issuing a decree stipulating that the regional authority (the Intendent) was to ensure that in any land transaction, proof of ownership should be verified in a court of law and approved by the *cacique* of the area in question.³² The legislation was however, rarely implemented and with the courts either unable or unwilling to resolve the huge number of disputes arising from conflictive claims, resistance was increasingly articulated through crime, violence and revolt outside the courts. Such tactics of resistance employed by the Mapuche varied from isolated incidents of theft and violence through more organised and persistent forms of banditry, to large-scale armed assaults and open revolt and rebellion. These responses were not only justified in terms of the violations suffered, however, but were also underwritten by the indigenous concepts of justice outlined by Tomás Guevara.

The civil wars of the 1850s and the 1859 rebellion. At the same time as the Chilean agricultural sector boomed as a result of massive wheat exports, other sectors of the economy were also developing rapidly in the north and south of the country and the new elites created by this process began to vie with the traditional landed elite for political power. Twice in the 1850s, this competition for power led to civil war. The historian Maurice Zeitlin states that the conflict in 1851 was the result of growing political dissatisfaction in the important mining centres of Concepción and La Serena, with the fact that the mining sector was burdened disproportionately with national taxes. In April 1851, a liberal revolt was quickly quashed by the government, but the resentment of the mining elite was further incited a few months later when Montt raised taxes on copper and silver from 1.5 per cent to 4 per cent.³³ In September 1851, defeat of the liberal candidate and Intendent of Concepción, General José María de la Cruz, in the national elections precipitated another revolt in the mining regions.

Details of the 1851 war are surprisingly scarce and often contradic-

tory. Further, its consequences on the frontier and the role of the Mapuche in the conflict are almost completely unrecorded. Evidence suggests, however, that in Araucanía support among the Mapuche for the revolution was split according to the traditional alliances and rivalries in Mapuche society. Many of the indigenous *caciques* saw the Santiago government as their principal enemy, given its constant refusal to accept and honour the treaties signed with the Spanish before Chilean Independence, and viewed General Cruz as a potential ally. Others, however, pactured with the centralist forces of Montt and the Santiago government and took up arms against the rebels. This division is captured well in a letter from Bernadino Pradel to Pedro Ruiz Aldea regarding the 1851 revolution:

*"They invited the Mapuches to enrol as soldiers in both armies, and with this in mind they believed that the triumph of the Southern Army the cacique Manil would remain lord of all Araucanía and avenge himself for the death of his brother by the one-eyed son of Colipi, this being what they requested in return for the services they offered General Cruz."*³⁴

In December 1851, the fate of the revolution was sealed when the rebel army was defeated in battle at the confluence of the rivers Loncomilla and Maule.³⁵

In 1859, civil war again broke out in Chile. During the 1850s, the Montt regime had initiated a radical reorganisation of government income, abolishing the *catastro* and replacing it with the *impuesto agrícola* (a tax on agricultural earnings rather than land holdings), and also abrogated the tythe and estate entailments. These measures proved to be divisory in both the liberal and conservative parties. The traditional sectors of each party, with their power based in the great estates of the central valley and their staunch support of the Church, abhorred the new legislation, while the more modern elements of both parties supported it. The outcome was an unlikely alliance of the traditional and more radical sectors of each party which quickly led to conflict. In January 1859, revolution again erupted in the northern province of Copiapó and the southern provinces of Talca and Talcahuano. Once more the leaders of the revolt were predominantly miners and the revolt was regionalist in character.³⁶

On the frontier, the breakdown of civil authority compounded the situation of endemic lawlessness and the situation was further exacerbated by heavy rains which ruined the 1858 wheat, potato and bean harvests, causing an upsurge of subsistence crimes among the rural poor and Mapuche in the region.³⁷ Moreover, since 1851, indigenous disaffection had grown in almost direct proportion to the number of migrants occupying Mapuche territory to the south of the Bío-Bío. During the 1850s, an estimated 15,000 migrants usurped and occupied the majority of the territory between the rivers Bío-Bío and Malleco.³⁸ The civil war was viewed by many Mapuche as an opportunity to settle scores with Chilean colonists and with the exceptions of the Mapuche

groups centred on Valdivia, Chol-Chol and Purén, support among the Mapuche for the uprising was more widespread than in 1851 when the number of migrants were still relatively few. In the first months of the revolt, the rebel forces succeeded in capturing Copiapó, Talca and Talcahuano from the government, but after these initial successes the rebels were routed in Concepción and the revolt was crushed. After this reversal, many of the defeated forces took refuge from government persecution in Araucanía, where they dissolved into smaller bands and together with the Mapuche and numerous outlaws operating in the region, conducted a campaign of guerrilla warfare and banditry against the haciendas and towns of the frontier.

Although any hope of deposing Montt seemed to have disappeared, the Mapuche escalated the revolt in Araucanía. From August 1859, the Mapuche attacked and destroyed virtually every town south of the Bío-Bío in a series of coordinated *malones*. Negrete was the first town to fall victim, being sacked and burnt to the ground at the beginning of November 1859. Later the same month Nacimiento, Los Angeles and Arauco were all simultaneously attacked and Angol suffered a similar fate a few days later. The estates of the zone also endured equal misfortune, nearly all being looted and burned by the marauding Araucanians and their bandit allies. Notably, the Mapuche that had allied themselves with the government and those considered accomplices of the occupations were also victimised by the guerrillas. In some senses, the rebellion was a success. By February 1860, the material damage incurred on Chilean interests in the region totalled over 1,000,000 *pesos* and more importantly, only 2,000 of the 15,000 Chilean colonists remained in the area as the migrants fled north. The timing of the revolt and the targeting of the towns and settlements south of the river Bío-Bío, also clearly indicates that the Mapuche had their own motives for participating in the civil war and a well defined programme for the rebellion, which was only tenuously linked to the broader national conflict. The effects of the conflict in Araucanía were, however, devastating. Three years of bad crops were followed by several more years in which the high level of conflict inhibited cultivation and cattle rearing. This practically destroyed the regional economy, with severe consequences for the Mapuche. In 1861 peace was agreed, but the question of property rights in the region between the Bío-Bío and the Malleco remained unresolved and many influential figures called for the government to take action.³⁹

In fact, conflict on the frontier did focus the government's attention on the region. In the 1850s, many important members of the regional and national elite had invested in land in Araucanía and with the end of the rebellion, they clamoured for the restitution of their properties and the better protection of these interests from Mapuche revolt. During 1861, the Commander-in-Chief of the frontier forces, Cornelio Saavedra, proposed a plan for the occupation of Araucanía between the Bío-Bío and the Malleco. According to his plan (heavily influenced by the North American experience), the frontier was to be advanced from the river

Bío-Bío to the river Malleco and the area then declared property of the state and divided into plots for sale to colonists. While Saavedra's proposal was accepted by the Chilean congress, financial constraints led to the suspension of the plan before its implementation and Saavedra was limited to the reconstruction and fortification of Negrete, Mulchen, Renaico, Angol and Lebu. These moves however, provoked further indigenous disquiet on the frontier.

According to agreements reached between a commission of Mapuche *caciques* and President Pérez in 1862, the forts agreed upon were to be constructed on land voluntarily sold by the Mapuche and paid for by the government. In the case of Angol, however, this proved problematic. Saavedra was successful in persuading the principal *abajino cacique* of the area, Domingo Melín, to authorize the construction of Angol, but the land where Saavedra proposed to construct the town pertained to two lesser ranking *caciques*, Huaiquiñir and Trintre, who refused to sell the property to Saavedra. To evade this difficulty, Saavedra resorted to subterfuge, exploiting the lack of official title to the area by purchasing the property from José Pinolevi, a hispanized *cacique* who had never lived in Angol. In December 1862, some 4,000 troops and civilian militia marched from Nacimiento to begin construction in Angol. Unable to prevent the occupation of their lands and not counting on the support of other *abajino caciques*, Huaiquiñir and Trintre turned to banditry. Between 1863 and 1867, Huaiquiñir and his band were responsible for a myriad of attacks across the frontier, especially in the region of his usurped property in Angol. Both these *caciques* had been active in the 1859 revolt and had extensive contacts among the numerous *montoneros* that had remained in Araucanía, turning to crime upon the conclusion of the uprising. These bands of brigands were to prove a persistent headache to the authorities of the region. In July 1867, *El Meteoro* wrote:

*"When the 1859 revolution broke out, a band of revolutionaries came to the frontier and stirred up the Indians against the established institutions. All the bad citizens joined them and took advantage of the revolt to commit every class of crime. The fields were abandoned and the sown fields destroyed, all the houses were torched and there was not even one Christian worker the other side of the Bío-Bío [...] A part of these troublemakers still reside in Araucanía and dressed as Indians it is them who come with them to rob our animals, they have given up their Spanish names and taken those of the Indians."*⁴⁰

The Mapuche's protection of bandits was a constant source of friction between the Chilean authorities and the Araucanian *caciques*. Many of the bandits that plagued Araucanía took refuge on *arribano* lands in Chiguaihue. Together with the most powerful *arribano cacique*, Quilapán, himself renowned for his rebelliousness, and the dispossessed *caciques* Trintre and Huaiquiñir, these bandits were widely feared on the frontier and their exploits regularly condemned in official communications and the regional press. The Chilean authorities repeatedly requested that these criminals be handed over by the *caciques*, but as Guevara pointed

out, the Mapuche response was conditioned by their own cultural perspective and social norms:

*"Robbery and banditry were until recently considered among the legitimate modes of acquisition. They were exceptions within the local group. Exercised outside the group, they didn't lead to any punishment at all, on the contrary, they gave the perpetrator a certain prestige and all tried to support him and to hide the animals or objects acquired [...] Tradition opposed that the guilty party be handed over to the victims of another group. If an agreement was not reached, they defended him with arms in hand."*⁴¹

In 1865, Chilean relations with the *arribanos* deteriorated further over the hostile stance adopted by Quilapán as Chile went to war with Spain.

During the early 1860s, Chilean fears of a foreign intervention in Araucanía had already been aroused by the declaration of a hereditary and constitutional monarchy in the region by the French lawyer, Orelie Antoine.⁴² The declaration of war with Spain in September 1865 further provoked these fears and it was expected that any Spanish attempt to invade would begin in Araucanía, where the Spanish would, it was assumed, be assured of considerable support among the Mapuche. Again, however, this national question was interpreted in a distinct context by the Mapuche. The plans to advance the frontier line to the river Malleco and the construction of several forts and towns south of the Bío-Bío had been responded to in different ways by the different Mapuche groups. The majority of the *costinos*, *pehuenches* and *abajinos* had assured the government of their loyalty and neutrality in the conflict with Spain. The *arribanos*, however, had been more seriously affected by recent Chilean intrusions and adopted a more hostile stance, to the extent that rumours of an impending *arribano* rebellion resounded throughout the frontier even before the conflict with Spain began.⁴³

While there was no room for common accord among the Mapuche, the lack of a general revolt did not deter some groups from Chiguaihue, together with bandits operating from this area, from committing a number of violent assaults throughout the frontier in late October 1865, provoking fears of an uprising and a mass exodus from rural areas into the frontier towns and north across the Bío-Bío. The response of the authorities to the growing malice of these attacks was to flex its military muscle. On 6 November 1865, two forces totalling more than a thousand soldiers and militia, left Mulchen and Angol for Chiguaihue in pursuit of the rebels and particularly the bandits sheltered by them. The expedition was considered a success, some two dozen bandits were captured, imprisoned and several were executed after a meeting between the Chilean military and Quilapán in Collico. Rumours of further attempts by the *arribanos* to incite a rebellion, however, soon led to a second military expedition south of the Malleco in the middle of November. Finding only one small group of Indians with which to fight, the expedition contented itself with pillaging the properties of the "*barbarians and their Christian allies*," robbing an estimated 7,000 cattle and 5,000 sheep.

Throughout the latter months of 1865, Saavedra used fear of a Spanish invasion to occupy a large extension of the Araucanian coast and after the termination of the conflict with Spain, the government finally endorsed Saavedra's plan to forward the frontier to the river Malleco as he had first proposed in 1862.⁴⁴

The 'Malleco Line' and the 1868 rebellion. Between December 1867 and January 1868, Saavedra negotiated and oversaw the construction of eight new forts along the course of the Malleco. The largest of these were built at Collipulli and Chiguaihue, the first for its importance as a trade route of the *arribanos* across the Malleco and the second to subjugate and control the area that for so long had been the centre of operations for rebellious Indians and bandits alike. The other six forts of the Malleco line (Huequen, Cancura, Lolenco, Mariluan, Perasco and Curaco), were much smaller, and guarded the lesser used crossing points along the river. In Argentina, similar advances by the Argentine military across the pampas also generated revolt among the *puelches* and the alliance of these Mapuche with the *arribanos* was an important feature of the 1868-1871 rebellion.⁴⁵

The construction of the new forts soon attracted migrants to the areas surrounding the Malleco garrisons and beyond the Malleco deeper into *arribano* territory. Resistance to these occupations did not immediately take the form of open confrontation, however, but rather developed into rebellion as a result of an increasing number of audacious attacks and assaults by the Indians and their bandit allies. In response to a number of attacks in the region of Chiguaihue, the military responded by sending two divisions of over 100 soldiers into Araucanía in a punitive campaign against the *arribanos*. One division returned without having fought, but with a booty of women, cattle and sheep looted during the expedition. The other division, however, was attacked by a numerous contingent of Mapuches, resulting in the death of 28 soldiers and serious injuries to another 20 men.⁴⁶ This offence was quickly compounded by an even more brazen assault on the *abajino caciques* of Purén, Catrileo and José Pinolevi (who had fraudulently sold the land in Angol to Saavedra for the foundation of the town and fort in 1862). Both these *caciques* were traditional allies of the authorities and had often sided with the Chilean government against the *arribanos*. The *malón* is well documented in both official sources and in the oral history of the Mapuche. Tomás Guevara relates the oral history of the *cacique* Juan Tromo regarding this assault in the following terms:

"The rebel Indians [...] hated those that yielded to the government. 'Its their fault' they said about the advance of the winkas [Spanish, JD], 'We should play chueca [a Mapuche game similar to hockey, JD] with their heads'. The others also complained. 'Because of those rebels and criminals, the innocent and their interests suffer.' 'Lets attack them' they shouted in their meetings.

Winka [José, JD] Pinolevi helped the Chilean chiefs when they

established the forts on the river Malleco (1868). The arribanos, always rebellious, and some abajinos then allied with them, agreed a malón against Pinolevi and Catrileo. Both were employed by the government and for this reason the hatred and fear grew in others.

They formed a numerous division of lancers. When day broke one day they arrived to the territory of Pinolevi and Catrileo, divided into several groups. Both of them fled, the first to hide in the hills and the other to the coast to seek help from Colonel Saavedra.

They didn't leave Catrileo even one animal and they tore down his house. They didn't burn the Winka's house to fool him. One group hid. He hid for several days too.

He sent spies one time. they returned saying 'there's no one there.' Then he came down from the hills and went to his house. He had hardly entered when he came out at top speed from inside. Winka succeeded in mounting. They chased him and within a short distance they were on his tail.

He turned around and straightened his lance, but surrounded on all sides they raised him on their lances and left him like a sieve... That's how the elders say this famous cacique protected by the Chilean authorities died."⁴⁷

In response to the attack, Saavedra offered Catrileo troops with which to revenge the *malón*, in return for the construction of a fort in Purén, which Saavedra persuaded Catrileo would best protect his interests in the long term. Catrileo agreed to Saavedra's demands and in November 1868, a column of 250 infantry, 50 militia cavalry and 200 Mapuche allies left Cañete for Purén. Before the end of the month, the fort in Purén was erected and in the following months, Catrileo took his revenge, riding with the Mapuche loyal to the government and the soldiers sent by Saavedra against the *arribanos* rebels and their allies.⁴⁸

The situation of conflict in Araucanía rapidly assumed the appearance of an open confrontation as the scale of the attacks in the frontier grew in terms of the frequency, number of assailants and violence employed. In June 1868, for example, a group of approximately 100 Mapuche and bandits assaulted the hacienda of don Carlos Onfray near Angol, pillaging over 100 cattle and 160 sheep. Less than two weeks later, a band of 150 Araucanians and brigands assaulted a property of don Domingo Lagos and his brothers, robbing 300 cattle and 150 horses. In November, the conflict escalated still further when the forts of Collipulli, Curaco and Peralco were simultaneously assaulted by rebel Indians.⁴⁹ The manner in which banditry escalated and amplified into rebellion confirms the strong links between brigandage and rebellion posited by Eric Hobsbawm.⁵⁰

In 1869, the rebellion intensified further. In January, a contingent of between 1,500 and 2,000 Indians crossed the river Malleco, attacking the zone of Renaico, Tijeral and Mininco after a smaller force of two hundred Indians had diverted the attention of the military towards Angol. In the *malón*, the aggressors murdered more than sixty inhabitants of the

zone, took prisoners of all the women and children they found and robbed between 1,000 and 3,000 head of cattle. The attack drew a rapid and equally brutal response. Between 300 and 700 soldiers rode to cut the retreat of the insurgents across the Malleco and after a bloody battle, the captives and almost a thousand cattle were recovered.⁵¹

During the remainder of the year, the conflict settled into a familiar pattern. The military launched repeated expeditions into Araucanía, on orders from Santiago, dedicated to the destruction and looting of *arribano* property. The rebels, on the other hand, avoided direct confrontation with the superior arms of the Chilean military, preferring a campaign of guerrilla warfare behind enemy lines, using their knowledge of the terrain and superior horses to keep the military guessing. Nevertheless, the tactics of the military had a devastating impact on the Mapuches. By May 1869, the local press estimated that the military had already pillaged 20,000 sheep, 5,000 cattle and 500 horses from the rebels and burnt down over 2,000 indigenous ranches. Silvio Duncan Baretta and John Markoff, point out that such widespread looting underlined the degree to which the elite shared a set of values with both Indians and the rural poor, for whom such violence and crime was acceptable within the moral terms of the frontier.⁵²

By the end of 1869, the devastating effects of the war had taken their toll on the *arribanos*. Misery and hunger dominated the province and the abysmal conditions were worsened by a smallpox plague that further decimated the Mapuche population. Despite this, the conflict continued during 1870 and 1871 and even spread, as Quilapán reached accords with some *abajino caciques*. In these years, however, the conflict took on a different character as technological changes and improved communications tipped the war decisively in the favour of the Chilean military.⁵³ After a final and desperate offensive launched against the Malleco line in January 1871, involving between 1,000 and 1,500 warriors, Quilapán proposed peace to the Chilean government and open hostilities were effectively ended.⁵⁴

Spiralling banditry in Araucanía. Between 1872 and 1878, Araucanía appeared to experience a period of relative calm, despite increasing state intervention in the region and the division and sale of hundreds of thousands of hectares of Mapuche land. Although the region did not witness scenes of open rebellion, the Mapuche use of banditry and other less overt forms of resistance against the Chilean population grew dramatically. Once again, in a large number of cases bandit gangs were composed of an alliance of Mapuche and marginalised sectors of the Chilean rural poor. This alliance was increasingly cemented by the assimilation of the Indian into Chilean society and the intensified development of agrarian structures common to central Chile in Araucanía. Between 1873 and 1875, nearly 100,000 hectares of land between the rivers Bío-Bío and Malleco were sold at public auction in Santiago and in October 1875 administrative changes consolidated and extended this

process with the creation of a 'territory of colonization' to the south of the river Malleco. In 1878, a further 77,000 hectares in the regions of Purén, Los Sauces and Lumaco were also sold.⁵⁵

While Mapuche possessions were in theory to be respected and the land divided into small plots of no more than one hundred hectares, in practice the process signified the loss of even more indigenous territory and fraudulent buying and land consolidation soon led to the formation of the large estates so common in the valleys of central Chile. While cattle raising remained the principal activity, cereal production in the region also grew significantly. By 1873, the first mill in Araucanía (constructed by José Bunster in Angol in 1869) was operating at full capacity, processing some 40,000 *fanegas* of wheat, encouraging Bunster to open another in Collipulli in 1877.⁵⁶

The massive sales of indigenous land in 1873 and 1875 and the foundation of another fort south of the Malleco at Los Sauces during 1874 drew a surprisingly muted response from the Mapuche. Still ravaged by the effects of the war, a unified *arribano* response to these new moves was further hindered by the death of their principal cacique, Quilapán, in January 1875. With Quilapán dead, the *arribanos* were left leaderless and divided. Unable to agree on a common strategy for dealing with the Chileans, the lesser ranking *caciques* elected a variety of disparate approaches of adaptation and resistance, many preferring some kind of co-existence to outright confrontation.

The lack of a unified and open response to the latest Chilean advances, however, is not explained solely by these causes. During the final years of the so-called *guerra de exterminio*, another disincentive to open confrontation had also become more than apparent: the increasingly superior firepower of the Chilean army. The introduction of modern weapons to Araucanía changed the face of conflict in the region dramatically. The Mapuche still fought with native weapons, typically a lance and a *boleadora* (a kind of lasso with weighted balls attached). Before the introduction of modern firearms, the Mapuche had attacked while the troops attempted to re-load after firing. The new multiple-shot rifles, however, gave the soldiers a great advantage over their adversaries, enabling a small division of soldiers to contain and pursue much larger numbers of Mapuche. Moreover, better roads and the arrival of the railroad to the region enabled soldiers to be dispatched swiftly to and throughout the zone, while the telegraph greatly aided the coordination of defensive and offensive operations.

Given the leaderless state of the *arribanos*, the divisions between the Mapuche groups and the superior force of the Chilean military, banditry was both a more feasible and less risky form of indigenous protest and resistance than open confrontation at this time. With the establishment of the Malleco line and the forts of Purén and Los Sauces, the lair of numerous bandit gangs became the thickly forested hills and mountains of Adencul, Ñielol and Quechereguas, famed centres of resistance against the Spanish *conquistadores* in previous centuries. The element of

social protest and resistance implicit in brigandage is evident. Mapuche bandits and their cohorts repeatedly targeted properties fraudulently obtained from them. In April 1874, for example, a group of 35 bandits (mostly Mapuches) attacked an estate in Cancura auctioned by the government in November the previous year, sacking the property and taking several prisoners. Don José Bunster was also repeatedly targeted by Mapuche outlaws. Having bought around 20,000 hectares of *arribano* land (the 'pampas of Quilapán'), Bunster was hated by many dispossessed *arribanos*. In September 1874, a band of Indians robbed 150 head of cattle from a property of Bunster in Nipaco near Angol. Mapuche that collaborated with the Chileans were also frequently victims of bandit raids.⁵⁷

While indigenous rebellion generally precipitated a massive and destructive military response, banditry did not. The state did attempt to clamp down on banditry, but the lack of an adequate police force, the difficulty of policing the region and slow and ineffectual judicial processes meant that such measures had little impact. The scale of banditry in Araucanía thus reached massive proportions. The local press estimated that the total value of stolen animals in 1874 was some 100,000 *pesos*, or one-sixth of the total capital of the province. The massive impact of banditry on the regional economy goes some way towards sustaining James Scott's contentions regarding the cumulative importance of relatively unorganised acts of social protest and resistance requiring little organisation or coordination. The response of the authorities to such endemic brigandage was, once again, to strike at the heart of rebel territory with the construction of a new line of forts (the 'Traiguén line'). The fort at Los Sauces was founded in 1875 and followed by the forts of Lumaco, Traiguén and Adencul in 1878 and 1879. The new string of forts ran over 50 kilometres and served to protect some 100,000 hectares of extensive and fertile agricultural plains and valleys to the south of the Malleco, as well as giving the military a post within striking distance of Quechereguas and Nielol, centres of bandit activity. The construction of the Traiguén line initially drew a muted response from the Mapuche. The forts were situated in *abajino* territory and the *caciques* of the area, enriched by commerce with the Chileans, showed little intent of revolt. Two years later, however, with Chilean troops engaged in the War of the Pacific, Araucanía witnessed one more uprising, the final Mapuche rebellion.

The 1881 general rebellion. In November 1881, with Chile at war with Peru and Bolivia, conditions on the frontier conspired again to provide both the motives and conditions for rebellion. The revolt of 1881 is significant because it was not only the last Mapuche rebellion, but also the first time in Mapuche history that all the Mapuche groups had participated simultaneously in an act of revolt. The seemingly inevitable failure of the uprising also marked the end of Mapuche autonomy, for in defeat Araucanía was definitively occupied, the Mapuche reduced

and compelled to succumb to Chilean law. Despite the importance of the revolt, the motives of the rebellion and its cultural significance have only recently come under scrutiny, having generally been overshadowed by events in the north of the country.

The resounding success of Chile in the War of the Pacific left them in sole control of the nitrate producing regions. The multiple effects and consequences of the enormous wealth derived from nitrates has dominated much academic work on nineteenth century Chile. At the same time as Chile expanded territorially to the north, however, it also simultaneously completed the conquest and incorporation of Araucanía in the south. The integration of Araucanía into the national territory was important for several reasons. While the acquisition of the northern deserts provided a flow of capital substantial enough to ease inter and intra-sectoral contradictions in mining and agriculture, expansion into Araucanía helped dissipate growing social tensions in the rural sector by providing another source of employment to the thousands of rural poor that vagabonded the length of the country in search of work.

The increasing contradictions of the Chilean agricultural sector continued to grow during the 1870s, hastened by high rates of population growth, the mechanisation of some agricultural tasks and the continued development of agrarian structures that required little permanent labour (i.e. cereal production and cattle farming). While debate raged in the National Society of Agriculture over how best to resolve the labour question, tens of thousands of Chilean rural dwellers continued to be forced into a stream of semi-permanent migration in search of work as the harvest season moved from north to south.⁵⁸

The growing demand for land was demonstrated by the thousands of requests received by the local authorities soliciting *mercedes de tierra* in Araucanía and the number of migrants settling illegally on marginal lands.⁵⁹ In addition, improved communications, relatively high wheat yields and cheaper land prices made the area highly attractive to farmers and speculators alike. Responding to the demands of these groups the government continued with its colonization programmes. Although some land was distributed free to national and foreign colonists, most was sold by auction in lots of 400-500 hectares or more in Santiago. Consolidation of these tracts soon produced a pattern of land holding similar to that of the central valleys and did little to resolve rural landlessness. Moreover, as such pressure on indigenous land increased, so inevitably did the level of inter-ethnic conflict as relations between the Mapuche and the colonists deteriorated.

Although the continued invasion and state sponsored usurpation of indigenous lands was an important determinant of the 1881 rebellion, it is in itself an inadequate explanation of the revolt and several important aspects of the uprising remain unexplored. Why, for example, did all the Mapuche groups participate in the 1881 rebellion, given that in previous revolts divisions and rivalries had led some groups to remain either neutral, or to side with the Chileans? What importance (if any) should

we attach to the fact that Chilean troops were engaged in the War of the Pacific when the 1881 rebellion erupted? What role did cultural factors play in inciting rebellion?

The evidence suggests that the stage was perfectly set for a general indigenous rebellion in Araucanía in 1881. Every Mapuche group was adversely effected by the continued encroachment of the Chileans in Araucanía and the apparent failure of other tactics of adaption and resistance also favoured a revolt. The *abajinos*, who had for so long tried to protect their lands and autonomy vis-à-vis a peaceful coexistence with the Chileans were increasingly confronted by the bankruptcy of this approach. The construction of garrisons on *abajino* lands served only to bring these Mapuche further into the sphere of influence of Chilean society. The forts were supposed to protect the properties of the *abajinos*, but at the same time they also attracted greater numbers of colonists and brought these Mapuche under the close control of the Chilean military. Relations between the *abajinos* and the Chilean authorities deteriorated rapidly after the foundation of Traiguén and Adencul between 1878 and 1879 and as a result of numerous confrontations between *abajinos*, colonists and soldiers in this area.

It appears that the replacement of soldiers stationed on the frontier with civilian militias after the outbreak of the War of the Pacific was pivotal in the 1881 rebellion. With the commencement of war in the north, the military units responsible for the frontier were withdrawn and replaced by civilian militias and guards quickly formed from the migrants and colonists of the zone. Antagonism between the Mapuche and the colonists had, however, grown significantly since the end of the *guerra de exterminio* in 1871, as colonists invaded indigenous lands and violently victimised the Mapuche with virtual impunity. The Mapuche too contributed to spiralling rural violence and crime with their almost incessant *malones* and assaults across Araucanía. In the absence of the regular troops, the colonists were able to offend against the Mapuche almost at will, and their formation into militias simply gave them both the legitimacy and the firearms to escalate such practices.⁶⁰ The rise in the level of conflict between the civilian militias and the responses of the Mapuche are well documented in the available primary and secondary sources. Tomás Guevara, for example, notes that:

*"The uncouth colonist of the frontier, commonly of an inferior level to that of the Indian, was his bitter enemy: he snatched his animals, wounded or killed him when he could [...] he invaded his lands little by little and flogged him for even the suspicion of a theft, he ran him down on horseback and wounded children and women without distinction during his parties and reunions."*⁶¹

The reputation of the militia for sponsoring violations against Indians quickly grew in the frontier, nowhere more so than among the *abajinos*, whose contact with the Chileans was greatest. Increasingly despoiled of their lands and the victims of a myriad of abuses, it was manifestly evident by the 1880s that the tactics of adaption, cohabitation

and cooperation with the Chileans had failed, but two events in 1880 finally pushed the *abajinos* to rebellion. In February 1880, the reduction of the *cacique* Juan Trinte was pillaged and destroyed after an alleged horse theft. Soon after, the important *abajino cacique* Domingo Melín and more than twenty members of his family were murdered in cold-blood by the civilian guard.⁶²

In revenge in September the same year, nearly a thousand *abajino* warriors participated in a carefully planned *malón* against Traiguén. First, in a diversionary attack near Los Sauces, some six hundred oxen were plundered and thirteen colonists killed. The assault had the desired effect, drawing the majority of the soldiers stationed in Traiguén out in persecution of the assailants and in their absence, a band of around 500 Mapuche fell on Traiguén, sacking the town and assaulting the fort. The tactics and the large number of Mapuche warriors adhering to the *malón* indicates a high level of organisation and concurrence among the *abajinos* and Bengoa suggests that this indicates that the rebellion had already begun. This intimation is further corroborated by the fact that during the attack the Mapuche kidnapped those women unable to take shelter in the fort. The abduction of women was a custom with great ritual and historical significance for the Mapuche and its practice in this case suggests that the attack was imbued with far more than a simple desire to revenge the death of Melín. Rather, it may indicate as Guha points out, that a 'switching of codes' had taken place and that the *malón* was permeated with the 'discourse of rebellion.'⁶³

Events in neighbouring Argentina were also instrumental in generalising rebellion in Araucanía. After the joint campaigns of the Mapuche from either side of the Andes in the early 1870s against both Chilean and Argentine forces, both nations had agreed to 'reduce' the Mapuche through a coordinated military advance. This had begun in Araucanía with the establishment of the Traiguén line in 1878, but was interrupted with the outbreak of the War of the Pacific in 1879. From 1878, the Argentine government sponsored the 'campaign of the desert' in the pampas, intended not simply to reduce, but rather to eliminate the Mapuche settled there. Throughout 1878 and 1879, the Argentine military drove the *puelches* back from the fringes of Buenos Aires province, arriving in 1880 as far as the Andean cordillera settled by the *pehuenche*. The displacement of these Mapuche by the Argentine forces and attacks by the Argentines on *pehuenche* territory precipitated increasing rebellion among them. In January 1880, *El Bio-Bio* reported the death of between 30 and 50 Argentines and added:

*"For some time now the Indians dislodged from the territory that the Argentine troops now occupy have been preparing [...] a numerous warparty to fall, at the given moment, upon the enemy detachments and exterminate them [...] four or five thousand Indians are now camped opposite the Argentine forces waiting for the opportune moment to fall upon them and give them a malón of horrible butchery."*⁶⁴

In 1882, the Chilean Colonel Martín Drouilly also reported:

*"As a consequence of the advance of the Argentine frontier in 1879, the pehuenche Indians sought refuge on the western side of the Andes [...] many of them in the high valleys of the Bío-Bío, from where they maintained continual hostilities, not only against the Argentine army, destroying its convoys and at times forts, but also committed these acts in Chilean territory [...] where they killed scores of people and took many women captive."*⁶⁵

The arrival of Argentine troops to the Andes also generated fears in Santiago that Argentine forces may continue across the Andes into Araucanía, a concern apparently substantiated by Argentine expeditions as far as eighty miles into Araucanía in retribution against the *pehuenches* for their numerous attacks.⁶⁶ In 1881, with victory in the War of the Pacific already assured, and with the state of revolt in Araucanía growing almost daily, the government decided to advance the frontier to the river Cautín, a move which effectively meant the incorporation of all Araucanía and the total loss of Mapuche autonomy.

During January 1881, the Mapuche rebellion in Araucanía grew, with large groups of Indians conducting *malones* in the vicinities of Traiguén, Adencul, Los Sauces, Collipulli and Lumaco. At the end of February, a Chilean caravan of injured soldiers and their armed guards were attacked near Ñielol and over a hundred men massacred. Little more than a week later, another series of *malones* were launched against colonists along the Malleco line and in the region of the newly founded Temuco, the first fort of the Cautín line. As in the rebellions of the previous century, individuals vested and identified with authority, such as *capitanes de amigos* and *lenguaraces*, were among the first victims of the rebellion. Until March 1881, the rebellion remained unorganised, but during this month over 60 *caciques* from distinct groups met and agreed to coordinate and generalise the rebellion. As we have seen, the *abajinos*, *pehuenches* and *pampas* were already in revolt, but importantly, in the assembly *arribanos* and *costinos* also agreed to participate in the rebellion. The fact that all these groups concurred on rebellion, demonstrates the profound degree of discontent among the Mapuche, which led them to rebel in unison for the first time.

As in the conflict of the late 1860s and early 1870s, the Mapuche were forced to rely on guerrilla tactics in confrontations with the Chilean militias and, increasingly, with soldiers returning from Peru. From 1881, soldiers returning from the war were directed immediately to the south. The return of these battle experienced forces would prove to be decisive as the rebellion unfolded. This was amply demonstrated in April 1881, when with planned military precision, 2,000 troops attacked Mapuche rebels esconded in the Ñielol mountains from five directions, killing the principal *caciques*, taking many prisoners and burning and pillaging their homes, animals and crops. Although many Mapuche escaped into the hills, the defeat was a morale crushing blow and the uprising was temporarily subdued.⁶⁷

With the winter months approaching, both sides retrenched in preparation for the resumption of conflict when the rains subsided and the weather improved. In November 1881, in accordance with a carefully orchestrated plan agreed in meetings and communicated across Araucanía by messengers with knotted ropes, the Mapuche rose in a final act of rebellion. According to the plan, the Mapuche were to first cut the telegraph wires and then to simultaneously attack every fort south of the Malleco and if successful continue from there as far as the river Bío-Bío. The revolt was scheduled for 5 November, but two days beforehand, a band of around 500 *arribanos* attacked the fort of Quillem. Although the *malón* was a success, forcing the retreat of the small garrison force, the attack preempted the rebellion before the prearranged cutting of the telegraph wires and deprived the revolt of the element of surprise. As a result, when the rebellion proper erupted two days later, *arribano* participation was severely limited by the presence of a large number of Chilean troops sent to castigate them for the attack on Quillem. Moreover, when the general uprising began elsewhere on the frontier, the forts were ready and waiting. On the coast, the rebellion began with the successful attack on and destruction of Imperial. From there the *costinos* assaulted Toltén and although unable to take the fort, they succeeded in neutralizing the garrison barracked there. After these initial successes, however, the *costino* suffered a decisive reversal, being defeated by Chilean forces as they marched on Arauco.⁶⁸

At the same time, on the other side of the Nahuelbuta *cordillera*, several thousand Mapuche warriors simultaneously laid siege to Lumaco and Temuco and marauded through the countryside decimating Chilean estates. Despite several days of bloody battles, however, the Mapuche were unable to take either of the heavily defended forts and within less than a week, with reinforcements arriving continually from Santiago, the rebellion was crushed with heavy loss of life sustained among both Araucanian and Chilean forces.⁶⁹

With the rebellion defeated, a massive campaign of reprisal was launched against the Mapuche in which hundreds more died, as the military and the colonists extracted their revenge. At the same time, the government speeded up the foundation of garrisons across the region. A fort was constructed at Chol-Chol in November 1881 and in 1882 new garrisons were built at Caruhue (on the site of Imperial), Nueva Imperial (by the river Toltén), Curacautín and Freire. The same summer, a punitive expedition was undertaken against the *pehuenches* for their part in the rebellion and the cordillera passes between Araucanía and Argentina were closed, fixing the boundaries between the two nations and preventing further cross-Andean Mapuche alliances. Finally, in January 1883, the ruins of Villarica, long a symbol of Mapuche autonomy and a jealously guarded secret, were located and the city refounded. In the years that followed the 1881 rebellion, hunger and disease plagued the Mapuche as they reduced to reservations, their lands divided and sold to foreign and Chilean colonists and speculators quick to see the great

agricultural potential of the region. Mapuche resistance to these processes has never faded, but in more than a century since 1881, it has never again taken the form of rebellion.

Conclusions

It is indicative of the profound nature of cultural, social, economic and political change on the frontier between the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries that analysts now contest whether Araucanía was forcefully 'incorporated' or more pacifically 'integrated' into Chile between 1850 and 1883. Villalobos insists that the use of terms like conquest, occupation and incorporation are equivocal because they suggest the process began only recently, was dictated by the state and involved the assimilation of something separate rather than the culmination of a slow process initiated centuries previously.⁷⁰ Villalobos supports this contention with a periodisation of indigenous rebellion in Chile, noting that from the late seventeenth century onwards, rebellion was progressively less frequent and less bellicose in Araucanía. While Villalobos is correct in emphasizing the long history of frontier relations, the importance of the processes of acculturation and *mestizaje* and the mutually beneficial commercial links between the Mapuche and Spanish with a concomitant decline in indigenous revolt, the equation of declining rebellion with dwindling social protest and resistance on the frontier is misleading.

The theoretical perspectives outlined in the first part of this paper emphasize that rebellion as a collective act requires not only a uniform response to external pressure, but also a high degree of internal cohesion and organisation. The decline in acts of rebellion in Araucanía was, however, intricately linked to the growing inability and unwillingness of Mapuche society to produce an organised, massive and collective response to Chilean pressure. In fact, the deep processes of differentiation and stratification occurring in Mapuche society between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries made a uniform response to the gradual occupation increasingly difficult, given the antagonisms and rivalries between the different groups of Mapuche and the distinct manner in which each perceived and experienced the Chilean advance. This is clearly demonstrated by the partial natures of the 1859 and 1868 revolts, in which only the *arribanos* and small elements of the *abajinos* and other groups participated.

In addition, while rebellion may remain for many analysts, the ultimate expression of social protest and resistance, it is evident that by the nineteenth century the Mapuche were well aware of the very high risks and costs associated with such an act. Even when a rebellion is successful, the costs and repercussions of revolt are generally felt heavily by the insurgents. In 1859, for example, although the Mapuche rebellion was effective insofar as it consummated the desire for revenge and forced the Chileans from Mapuche territory, the immediate human and economic costs were high. Moreover, the medium-term response to

the rebellion was simply an increased state and military role in the occupation of Araucanía. Within little more than a year of the rebellion the area was effectively reoccupied and protected by a more numerous force.

Scott points out that most rebellions are usually unceremoniously crushed by the superior forces of the state.⁷¹ Evidently this was increasingly the case in Araucanía as the coercive apparatus of the state developed. In the period under consideration, the professionalization of the armed forces and the development of modern weapons and communications made the success of indigenous rebellion progressively more unlikely. In 1859, for example, the Mapuche were able to balance the undoubted advantage that the Chilean expeditions to Araucanía enjoyed in terms of weaponry, with better horses, greater mobility and familiarity with the terrain. In 1868, the guerrilla tactic of avoiding direct confrontations, meant that the Mapuche could still sustain a conflict in Araucanía, but the superior firepower of the Chileans meant that they had little chance of ever winning it. By 1881, confronted by a modern army able to effectively occupy space and protect and maintain supply lines, Mapuche rebellion was very quickly and effectively put down.

The timing of the rebellions suggests, however, that the Mapuche were well aware of the high risks and difficulties associated with this strategy and only elected to revolt in specifically auspicious or critical circumstances. In all three cases, rebellion occurred not only in response to Chilean advances, but also at junctures when either tactical alliances or external factors most favoured an otherwise improbable success. In the 1850s, the political crisis in Chile and the regionalist civil wars offered the Mapuche the opportunity of a limited, but stable autonomy under the federalist option of General Cruz.⁷² In the 1860s, the possibilities of an alliance with the French, English and Spanish all appear to have been taken seriously by Quilapán. In the 1868 rebellion, the *arribanos* sought alliances throughout Araucanía and across the Andes with the powerful *pampas caciques*, in an attempt to ensure its success and although the link is tenuous, there is little doubt that the fact that Chilean forces were engaged in the War of the Pacific was central to the Mapuche as they planned their final rebellion in 1881.

For all its importance, nevertheless, rebellion was only one of a myriad of tactics of protest and resistance employed by the Mapuche. The strategies of resistance were obviously conditioned by the variety of indigenous objectives as well as the modes of domination. The most common form of protest and resistance in Araucanía was banditry. Banditry was endemic on the frontier, especially from the 1870s as the military advantages of the Chileans became clear. While unrevolutionary, brigandage enjoyed high success rates and did not provoke the damaging rupture of Chilean-Mapuche relations. Moreover, the frontier provided virtually perfect conditions for the bandit. The extensive and unfenced terrain made quick movement over long distances easy, the proximity of numerous forests and hills rendered ample shelter, while

the high quantity of grazing animals provided abundant and mobile targets.

As we have seen, among the Mapuche the practice of banditry was reinforced by indigenous conceptions of justice and the social and cultural importance of the *malón*. When the specific targeting of acts of banditry is also taken into consideration, there can be little doubt about the strong element of protest and resistance inherent in these acts. But banditry was also very much linked to rebellion in Araucanía. All three of the rebellions examined were preceded and accompanied by escalating acts of brigandage.⁷³ While then, the rebellions of 1859, 1868 and 1881 remain the classic acts of open and massive protest and resistance in Araucanía, banditry and other supposedly 'lesser' tactics of protest and resistance clearly formed the chain that linked these events together as Mapuche society sought to shape and condition the nature and development of Mapuche-Chilean interaction.

Endnotes

1. See Villalobos, "Guerra y paz." Simon Collier states that *mestizos* represented over half the Chilean population by 1800. See Collier, *Ideas and Politics*, pp. 4-5.

2. Araucanian Independence was tacitly acknowledged by the Spanish crown in the 1796 Negrete treaty, in which documents refer to 'the commerce of the two nations,' see Bengoa, *Historia*, p. 48. This is the best Mapuche history in print. Bengoa and his team draw extensively on secondary material, archival records and on Mapuche oral histories.

3. See, for example, the works considered in the review essay of Campbell, "Recent Research."

4. Campbell, "Recent Research."

5. Stern (ed.), *Resistance*.

6. Guha, *Elementary Aspects*, and Guha (ed.), *Subaltern Studies I-VI*.

7. See Hobsbawm, *Bandits*. For a debate on social banditry, social protest and resistance see Joseph, "On the Trail." Also Foucault, *Discipline*; Turton, "Patrolling."

8. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak*.

9. For travellers accounts see for example, Schmidtmeier, *Travels into Chile*; Callcott (nee Graham), *Journal*. The anthropological works of Mischa Titiev and Louis Faron are useful for details of kinship and sociopolitical organisation among the Mapuche, but the fact that these studies were undertaken between seventy and eighty years after the conquest of Araucanía limits their value to the historian. See Titiev, *Araucanian Culture*; and, Faron, *Mapuche Social Structure*, and *Hawks of the Sun*. Even the otherwise excellent rural histories of Arnold Bauer and Brian Loveman make little reference to Araucanía and Mapuche society; Bauer, *Chilean Rural Society*; Loveman, *Struggle in the Countryside*, and *Chile*. Chilean history texts tend to summarize the lengthy history of indigenous rebellion in just a few pages and with a pronounced elite bias, see for example, Galdames, *History*; and Encina, *Resumen*.

10. All translations are my own. Guevara, *Historia de la justicia*, pp. 8-12. See also Guevara, *Últimas familias*, pp. 203-204. Guevara also published two earlier books titled: *Historia de la civilización*, and *Araucanos*. Neither are currently in print.

11. Guevara, *Historia de la justicia*, pp. 36-37 and 64.

12. The text also reveals some of the problems facing the historian using such sources. The decentralised socio-political organisation of Mapuche society means that events are remembered only from a familial or local perspective, rather than a cultural viewpoint. Coña, for example, details the events of the 1881 rebellion on the coast, but admits to knowing little of the course of the rebellion elsewhere. Coña, *Testimonio*, pp. 270-287.

13. Saavedra, "Documentos." Lara, *Crónica*.

14. Similar in this respect is Sánchez Aguilera, *Angol*.
15. Lara notes, for example, numerous cases of soldiers ordered to *encaminar* (arrest, march and execute) Mapuches; Lara, *Crónica*, pp. 390-393.
16. The region continues to draw little attention from historians and anthropologists from further afield. By academics exiled in Europe, see, for example, the journal *Nueva Historia*, established in London by Chilean historians in 1981. The CEPI is concerned primarily with the formulation of pro-indigenous legislation and the defence of indigenous rights. The CEPI is directed by the historian José Bengoa.
17. Casanova Guarda, "Rol de la jefe."
18. Bengoa, *Historia*, pp. 17-22.
19. Although significantly less than the twenty-five million inhabitants of Mesoamerica estimated by W. Borah and ten million inhabitants of the Incan Andes calculated by N. Wachtel, the quantity of indigenous inhabitants of Chile is perhaps surprising given that it is not known for its indigenous population. See Bengoa, *Historia*, p. 15. Also Villalobos, *Vida Fronteriza*, pp. 216-219. With regards to this period, for example, Casanova notes that influential *caciques* may have commanded over three thousand men and the most powerful over six thousand, see Casanova, "Rol del jefe," p. 34 and p. 39.
20. According to Bengoa, however, such conflict that did exist was limited to local inter-family disputes as the Mapuche had no concept of territorial property and animal rearing was only practised on a small scale. The practice of robbery and violence against other families was common, as Guevara pointed out, but the determinants of social conflict were more often the result of cultural than economic factors. Bengoa, *Historia*, p. 24.
21. By the late eighteenth century, conflict between the Indians of the region had generalised significantly. See León Solís, "Coroña Española."
22. Zapata, "Parlamentos," pp. 56-57; Villalobos, "Guerra y paz," pp. 14-15.
23. Bengoa identifies over ten distinct Mapuche alliances based on distinct areas. See Bengoa, *Historia*, p. 69.
24. Bengoa, *Historia*, p. 64; Duncan Baretta and Markoff, "Civilization"; Góngora, *Vagabundaje*.
25. Casanova Guarda, *Rebeliones*.
26. Casanova Guarda, *Rebeliones*. See also the article by Louis de Armond, who notes the numerous desertions of mestizo soldiers to join the Mapuche, de Armond, "Frontier Warfare."
27. León Solís, "Coroña Española," pp. 35-37; Casanova, *Rebeliones*, pp. 53-58.
28. Casanova, *Rebeliones*, p. 50.
29. Vicuña MacKenna, *Guerra a Muerte*. It is probable that Guevara's *Araucanos en la Guerra de Independencia* would present a more intricate view of Mapuche participation. Even after the treaty was signed, *montoneras* and groups of brigands composed of royalists and Indians continued to plague the southern valleys and the *cordillera* with impunity until well into the 1830s. See Bengoa, *Poder*; Valenzuela Márquez, *Bandidaje Rural*; and Salazar, *Labradores*.
30. Gabriel Salazar has argued forcefully that during this time, the rural economy underwent a significant degree of peasantisation. Salazar, *Labradores*, pp. 37-47.
31. Leiva, *Primer avance*, pp. 31-34.
32. National Archive of Chile/Archive of the Intendent of Arauco (hereafter: ANS/AIA): Pieza 32, Number 268, (23 October 1856).
33. Zeitlin, *Civil Wars*, for example p. 38. See also Collier, "Conservatismo Chileno."
34. Bengoa, *Historia*, p. 165.
35. Further analysis of the impact and nature of the 1851 revolt in Araucanía is hindered by the lack of documentation available.
36. Zeitlin notes that the leaders of the 1850s revolutions were overwhelmingly drawn from the mining bourgeoisie and other representatives of 'productive capital.' A high percentage were also intellectuals, Zeitlin, *Civil Wars*, pp. 48-56.
37. ANS/AIA: Pieza 55, Number 11, (February 1858); and ANS/AIA: Pieza 55, Number 20, (23 June 1858).
38. Saavedra, "Documentos," pp. 7-8.
39. Bengoa, *Historia*, p. 168; *El Mercurio* (28 February 1860 and 4 July 1860).

40. Leiva, *Primer avance*, pp. 91-95, 125-130 and pp. 157-159. During the 1860s, the infamy of Huaiquiñir grew to such an extent that Leiva called him "The leader of all the Araucanians expelled from Angol and of the groups of bandits that support them," Leiva, *Primer avance*, p. 159. Quote from *El Meteoro* (20 July 1867).

41. Guevara, *Ultimas familias*, pp. 203-204.

42. Orelie Antoine was quickly arrested, declared mad and deported, but elements of the military and the Chilean elite used the episode to play on fears of a French or British sponsored intervention in Araucanía. For details see, Braun Menéndez, *Reino de la Araucanía*; Silva, *Rey de la Araucanía*. Orelie returned briefly to Araucanía in the early 1870s. See Bengoa, *Historia*, pp. 189-197.

43. Although the *abajinos* were more numerous than the *arribanos*, Saavedra notes that the latter were more effective fighting force because the alliances between the principal *caciques* were stronger, while the *abajinos* were divided by the rivalries and discord between their *caciques*. Saavedra, "Documentos," pp. 120-121.

44. In an attack on Mulchen, some three hundred animals were robbed and over a dozen people were murdered. In the following week, the local press reported a further dozen murders near Angol, Welichecó and Itraque. *El Meteoro* (6 October 1866), and *El Guía de Arauco* (4 November 1865); also *El Guía de Arauco* (10 November 1865 and 26 November 1865).

45. See León Solís, "Alianzas militares." Also Sánchez Aguilera, *Angol*, pp. 222-223; and Lara, *Crónica*, p. 309.

46. *El Meteoro* (2 and 9 May 1868); and Sanchez Aguilera, *Angol*, pp. 232-234.

47. Guevara, *Historia*, pp. 160-162.

48. Sánchez Aguilera, *Angol*, pp. 227-229; and Guevara, *Historia*, pp. 160-162.

49. Lagos had previously been accused of arson and murder by the Mapuche. *El Meteoro* (20 June, 27 June and 28 November 1868).

50. Hobsbawm, *Bandits*, pp. 18-19 and 21-23.

51. *El Meteoro* (6 January 1869); and Sánchez Aguilera, *Angol*, pp. 236-237. There is some dispute over the exact figures and Sánchez Aguilera does not acknowledge his sources.

52. See Duncan Baretta and Markoff, "Cattle Frontiers," p. 607. Also León Solís, "Alianzas militares," p. 21. For the figures see *El Meteoro* (15 May 1869).

53. These changes included the introduction of repeat action rifles, improved communications and the telegraph.

54. León Solís, "Alianzas militares," pp. 28-29.

55. Bengoa, *Historia*, p. 256; and Lara, *Crónica*, pp. 384-385.

56. Lara, *Crónica*, p. 470.

57. *El Meteoro* (16 April 1874); Bengoa, *Historia*, p. 258; and *El Meteoro* (18 September 1874).

58. See, for example, Bengoa, *Poder*, pp. 249-252.

59. Bengoa, *Historia*, pp. 255-258.

60. While the regular troop routinely engaged in similar acts against the Mapuche, they were careful to confine these practices to attacks to *caciques* not pacted with the Chilean authorities. The fact that members of the civilian militias were settled generally on or around land near the garrisons, however, placed them in conflict with the *abajinos* (despite their pacts with government) and served to alienate these.

61. Guevara, quoted in Bengoa, *Historia*, p. 270. Horacio Lara also details a number of cases of extremely brutal and violent offenses against the Mapuche and highlights the central role of the civilian militias in these crimes. See Lara, *Crónica*, pp. 390-394.

62. Melín was one of the principal *abajino caciques*, with lands situated between Traiguén and Los Sauces. Again the assassination of Melín followed an accusation of horse theft. Bengoa, *Historia*, pp. 270-271.

63. Guha states that "peasants tend to invest disparate attacks on property and person with new meaning [...] of collective social defiance." Guha, *Elementary Aspects*, pp. 107-108. Other references from *El Bío-Bío* (26 September 1880); *El Ferrocarril* (29 September 1880); and, Bengoa, *Historia*, p. 272.

64. *El Bío-Bío* (4 January 1880).

65. "Memoria que el Ministro de Guerra presenta al Congreso Nacional de 1882." See Bengoa, *Quinquen*, pp. 16-20.

66. Bengoa, *Quinquen*, p. 20.

67. The soldiers also constructed a fort in Nielol to subjugate the area. Bengoa, *Historia*, pp. 290-291.

68. See Coña, *Testimonio*, pp. 270-287.

69. Bengoa estimates that 700 Mapuche died and 300 were injured in combat between the 3 and 9 of November 1881 from a total force of between 6-7,000. Bengoa, *Historia*, p. 322. Bengoa also posits that Chilean losses were undernumerated to prevent an adverse reaction in Santiago, p. 315.

70. Villalobos, "Guerra y paz," p. 26. Contrast this view with that of Bengoa, who talks of a history of intolerance, genocide and ethnocide; Bengoa, *Historia*, p. 5.

71. Scott's research concentrates on modern rebellions. This assertion is not as valid for the rebellions of last century because the coercive apparatus of the state was not yet fully developed.

72. Bengoa also states that the *arribano cacique* Mangin (father of Quilapán) sought an alliance with Buenos Aires. Offering the federal Argentine government control over Araucanía in return for support against the Chileans. Bengoa, *Historia*, p. 87.

73. These links are also forwarded by Eric Hobsbawm. See Hobsbawm, *Bandits*, pp. 21-23.

Indigenous Peasant Rebellions in Peru during the 1880s

LEWIS TAYLOR*

Introduction

In 1970 Jean Piel published what was for the time a landmark essay surveying the existing literature on the rural poor in nineteenth century Peru. He lamented the fact that studies of the peasantry were "*notably absent from books on modern Peru, and its history still remains to be written [...] neither abroad nor in Peru has there been a systematic study of the Peruvian peasantry.*"¹ While Piel's observation regarding the scant literature was correct when penned, the situation rapidly changed as the implementation of General Velasco's land reform (1968ff) gave an important stimulus to research on agrarian issues, with the result that the quantity and quality of publications on the Peruvian countryside now ranks among the best in Latin America.

Even so, within this largely healthy panorama, progress remains uneven. The most impressive advances have been registered in our understanding of twentieth century rural society, particularly contemporary agrarian problems. Here, studies of rural life on the coast led the way, followed in the 1980s by a string of publications focused on the highlands, which are gradually enabling a more rounded view of Andean society to emerge. A similar trend occurred *vis-à-vis* the colonial period, where our knowledge across a wide range of subjects (the mining sector, commercial circuits, regional social structures and ethnic/class relations) has significantly improved.

In common with the historiography of other Latin American countries, the Peruvian nineteenth century has received comparatively less

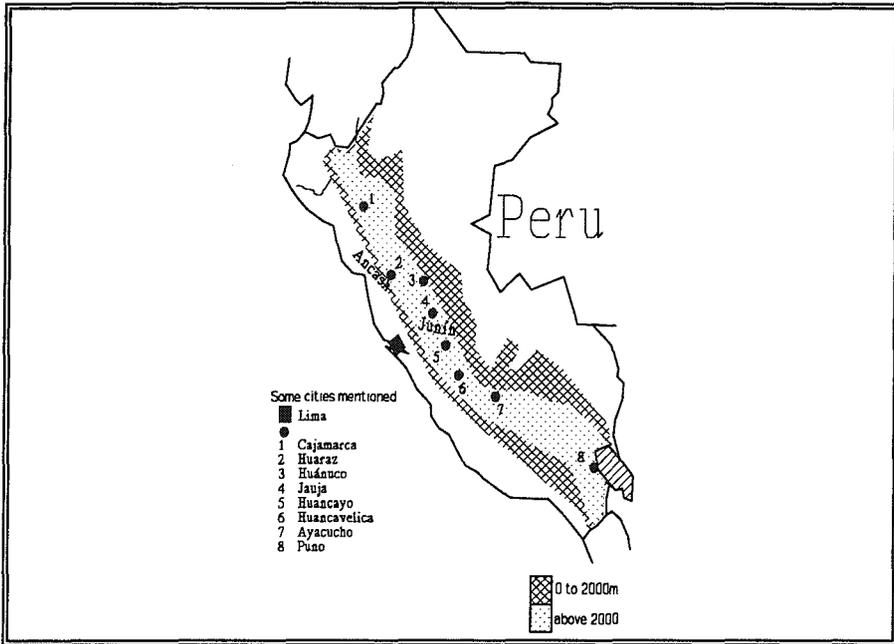
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attention from researchers, despite its importance in the formation of the modern Peruvian nation. Relative neglect, however, does not signify stagnation and since 1980 the number of publications has steadily expanded (especially on the post-1870 period), with Indian rebellion forming a favoured theme for investigation. As a result, a reasonable body of literature now exists on this topic and the objective of this chapter will be to review that which relates to the 1880s. Although other conflicts will be mentioned, emphasis is given to the two case studies that to date dominate the literature: the indigenous uprising in the Central Andes ignited by the War of the Pacific; and Atusparia's Revolt of 1885, centred on the department of Ancash. When conducting the review, different interpretations of the events under discussion will be highlighted. Attention will also be given to the various methodological approaches adopted in the study of these indigenous insurrections. Finally, gaps in the existing literature will be indicated, along with suggestions for future research.

Economy and Society in Junín, 1860-79

The most important Indian uprising to occur in late nineteenth century Peru in terms of scale (number of participants and geographical spread) and socio-political impact (the ability to secure demands and reshape existing power structures), centred on the highland department of Junín, located in the Central Andes. In order to fully understand how this revolt unfolded, a modicum of background information on the department is required. Immediately following independence, regional economic activity declined owing to the negative impact of military conflict on agriculture (particularly livestock operations) and stagnation in the mining sector. After 1850 economic conditions started to improve, initially driven by increased demand for foodstuffs from Lima's rising population and later boosted by a significant easing of transport difficulties with the construction of the railway to Chilca (1875), sited in the *sierra* halfway between Lima and the departmental capital of Huancayo. Such developments led to considerable commercial expansion between 1860 and 1879, a trend assisted by small-scale mining discoveries that pumped silver into the local economy. Livestock numbers gradually recovered. Early steps to modernize agriculture also took place during the 1860s and 1870s, via the importation of European breeds of pedigree sheep and cattle—investments undertaken by new 'progressive' members of the region's landowning elite, who had acquired extensive properties at the expense of traditional families bankrupted during the independence wars.²

With regard to rural social structure, the department of Junín adhered to a typical Andean pattern whereby large-scale estates, medium-scale farms, peasant freeholdings and peasant communities coexisted uneasily alongside one another. In contrast to the situation found in some other regions of highland Peru, however, in the central *sierra*



peasant communities and freeholders had not only managed to stave off hacienda encroachment of their lands, they also controlled a high proportion of the best arable land in the extensive Mantaro Valley. The overwhelming majority of country dwellers resided and worked in these peasant communities. The 1876 National Census provides an indication of this state of affairs: in the province of Huancayo only five percent of the rural population were settled on estates, while in the neighbouring province of Jauja a mere four percent lived inside hacienda boundaries.

Members of these villages were far removed from the stereotype of isolated 'limited good' peasants beloved by traditional anthropology: they actively participated in regional commodity and labour markets, to the extent that after 1860 increased social differentiation occurred in some communities as a result of the consolidation of a class of prosperous peasant-merchant *coqs de village*. Hand in hand with growing commercialisation, the Indian Quechua-speaking communities became more ethnically diverse, as *mestizo* outsiders married in, acquired land and established farming and commercial enterprises.³ The strong presence of economically viable, reasonably prosperous and autonomous peasant communities, coupled with the concomitant weaker structures of *gamonalismo*, would be crucial factors in determining the contours of socio-political conflict in Junín during the 1880s.

For their part, the estates covered large extensions of the *puna* and tended to specialise in non-intensive livestock rearing. If in the highlands the *comuneros* successfully blocked the advance of hacienda boundaries during the 1860s and 1870s, one area of significant estate expan-

sion occurred in the *ceja de selva* on the eastern flank of the Andes. Here the regional elite successfully annexed land from the Campa Indians and established new haciendas. Profitable enterprises, these estates marketed important quantities of *aguardiente*, *chancaca* and *coca* in the highland markets and mining camps.

From the preceding 'snapshot' of Junín's economy and social structure in the 1870s, various potential sources of conflict could be pinpointed:

- a) between members of the local elite over property, commerce and political power;
- b) landlord-peasant community or freeholder disputes surrounding the control of agricultural resources and labour;
- c) inter-village rivalry around land, livestock and water;
- d) intra-community rifts related to agricultural resources, commerce, labour and power; and
- e) capital-labour conflicts in the mining camps and haciendas.

In addition, state-peasant tensions concerning the collection of the head tax (*la contribución personal*), corvee labour (*la república*) and other impositions also existed, while ethnic division further complicated social relations, given that landowners were almost invariably *blancos* and the majority of peasants *indios*.

Numerous possible points of schism therefore existed, but most remained latent throughout the relatively prosperous conjuncture of the 1870s. However, these potential social contradictions burst into the open with the outbreak of the War of the Pacific in April 1879, an event which triggered a large-scale rebellion of mostly Indian composition that momentarily 'turned the world upside down'.

Manrique's Account

The most detailed account of the events that took place in the environs of the Mantaro Valley during and after the Chilean invasion of Junín, has been written by the Peruvian historian Nelson Manrique.⁴ For Manrique, the conflict escalated through four key stages. The first relates to the failed attempt to defend Lima. Following the defeat of the Peruvian troops at Arica, the Chileans pushed north towards Lima, provoking widespread panic and government calls for a general mobilisation to defend the capital and repel the invader. In response, during the latter months of 1880 landlords and other local notables in the central *sierra* enthusiastically formed battalions made up of volunteers from the Andean towns, local *gente decente*, as well as Indian *comunero* and *peón* conscripts dragooned into service by the prefect and the *hacendados*. Lacking even elementary military training, this motley and poorly armed force of Spanish speaking 'officers' and Quechua speaking 'soldiers,' trekked down from the highlands to participate in the battles of San Juan and Miraflores on the outskirts of Lima.

Amid military chaos and widespread desertion when confronted by

a better equipped, organised and battle-hardened foe, it was not surprising that the Peruvian forces suffered bloody reversals and despite individual acts of bravery, proved unable to prevent the Chileans occupying Lima, an outcome that precipitated the collapse of the Peruvian state and the disintegration of the army.⁵ Taking advantage of the ensuing confusion, the surviving Indian conscripts fled back to their farms and villages in the mountains, closely followed by President Nicolás de Piérola on 15 January 1881. After a period in hiding spent convalescing in Lima from a gunshot wound, in April 1881 colonel Andrés Avelino Cáceres also abandoned the capital to seek refuge in the central *sierra*, from where he intended to launch a guerrilla war of attrition against the Chilean army of occupation.⁶

Manrique sees the second phase of the conflict occurring between April and June 1881, when a Chilean column under the command of Ambrosio Letelier marched into the Central Andes. Letelier's expedition had three objectives:

- a) to crush the scattered remnants of the Peruvian army;
- b) undermine the position of Piérola, thus removing a challenge to president García Calderón, whom the Chileans had installed in office; and last but not least,
- c) pillage as much as possible from the local population.

To this end, under the threat of being razed to the ground in case of non-payment, onerous *cupos* (ransoms) were levied on urban settlements such as Cerro de Pasco and Tarma, as well as mines, haciendas and villages. In addition, as they journeyed through the Andes, Letelier's troops lived off the land, requisitioning livestock, foodstuffs and plundering whatever else took their fancy. One consequence of these predatory activities was to sow the seeds of division within the regional elite, between those individuals desirous of a negotiated truce (mainly the most wealthy *hacendados* and merchants) and those who wished to continue the struggle (chiefly medium-scale property owners). Being hardest hit by the disruption to trade, the imposition of *cupos*, the sacking of their estates, mines and commercial establishments that threatened them with bankruptcy, a section of the rich muted the possibility of collaborating with Letelier, a course of action especially attractive to those landlords who in the pre-war years had commenced the modernisation of their properties.⁷

Meanwhile, within Comas, Chupaca and other peasant communities sited in and around the Mantaro Valley, different processes were at work. Having arrived at the conclusion that Piérola was more intent on bolstering his own political position than putting up an effective challenge to the Chileans, Cáceres toured the area with a view to rebuilding military resistance. His message met with a positive response among Junín's indigenous peasants, especially those housed in communities on the right bank of the Mantaro Valley, whose inhabitants had been informed about the conduct of the war by fellow villagers who had participated in the San Juan and Miraflores battles. Indeed, in a number

of localities the *campesinos* had already taken the initiative, being persuaded into organising guerrilla bands to protect their families and property by veterans and village level *coqs de village*. In these uncertain circumstances the Letelier column was recalled to Lima and abandoned the highlands during the first days of July 1881.⁸

Clearly the Chilean commanders could not stand idly by in the face of mounting organised resistance in the central *sierra*, reflected in a growing number of hit-and-run raids against their troops stationed on the approaches to Lima. They therefore mounted a full-scale invasion, sending 3,200 soldiers into the Andes with orders to scatter all armed opposition, undertake severe reprisals for attacks on Chilean columns and squeeze the population into submission. This occupation, which forms Manrique's third phase in the conflict, lasted from February to July 1882 and brought even greater socio-political turmoil to Junín and adjacent departments.

Faced by a far superior force, Cáceres, his army still in the process of being armed and organised, prudently opted to withdraw south from Huancayo to Ayacucho, a move that left the local population to fend for themselves as best they could. Given the drift of events over previous months, the outcome was not hard to predict, for although the Chilean army was billeted in Huancayo and other towns along the Mantaro Valley, it depended on the surrounding countryside for its supplies, most of which were produced in the peasant sector. The resultant expropriations had a particularly detrimental impact on a peasant economy already under stress because of a drought that had lasted for two years. To make matters worse, the rural population also became the target of arbitrary beatings and the abuse of peasant women. Such injustices gave strong stimulus to the spread of a grass-roots resistance movement that had been steadily gaining strength during preceding months, with dozens of communities located on the right side of the Mantaro river holding *cabildos abiertos* that decided to mobilise, attack the invaders and drive them out of the *sierra*.

To this backdrop, the first action of note occurred in late February 1882, when insurgents from the community of Comas successfully ambushed a column of 35 Chilean troops on a mission to raid an adjacent estate. Thereafter the conflict rapidly escalated, as forceful Chilean efforts at reprisal and repression led to the wholesale sacking of villages, injurious conduct which provoked a deep hatred on the part of the local population and brought a steady flow of recruits to the guerrilla cause. By April 1882 this process had advanced to such a degree that most of the Mantaro area was in a state of open revolt, the indigenous peasant majority being joined by smaller contingents of medium-scale farmers, village based merchants and the occasional turbulent priest. At this juncture the conduct of the struggle also altered. After suffering heavy losses in a large set battle on the outskirts of the community of Chupaca on 19 April 1882, the defeated but not vanquished rebel forces changed strategy, fully adopting a guerrilla mode of combat, aban-

doing their homes and accompanied by women and children sought refuge in less exposed mountain retreats, from where they ventured forth to execute surprise attacks against their enemies.⁹

Aided by the propitious terrain, the indigenous insurgents quickly rendered the Chilean position untenable: spread thinly in vulnerable garrisons strung along the Mantaro Valley and facing difficulties in maintaining the troops adequately provisioned, in July 1882 the *rotos* opted to cut their losses and withdraw from the central *sierra*. This decision coincided with the reentry of Andrés Cáceres into the fray. Cáceres and his recently formed but still poorly munitioned *Ejército del Centro*, marched north from Ayacucho and joined with the Mantaro peasant guerrilla units to intensify assaults upon the retreating Chilean forces, who in retaliation for a succession of bloody reversals, revenged themselves upon the civilian population via a scorched earth policy against towns and rural property, both parties committing many atrocities in what degenerated into a desperate struggle with no quarter given.¹⁰

Meanwhile, the invasion of 1882 deepened social contradictions within rural society and unleashed a number of conflicts parallel to that being fought out between the indigenous peasantry and the Chilean army. Military defeat and the collapse of the state seriously undermined established power structures: landowners found themselves in a weaker position, while the *comuneros* had attained a high level of mobilisation and established armed guerrilla bands that significantly tilted the local balance of power in favour of the peasantry and other sectors of the rural poor. When taken into consideration with the economic devastation caused by the war, this disturbing socio-political situation acted to harden opinions among most of Junín's landowning elite in favour of a negotiated settlement, for only with an end to the conflict could business improve and the social status quo be reestablished. Key figures within the *hacendado* class therefore became bolder in their collaborationism and sought an accommodation with the enemy. A first important step in this direction occurred in March 1882, when Luis Milón Duarte (then mayor of Concepción, the third largest town in the Mantaro Valley and political figurehead of the Vallardes family, who owned several of the region's largest haciendas), approached the Chilean commanders in Junín with the intention of signing a unilateral peace accord. This initiative was followed by a trip to Lima to bargain with Patricio Lynch, the head of the occupying forces in Peru.¹¹

Such activities were viewed as treason and met with considerable hostility by the indigenous peasant *guerrilleros*. They provoked a deepening split between them and collaborationist landlords, a rift that soon evolved into open conflict: in June 1882 a detachment of armed peasants invaded the hacienda Ingahuasi, owned by Duarte, captured the landowner and sacked the estate. Despite threats to his life, the insurgents delivered Duarte to Cáceres, who imprudently released the collaborator. Armed peasant bands also occupied two estates owned by another colla-

borationist *hacendado*, Jacinto Cevallos.¹²

These actions indicated that the multi-class anti-Chilean alliance that had hitherto largely held on the Peruvian side was coming under unendurable strain. In fact, the appearance of landlord-peasant conflicts was symptomatic of the tensions mounting in all sections of Peruvian society, tensions that would soon plunge the country into civil war. At the very time when the Chileans had been forced out of the central *sierra* and Cáceres was planning an assault on Lima, the predatory habits of a Chilean column active in the northern department of Cajamarca induced a prominent local landowner, Miguel Iglesias, to issue the *Grito de Montán*, in which he proclaimed that resistance was futile and that peace had to be attained at any price, even if it entailed the territorial annexation of Peru's southern provinces. This call was welcomed by many Andean *hacendados*, including the faction led by Luis Milón Duarte in Junín. For his part, Cáceres vehemently opposed the policy and by late 1882 the rival factions had entered into open conflict, the *iglesistas* even going so far as to attack the *Ejército del Centro* and other forces loyal to Cáceres, in addition to acting as guides for the Chilean army.¹³

To this backdrop of a civil war unfolding within a national war, the fourth and final phase of the Junín indigenous peasant insurrection was played out in 1884 and 1885 amid shifting alliances, intrigue and more than a little treachery. As political positions hardened in 1882, the indigenous peasant guerrillas of the central *sierra* opted to support Cáceres and continue the resistance. Undeterred by the important defeat inflicted on the *Ejército del Centro* at Huamachuco in the northern highlands on 10 July 1883 and the signing by Iglesias and Lynch of the Ancón peace accord on 20 October 1883, the peasant insurgents continued conducting a two-pronged strategy designed to:

- a] attack the remnants of the Chilean forces still in the central *sierra* (for example, they forced the enemy out of the neighbouring departments of Ayacucho and Huancavelica); and
- b] harry collaborationist landowners, invading and plundering their estates.

Encouraged by Cáceres, the latter activity gained considerable momentum, so that between October 1883 and May 1884, "almost all the important haciendas located between Tayacaja [in Huancavelica] and Cerro de Pasco had been occupied by armed bands of indigenous peasants."¹⁴ When conducting these invasions, it increasingly appeared that the peasants were pursuing their own agenda and acting more and more outside the control of Cáceres.

By mid-1884, however, the shifting sands of national politics came to exercise an important impact on the Cáceres-peasant guerrilla relationship. With the peace treaty signed and the withdrawal of the Chilean troops almost complete, Cáceres reassessed his priorities, focusing on the ousting of Iglesias and installing himself as President. To fulfil this ambition and maintain himself in power, he needed support from regional elites and with this in mind moved to put a brake on the peasant

anti-landlord offensive and uphold the sanctity of private property—hardly a surprising position to adopt given that Cáceres was a member of a *hacendado* family from Ayacucho. To this end, on 2 July 1884 Cáceres ordered the capture of the leaders of guerrilla units from Colca community, who had taken over adjacent estates. After being accused of banditry, four of his erstwhile allies were placed before the firing squad.¹⁵

Over the following months there occurred a concerted attempt to *descabezar* the peasant rebels and enforce the return of invaded haciendas to their owners, although efforts in this direction were severely hampered by the chronic weakness of the Peruvian state, which did not possess enough coercive capacity to collect the head tax in many districts, let alone subdue the armed peasantry in a head-on confrontation. When mounting resistance to the Chilean invasion, the indigenous peasants had not only acquired weapons and military experience, they had also developed an appreciable level of internal organisation, political confidence and autonomy. They were not, therefore, prepared to meekly relinquish all the gains achieved during the past three years of struggle, an attitude that still prevailed in the communities after Cáceres finally managed to topple Miguel Iglesias and seize the presidency on 30 November 1885.

Acutely aware of the need to cement his ties with the regional elite, in January 1886 Cáceres commissioned Bartolomé Guerra to collect arms in possession of peasants housed in communities sited on the right bank of the Mantaro river, but even though Guerra was a figure of considerable authority (having been a guerrilla leader in the zone), his efforts proved largely unsuccessful in the most conflict ridden areas.¹⁶ Following this failure the pressure on Cáceres to restore 'normal' socio-economic relations via the return of estates to their former owners intensified. In response, in September 1888 he sent a column of troops into the central *sierra* with instructions to disarm the rural population and reconstitute property. Shortly afterwards a special commission, headed by Emiliano Carvallo, was appointed to direct the process, the aim being to combine military threat with negotiation in order to ensure compliance. By January 1889 this *pan y palo* strategy achieved a measure of success, as communities located on the right side of the Mantaro Valley handed back some lands, but agreement was only reached after Carvallo had judged in their favour on a number of longrunning boundary disputes.¹⁷

The authorities encountered more intractable problems when dealing with those communities sited on the mountainous and less accessible left side of the valley, where although some estates reverted to their owners they were little more than empty shells, the peasants having lifted all the livestock. Under pressure, the *comuneros* entered into an agreement with the authorities to return the animals, but in practice they refused to comply and avoided all attempts to capture, disarm or subdue them, despite several armed expeditions being dispatched to the

zone. Frustrated by this intransigence, Jacinto Cevallos, the collaboratorist owner of the haciendas Punto and Callanca, agreed to sell out to the *comuneros* of Comas and Acobamba for a total price of 2,250 head of cattle, only to see the peasants fail to keep their side of the contract by maintaining control of the land while handing over just 130 cattle. Not until 1902 was Cevallos able to recover his properties, assisted by a column of one hundred troops sent from Lima that was reinforced by local police detachments and privately hired gunmen.¹⁸ Such a lack of state authority and weakened landlord hegemony meant that for twenty years Comas and surrounding districts remained outside effective state control. From a long-term perspective, the historical legacy of the indigenous uprising of 1882-84 was to make *hacendados* more cautious in their dealings with the communities and prevent an 'avalanche of hacienda expansion' on the Puno model, so providing a platform for the development of the most prosperous peasant economy in highland Peru.¹⁹

Differing Interpretations of the Junín rebellion

Manrique's analysis of how the indigenous rebellion unfolded in the Mantaro Valley differed on a number of counts from earlier publications written in the 1970s, especially those by Henri Favre and Heraclio Bonilla. Although various people had commented on these events, often from a partisan political standpoint aimed at justifying past actions, the first serious attempt at a systematic analysis of the Central Andes insurrection was undertaken by the French anthropologist Henri Favre in an important article published in 1975.²⁰ Favre argued that after the Chilean occupation of Lima and the disintegration of the Peruvian state, the nodal point of resistance shifted to the central *sierra*, where at the behest of Cáceres the peasantry were organised by village leaders of *misti* extraction—or *petits blancs* as Favre labelled them (no doubt influenced by events in Algeria). To a backdrop of predations by the Chilean army, not only were these *coqs de village* able successfully to establish community based guerrilla units that proved effective fighters against the enemy, they also took advantage of the chaotic situation to employ the armed columns under their control in pursuit of their personal economic interests, particularly at the expense of local landlords via land invasions and the sacking of estates.²¹

At this point in the argument, Favre's interpretation diverged from that proffered by Manrique. For Favre, in addition to fighting the Chileans on the orders of Cáceres, under the clientship of influential *misti* village level powerbrokers the peasantry followed their own separate agenda outside the control of Cáceres. Furthermore, Favre maintained, as the conflict deepened leadership shifted from whites and *mestizos* into the hands of Indian *comuneros*, whereupon guerrilla actions radicalised to encompass the occupation of all the large haciendas in Junín department and eventually spread over the whole of the Central

Andes. Such actions, Favre held, were accompanied by the assassination of hacienda administrators and the mutilation of their corpses, as the peasants exacted revenge for past humiliations.²²

With time the conflict evolved into a cruel 'race war' against all non-Indians, whether inside or outside the estate sector, a development that forced the white and *mestizo* population to abandon their interests in the countryside and flee to Huancayo, Huancavelica and other Chilean controlled towns. This turn of events, Favre argued, struck fear into non-Indians and drove them into the arms of the Chilean force of occupation. They became collaborators in return for protection. For his part, Cáceres did little to restrain the rebellious Indians or reorient their activities in any meaningful fashion: this only occurred when Cáceres, motivated by his presidential ambitions, needed to establish a *modus operandi* with the regional elite. The 'race war' consequently continued unchecked until mid-1884, when Cáceres moved to execute a number of guerrilla leaders.²³

Manrique's objection to this interpretation focused on three issues. First, he argued that while the indigenous rebels did operate with a significant degree of autonomy, this situation only arose at specific conjunctures when Cáceres was outside the Mantaro Valley area (e.g. in Ayacucho, Huancavelica, or in the north on military campaigns). When Cáceres was in Junín, the insurgents recognised his command and followed an agreed military strategy. Consequently, they did not comprise an undisciplined rabble running out of control.²⁴

The latter point relates to Manrique's second criticism of Favre's thesis. He argued that Favre got both his timing of events and their interpretation wrong, for whereas Favre posited that the conflict escalated into a 'race war' that forced non-Indians to seek protection from the Chileans, what actually happened was that collaboration by Junín's landlords occurred prior to the widespread adoption of anti-landlord measures by the indigenous guerrillas. Furthermore, in 1882-83 not all haciendas were targeted for occupation, only those belonging to known collaborators like Luis Milón Duarte and Jacinto Cevallos. For Manrique, such actions undertaken by the guerrilla bands acted to reduce the number of *hacendados* deserting to the collaborationist camp. As a result, there was no "*total liquidation of the large latifundio system in the region,*" as Favre maintained.²⁵ In addition, Manrique held that Favre exaggerated when he claimed that the indigenous guerrillas controlled "*all the Central sierra.*" He also questioned the suggestion that the torture and assassination of hacienda administrative personnel was commonplace, noting that Favre's comments on this point were not backed up by adequate substantiating evidence. On the contrary, the documentation suggested otherwise, as illustrated by the case of the chief collaborator in the region—Luis Milón Duarte—who on his own admission, was handed over to Cáceres by his indigenous captors without "*a hair on my head being touched.*"²⁶ This and similar events, Manrique posited, gave further credence to the argument that the rebels operated in accordance

with an agreed strategy and exhibited a substantial degree of discipline.²⁷

Following on from this, Manrique's third area of disagreement concerned Favre's claim that a full-scale 'race war' was conducted by the indigenous guerrillas against whites and *mestizos*. Manrique stressed that only the collaborationist sector of the landlord class became targets and no archival evidence exists to suggest that indiscriminate attacks on people and property materialised. Favre consequently fell into the trap of uncritically taking on board exaggerated reports of an unchecked 'race war' supposedly raging in the highlands—images popularised through an ideologically conditioned Lima press and other prejudiced observers based on the coast, who possessed little idea of what was actually taking place in the *sierra*. Finally, one consequence of Favre's focus on an imaginary 'race war' meant that his analysis did not fully appreciate the significance of changing political conjunctures and class alliances as the War evolved.²⁸

In another influential article published in 1978, the Peruvian historian Heraclio Bonilla also discussed the indigenous rebellion that occurred in the Central Andes during the 1880s.²⁹ Drawing heavily on Favre's work, other secondary sources, British diplomatic dispatches and some archival material relating to the oligarchic Aspíllaga family, Bonilla stressed the deep ethnic and class divisions that came to the fore in Peruvian society in the wake of foreign invasion, military defeat and the collapse of the state. One of his key arguments was that Peruvians of all classes demonstrated a marked absence of 'national consciousness': collaborationist sentiments prevailed among the *limeño* elite and their regional acolytes, while the highland peasantry mistakenly thought they were caught up in a routine factional conflict of *montonera* complexion between rival *gamonales*.

This lack of awareness, when contrasted to the attitude of the Chilean troops, proved to be a major factor behind Peruvian military failure.³⁰ However, in the latter part of his analysis Bonilla speculated (without providing much collaborative evidence), that when the conflict was well advanced and Peru's fate sealed, a layer of rural participants acquired "some consciousness of their situation," because the "foreign invader actually began to transform the hitherto purely ethnic consciousness of the Andean peasantry into a sense of national solidarity—the feeling of a defeated people confronting a common destiny."³¹

Uncritically taking his lead from Favre, Bonilla further held that the predominance of ethnic loyalties over national sentiments produced an indigenous uprising in the Central Andes that not only resisted Chilean occupation, it also became transformed into a 'race war' directed against the peasants *misti* landowner oppressors. This *guerra de razas* drove all other ethnic groups to collaborate with the Chileans, for as ethnic divisions prevailed over the national question, there was no possibility of solidarity between the various racial segments. Unwittingly then, the indigenous insurgents made a decisive contribution to the Chilean victory.³²

Manrique voiced various objections to this analysis. Like Favre, Bonilla's claim that peasant resistance degenerated into a 'race war' characterised by an uncontrolled settling of old accounts, was regarded as mistaken and simplified the dynamics of the conflict. The indigenous rebellion was primarily directed against the Chileans, but not against all non-Indian sections of the Peruvian population, because although the ethnic dimension obviously existed, it was not dominant in determining the insurgents' actions. For Manrique, the first key point of rupture was the 'national question' (represented by *comunero* rebels confronting Chileans). Later this meshed with the issue of class division (i.e. post-1882 peasant-landlord struggles over land), insofar as the main conflicts involved those estates owned by collaborationist *hacendados*, property belonging to 'patriotic' landlords having been respected.³³ By rebelling, the indigenous guerrillas wished to get rid of the Chilean invaders in order to put a stop to their exactions and so guarantee the continued existence of their village economies. They also hoped to reinforce the socio-political autonomy of their communities. These represented important but limited goals. At no stage did the peasants pursue the more ambitious policy of driving the whites from the Central Andes.

In addition, Manrique maintained that Bonilla (like Favre) presented an oversimplified and inaccurate version of events that not only failed to distinguish between the actions of Indians in Junín and other regions of Andean Peru (Huánuco, Cajamarca, etc.), his account also did not relate the activities of the indigenous guerrillas to changing national and local circumstances as the War progressed. Such an omission made it impossible for Bonilla to construct an adequate interpretation of why participants acted in a particular fashion at a particular conjuncture and how the contours of conflict shifted over time.³⁴

A final area of disagreement between Bonilla and Manrique concerned the thorny issue of 'national consciousness'. Manrique rejected the suggestion that the indigenous peasantry thought they were fighting for 'Don Nicolás' or 'Don Miguel', arguing that in the Central Andes at least, archival evidence and the manner in which the conflict developed indicated that a considerable swathe of the rural population possessed a basic comprehension of what the struggle was about. In part, this was made possible by pre-war economic development, which helped widen the peasant world view beyond the horizon of village boundaries. Manrique conceded that during the first stage of the War the majority of peasants had been reluctantly shanghaied into the army with little knowledge of what was afoot. However, their level of awareness and attitude rapidly changed when Letelier's column entered the highlands. By late 1881, therefore, many peasants could distinguish between 'Peru' and 'Chile,' as well as differing factions within the regional elite. Although most *comunero* insurgents (not surprisingly) failed to evolve their own *proyecto nacional*, a general comprehension of the causes and significance of the conflict was inculcated by veterans of the defense of Lima, literate individuals settled in the villages and Cacerist *mistis*.

Consequently, once the War reached the Central Andes, a raising of national consciousness swiftly occurred, the peasants developing their own view of the nation. This process took deepest root in the environs of Comas, a nodal point of post-war conflict between peasant and state.³⁵

A position similar to that advocated by Manrique was adopted by Florencia Mallon, who equally emphasised the interaction of developments in the military sphere and national politics with the appearance of new social tensions and shifting class alliances. The importance of local variations within the Central Andes was also highlighted by Mallon: peasant resistance and its response in the shape of landlord collaboration, she argued, were more prevalent in the southern and eastern sections of the Mantaro Valley (the focal point of Chilean occupation and depredation), which in turn provoked higher levels of class conflict in these localities. On the other hand, to the north in the vicinity of Jauja, the landowners mostly supported Cáceres, a stance that enabled the polyclass nationalist coalition to survive intact. Such local variations suggested that to interpret the indigenous rebellion as a 'race war' against whites was "*exaggerated*."³⁶

On the issue of 'national consciousness,' Mallon argued that "*prewar and wartime events in the central sierra set the conditions for the development of nationalist consciousness*" and as the conflict unfolded, the Junín peasantry underwent:

*"an intense process of ideological growth [...] Out of this confrontation, they developed both an understanding of national politics and a strong sense of nationalism, though neither would be recognized as such by modern or upper class standards. Their nationalism, for example, was not a general or symbolic sense of nationhood, but a feeling founded very concretely on their love of their homeland—for the place where they were born [...] Thus, the Chileans were not enemies because they were Chileans, but because they invaded and destroyed the homeland, the peasants' most precious resource, their source of subsistence and life."*³⁷

As a consequence of what Trotsky called the "*swift, intense and passionate changes in the psychology of classes*," the peasantry quickly acquired "*a clear grasp of the implications of political debates for developments in their own villages*."³⁸ The internalisation of a more sophisticated *Weltanschauung* by peasants in Junín, however, contrasted with the situation encountered in other highland regions where the impact of Chilean occupation was less intense. Moreover, different rural social structures and relations (for example, weaker communities and greater landlord hegemony) existed elsewhere in Andean Peru, with the result that in these zones "*the local oligarchy did not face a strong class challenge*."³⁹

For Mallon, not only did the 'development of national consciousness' differ between regions, national identity similarly took root to varying degrees within Junín. Here a key factor was said to be the level of involvement communities had played in the anti-Chilean resistance movement. Accordingly, the inhabitants of Comas and surrounding

communities were in the forefront of this social process, owing to their important role in rolling back the occupation. When this transforming experience was added to by lessons gained as a consequence of attempts by Cáceres to repress their activities in mid-1884 and post-war sentiments arising from participation in a de facto autonomous peasant republic, the *comuneros* eventually created for themselves the social and political space to evolve "a broader vision or project of how their society should be organized."⁴⁰ The *campesinos* alternative national programme, with its "particular brand of nationalism [...] envisioned a society in which local autonomy would nurture local prosperity, without landowner oppression or state exactions, and where a larger confederation could handle commerce, infrastructure, and a common defense."⁴¹ Unfortunately, this peasant Valhalla stood in contradiction to the political realities of class power in late nineteenth century Peru, so that as the state was rebuilt after Piérola became president 1895, the rural dissenters eventually had their wings clipped despite putting up a dogged fight to maintain their independence.

In a spirited reply to the criticisms raised by Manrique and Mallon, Bonilla sidestepped the issue of whether or not the Junín peasant insurrection took on the shape of a 'race war' and concentrated his argument on a defense of the proposition that all classes demonstrated a lack of 'national consciousness.'⁴² Bonilla sustained that the acquisition of a "genuine nationalist sentiment or consciousness" on the European model entailed more than "the natural peasant reaction to foreign aggression framed in language lent to them by Cáceres," a distinction that Manrique and Mallon failed to consider.⁴³ According to Bonilla, peasant rebellion was to be expected given Chilean despoliation, but this in itself provided insufficient grounds to claim that the peasantry were fighting under a nationalist banner: a conceptual gulf existed between defending one's village and fighting for a more abstract entity such as 'Peru.' In any case, Bonilla maintained, even if it was conceded that some form of nationalist consciousness had developed, without support from a non-existent bourgeoisie ("the class which historically waves the flag of nationalism") any nationalist feelings Junín's peasantry might have held, quickly evaporated following the withdrawal of the Chilean army.⁴⁴

On this issue the protagonists in the debate appear to be talking past one another. Bonilla defended his position by adopting a narrow interpretation of nationalism drawn from the nineteenth-century European experience of industrial revolution, the creation of national markets, racism and the scramble for Africa. His 'ideal type' nationalism mirrors what Seton-Watson termed the 'official nationalism' purposefully propagated by elites into wider society, a conservative brand of the genre that contrasted to previous more spontaneous popular nationalisms on the Irish model.⁴⁵

For their part, Mallon and Manrique (without making the link) took their cue from the latter variant. A basic problem here is that in the first round of publication and debate, none of the authors based their argu-

ment on a serious review of contemporary (i.e. published between 1975-83) analyses of nationalism, either in its European guise or its Third World variant. This was a surprising omission given that a number of important texts on the topic had recently appeared and several liberation wars were being fought in Asian and African societies lacking a 'proper' bourgeoisie, but where the leading social actors comprised indigenous peasants led by a petit-bourgeoisie of nationalist persuasion—a constellation of mutinous social forces not dissimilar to that found in 1880s Junín.⁴⁶ Current events in Guinea Bissau, Zimbabwe, Vietnam and elsewhere thus indicated that 'peasant nationalism' along the lines suggested by Mallon and Manrique did not constitute a contradiction in terms.

If the line of analysis pursued by Mallon and Manrique proved suggestive, at the same time they pushed their argument on the question of national consciousness somewhat further than the documentation warranted. The nature of the relationship between leaders and led required further examination: it appears proven that the leaders of the peasant guerrilla bands possessed a significant degree of awareness about the causes and implications of the conflict, but to what extent was this inculcated among the Junín peasantry at large? On this point Bonilla asks a valid question: how reliable is the documentary evidence, given that peasant attitudes may well have been refracted through a filter comprised of *misti* lawyers, priests, soldiers and other literates of Cacerist sympathies?⁴⁷

Problems with the use of sources therefore exist. This said, the array of documentation employed by Mallon and Manrique was far wider than that used by Favre and Bonilla, which enabled them to construct a more accurate and rounded analysis. On the other hand, Bonilla's source material laid him open to the accusation that he was repeating the 'elite historiography' against which Piel had inveighed. Although the British consul, Antero Aspíllaga and the various other illuminaries cited by Bonilla may have possessed a reasonably accurate picture of wartime developments on the coast, their knowledge of highland society and events was minimal.⁴⁸ Consequently, his account left too much to supposition and prejudice, a distortion that Bonilla failed to take sufficiently into consideration and resulted in a one-sided analysis. Mallon and Manrique largely overcame this problem through consulting a wider range of secondary sources, being more sensitive to the 'hidden transcript' within statements emanating from elite commentators and by undertaking archival research that involved a careful revision of military, legal and prefectural documents. The latter were particularly important in enabling them to acquire a better understanding of developments at the grassroots level.

Thus it is largely thanks to the work of Mallon and Manrique that our knowledge of the Junín rebellion has significantly advanced since the early 1980s. Gaps in the literature and issues in need of further clarification nevertheless still exist. For example, no detailed analysis of pre-War factional structures, alliances and conflicts in Junín has been

undertaken, although these political legacies undoubtedly exercised an important influence on the positions adopted by particular individuals and *clientelas* during the 1880s. While the literature understandably concentrates on the role of peasant *comuneros*, the activities of estate employees has been neglected, as has the relationship between villagers and hacienda labourers. Likewise, the impact of longstanding inter-community rivalries on peasant behaviour under wartime conditions requires fuller examination. Reference has already been made to the need for more detail on the nature of the link between the peasant base and Cacerist proselytizers; it would also help to have further information on the class and ethnic background, life history and position in village power structures of the guerrilla leaders. No doubt much of the documentation necessary to push forward our knowledge on these questions has been destroyed, but it is likely that as yet unresearched papers exist in private hands (especially the descendants of *tinterillos*, judges of the peace and district governors), as well as in small town municipal, notarial and parochial archives. Finally, events surrounding the War of the Pacific has spawned a rich folklore among the Junín peasantry and this popular oral history forms another source that is still to be properly investigated.⁴⁹

Atusparia's Revolt: Ancash 1885

The second largest rebellion to take place in late nineteenth century Peru occurred in the department of Ancash. Like the Junín insurrection, this revolt evolved to a backdrop of military defeat, foreign invasion (Chilean troops occupied the area in 1881 and 1883), bitter civil war between rival *cacerista* and *iglesista* factions (1882-85), and last but not least, the collapse of state authority. Unfortunately these events have received less attention than the Junín case: prior to 1980 several superficial accounts were written, and it is largely thanks to the efforts of local historian Augusto Alba and U.S. anthropologist William Stein that the causes and trajectory of this uprising are today better understood.⁵⁰

Atusparia's rebellion centred on the Callejón de Huaylas, an elongated valley flanked by the impressive Cordillera Blanca and Cordillera Negra, which housed the departmental capital Huaraz, in addition to the usual *mélange* of haciendas, *fundos*, peasant communities and independent peasant freeholdings. In contrast to the Mantaro Valley, in Ancash the agrarian order mirrored a typical Andean pattern, whereby estates and medium-scale *fundos* owned by the local elite monopolized land on the valley bottom, with peasant communities and freeholdings being crowded onto the less fertile hillsides. Although the Callejón de Huaylas did not develop the same degree of commercial dynamism as Junín, a number of small-scale mines operated in the locality, which provided a source of skilled and unskilled employment. Silver extraction also supported a rich variety of ancillary occupations (muleteers, artisans, etc.), and created a limited market for foodstuffs. Apart from

local markets, the Callejón de Huaylas's more prosperous agriculturalists supplied coastal settlements and mining camps as far afield as Cerro de Pasco with wheat, meat and other staples.

This agrarian structure gave rise to familiar patterns of conflict (*hacienda-hacienda*, *hacienda-peasant community*, etc.), but as the department contained large numbers of Quechua speakers in both town and country, ethnicity also helped shape the everyday content of social relations. In this regard, three key ethnic groups could be identified—Indians, *mestizos* and whites—with the usual '*blanqueamiento*' arising in accordance with socio-economic standing and urban or rural residence.

In common with many other areas of the Peruvian *sierra*, the War of the Pacific proved disastrous for Ancash's peasantry. On the eve of the War, their household economy had been severely affected by torrential rains that swept away crops, topsoil, destroyed irrigation systems and disrupted communications. Immediately afterwards, wartime inflation, conscription, *cupos* and requisitions by Chilean and Peruvian troops further threatened a peasant economy already under severe stress. To make matters worse, Chilean conquest and civil war brought an upsurge in general lawlessness and brigandage, one consequence of a collapse of the state and an erosion of elite hegemony.

In order to remedy this situation, the *iglesista* administration in Lima appointed Francisco Noriega as prefect of Ancash, with instructions to restore order, reconstruct local state authority and hound *cacerista* sympathizers, tasks he embarked upon with considerable enthusiasm. On 7 November 1884, the day after his arrival in Huaraz, Noriega issued a decree ordering over thirty citizens of known *Cacerist* affiliation to present themselves to the prefecture prior to being expelled from the town, a number of whom were clapped in irons and dispatched to Lima. Other pronouncements prohibited people from leaving Huaraz without authorization, ordered the collection of arms and similar measures aimed at harrying political opponents and imposing social control. Given that disbursements from Lima were not forthcoming, Noriega levied a mining tax and moved to take over the municipality with a view to gaining access to additional sources of income. In February 1885 the inhabitants of Huaraz were instructed to pay \$ 0.40 (forty *centavos*) per household to supposedly cover the cost of renumbering their houses, under threat of being fined \$ 0.80 in case of noncompliance. Work permits (*boletos de ocupación honorosa*) also had to be purchased from the prefecture by all those seeking paid employment. Such unpopular actions, along with the prefect's highhanded behaviour, earned Noriega considerable unpopularity among the urban population. Undaunted, however, he continued to act with full rigour, even going so far as to forcibly search the homes of prominent *cacerista* landowners.

Having alienated a large part of the urban population, Noriega then injudiciously proceeded to heighten rural discontent. Peasant *estancias* in the vicinity of Huaraz were forced to provide around seven hundred unpaid workers per day, a corvee labour draft (*la república*) imposed to

repair the church, construct a new graveyard and accommodation for the cavalry unit stationed in the departmental capital. Plans were also laid to collect the head tax (*la contribución personal*), which in prewar years had formed the chief source of income to cover government administrative costs and salaries at the local level, but given the chaotic environment created by the War and civil war, its collection had been sporadic and incomplete. Keen to impose his authority and acquire funds, on 22 February 1885 Noriega issued a decree ordering the payment of \$ 2.00 per semester (the legal rate was \$ 1.00), to be paid within three days under sanction of a fine or imprisonment.

This arbitrary and illegal imposition was received with alarm and anger by a rural population whose ability to pay had been undermined by natural disaster and war. Resistance to the tax rapidly grew and the peasants conveyed their feelings to their local village representatives (*varayoqs*), who the authorities appointed annually to oversee tax collection, muster labour drafts and organise religious festivals. The head *varayoq* in the district of Huaraz was an artisan of rural extraction named Pedro Pablo Atusparia. Along with other headmen from neighbouring *estancias*, Atusparia sent a petition to Noriega arguing that economic circumstances made it impossible for the peasantry to pay the head tax, especially as a *montonera* column loyal to the Cacerist caudillo José Mercedes Puga had forcibly collected such a tax only four months earlier. Moreover, as large numbers of household heads found themselves dragooned into performing unpaid labour service on public works, they did not have the freedom to obtain the paid employment which might enable them to raise cash and pay the tax. For the above reasons, a reduction in the levy to the legal level of \$ 1.00 per semester was requested.

Although the petition was drafted in a suitably deferential style, its well-crafted Spanish immediately led Noriega to suspect that the document was inspired by his factional opponents based in Huaraz town. Infuriated, he therefore moved to stamp out what he regarded as a challenge to his authority, ordering Atusparia to present himself in the prefecture with a view to effecting his arrest. Unknown to the prefect, however, Atusparia was already languishing in jail after refusing to obey an order from the *iglesista* governor of Huaraz, José Collazos, to mobilise additional contingents of corvee labourers to cut and transport reeds destined to thatch a section of the local barracks. To add insult to injury, Atusparia had informed the governor that the villagers would no longer work gratis for the authorities. For this insubordination, the Indian leader was put in irons, beaten in an attempt to discover who had instigated the 'insolent' petition and dragged to the prefecture, where in a symbolic act designed to humiliate, his pigtail was cut off.

Undeterred by the signs of growing peasant disquiet, Noriega determined to press ahead with the collection of the head tax. Taking advantage of the presence in town of large numbers of peasants attending mass and undertaking their weekly purchases, on Sunday 1 March

1885 governor Collazos once more ordered the *varayoc* to enforce the levy within three days. When this demand met with protests, they too were arrested, beaten and had their pigtails docked. Such heavy-handed behaviour incensed the peasants. The next day approximately two thousand *campesinos* from surrounding villages occupied Huaraz and congregated in the Plaza de Armas before the prefecture, demanding the release of their leaders and a reduction in the *contribución personal*. At this point matters soon began to spiral out of control: amid rumours that the Indians were going to attack the town, the jittery police and army detachments garrisoned in Huaraz panicked, opening fire on the protesters, "leaving many dead and wounded among the unfortunate protesters, who never imagined that their response would be so terribly violent."⁵¹ Understandably angered by this turn of events, after a night of intense mobilisation the following dawn an estimated five to six thousand peasants from a fifteen kilometre radius around the town descended on Huaraz and armed with slings, staves and an assortment of firearms, gradually fought their way into the Plaza. Eventually numerical advantage told and the defending troops either managed to flee during the chaos of battle, or were killed when the peasants overran the last pockets of resistance:

*"With ferocious bravery they penetrated the police barracks. Women transformed into fighters marched alongside the Indian combatants. The women were the most angry and it was they who insisted most vehemently that no mercy should be shown to the defeated. No one was spared. They were all finished off."*⁵²

For his part, Noriega escaped unscathed as he had fortuitously left Huaraz to inspect roadworks near the town of Aija.

Once in control of Huaraz, the sacking of property belonging to prominent *iglesistas* and the Chinese (who were disliked because of their perceived collaboration with the Chileans) occurred. Nevertheless, order was soon restored by Atusparia and his associates, but not before tax records and other documents had been torched. On 5 March in the presence of approximately five thousand peasants, a *mestizo* lawyer, Manuel Mosquera, was named prefect; Atusparia became the peasant delegate to the prefect and a young journalist, Luis Felipe Montestruque, general secretary to the prefect. Other *mestizo* urbanites were appointed to positions within the new administration and the authority of the Iglesias government in Lima was rejected as the insurgents declared for Cáceres and Puga. The lives of local *iglesistas*, however, were spared through the intercession of Atusparia, who acted as a moderating influence on the peasant rank-and-file.

With Huaraz under their control, the rebels moved to capture other settlements along the Callejón de Huaylas. Atusparia and Mosquera led a force comprising eighty well armed men and two thousand Indians sporting an assortment of hand weapons and primitive firearms, to capture Carhuaz on 16 March. After sacking the governor's office and a number of commercial establishments, order was restored by Atusparia,

who had several of the looters shot. Almost immediately the revolt spread over the Cordillera Negra down towards the Pacific coast, a development assisted by the appearance of a large detachment of rebels under the leadership of a miner and muleteer employed in the local Uchcu mine, Pedro Cochachín, popularly known as 'Uchcu Pedro.'

With Indians in other localities also supporting Atusparia, the uprising gradually spread over the whole Callejón de Huaylas and its environs. A decisive battle in establishing rebel control took place at the town of Yungay, where the predominantly white and *mestizo* townspeople assisted by *iglesista* reinforcements from elsewhere in the valley, fiercely resisted the rebels. On 28 March 1885 the urban militia (*Guardia Urbana*) of Yungay were attacked by approximately five hundred Indian rebels, who after an intense conflict were driven off, one of Atusparia's lieutenants being captured in the process and locked in the town jail. The next day additional attacks and counter-attacks were mounted, during which a local notable was surrounded by the insurgents, beaten to death and his corpse mutilated. In reprisal, the Yungay militia killed the Indian leader who had fallen into their hands. Over the following days further clashes occurred with heavy casualties on both sides, but eventually the town was taken on 6 April 1885. Two developments turned the contest in the rebels favour: the defenders of Yungay found themselves running out of ammunition, while Atusparia's forces expanded to around five thousand Indians as a result of a steady flow of peasant volunteers from surrounding villages and the arrival of miner-peasant reinforcements under the command of Pedro Cochachín.

As in the case of Huaraz and Carhuaz, the victors looted property belonging to unscrupulous merchants, despised usurers and pettifogging *tinterillos*. Celebrating their success with ample quantities of alcohol, they destroyed a substantial part of the town, in the process killing several of the inhabitants. Once again, after an initial flurry of excesses, Atusparia and Mosquera imposed order on their followers. A similar train of events occurred elsewhere: on 5 April 1885 the small settlement of Pueblo Libre was overrun by a reported thousand Indians drawn from the surrounding *estancias*; they seized a local notable named Julián Meléndez, hammered nails into his left ribs and throat, after which he was dragged off to the cemetery and decapitated.

Such expressions of long suppressed class and ethnic resentment were nevertheless surprisingly rare, even though by 10 April 1885 the insurgents found themselves in control of all the Callejón de Huaylas, from Huaraz in the south to Carhuaz in the north, and could muster between 20-25,000 combatants. What had commenced as a seemingly restricted protest against unjust taxation had swiftly escalated into a full-blown rebellion against the existing social order in highland Ancash and *iglesista* rule from Lima. Furthermore, by April 1885 the scale of the rebellion was far greater than any of the early participants could have anticipated and on a number of occasions the uprising had threatened to spin out of the control of Atusparia and its urban *mestizo* leadership. An

uneasy alliance prevailed between the leaders and the rank-and-file.

At this stage in the proceedings the rebellion apparently spawned some interesting ideological facets. According to Alba, following the initial success of the insurrection in Huaraz, elements of the local Indian population came to view Pedro Pablo Atusparia as the Inca reincarnate who would restore collective wellbeing and justice to the Andean world.⁵³ Such ideas were particularly articulated by several of the *mestizos* involved in the revolt, notably Luis Felipe Montestruque, who started to formulate a revolutionary programme for the movement with messianic overtones in the pages of his newspaper *El Sol de los Incas*. Montestruque penned editorials advocating the establishment of 'peasant socialism' based on equal land distribution, communal ownership and the coronation of Atusparia as the new Inca. Apparently such a programme proved attractive to a number of insurrectionists, including 'Uchcu Pedro,' who implemented a land reform to the benefit of peasant communities in some areas of the Cordillera Negra. However, the extent to which 'peasant socialism' on Tahuantinsuyo lines caught the peasantry's imagination or remained a dream swirling around the heads of radical urban *mestizos* remains unclear.

For their part, the *iglesista* authorities in Lima could not help but view developments in Ancash with considerable dismay, given the danger that Indian rebellion might spread beyond the department to neighbouring highland areas. Cacerist participation in the uprising was also a matter of deep concern, especially as the unpopular administration of Miguel Iglesias exercised a very tenuous grip on power. In order to meet the challenge, on 8 April 1885 colonel José Iraola was appointed as prefect of Ancash to replace the discredited Francisco Noriega, who after the fall of Huaraz had removed himself to the coastal town of Casma, from where he attempted to organise resistance to the rebellion. Fresh regiments of infantry, cavalry and an artillery detachment sailed from Callao to the port of Casma, with other troops being directed to Casma from Salaverry in the north. Although the government was hard pressed financially, initially at least funds were made available to ensure that the troops received their wages promptly.

Somewhat apprehensively (it was rumoured that 20-25,000 Indians were guarding the main Andean passes), the government troops marched towards the *sierra* on 17 April 1885. Their destination was Yungay, which was chosen in preference to Huaraz because it was known that the local urban elite opposed the rebellion and would give support. This proved to be the case: prefect Iraola entered Yungay on 24 April to popular acclaim from the urban population, his column having successfully beaten off five attacks by large contingents of Indians congregated on the peaks overlooking the highway. Lacking adequate firepower, the rebels could not convert their numerical superiority into military advantage.

The next day Yungay was surrounded by an estimated five to six thousand Indians, of whom no more than about four hundred possessed

firearms. In the ensuing assault, Iraola's 650 better armed troops managed to beat off the rebels, the use of cannon being particularly effective in the narrow streets. For four days the insurgents made repeated attempts to capture Yungay, all unsuccessful and at the terrible cost of approximately thousand dead, included among them the advocate of 'peasant socialism' Luis Felipe Montestruque. In contrast, the defending troops lost no more than two officers and thirty men. Somewhat demoralised by their failure to take Yungay and the heavy casualties inflicted upon them, the rebels retreated to the departmental capital in disarray.

The defeat at Yungay marked a turning point in another respect, for it led a number of *caceristas* and urban *mestizos* to abandon the rebel cause. Some, sensing that the tide had turned against the insurgents, sought to save their skins. Others had become increasingly alarmed at the direction the revolt was taking (i.e. questioning the status quo and running outside of *mestizo* control), and concluded that accommodation with the Iglesias administration was necessary if '*la indiada*' was to be kept in its place. Ranked among these was the formal leader of the uprising, Manuel Mosquera, who attempted to negotiate a peace accord with Iraola. When this proved unsuccessful Mosquera fled south to Jauja, where he maintained a low profile until Cáceres became president.

Meanwhile, Iraola, despite the tired state of the government troops and a dangerously low level of munitions to feed the guns, determined to press home his military advantage even though a force of fifteen thousand were reputedly defending the departmental capital. On 30 April 1885 the march on Huaraz commenced and Iraola managed to occupy the city quite easily three days later. In part this was due to the actions of sectors of the local *gente decente*: afraid of a prolonged struggle with unpredictable consequences, some of Huaraz's merchants supplied the Indians with considerable quantities of alcohol so that when prefect Iraola arrived most of the insurgents were inebriated, many being shot by the troops as they lay unconscious in the streets. Those that could fled. Many others were less fortunate: as they moved along the Callejón de Huaylas the troops (eagerly assisted by *iglesista* irregulars), took their revenge on factional opponents, participants in the revolt and anyone else not to their liking but misfortunate enough to cross their path. In these '*limpieza con sangre*' sweeps numerous people found themselves imprisoned and tortured, while it has been claimed that in one incident approximately five hundred Indians were forced to dig their own graves prior to being shot.⁵⁴ The wounded Atusparia enjoyed a happier fate: after his detention the head *varayoq* was well treated through the intercession of the urban elite, who recognised the restraining role he had played during the initial phase of the rebellion and feared an upsurge in violence if he was executed. Aided by the grateful *caceristas*, in 1886 Atusparia travelled to Lima, where he was presented to president-elect Cáceres. Upon returning to Ancash Atusparia retired to his birthplace, the *estancia* of Maríán, dying there in 1887.

The conflict, however, did not end with the occupation of Huaraz

and the capture of Atusparia. Although most of the rebels were disheartened, disorientated and willing to accept Iraola's amnesty and surrender—a decision facilitated by Iraola's promise not to collect the head tax—Pedro Cochachín refused to lay down his arms. Heading a band of the most determined insurgents, Cochachín attacked Huaraz on 11 May 1885, but once again the superior arms of the government troops won the day. After this defeat, Cochachín returned to the Cordillera Negra, from where he waged a guerrilla campaign against the *iglesistas*. During the ensuing four months 'Uchcu Pedro' and his band of three hundred *montoneros* invaded several haciendas and small urban settlements, refusing all advances from Iraola to agree to a truce and evading various attempts by the authorities to capture him. With the direct approach unsuccessful, the *iglesistas* resorted to more machiavellian measures: one of Cochachín's *compadres* invited him to celebrate a '*corte de pelo*' to be held at his farm on 28 September, where a detachment of government troops were able to ambush the rebel leader and overpower his bodyguards. Once captured, 'Uchcu Pedro' was put in irons, immediately taken to Casma and summarily executed.⁵⁵

Following the death of their leader, resistance to Iraola swiftly crumbled as the remaining guerrilla bands broke up and dispersed. A semblance of order was gradually restored to the countryside and the socio-political status quo reestablished. The insurrection had lasted two months and exhibited a number of the characteristics commonly associated with peasant revolt: it fell prey to clientelism; it remained localised, thus permitting eventual state repression; and despite the efforts of maverick characters such as Luis Felipe Montestruque, the participants proved unable to evolve an alternative political project or establish a level of organisation capable of mounting a sustained and effective challenge to the established order. This ineffectiveness was epitomized by the reimposition of the *contribución personal* and the labour draft in 1886, ironically by a Cacerist administration. Unlike the Junín rebellion then, the Ancash revolt gained few lasting concessions for the indigenous peasantry and other sectors of the rural poor.

Differing Interpretations of the Ancash Revolt

Being much less studied than the Junín case study, no debate on the Ancash insurrection has taken place. Nevertheless, Atusparia's Revolt has attracted superficial comment from a number of writers, who typically speculate without having conducted archival research. Aníbal Quijano, for example, stated that the Ancash rebellion was (following Hobsbawm's model) 'pre-political' and took on the complexion of an atavistic 'race war' in which the peasants strove for "*the return of land to the Indians and the elimination of the white population.*"⁵⁶ Wilfredo Kapsoli proffered a different interpretation, claiming that the events in Ancash in 1885 comprised a straightforward anti-tax rebellion fuelled by wartime inflation, especially increases in the price of salt. Furthermore, it repre-

sented a movement "characterised by social passivity and no questioning of the social order."⁵⁷ For his part, Jean Piel held that Atusparia's Revolt:

*"started off as a conflict between President Iglesias, in power since the evacuation of Peru by the Chileans, and General Cáceres who accused him of treason and wanted to replace him in the presidency. A mestizo local agent of Cáceres became aware of the benefit to be derived from the discontent which had been endemic in the Indian communities around the departmental capital, since the prefect had obliged them to provide free labour for the state and had levied an arbitrary capitation tax of two soles. On the day after Atusparia, the mayor of these communities, had been publicly humiliated for daring to present a petition, the Indians attacked the prefect's office and freed the prisoners there, killing several soldiers in the process. This might have had no further consequences had not Atusparia (advised and doubtless armed by Cáceres's agent) set himself up as the Indian prefect of the department. With the support of the redoubtable guerrilla leader, Uchcu Pedro, an Indian miner, he managed to gain control of the entire mountain area of the department. It took several months for the troops sent from Lima to recover the region, and an important concession had to be made: the termination of the fiscal excesses of the original prefect. In the course of this pacification the mestizos abandoned the rebellion and rallied to the central authority, albeit with some reluctance."*⁵⁸

In a later article, Piel and his co-author Manuel Valladares held that the uprising did not evolve into a 'race war':

*"As the peasants fiercely attacked the landlords and the authorities, many observers have been led to believe that the insurrection was racially motivated. We do not detect this [...] the reason why the whites were assassinated was not because they were whites, but because they were exploiters."*⁵⁹

Valladares and Piel consequently differed from most of the earlier literature by emphasising the class over the ethnic dimension of the revolt. They also departed from existing interpretations by claiming that after the initial taking of Huaraz, leadership of the insurrection passed from Pedro Pablo Atusparia into the hands of Manuel Mosquera and other urban *mestizos* of petit-bourgeois extraction.⁶⁰ In other respects, however, Valladares and Piel followed the traditional historiography, claiming that Pedro Cochachín was far more violent and anti-white than Atusparia, who acted as a moderating influence on the Indian masses.⁶¹

Unfortunately, prior to the mid-1980s most writing on the 1885 Ancash uprising took its data from Reyna's 1932 novel of dubious merit (see below), reiterating its message uncritically without undertaking any serious fieldwork. Steps to correct this were first taken by Augusto Alba, who in addition to employing published secondary sources and reports appearing in Lima and *ancashino* newspapers, also revised some prefectural documents housed in Lima, local municipal papers and reports sent to the War Ministry in Lima. As a result of this endeavour, Alba was able to provide a more rounded view of the revolt. Nevertheless,

his useful monograph is wholly descriptive and it has been left to William Stein to undertake the most thorough trawl through the archival material and place it within an analytical framework.

On the basis of this research, Stein rejected Quijano's argument that the 1885 insurrection developed into a 'race war' aimed at the assassination of whites and the expropriation of their property. A first point made by Stein was that although some land invasions may have taken place, no hard evidence exists to verify this type of event. Indeed, the idea that the uprising was accompanied by significant attacks against white and *mestizo* estates was first floated by Reyna and "*may only be literary fiction.*"⁶² With regard to the sacking of commercial establishments, such incidents took place but remained localised, usually involving assets belonging to prominent *iglesistas* or individuals with a reputation for mistreating the peasantry. Second, Atusparia's Revolt did not comprise a 'race war' as Quijano claimed, given that the uprising embraced people from different ethnic groups. At key moments during the revolt Indian leaders like Atusparia preached order and restraint. In addition, many key positions within the rebel ranks were occupied by *mestizos* and although the overwhelming majority of participants were Indians, the relatively small number of *mestizos* who became involved exercised an influence on the course of the rebellion out of all proportion to their numbers. Finally, Stein noted that no evidence has been unearthed to suggest that the Indians wished for, or attempted to, bring about "*the elimination of the white population.*" The movement was extremely amorphous and did not evolve such clearly defined goals. Indeed, Quijano's 'race war' interpretation merely regurgitated a distorted version of events that had originally been peddled in *El Comercio* and other pro-*iglesista* sections of the Lima press who wished to play down the anti-government aspect of the insurrection, engaged in a crude racial stereotyping and pushed the idea of an anti-white peasant 'communist' *jacquerie* in order to bolster support for an unpopular government and legitimise repression.

On the other hand, Stein in part agreed with Quijano's contention that the uprising was 'pre-political,' on the grounds that while the rebellion was triggered by peasant socio-economic grievances it failed to pursue clearly defined objectives, exhibited no small degree of incoherence and did not evolve policies aimed at restructuring power relations in the countryside. Yet on another level, the uprising was highly 'political' in that the *cacerista-iglesista* civil war formed a crucial backdrop to the rebellion and strongly influenced its trajectory. Equally, the centrality of patron-client relationships in Ancash society and the involvement of *mestizos* in the conflict, ensured that it possessed an important political dimension. As a result, attacks on people and property did not occur in an indiscriminate fashion, but were mostly aimed at factional opponents. *Mestizo* participation also meant that the rebellion did not comprise a straightforward urban-rural confrontation.

Stein therefore viewed Atusparia's Revolt as a complex event that

possessed interrelated class, ethnic and political facets. For this reason he disagreed with Kapsoli's assertion that the insurrection formed just another spontaneous 'fiscal' peasant revolt, correctly stressing the wide array of social actors with divergent goals who became caught up in the uprising and indicating how their aims changed as events unfolded. Just as the 1885 Ancash revolt developed into something more than a 'simple' *jacquerie* over taxation, Stein also rejected Kapsoli's claim that it was characterised by "*social passivity and no questioning of the existing social order.*" The speed with which the mobilisation occurred, the large numbers mobilised and the intensity of the conflicts generated, causing substantial loss of life, did not indicate 'social passivity' or a basic contentment with the status quo.

With regard to the assertion made by Valladares and Piel that Pedro Cochachín acted in a much more blood-thirsty fashion than Pedro Pablo Atusparia and pursued a campaign of racially motivated revenge for past injustices, Stein made the point that archival evidence to substantiate these claims has not been uncovered. Partisan political motivations lay behind the image of the 'good Indian' Atusparia and the 'bad Indian' Cochachín: 'Uchcu Pedro's' reputation for gratuitous violence and anti-white activities was manufactured by the Lima press in order to justify, and win support for, state repression.

Four decades later, this particular view of Cochachín was propagated for very different ideological motives by Ernesto Reyna, firstly through three short literary pieces that appeared between September 1929 and January 1930 in José Carlos Mariátegui's influential magazine *Amauta*. Shortly afterwards these extracts became part of a radical indigenista novel published in 1932. In this work Reyna labelled 'Uchcu Pedro' as a '*chancador de huesos*' ('bonecrusher') and a '*destripador*' ('disemboweler'), painting Cochachín as an Indian hero who resolutely defended his race against the rapacious whites.⁶³ Thereafter, Cochachín's supposed anti-white prejudice, ferocity and bloodlust became accepted uncritically as historical 'fact' by Valladares, Piel and other writers in the 1970s, a process unwittingly encouraged by the work of eminent historians like Jorge Basadre and local chroniclers in the mould of Félix Alvarez-Brun.⁶⁴

Consequently, the role actually played by Cochachín in Atusparia's Revolt remains unclear and has most likely been distorted. This indicates a more general point about the literature: although the work of Alba and Stein has the merit of advancing our knowledge of the Ancash uprising, many key aspects remain unstudied while others require further investigation. Sufficient data appears to exist on particular key events, but the background information that would enable them to be better understood and properly put into context is lacking. In common with other areas of highland Peru during this period, the workings of the system of *gamonalismo* at the local level remains unexplored. Factional rivalries clearly played an important role in preparing the ground for revolt and influencing its course once Huaraz was captured, yet this

issue has not been researched for the pre-1885 period or the years following the rebellion. Patron-client relations were also very important, but no detailed study has been written on how these operated at the local level, who was involved with whom and with what effect. To give one example of what is missing in this regard: the scale and speed of mobilisation on the eve of the taking of Huaraz is impressive, but it remains unclear how this came about. What level of preparation took place? Did a network of peasant activists (perhaps influenced by participation in the defense of Lima) exist, so facilitating the rapid assemblage of villagers?

In addition to examining the linkages between leaders and followers, further work needs to be undertaken on intra-leader relations: was Atusparia the easily duped stool-pigeon of the '*criollo vivo*' Manuel Mosquera, the vision proffered in several accounts? Did Atusparia and Cochachín disagree fundamentally on strategy and tactics? Was Cochachín more enthusiastic about fighting for the *cacerista* faction than some variant of indigenous 'peasant socialism'? These and many other questions remain unresolved.

Another theme that merits further examination is the question of popular consciousness, for the voice of the indigenous peasantry is largely absent from accounts of Atusparia's Revolt. The seriousness or otherwise with which Atusparia was viewed as the new Inca and the degree of acceptance of 'peasant socialism' remains shrouded in mystery. The Huaraz uprising was preceded and followed by high levels of lawlessness, with banditry being particularly endemic, yet as with peasant 'moral economy', the whole issue of brigandage and 'everyday forms' of resistance has not been investigated, even though Stein has suggested that Cochachín acquired the mantle of a 'social bandit'.⁶⁵ This topic also remains to be studied with regard to the department of Junín in the late nineteenth century. In other respects publications on the Ancash revolt exhibit similar gaps to the writings on Junín:

- a] there has been little effort to analyze these events in the light of theories of rural social movements, either with regard to the 1970s literature (Huizer, Landsberger, Shanin, Wolf, *et al.*) or more recent material (Guha, Scott, Tilly, etc.); and
- b] although Stein has recorded some oral histories of the 1885 rebellion, this remains an area in need of additional research.⁶⁶

Even though many documents relating to Atusparia's Revolt have over the past century fallen prey to man or nature, a number of sources remain underexploited. The holdings of the *Archivo Departamental de Ancash*, located in Huaraz, have not been thoroughly investigated. Prefectural archives housed in the highland towns, especially at provincial sub-prefect and district governor level, no doubt contain a rich amount of untapped material. Municipal archives have not been thoroughly analyzed, while criminal and civil *expedientes* processed by the local court will contain a mine of information that remains unexplored. The same can be said of the departmental land registry.

Conclusion

On the basis of his analysis of indigenous peasant rebellions in Puno between 1895 and 1925, José Tamayo posited that the likelihood of uprisings increased when:

- a) class conflicts in the countryside heighten as a consequence of land usurpations by *hacendados*;
- b) reformist or 'populist' national governments take office that make promises to the peasantry;
- c) a 'catalyst' appears from outside the peasantry (i.e. discontented *mestizos* or reformist organisations like the Comité Pro-Indígena Tahuantinsuyo), which encourages mobilisation;
- d) economic and/or political rivalries among the local landowning elite create the political space for mass mobilisation to get off the ground; and
- e) the state's coercive capacity is weak due to the small number of ill-equipped *gendarmes* policing the countryside.

In addition, for Tamayo indigenous peasant revolts constituted 'a reply, a defense mechanism' in the face of exploitation and possessed the following characteristics:⁶⁷

- a) poor organisation and a lack of direction;
- b) short duration but extreme violence, the result of a need "*to satisfy subconscious and repressed sentiments*";
- c) they became the target of bloody state repression by the army and the police, assisted by personal militias in the pay of vengeful landlords and accompanied by "*assassinations, persecutions, the lifting of livestock and the incendiarizing of homes*";
- d) they were accompanied by millenarian sentiments that aspire to the restoration of the Inca Empire, "*a pachacuti, the return of all lands stolen from the Indians by the whites,*" or an end to official abuses; and
- e) abysmal failure to achieve their goals because of the extent of state repression.

With respect to the Ancash and Junín revolts of the 1880s, it appears that Tamayo's first condition for creating an environment propitious for revolt—an upsurge in conflicts over property and natural resources—did not play a decisive role. Nor did his second point, given that in neither case study did peasant mobilisation receive official encouragement.

In other respects, however, Tamayo's analysis makes relevant arguments. The collapse of the state under the pressure of foreign invasion and military defeat proved to be a key factor in putting the conditions for revolt in place, as did the irreconcilable factional divisions that split local elites. In both the Ancash and Junín mobilisations, non-peasants—primarily *caceristas*—played an important role in fomenting rebellion. Nevertheless, other factors not mentioned by Tamayo helped provoke revolt in Ancash and Junín. The vagaries of the Andean climate caused crop failure and produced a situation in many households akin to Tawney's famous description of the Chinese peasantry. Tamayo's

analysis ignored an important aspect in relation to the state and the elite that worked to increase the likelihood of rebellion: the state and a considerable swathe of the ruling class at national and local level suffered a severe loss of moral authority and legitimacy, so creating a 'crisis of hegemony.'

Regarding the characteristics of indigenous peasant revolts, the events in Ancash demonstrated a greater degree of affinity to Tamayo's model than the Junín example. Atusparia's Revolt was characterised by disorganisation, poor leadership and the inability to formulate coherent goals. It failed to ameliorate peasant exploitation. Although a number of violent incidents occurred, the rebellion peaked within a matter of weeks. The insurrection was also harshly repressed by a combination of government forces and non-official militias, while it contained an as yet unclear millenarian streak. On the other hand, the peasant guerrilla movement that appeared in Junín during the early 1880s departs in a number of important respects from Tamayo's model. A significant degree of organisation and mass participation was achieved over many months and in some cases years; equally, the insurgent bands appear to have acted in accordance with agreed strategies and attained a surprising level of discipline.

The rebellion did not spawn numerous acts of gratuitous violence on the peasant side. The degree to which the Junín uprising unfolded amid millenarian undertones remains unstudied, but one legacy is clear: the insurrection did not end in abject defeat. Indeed, the revolt was successful in that it allowed relatively prosperous peasant communities to survive intact and for many decades after the rebellion it encouraged landowners to treat their peasant neighbours with prudence. In Junín, then, the indigenous peasantry did not comprise a simple amalgam of "*potatoes huddled into a sack [...] unable to assert their class interests in their own name.*"

Endnotes

1. Piel also insinuated that "*a deliberate and persistent censorship*" by "*an official school of historical scholarship*" accounted for the lack of research. Piel, "Place of the peasantry," p. 108.

2. For further details, see Manrique, *Mercado interno*, Chapters I and II.

3. Manrique, *Mercado interno*, pp. 145-164. Also see Mallon, *Defense of Community*; and Contreras, *Mineros*.

4. Manrique, *Guerrillas indígenas*, and his *Yawar mayu*.

5. Manrique, *Guerrillas indígenas*, Chapter II.

6. Manrique, *Guerrillas indígenas*, pp. 86-88, and, *Yawar mayu*, pp. 28-29.

7. Manrique, *Yawar mayu*, pp. 29-32, and, *Guerrillas indígenas*, pp. 101-103. Neither were landowners pleased to see the conscription of hacienda labourers into the army.

8. The troops were ordered back to Lima after losing all semblance of military discipline and, according to Manrique, having "*degenerated into banditry.*" Letelier and his fellow officers were sent to Chile, given a courtmartial and imprisoned. See Manrique, *Yawar mayu*, p. 30.

9. Manrique, *Guerrillas indígenas*, pp. 107-156. Also see Mallon, *Defense of Community*, pp. 87-88.

10. Manrique, *Guerrillas indígenas*, pp. 189-198.
11. Manrique, *Guerrillas indígenas*, pp. 231-233, *Yawar mayu*, pp. 33-34.
12. Manrique, *Yawar mayu*, pp. 37, 54-55.
13. Manrique, *Yawar mayu*, p. 41; Mallon, *Defense of Community*, pp. 96-97.
14. Manrique, *Yawar mayu*, p. 56.
15. Manrique, *Guerrillas indígenas*, pp. 357-366; Mallon, *Defense of Community*, pp. 99-100.
16. Mallon, *Defense of Community*, pp. 102-103; Manrique, *Yawar mayu*, p. 60.
17. Manrique held that agreement could be reached because:
 - a] these valley communities were accessible and more easily repressed,
 - b] the shooting of the Colca leaders intimidated the peasants, and
 - c] there was no great demographic pressure on the land, making accommodation less difficult.
- Manrique, *Yawar mayu*, pp. 60-61. Also see Mallon, *Defense of Community*, pp. 108-109.
18. Mallon, *Defense of Community*, pp. 109-120; Manrique, *Yawar mayu*, pp. 63-69.
19. On Puno see Jacobsen, *Mirages of transition*. On the emergence of a thriving peasant sector in Junin, see Long and Roberts, *Miners*.
20. Favre, "Remarques."
21. Favre, "Remarques," pp. 60-69.
22. Favre, "Remarques," pp. 61-62.
23. Favre, "Remarques," pp. 62-63.
24. Manrique, *Guerrillas indígenas*, pp. 267-270.
25. Manrique, *Guerrillas indígenas*, and, *Yawar mayu*, pp. 34-39.
26. Manrique, *Yawar mayu*, p. 37.
27. Manrique, *Guerrillas indígenas*, pp. 268-269.
28. Manrique, *Guerrillas indígenas*, p. 272.
29. Bonilla, "War of the Pacific." Spanish version published in Bonilla, *Siglo a la deriva*, pp. 177-225.
30. Bonilla, "War of the Pacific," p. 92.
31. Bonilla, "War of the Pacific," pp. 115-116.
32. Bonilla, "War of the Pacific," pp. 101-102, 113.
33. Manrique, *Guerrillas indígenas*, pp. 178-80, 269-72. Also see, Manrique, "Campesinado," pp. 167-168.
34. Manrique, *Guerrillas indígenas*, pp. 380-381.
35. Manrique, *Yawar mayu*, pp. 63-79, and, "Campesinado," pp. 162-170.
36. Elsewhere Mallon states that: "the land invasions were not totally indiscriminate. For the most part they occurred in areas where the elite had collaborated openly with the Chileans or with Iglesias [...] While violent and racially motivated actions did occur, the generalized peasant mobilization in the central highlands was far from being an all-out racial war or the unleashing of some form of savage atavistic barbarism." Mallon, *Defense of Community*, pp. 93-95, 99, and Mallon, "Nationalist," pp. 242-247.
37. Mallon, "Nationalist," p. 267, and, *Defense of Community*, pp. 90-91.
38. Mallon, *Defense of Community*. José Varallanos recorded something similar occurring in the department of Huánuco, where under Cacerist leadership the peasantry organised into *montonera* bands to fight the Chileans and the *iglesistas*. According to Varallanos they did not comprise a "mass of drunken Indians, without consciousness or a clue about what they were fighting for." Varallanos, *Historia*, p. 567.
39. Mallon, "Nationalist," p. 266.
40. Mallon, "Nationalist," pp. 249, 268-269.
41. Mallon, "Nationalist," pp. 268-269.
42. Bonilla, "Indian Peasantry." A Spanish version appeared as "Campesinado indígena."
43. Bonilla, "Indian peasantry," p. 225.
44. Bonilla, "Indian peasantry," p. 227.
45. On 'official nationalism,' see Seton-Watson, *Nations*, p. 148.

46. Apart from Seton-Watson, other useful texts on nationalism to appear in the 1970s and early 1980s include, Grillo, *Nation*; Kedourie, *Nationalism*; Smith, *Theories*; Weber, *Peasants*. While this article was being written Florencia Mallon published a new monograph on the theme of 'peasant nationalism.' Based on empirical case studies from Peru and Central Mexico, in this latest work she draws on Gramsci's concept of hegemony, discourse analysis and Ranajit Guha's 'subaltern studies,' to devise a 'decentered' (i.e. non-elite, unofficial) analysis of popular consciousness that focuses on the struggle over citizenship and liberty. This approach provides a better theoretical base for understanding popular consciousness during the Junín rebellion than that adopted during the first round of debate with Bonilla. See Mallon, *Peasant and Nation*, especially Chapters 1 and 6. In a similar vein, see her article "Promise and Dilemma."

47. Bonilla, "The Indian peasantry," p. 225.

48. On this issue, Mallon makes a valid point: "it seems necessary to take the testimony of the hacendados and other sources close to them, such as the Chilean commanders, foreign consular officers, or political authorities, with a rather large grain of salt." Mallon, *Defense of Community*, p. 99.

49. For an initial attempt at this, see Robles, "Resistencia campesina."

50. Unless otherwise indicated this section on Atusparia and Ancash is based on: Alba, *Atusparia*, pp. 16-17, 40-41, 42-43, 46, 48-49, 50-51, 60-61, 70-71, 72, 78, 79, 90-93, 99-109, 115-117; Stein, *Levantamiento*, pp. 46-47, 54, 56-57, 58, 74-78, 79, 85-86, 86-87, 228-229; and Stein, "Rebellion in Huaraz", and "Myth." Also historian Mark Thurner of the University of Florida is studying Atusparia's Revolt. His book *From Two Republics to One Divided* will be published by Duke University Press.

51. Alba, *Atusparia*, pp. 50-51; Stein, *Levantamiento*, pp. 77-78.

52. Alba, *Atusparia*, p. 54. On p. 55, Alba cites another witness who recalled that: "The Indian savages of the department of Ancash [...] beat their victims to death with staves and stones amid cries of 'Thieves. Here's your tax!'. Others shouted 'Death to the azules' [Iglesistas - LT]. The savages rampaged around the town beating us and taking our clothes, leaving some people in their underclothes and others as naked as the day they were born. Even worse, with the corpses and the mortally wounded lying in the streets, who they did not even bother to put out of their agony, the Indians gouged out their eyes, cut off their ears and limbs. They stuck thick knotted staves up the anus of the dead to the throat. This was the fate of the poor soldiers [...] who died by clubs and rocks as if they were flea-ridden dogs." As yet it is not known if this macabre account exaggerates events.

53. Alba, *Atusparia*, p. 78. For a sceptical viewpoint on this issue, see Stein, *Levantamiento*, pp. 297-308.

54. Alba, *Atusparia*, pp. 115-117; Stein, *Levantamiento*, pp. 228-229; Álvarez-Brun, *Ancash*, p. 206.

55. Alba, *Atusparia*, pp. 137-148.

56. Quijano, *Problema agrario*, pp. 57, 121.

57. Kapsoli, "En torno," p.247. Also see, Kapsoli (ed.), *Movimientos*, pp. 27-28.

58. Piel, "Place of the Peasantry," p. 129. Piel mistakenly gives the year of the Ancash uprising as 1886. Moreover, Atusparia did not hold the office of prefect, nor did the revolt gain 'important concessions' as the head tax and corvee labour services were reimposed in 1886.

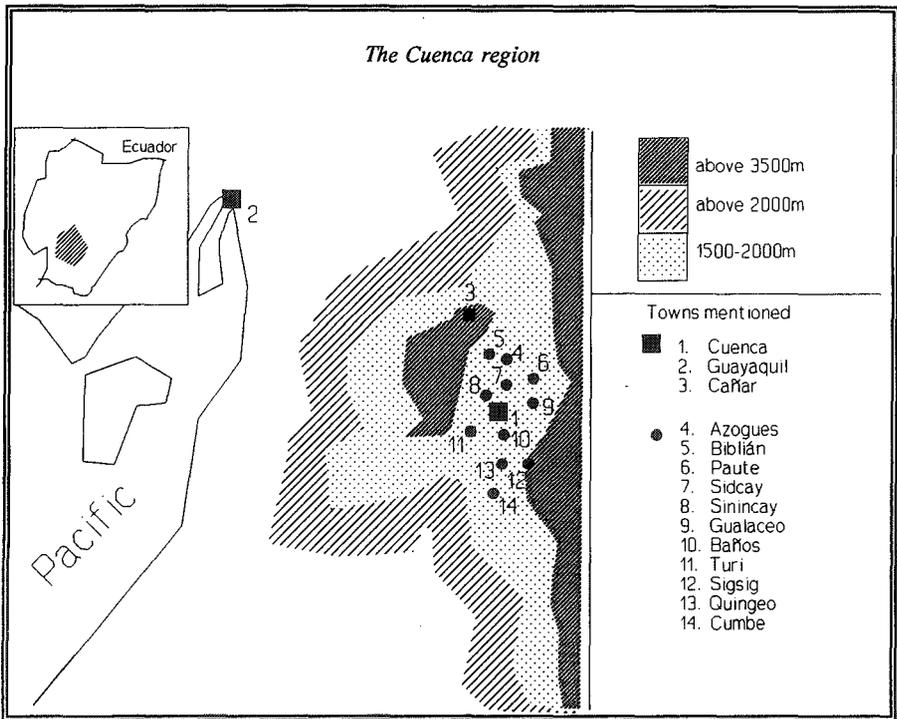
59. Valladares and Piel, "Sublevación," pp. 149, 167.

60. Valladares and Piel, "Sublevación," pp. 174. For an extremely critical perspective on the role of Mosquera, see the same article on pp. 167, 169 and 172. Authors who gave prominence to the role of Atusparia include: Antúnez de Mayolo, *Sublevación*; Basadre, *Historia*, IX, p. 35; Klaiber, *Religion*, pp. 58-70; and Blanchard, "Indian Unrest," pp. 454-455.

61. According to Valladares and Piel, Cochachín was "the most powerful lieutenant of Atusparia. His intervention in the uprising was characterised by extreme ferocity, pronounced counter-racism and a passionate affinity for violence, which he demonstrated on more than a few occasions when leading his famous 'disembowelers.' Without the intervention of Atusparia, with his serene and persuasive manner, the invasion of Huaraz and Yungay might have culminated in the burning and destruction of property, as well as the extermination of the whites, policies in accordance with the thoughts and wishes of Uchcu Pedro." Valladares and Piel, "Sublevación," p. 167. This stands uneasily alongside their earlier statement negating the racial dimension to the conflict. On this, also see the same article p. 169.

62. This paragraph and the following two are based on Stein, *Levantamiento*, p. 49, 43-44, 159-160, 48, 130-134, 148, 155-157, 49-50, 310-313, 317, 320, 72-73 and 240-245.

63. Reyna, "Amauta Atusparia"; Also Reyna, *Amauta Atusparia*, especially pp. 53-55.
64. Basadre, *Historia*, p. 35, and *Peruanos*, p. 12; Alvarez-Brun, *Ancash*, pp. 203, 206-207.
65. Stein, *Levantamiento*, p. 322. Ancash was the birthplace of the famous brigand Luis Pardo, regarded by many as an Andean Robin Hood. See Alvarez-Brun, *Ancash*, pp. 217-229; and especially Carrillo Ramírez, *Luis Pardo*.
66. Stein, "Historia."
67. Tamayo Herrera, *Historia*, pp. 193-202.



The *Huelga de los Indígenas* in Cuenca, Ecuador (1920-21) Comparative Perspectives

MICHIEL BAUD*

Introduction

Both historians and politicians have been fascinated by Indian revolts in the Andes. This may, in the first place, be explained by the abundance of documentation. These revolts inspired so much terror among the elites that they left ample archival evidence for the historians to work with. Secondly, and analytically more importantly, they point at a crucial problem of Andean history. These revolts are a clear example of the contradiction between the long-term structural subordination of indigenous populations which began in the sixteenth century (and is lasting until today), and the continuing Indian efforts to change the system. How is it possible, many people have asked themselves, that Indian groups have managed to maintain such a degree of cohesion and combativeness that they have been able to defy the authorities for more than five centuries? From where have they drawn their motivation and ideology?

On the other hand, the irregularity, contingency and varied outcomes of Indian revolts beg further explanation. The focus on indigenous revolts should not close our eyes to the problem of how they were interspersed with shorter or longer periods in which there were no signs of open conflict. Historian Steve Stern calls these periods of 'resistant adaptation', and implies that resistance to Spanish and republican colonialism was the norm.¹ The implication of continuous resistance—open

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or hidden—of the rural indigenous population appears too one-sided. The question should be: What made Indian peasants become dissatisfied citizens, and why did they take up their arms? There is no doubt that it is very difficult to answer these questions. Historians often can only formulate tentative answers to these questions. In addition, our knowledge of Indian rebellions normally originates in observations by outsiders, who are often the enemies of the Indian movements. Even sympathetic observers, such as the representatives of the *indigenista*-movement, do not always 'understand' indigenous rural society. To overcome part of these difficulties, a comparative approach to Indian revolts may be very useful. It allows historians to contextualize the specific movement they study. By focusing both on differences and similarities in time and place, historians may better be able to understand the social and cultural logic of Indian rebelliousness.

Such a comparative approach is even more necessary in the Andes. Generally recognized as one cultural and historical area, it has shown marked differences. Differences exist between countries, but also within countries among economic or cultural areas. A profound variety has been noted between highland Indian populations and those originating in the more temperate or sub-tropical zones as well as among Aymara and Quechua speaking groups. For Peru, it is generally recognized that there also existed marked differences between the Aymara-speaking Indians on both sides of an imaginary line running through the south of the Mantaro valley.² The 'Indian' reality in Ecuador has always been strongly different from that of the Andean core regions in the Peruvian and Bolivian altiplano. It remains one of the crucial questions of Andean history to explain these differences and to analyse their historical results.

This chapter aims at a tentative and largely hypothetical step towards this goal. The point of departure will be an indigenous peasant revolt that shook southern Ecuador in the years 1920-21 and thereafter. Hardly any 'rebellious' or Indian sources are available to shed light on the perceptions of the rebels and the internal organization of the movement.³ However, by looking through the eyes of the press, regional officials, and the provincial Governor the contingencies of Indian rebelliousness and the construction of Indianness in the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Andes can be partially illuminated. In the conclusion some comparative remarks will point at possible directions of future research.

The Cuenca Region Around the Turn of the Century

The region around Cuenca (see map on p. 216) is generally considered one of the three important regions of Ecuador.⁴ Because of deficient means of communications in the late nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, it existed quite separated from the administrative center in Quito and the important seaport town of Guayaquil. On the

other hand, linkages to the world market were developing rapidly in this period. They had begun in the nineteenth century with the export of *quina* (or *cascarilla*), the raw material for quinine, which caused a temporary economic boom in the region. Later the artesanal manufacture of so-called Panama hats and the cultivation of the *paja toquilla* needed to manufacture the hat, became the most important activity. Around the turn of the century, labor migration to the coast was also becoming an important element of the regional economy.⁵ In spite of these linkages to the world market, agriculture continued to be essential for the region's food supply.⁶

For its subsistence, the region was almost completely dependent on its own food production. The principal crop was maize, complemented by the cultivation of beans and other food crops. Cows which were held on the larger haciendas provided the region with meat and milk. Regional agriculture was quite precarious and its production did not keep pace with the growth of the population. When drought, frost or hail destroyed considerable parts of the region's food production, hunger and distress were its inevitable result.⁷ The region experienced widespread subsistence crises in the years 1882 and 1892-93, which could only partially be solved by the importation of Chilean wheat.⁸ It might well be that these crises became more frequent in the beginning of the twentieth century, with continued growth of the population and monocultural emphasis on maize cultivation. In addition, increasing migration to the coast (and later abroad) and the growing emphasis on the export of artesanal products, further weakened the agricultural sector and made the region more liable to foodcrop crises.⁹ This was especially clear in 1910 when the boundary dispute with Peru hampered the provision of food. Although the government took measures against merchants who were manipulating the market to artificially raise prices, the provincial population was hard hit. Only three years earlier a similar situation had depleted whatever resources peasants in the region may have stockpiled.¹⁰

Socially the region was characterized by a two-fold division. One was between the small elite of a urban and land-owning *blanco-mestizo* elite and the mass of the Indian peasant population. A second division existed between the town of Cuenca and the surrounding countryside. Although these divisions partly covered the same ground, they did not completely overlap. In the rugged, mountain-valley geography of the region everywhere pockets of population lived linked to the market through their agricultural and artesanal production, but in other ways they were quite isolated. Each of them represented a local microcosm with its own conflicts, power relations and social stratification. Normally these communities included some *blancos*.¹¹ This group consisted of local landowners, public officials such as the so-called *tenientes políticos*, priests and small-scale traders. They lived (part of the time) in the rural communities, but they regularly traveled to Cuenca. Mentally they felt part of urban society and socially they often belonged to the urban elite.

The element setting the Cuenca region apart from the other highland regions of Ecuador was the relative absence of large landholdings. The regional elite and the Church possessed some haciendas, but they never acquired predominant influence within regional society as in the rest of highland Ecuador (and the Andean highlands in general).¹² Although the social distance between the rural elite and the majority of the rural population was great, elite-peasant relations in the countryside had a different ring to them, colored as they often were by strong patron-client relations. The social rift and the white-urban disdain for the 'Indian' was softened by paternalistic relationships between landowning families and their laborers. However, these relations were based on the presumption of obedience and respect on the part of the Indians. When these were replaced with a rebellious and recalcitrant attitude, little remained of the inter-class harmony. Nowadays, even elderly white people who speak of the peaceful and friendly relations they had with individual Indians remember with horror and derogation the barbarous rebellions of the beginning of the century.

This peculiar social structure formed the background for the specific processes of change taking place in the Cuenca countryside after the period of Liberal government from 1895 to 1911 under the presidency of Eloy Alfaro. The Cuenca elite formed a traditionally conservative stronghold and vehemently resisted the Liberal Revolution. Although patron-client relations bound many peasants to the conservative elite, the majority of the indigenous peasants were strongly in favor of *Alfarista* liberalism. It created a political and ideological niche in which their struggle for social and economic betterment became more viable. Liberal laws on the abolition of the *contribución territorial* and the prohibition of serfdom provided the indigenous population with the legal means to protect itself against abuse and exploitation. Even in the countryside around Cuenca where Ecuadorian serfdom, called *concertaje*, was virtually non-existent, the changing ideological climate provided the indigenous peasants with new opportunities to push through old and new demands. The archive of the Corte Superior de Justicia in Cuenca contains hundreds of their petitions and court cases filed in the late 1890s in which they protest against the unjust behavior of landlords and creditors.

It is safe to say that the growing discontent among the rural indigenous population in the first decades of the twentieth century was the direct result of the petering out of radical liberalism and the reassertion by conservative landowners of their former dominant position in the countryside. As soon as the ideological winds changed, the traditional power holders re-emerged and took hold of society again. Most of the reforms and new roads for expression were immediately blocked. Some of the haciendas that had been expropriated were returned to the hands of religious orders. The local landowners and *tenientes políticos* (often the same person) exercised their dominance in the countryside again. And perhaps even more important, they resumed the labor demands on the

rural population. It is not clear which groups suffered most from this restoration: the poorer or the more well-to-do peasants, but there is no doubt about the discontent. Peasant producers were constantly complaining about unwarranted labor demands and other abuses of landowners and *tenientes políticos*.

When it became clear that the conservative reaction made the fulfillment of the Liberal promises unlikely and even abolished some of the Liberal reforms, the tension in the Ecuadorian countryside increased dramatically. In the Cuenca region the local elite expressed its increasing concern about the recalcitrance and disobedient attitude of the Indian peasantry. The indigenous population did not hesitate to take legal action when it was abused or maltreated. This new assertiveness was not restricted to Cuenca. Weismantel recounts that in certain highland haciendas the owners no longer ventured to sleep on their haciendas in this period.¹³ It was in this atmosphere of a rapidly changing economy and increasing social and political tensions that the so-called *huelga de indígenas* occurred.¹⁴

Ouverture

The story begins in Cuenca, this beautiful little town in the southern part of Ecuador. It was March 1920. Local authorities were busy preparing the festivities for the celebration of the first hundred years of Ecuadorian independence. They were excited at this glorious moment of creole hegemony. Their pride and excitement were so great that without so much as a thought they took it for granted that everyone shared their enthusiasm and patriotism. There was no doubt in their mind that the 'common people' and the 'Indians' in the countryside had to share their dedication to the nation. The belief in the necessity of civilizing the Indian peasants, which had become such a powerful force in the late nineteenth century, was still the dominant paradigm in the social and political ideology of the Ecuadorian elite in this period. However, civilization and patriotism had a price, and the Indian population of the countryside around Cuenca was expected to contribute to the costs involved in the celebration.

A year earlier the Provincial Governor had already raised the taxes on *aguardiente*. And now plans for a new agricultural tax were in the works. Or at least, rumors about these plans could be heard everywhere in the countryside. These rumors became even more insistent as government officials began taking a new census in the countryside. Collective memory among the Indian peasant population left no doubt that these censuses were the inevitable precursors of new taxes. At the same time the rural population was asked to do extra labor tasks on top of the usual ones. Colonial and nineteenth-century schemata about the labor duties of the Indian population were alive and well. The elite expected the indigenous peasant population, usually called *indios*, to provide the manual labor necessary for its modernizing projects. As the Governor of

the province wrote to the director of a public road (who also used indigenous labor): "*I trust your feelings of patriotism and hope that, without forsaking the works on the road, you will provide the workers as asked by the Inspector del Centenario*".¹⁵

The urban elite was unaware—or did not want to be aware—of the bad feelings its policy caused among the rural population. Agricultural production in the preceding years had been very disappointing and the situation in the countryside was far from good. In addition, the market for artisanal goods, another important mainstay of the region, was down. The lack of compassion of the elite was a clear sign of the breach between the city—the regional political and administrative center—and its rural hinterland. It was not that the elite did not have links with the rural world and was ignorant of rural life, but more that its contacts and knowledge did not extend farther than the nearest vicinity of the town and that culturally and socially it lived in another world.

The Huelga de los Indígenas

The first signs that the preparations of the Centenario and the proposed taxes were stirring up bad feelings came in mid March 1920, when the Governor of the Province reported that because of the *malentendido* of new taxes, 'many Indians in a number of parishes in this Province have gathered in bands with the purpose of disturbing the public order'. On March 14, the Governor of the Province of Azuay sent a telegram to the Ministro de Gobierno in which he wrote almost casually:

*"The Junta de Fomento Agrícola decreed a census of the inhabitants of the parishes in order to organize the two days work provisioned in the Ley de Fomento; its plan was also to create agrarian statistics of the place. Because of this, the new tax and the fact that the creation of the agrarian census was misunderstood, the rural population has become excited [...]."*¹⁶

The tone of his message demonstrates that he hardly took the protests seriously. Apart from giving a clear insight in the cleavage between the urban elite and the indigenous peasantry, the timing of the rebellion suggests that the upcoming festivities for the Centenario were an important cause of the unrest. How interesting that such a symbolic event as the celebration of the Ecuador's independence would be the trigger to ignite widespread social unrest!

Although the authorities were asked to explain to the rural population that the census was a mere administrative measure and in no way a precursor of new taxation, the unrest could not be quelled. It was reported that three to four thousand indians were in rebellion. These numbers may have been exaggerated—as they usually were by the fear-struck urban elites—but reports indicate that the rebellion was spreading all over the countryside. Two days after the first news of the rebellion, the Governor again wrote to his Minister: "*The emergency about which I told You before, has reached major proportions, in spite of the concilia-*

tory measures I have taken. Three to four thousand Indians have rebelled against the parish authorities. They have chased away the *tenientes políticos* and have seriously hurt those who had not been able to escape."¹⁷ What he added was even more alarming. "In addition, it is feared that they will attack the city after they have ransacked the countryside."

The reports indicating that the rebels were planning to move toward the city really brought the authorities to their senses. Just as in pre-modern European history, in Latin America nothing was more feared by urban elites as the violation of their secure living space by rural mobs. The Cuenca elite was no different. The Governor of the province in Cuenca took stern measures, and asked the regional military to stop the rebels. Together with the police they were requested to protect the city and its surrounding countryside. When the military made its appearance, peace seemed to be restored in the countryside, but the calm was only superficial and was probably used by the leaders of the discontented rural population to coordinate their actions.

In the first days of April new incidents occurred. Among the rebels some coordination probably existed. Otherwise it is difficult to explain that all of a sudden in different places local officials were attacked and communication facilities were destroyed, especially telegraph posts. The violence was directed against various local representatives of the State: tax collectors and *tenientes políticos*, but above all against the offices of the local judges and the deposits of *aguardiente*. Squadrons of police sent to the places of unrest were attacked. This occasioned the first dead among the rebels marking a dramatic turning-point in the rebellion. From now on, the rebels would be more violent and unyielding.

The day following the casualties, a large number (reports say: thousands) of indignant indigenous peasants presented themselves on the outskirts of town. They came from the villages directly adjacent to the city: Baños, Turi, Sidcay. The city was not walled, but its center was small enough to be defended effectively by the state militias. The rebels tried a number of times to enter the city, but without success. Again the rebel forces suffered various casualties and retreated.

From Cuenca, as far as Quingeo and Sigisig, the region continued to be in turmoil. Police forces and military were attacked. And new attempts were made to enter the city. When a fresh battalion of soldiers was sent by the central government peace was restored in the immediate surroundings of the city of Cuenca. But not in the hinterland, where the guerrilla tactics of the Indians prevented a rapid repression of the movement. A letter from the Governor gives a clear indication of the chaotic situation in the province and, at the same time, shows the strength of the prejudices of the Cuencan elite:

"[The pacific inhabitants] live in constant alarm, like those people living in just-established colonies in the midst of semi-barbarous tribes, fearing every moment for a savage attack on their persons and possessions, often in the middle of the night. The authority of the police cannot help them until after the atrocities have been committed; then

the trench warfare starts. The rebels face the police force and attack it when they are able to assemble considerable numbers and hope to gain the upperhand; when they think they are somewhat weaker, they pull back, hide in the ravines or flee for the moment to regain their positions. When the authorities return to the city, the agitators leave their hiding places and start doing the same again."¹⁸

As a conclusion to this letter, the Governor asked for more effective support from the armed forces. Within a few days a whole battalion arrived in the city, which according to the Governor succeeded in restoring peace within a few days.

The authorities had come to understand that the rebellion was not a transitory phenomenon. The rebels could not be pacified by mere violence, especially because the rebels had the advantage of knowing the mountainous countryside. They therefore tried to reduce the discontentment by pacific means. The Governor suggested to the Minister of State to postpone the implementation of the new tax 'as one of the peaceful means employed to calm the Indians'. His petition was conceded and April 14 de *Juntas de Fomento* of Paute, Gualaceo and Sigisig received a circular of the Governor which said:

*"I want to emphasize to you that, in the actual circumstances, it would be convenient to suspend for the moment the collection of the mentioned tax. If this would not be possible, I believe that the Junta should proceed with prudence and would agree 'patrióticamente' that the tax would only be paid by the farms that are valued at more than \$2000."*¹⁹

In a letter to the Minister of Agriculture, the Governor explained that this step was taken 'in order to achieve tranquillity of the *raza indígena*'. He explained:

*"The best way to free the Indians from the tax decreed by the Juntas de Fomento in this province, without creating any undesirable privileges, is, I believe, to be found in the decision that this tax is only paid by farms that are valued for instance more than \$2000. In this case, the Indians would remain exonerated, because their possessions normally do not exceed this value."*²⁰

Among other things, this letter shows that the rebels had not been so wrong in believing the rumors about the new tax, after all.

Although this policy of carrot and stick appeared to have some initial success, the rebellion continued. Or rather, the return to normal government remained problematic. One of the results of this situation was that no-one wanted to be *teniente político* any longer. Late in May it was reported that: *"In various parishes where the Indian rebellion has occurred, it is impossible to exercise state authority. As long as the threats against the tenientes políticos have continued, no-one is prepared to accept the position of teniente."*²¹ Groups of rebels continued to roam the countryside and sometimes roads were blocked. Many regions were effectively sealed off from the outside world. Reports of what happened reveal some of the attitudes of the rebels. A terrified *teniente político* wrote an eye-witness

account. One night, the rebels broke into his house and forced him to show them his correspondence. When they discovered a letter in which the Governor himself complained about *abusos* committed against rural laborers, they forced the man to read this letter in public. In his own words, this is what happened:

*"At 9.30 at night they forcefully entered my living quarters. They were very angry and prepared to kill me. The aggressive populace consisted of some three hundred men. Finally, they succeeded in taking me prisoner, and I was convinced that I was going to die. They demanded that I hand over the decree sent by the Collector of taxes which states that they have to pay the tax of one promil on rural estates. Afraid of their threats I gave them the decree they asked for. That was not enough and they also demanded that I showed them all the papers that I had in my possession. They looked through them one for one and forced me to read every paper three or four times to them. Finally I read to them the letter written by you the number of which I don not remember, but which had the following contents. The Governor says: The Junta that I direct has been informed that some tenants of the nationalized estates commit the following abuses: They force their laborers to work with their own utensils on other people's estates contrary to what is agreed, they force them also to work in insalubrious places, etc.. They took this letter with them, together with other papers and forced me to read them in public forbidding me to explain the meaning of the decrees. They told me to let the Collector know that they would pay the just-mentioned tax, but no other ones, in August, and not before that date. It so happened that a large group of men woke me up the next Sunday at six in the morning and pulled me out of my living quarters and forced me again to read the letter."*²²

Apart from showing the fear of this local official (or was it simulated?, the suspicious historian may ask), this report indicates that the demands of the rebellious peasantry were quite moderate. They clearly demonstrated that they had had enough, but they did agree to pay the tax.

The unrest continued in the months of June and July. Although the regional authorities remained the main target of the rebellious peasants, their fury also was directed elsewhere. Most significantly, the peasants attacked some of the expropriated haciendas that were being restored to their original owners. These haciendas had become an important symbol of conservative reaction. This may explain, for instance, the vehemence of the rebellion in the area around Ricaurte. Two haciendas which had belonged to the Dominicans, had been expropriated in this region. Afterwards they had been passed into the hands of a conservative landowner, who was rumored to be a strawman for the original owners. From the beginning of the rebellion, these two haciendas had been foci of protests and disturbances. On June 8 it was reported in *El Azuayo*:

"It is reported that the inhabitants of the section of Calchaulo of the parish of Ricaurte have again risen in revolt at the sound of horns and quipas. The problem is reported to be that they want to get rid of the

conservative who has taken advantage of the Liberal laws to rent the haciendas of Ucubamba and Paccha, to cultivate its land and to give them back to the priests ('los padrecitos') of Santo Domingo who are the owners."²³

The rebels also extended their activities to other spheres of society, and attacked schools and schoolmasters. Many teachers did not dare to return to their schools. The rebellion had turned into a general rejection of the established order and the national state.

The desperation and frustration of the authorities increased day by day. The *huelga* had undermined its authority completely; their officials had fled; the police were mocked. In August 1920 the Governor wrote: "The rebels respect no authority whatsoever; on the contrary, it is sufficient to be a public official of any nature to provoke their animosity."²⁴ Whole regions were outside state control. The rebellion already had lasted for months. In August, the government decided to take drastic means. The army received *carte blanche* to eradicate the rebellion. The peasants, who did not have fire arms except for some revolvers, were no match for this superior force. After more casualties and because many rebellious peasants needed to return to their fields the rebellion died down.

The calm was short-lived. In 1921 the violence resumed when the authorities tried to clamp down on some of the rebel leaders and killed two of them, and a new law on military inscription was issued. In the tense atmosphere already existing among the rural population, this was one more motive for suspicion. The renewed rebellion spread rapidly; several communities were reported to be 'completamente anarquizadas'.²⁵ But in the end, the rebellion was suffocated by the military. Many rebels were imprisoned and a number of leaders were either captured or killed.

The *huelga de los indígenas* in the strict sense was finished, but the southern Ecuadorian countryside remained unruly during the rest of the 1920s with rebellions and incidents flaring up repeatedly. They erupted usually in response to government measures. This happened in 1922 in response to new taxes and in 1925 against a new salt monopoly in a period of extreme scarcity of this product. In 1926, the situation was aggravated by new land taxes. In the ensuing unrest a *hacendado* was killed and a state official hurt. The years 1927 and 1928 also saw open violence against the authorities and the return of the military to the countryside.²⁶

Interpreting the *Huelga*

How can we interpret these events? Let me try to answer this question by focusing on two related questions: the question of ethnicity (of 'Indianness') and the role of the state.

Ethnicity. In the official correspondence and the local press the rebellion was labeled as a movement of the Indian population, in more derogato-

ry terms, *la indiada*. Most observers were at pains to emphasise the 'Indianness' of the movement. They mentioned the use of specific indigenous musical instruments such as shells, horns and other devices the peasant population used to communicate in the mountains, and called attention to the Indian way of speaking Spanish mixed with Quechua, as well as to its perceptions and view of the world. These stereotypes were not only held by the *blanco-mestizo* elite. Supporters of the Indian cause expressed the same kind of images. This was clear, for instance, in the long and romanticized poem about the *huelga* written by the local indigenista poet Alfonso Andrade Chiriboga.²⁷ Although it supported the Indian struggle and condemned the exploitation of the Indians *campesinos*, the poem repeated many of the conceptions about the Indian countryside extant among the urban elites.

However, we may rightly ask if this label was appropriate and how this Indian ethnicity was defined. Anthropological research has shown that the indigenous population of the region was already small at the arrival of the Spaniards because the mita services for the Inca-empire had drawn away a great part of the population. The Indian population was complemented by, and came to consist of a large population of mixed descent. Quechua was the lingua franca of the countryside and many elements of the regional culture originated in the indigenous society, but clothing and religion in the countryside were heavily Spanish influenced. Everything points to a strong process of *mestizaje* and cultural creolisation in the region during and after Spanish colonialism.²⁸

The administration in the region's villages was in the hands of the so-called *cabildos pequeños*. They were local institutions which found their origins in the Spanish colonial administration, but which were considered to be a characteristic part of indigenous society in the nineteenth-century. The *cabildo pequeño* had to answer to the *teniente político* who was appointed by the government.²⁹ However, it is difficult to conclude from this relation that there existed a simple dichotomy between the indigenous world and that of the *blanco-mestizos*. *Tenientes políticos* could just as well be indigenous leaders as local landowners. They were often the instrument of the regional elite which used them to control rural society, but others might also defend the indigenous interests of a village.³⁰ Much more research is still needed to understand the daily practice of this system. There is no doubt that its analysis will reveal many of the ambiguities and contradictions in the relationship between the central state and the Indian peasantry.

Because of these kind of problems, many researchers have recently started to question the analytical concept of 'Indian', especially for the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. They suggest that the concept of 'Indian revolt' sometimes obscures more than it illuminates. It covers historical phenomena which at times are so diverse that they should be considered to be of a completely different order. To throw all the expressions of Indian rebelliousness together under the banner 'Indian'

may well hinder their analysis, especially when we want to do so in comparative perspective.³¹ This approach suggests that it is not very useful trying to determine the essential characteristics of Indianness, but that research needs to focus on the continuous adaptation and change of Indian identities, and their relationship to the political and socio-economic power structure.³² It should therefore be asked to what extent manifestations of discontent were the direct consequence of the Indian character of the population, and if so, in what way this Indianness influenced the rebelliousness.

Who then were these insurgent Indians? Were they just peasants who resisted a predatory state, just as happened for instance in pre-modern Europe? Were they a new ethnic group, labeled as Indians, but which was more like a rural population which in a process of social isolation and discrimination had developed its own cultural traits? Or should we assume a part of the rural population to have retained its Indian identity, changed of course, but still clearly identifiable? I would say that the social position of the Indian population in the Cuenca region was determined by the interaction between the labels given to it by outsiders and its own perceptions (partly consisting of reactions to these imposed labels). The label *indio* in the Cuenca context was relatively new, or at least seems to have had relatively new implications. Much research is still needed to verify this interpretation, but it appears to coincide with conclusions of research done in other regions in the Andes.³³ Liberal policies which became prevalent in the nineteenth century, and indigenista ideas evolving as a reaction to them, redirected social ideology. From a legal and fiscal category, Indian became a denominator for a separate ethnic group and a social class. Brooke Larson states that in the Andean region Indianness as a biological or class category only fully crystallized around the turn of the twentieth century.³⁴ This is an interesting statement because it points at the contingency and processual nature of indigenous identities in modern Andean history.

On the other hand, it is difficult to maintain that indigenous ethnic identity was uniquely the result of outside labels. The indigenous peasant population in the Andes could look back at a long history of resistance and adaptation in which its 'Indian identity' had been an important ideological weapon. Subsequent generations remembered that their ancestors had fought as 'Indians' and had been killed for it. This collective memory went back to a mythical Incaic past, but it also referred to a shorter term Indian memory. The 'Indian identities' in the beginning of the twentieth century were just as well the result of the remembering of these struggles and their interpretation, as they were a reaction on state policies and legislation.³⁵

This discussion points to the conceptual problems encountered by historians trying to analyse the evolution of indigenous society and identities and, more in particular, of indigenous revolts in this period. It is necessary to see through the 'ventriloquy' of outsiders such as the state or the press, and to question the conceptions and imagery coming

to us both from the sources and relevant historiography.³⁶

State intervention. The immediate cause of the rebellion was new government legislation, and, before anything, the new taxes decreed to finance the celebrations of the centenary of the Ecuadorian state. The principal target of the rebellion was the Ecuadorian state and its regional officials. Why were the state and its representatives so central in triggering the rebellion? Rebellion in peasant societies can be caused by bad market prices, unreliable traders or usurious market conditions.³⁷ Taxes have, of course, always been a cause for rural rebellion, whether this is explained by the supposed 'moral economy' within rural society or its belief in reciprocity or otherwise. But taxes were not new for the Ecuadorians Indians, nor were abuse and exploitation. It is therefore interesting to explain why in the 1920s such a protracted period of unrest and rebelliousness existed in the Cuenca region, paradoxically enough a region normally considered a quiet and unconflictive region.

One explanation was that these taxes came at a moment of deep economic crisis. As Michael Gonzalez has noted, the conjuncture of falling income and rising taxes tends to result in rebellion.³⁸ Another important explanation of the sudden upheaval and intensity of the rebellion may be that the new taxes were meant for celebrating the anniversary of the republican state. This infuriated many who did not feel exactly favored by its existence. For the indigenous, rural population the end of Spanish colonial rule had been a mixed blessing. They lost the major part of the protection of colonial Spanish dualism, and received a lot of insecurity and exploitation in return. In addition, the celebrations of the Centenario were strongly colored by a creole triumphalism, which considered the Ecuadorian state as the icon of progress and creole domination. In the same vein, the export-oriented development of the Ecuadorian economy was presented as the glorious result of modernization of state intervention and modernization. This was not exactly the message a rural population wanted to receive at a moment in time when its agricultural and artesanal economy was on the verge of collapse and its social fabric was crumbling under the impact of migration to the coastal plantations. The celebration of the Centenario was an important symbolic occasion rubbing salt in many wounds. The symbolic importance of this occasion may be deduced from the fact that in Peru and Bolivia the celebration of the Centenario also provoked violent demonstrations of discontent.³⁹

The disappointment and frustration may well have been fueled by the radical pro-indigenous rhetoric that came into fashion in certain political circles at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. In Ecuador the governments of Eloy Alfaro and Leonidas Plaza (1895-1911) were crucial in the distribution and implementation of indigenista policies.⁴⁰ These Liberal governments functioned as a catalyst for a new process of conscientization. Modernization of Ecuadorian society and anti-clericalism were the main assets of Alfarista liberalism.

Its rhetoric was quite elitist and abstract, and hardly related to daily reality lived by the majority of the Ecuadorian population,⁴¹ but its discourses and laws were characterized by a radically indigenista rhetoric. It led to a number of laws which, albeit rather halfheartedly, tried to curb the most extreme forms of exploitation. Just as happened in Peru this led to the distribution of indigenista ideas amongst the rural people, and the development of a new social and political militancy.⁴² In addition, the interventionist radical Liberal governments became a powerful check on the dominance of the regional elite. Cuenca had always formed a bastion of conservative dominance. The Liberal revolution, while curbing the power of the conservatives, created new niches in which dissenting voices could make themselves be heard.

Frequently referring to the new Constitution and the abolition of a number of traditional obligations, the indigenous peasants did all it could to make things happen in daily practice. They sued landowners, public employees and members of the clergy for breaking the new Liberal rules and holding on to old ways in their attitude towards their Indian laborers.⁴³ While the Governor complained to the Minister of Justice in 1909 that many judges were slow in understanding the new laws, often sticking to their own ideas, especially in matters of religion,⁴⁴ the courts were confronted with an avalanche of cases filed by the peasant population. They referred to Liberal legislation to liberate individuals and groups from debt peonage (*liquidación de cuentas*) and unjust labor services. In short, liberal rhetoric in support of the Indians had seeped through into the rural society and had provided the Indian peasants with new metaphors of political articulation and struggle.⁴⁵

When late nineteenth-century Liberal radicalism petered out and conservatism took hold of Ecuadorian society, the indigenous peasants were left in a void. They had been fed indigenista and radical liberal ideas and were now faced with the restoration of the conservative order and a partial re-establishment of clerical hegemony. In this shift the local conservative elite, mainly consisting of landowners and part of the clergy, regained their dominant position.⁴⁶ This restorative phase did not so much present itself in a new governmental discourse and new legislation, but in a gradual shift in the local power structure. The interventions of the central government in regional politics had not been able to fundamentally change regional power relations, and society easily shifted back in beaten tracks. To give only one example, local labor services, such as the so-called *mingas*, the peasant population traditionally had to deliver but which were curtailed (often halfheartedly, to be sure) during the Liberal governments, were gradually restored. In 1918, just after a long famine which caused much suffering in Azuay, the *tenientes políticos* of the parishes of Quingeo, Baños, Sinincay and Sigsig organized *mingas* during several days in which participated some 400 men each.⁴⁷ Not surprisingly, these regional powerholders and *tenientes políticos* turned out to be the principal target of the rebellion. The new conservative dominance also explains the attacks on schools and haciendas which

had been regained by the conservatives.

In any case, it would be wrong to suggest that the fury of the population was the result of isolation, tradition or a stubborn clinging to old customs. On the contrary, the rebellion should be seen as the result of the interaction between the rural population, the cycles on the market and the changing role of the state. The fact that the dissatisfaction of the rural population expressed itself during, and as a result of, the celebration of the Centenario of the Ecuadorian state, demonstrates that this interaction was not only a matter of political economy, but also of discourse and ideology. The political and economic contradictions that were at the basis of the *huelga* had a highly charged symbolic meaning. It was significant that they exploded during festivities commemorating the first hundred years of Ecuadorian state formation and celebrating white mestizo dominance.

The *Huelga* in Comparative Perspective

The Cuenca rebellion invites interesting new research into the relationship between the Liberal reforms and the perceptions and behavior of the indigenous rural population in Ecuador. Secondly, it provokes new questions about the nature of Indianness in Ecuador and stresses the need for further analysis of the contents and significance of Indian ethnicity. It also invites comparative analysis. Can the *huelga* be compared with indigenous rebellions existing in the other parts of the Andes? Or should it be considered a completely different social and historical phenomenon? To answer these questions in a satisfactory manner, we should know much more about the nature, goals and composition of these Andean rebellious movements. Here we can only present some preliminary suggestions.

Several authors have pointed at the interesting coincidence of Indian rebelliousness in the Andes during the first decades of the twentieth century. Silvia Rivera has called the period 1910-30 in Bolivia a *ciclo rebelde*.⁴⁸ Manuel Burga and Alberto Flores Galindo describe the period 1920-23 as the *gran sublevación* in Peru.⁴⁹ One thing our typology has not explained is why so many rebellions happened in the 1920s in different countries. Their simultaneity suggests that in spite of regional and ethnic differences, the Indian movements responded to the same or similar social and economic changes. It is probable that it had something to do with the end of the post-war world market boom in that period. Andean rural society had been firmly linked to the world economy and it immediately felt the results of diminishing demand and lower prices for their products, be it cacao in the case of Ecuador or wool in that of Peru. Rapid inflation caused the prices of foodstuffs to increase dramatically.⁵⁰ Because the economic crisis of 1920 was generally felt, and affected all Andean countries, it must be considered an important cause for the rebellions of the indigenous peasantry. However, it cannot explain why this wave of peasant unrest in Peru already began in 1915,

long before the 1920-crisis was felt.⁵¹

Another explanation of the simultaneity of rural rebellions may be what we could call the 'ideological cycle' of republican politics. We have seen that indigenista ideas were very important in allowing space for Indian peasant mobilization and the articulation of the rural population's grievances. It would be interesting to analyse the emergence of a radical coherent body of indigenista thinking as the result of the life cycle of the Andean republics. If we consider the hegemony of indigenista ideas in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries as the result of the emergence of a 'third and fourth generation' republican elite in the Andean countries, this might also explain the simultaneity of Indian militancy in the 1920s.⁵²

A third interesting explanation would be the cooperation of the leaders of the various rebellious movements. On the level of rural society, this could explain the ideological coherence of some of the movements. There are some clear indications that indigenous leaders in Bolivia and Peru were in more or less close contact. The late nineteenth century had been a period in which the indigenous rural population in the Andes had been forced to defend itself against expansive haciendas and an increasingly interventionist and predatory state.⁵³ The 1920 rebellions were a direct continuation of the late-nineteenth-century resistance against the dramatic transformation of the countryside under the onslaught of capitalism and liberalism. Their leaders could build on a long history of resistance and used existing organizational networks to guide the discontent which exploded again in the 1920s. Within Bolivia and Peru so-called *mensajeros apoderados* traveled, open and secretly, long distances leading to different forms of coordination of the Indian rebels.⁵⁴ But they were not stopped by national frontiers. Indigenous leaders and their indigenista sympathizers spread rebellious and anti-state ideas all over the Andes.⁵⁵

However, it is not only similarities we see. Comparing the accounts of revolts in Bolivia with the one we have just given about Cuenca, one is struck by the differences. Where descriptions by Tristan Platt, Eric Langer and Silvia Rivera stress the anti-white, Incaic and 'Indian' character of the Indian rebellions, these characteristics appear to have been relatively unimportant in the Cuenca revolt.⁵⁶ The historical accounts about Peru appear on first sight to offer more similarities. Although the peasant population used to couch its demands in 'Indian' terms, Peruvian historiography have tended to stress class analysis and conflicts with expanding large landholding to explain indigenous protests.⁵⁷ In their studies of the southern *sierra* Flores Galindo and Jacobsen, for instance, stress the expansion of the large landholdings, depressed market prices and the diminishing importance of patron-client relations which had formed a protective buffer around the Indian peasant population.⁵⁸

Although some similarities thus existed between the Peruvian highlands and the situation in southern Ecuador, one important differ-

ence remained. Large landholdings or haciendas were largely absent in the Cuenca region. The haciendas that existed were relatively small. The region was known for its relatively even distribution of landed property, and the major part of the indigenous peasantry had access to some land. Some observers even heralded the harmonious society the Cuenca region was supposed to be and its benign social and ethnic relations. The main targets of the *huelga* were not the regional landowners or merchants, but the Ecuadorian state and above all, its local representatives, the *tenientes políticos*.

Would it be too daring to venture the idea that—of course in very general terms—we are here confronted by three different types of Andean revolts? The first, a 'Bolivian' model, was based on a—real or supposed—pre-Spanish Andean past. The *memoria larga*, on which it was based, could be found in the Bolivian communities and among the *comunarios* which had managed to maintain a degree of autonomy and according to Langer "had maintained most of their aboriginal organization and culture."⁵⁹ Their relation with the state was based on what Tristan Platt has called a *pacto de reciprocidad* with the state.⁶⁰ When the Liberal reforms broke this pact and made the access to land increasingly difficult, a messianistic and increasingly radical movement of *comunarios* emerged, which led to coherent political action in the 1920s and may have formed the basis for the indigenous political organizations in the 1980s and 1990s.

In the second, a 'Peruvian' model (but existing in many other places), the fundamental opposition was between the haciendas and the Indian peasant communities. The new opportunities on the world market and the resulted export-oriented transformation of the highland haciendas destroyed existing patron-client relations and diminished the viability of the Andean peasant. At the same time, new means of communication led to the divulgation of new ideas in the countryside. The major part of the conflicts were regionally orientated, sometimes as banditism, sometimes as peasant or Indian uprisings.⁶¹ Eventually, this *torrente social* (or 'seismic wave' as Flores Galindo, following Mariátegui, called it)⁶² led to well-organized political movements like the Asociación Pro-Indígena in the beginning of the century and the Comité Pro-Derecho Indígena Tahuantinsuyu, which was established in 1920 and organized a number of indigenous congresses.⁶³

After 1923, it was ruthlessly suppressed by the *hacendados* tolerated and sometimes half-heartedly supported by the *civilista* government of Augusto Leguía (1919-30), which initially had been moderately pro-Indian.⁶⁴ Although many of their demands were couched in 'incaic' terminology these movements appear not to have been directed against modernization, such as has often been suggested, nor were they very messianistic.⁶⁵ They were political movements geared at obtaining a fair share in what they considered modernity's two most important elements: access to the market and education. The fact that this quest for citizenship was brutally repressed, may have been the essential explana-

tion for the violence in the remainder of Peru's twentieth-century history.⁶⁶

The Cuenca case may provide us with a third Andean type of peasant revolt, neither determined by a pre-Hispanic past, nor an elite of large landholders. Here the indigenous peasantry had succeeded in maintaining (or obtaining) control over the land and other strategic resources, in part because it had been able to take advantage of the short-lived boom in exports of *quina*.⁶⁷ Because these were normally small pieces of land, only just capable of producing enough for the consumption needs of the peasant households, they were dependent on the protection of local landowners or political powerholders. The state and its officials, instead of providing such security, increased their demands on the rural population and became the chief symbol of the undermining of the social order. A collective indigenous identity did not play an important role, and where it did, it was often constructed in the nineteenth century as a result of republican legislation. The struggle in the countryside thus became, before anything, a struggle against a predatory state which abused its authority to extort money and labor from the rural population.

Of course, this threefold division lacks the cohesion and sophistication needed for a solid hypothesis. Apart from its neglect of the complex causes of social discontent and disobedience, it has several more concrete problems. First and foremost, we need more information about the perspective of all parties involved. Often, like in the case we presented above, we know too little about the motivations and perspectives of the rebels themselves. Secondly, we would need a historical, diachronic component showing change over time; thirdly, we need to account for local variations.

Still, I have presented it because such a comparative model shows the pitfalls of local explanations and may provoke a more comparative discussion as to the various types of rebellion in the Andes in the beginning of the twentieth century. This may lead to a comparison of rebellions, but perhaps even more needed, of historiographies. Are the Incaic Aymara Indians presented in Bolivian historiography similar to the creolized peasants of southern Ecuador? Is the dominance of the haciendas in Andean Peru essentially different from structures of social inequality in other rural parts of the Andes? A crucial problem arising from these questions refers to the comparability of the various indigenous and peasant movements in the Andes. Although 'viewed from the city' they looked all the same,⁶⁸ it seems necessary to distinguish the different forms in which peasant discontent in the Andes expressed itself. Only when this is done, can we hope to accomplish a real comparative history in which we can analyse different indigenous peasant movements and contrast diverging historiographies.

Conclusion: Indians and the State

This chapter might suggest that, before anything, indigenous peasant unrest in the Andes was linked to the life cycle of the republican state. The indigenous movement appears to have been both a result of and a reaction to a state that increasingly intervened in society, but was caught in several contradictions. These contradictions were, before anything, the result of the ambiguities within the creole elite.

The most important of these ambiguities was that weak and most of the times financially insolvent governments were expected to guide their nations to modernity. This led to half-hearted, inconsistent state policies and a continuing dependence on regional elites. Secondly, Latin American elites may have agreed on the sacred goal of modernity in the period 1870-1930, but they formed a very fluid and heterogeneous group which held widely divergent ideas as to the preferred road to modernization. Regional interest groups disputed each other control of the state apparatus. Native landowners competed with foreign-owned plantations over the control of labor. Traditional elite groups lamented the loss of old values and resisted innovations. Often, a hardly concealed animosity existed between the urban groups who controlled the state apparatus and rural elites.⁶⁹ The creation of large-scale enterprises often collided with the development of a prosperous rural sector of native producers. While the administrative elite favored the former, provincial elites tried to preserve and slowly adapt rural society, so as not to endanger their dominant position. Thirdly, the Latin American states were relatively young and unable to create a sense of nationality. The social cleavages were so great and the fear of *la indiada* among the elite so deep that lasting social alliances did not come into existence. On the contrary, as Florencia Mallon has suggested, the popular peasant nationalism which came into existence was brutally repressed.⁷⁰ This was clear in the case of the autonomous peasant movement which came into existence in Peru during and after the War of the Pacific, but the participation (and subsequent repression) of the indigenous population under direction of Zarate Willka in the Bolivian Liberal movement in 1899 may be considered another example.⁷¹

An additional argument corroborating the importance of the state in explaining 'indigenous peasant revolts' is the fact that in spite of all the differences among Andean revolts, the quest for legitimacy continued to be a common characteristic. Rebellious Indians first tried to persuade state authorities that their grievances were justified. They copied legal documents (or made them themselves), they formally informed the authorities of their grievances or supported regional elites and local officials in their supposed actions to alleviate their problems.⁷² This appeal to the government can be seen as a typical example of the legal-minded and ritualized mentality of the Andean peoples (originating in both Incaic and Spanish colonial governmental practice). At the same time, it may be considered as a response to ambiguous state intervention

from the late nineteenth century onwards. New state policies, together with changes in the world economy, opened niches of socio-economic and political articulation. The indigenous peasantry tried to take advantage of these new opportunities. Only when it was frustrated by an incompetent and repressive state apparatus, it took recourse to defiance and rebellion.

At the same time, education and the circulation of indigenista and revolutionary ideas provided the Indian peasants with new discursive symbols to express their grievances.⁷³ They discovered that they could use and appropriate the political rhetoric of the creole elite to further their own interests and to take advantage of the new niches in the system. They were accepted as *ciudadanos* at the moment of independence, and now they saw the opportunity to enforce the rights that were supposed to go with that denomination. New symbolic and discursive means allowed them to articulate their demands and to enforce their right to education and freedom of oppression and their opposition to unjust taxation or other abuses.⁷⁴ This is what Andean rebellions in the 1920s had in common. They appealed to the rights established in the constitutions of the Republican state had promised them and they used the new Andean symbolism radical politicians had provided them with. As such we could consider these rebellions as a sign of the incorporation of the Indian population in the national state.⁷⁵ As the Indian leader Carlos Condorena Yujra of the so-called Tawantinsuyu rebellion phrased it in 1924:

*"As a hard-working people, we have this right to establish schools, industrial centers, and markets and expositions, and believe that our initiatives toward well-being and progress are neither evil nor harm anyone; to the contrary they open a new and grandiose era of National Industrialization to the honor of Peru and all of America."*⁷⁶

The interesting point is, of course, that many rebel leaders translated this wish to become part of modernization in indigenous 'Andean' terms. It is not clear whether this happened in the Cuenca revolt,⁷⁷ but it did in many other Andean revolts. It appears that this evocation of an Andean past provided the Indian peasants with the legitimacy they were so concerned about.

In conclusion, it seems clear that we should not so much look for the primordial roots of this Indianness, but try to understand what were the contents of Indian identity and how it was created and recreated in a long-term process of social, economic and cultural transformation. It is, in other words, necessary to analyse the historical background of these revolts, and the visions of Andean society they express. These visions and perceptions are the result of historically constructed (ethnic) identities, and only when we analyse them as such we can hope to gain a better understanding of what are so easily called 'indigenous revolts'.

Endnotes

Most of the primary source material on which the description of the *huelga de los indígenas* is based, can be found in the Archivo Documental de la Gobernación del Azuay (AGA) and the Archivo Nacional de Historia, Sección de Azuay (AHN/C) in Cuenca. The hemeroteca 'Alfonso Andrade Chiriboga' of the Banco Central in Cuenca provided most of the regional journals. Some archival material was also found in the Archivo de la Corte Superior de la Justicia de Cuenca (CSJ).

1. Stern, "New Approaches," p. 11.
2. For instance: Manrique, *Guerrillas indígenas*, especially pp. 50-53.
3. Of course, this is a problem of most historical anthropological research. See Rosaldo, "From the Door of His Tent"; and, Crapanzano, "Hermes' dilemma."
4. It is generally considered to consist of the provinces of Cañar, Azuay and Loja. The Cuenca region is situated in Azuay, but comprises also parts of Cañar. It is approximately 50 kms. wide by 70 kms. long.
5. For instance: Chiriboga, *Jornaleros y gran propietarios*, p. 83 and *passim*.
6. The best introduction to the region is: Palomeque, *Cuenca en el siglo XIX*. Also Espinoza & Achiq, *Proceso de desarrollo*; and Palomeque, "Historia económica."
7. Palomeque, *Cuenca en el Siglo XIX*, p. 109.
8. For the 1893 famine: Letter Gobernador de Azuay to Ministerio de Beneficiencia, Nov. 4, 1893, in AHN/C Gob.Adm. L 183. Also: Petition of number of Indians to Gobernador de Azuay, Feb. 15, 1894, in AHN/C, 12.324.
9. For the neglect of agriculture as a result of the 'manufactura de sombreros de paja toquilla', see Informe de Gobernador de Azuay to Ministerio de Instrucción Pública, June 12, 1902, in AGA, Copiador 1902, L 10.
10. Letter to Sres. Comisarios Municipales del Canton de Cuenca, May 13, 1910, in AGA, L 68. Also: Ordenanzas Municipales 1910 y 1911, in AGA. For the 1907 famine: Letter Jefatura Política de Paute to Gobernador de Azuay, May 6, 1907, in AHN/C 74.877.
11. A group that would be called *mistis* in other parts of the Andes.
12. Palomeque, "Estado y comunidad." For Ecuador: Guerrero, *Semántica de la dominación*. Also Thurner, "Peasant Politics."
13. Weismantel, *Food*, p. 70.
14. The 'huelga' is described more extensively in Baud, "Campesinos indígenas." Also Moscoso, "'Cabecillas' y 'huelgistas'."
15. Wire of Governor Federico Malo to President of Junta de Fomento Agrícola, 25 Feb. 1920, in AGA, libro 148.
16. Wire of Gobernador de Cuenca, Federico Malo, to Ministro de Gobierno, March 14, 1920, in AGA, Libro 153 (Copiador de telegramas).
17. Wire Gobernador to Min. de Gobierno, March 14, 1920, in AGA, Libro 153.
18. Letter Gobernador to Min. de Gobierno, Aug. 23, 1920, in AGA, Libro 153.
19. Circular de Gobernación, Apr.14, 1920, in AGA, Libro 148.
20. Wire Gobernador to Min. de Agricultura, Apr. 14, 1920, in AGA, Libro 153.
21. Letter of Gobernador to Min. de lo Interior, May 22, 1920, AGA, Libro 153.
22. Letter Teniente Político de Sidcay, July 13, 1920, cited in letter Gobernador to Intendente General de Policía, July 20, 1920, AGA, Libro 154.
23. *El Azuayo*, I, 1, July 8, 1920, 'Los Indios'. For another example see the attack on the Hacienda Chacabamba in Cajabamba: *El Universo* (Guayaquil), Oct. 26, 1921.
24. Letter of Governor to Min. de Gobierno, August 23, 1920, AGA, Libro 153.
25. Letter of Judicatora 1a de Letras, Apr. 12, 1921; in Corte Superior de Justicia.
26. Moscoso, "'Cabecillas' y 'huelgistas'," pp. 227-230.
27. This poem is reproduced in Baud, "Campesinos indígenas," pp. 71-72. Some of the Catholic newspapers, most notably *El Azuayo* and *El obrero azuayo*, were also sympathetic to the demands of the *huelga*.
28. For a concise discussion of demography in the Cuenca region in the early colonial period, see Newson, *Life and Death*, pp. 226-244.

29. See Palomeque, "Estado y comunidad"; and Moscoso C., "Comunidad."
30. About the ambiguous position of these local leaders: Rasnake, *Domination*.
31. In his introduction to a well-known collection of articles on this problem, Steve Stern asks for a new focus on ethnicity as an explanatory variable. What he calls 'ethnic-blindness' is, in his view, only acceptable when it is justified for a specific historical case, see Stern, "New Approaches," p. 18. This remark refers, of course, to the marxist-oriented historiography of the late 1970s and 1980s, of which Stern himself was an example. In other historiographical and anthropological traditions there was traditionally more interest in the 'racial' or 'ethnic' question. See for instance: Van den Berghe, *Class and Ethnicity*. See also Brooke Larson's appeal for rereading these older studies on ethnicity in the Andes: Larson, *Communities*, p. 52 note 56.
32. Compare for such an approach the essays in Urban & Sherzer (eds.), *Nation-States and Indians*. Also: Field, "Who are the Indians?"
33. For instance: Gootenberg, "Population". Also: Painter, "Recreating Peasant Economy"; and, Cook and Jong-Taick Joo, "Ethnicity and Economy," pp. 54-5.
34. Larson, "Andean Communities," p. 35.
35. For an insightful ethnographic analysis of this process in the case of the *Cumbales* in southern Colombia, see Rappaport, *Cumbe Reborn*. She writes (p. 5): "It is by telling stories, whose contents are local in nature and whose structure is culturally distinctive, that the *Cumbales* find a medium in which they can express their relationship with their forebears, at the same time as they engage in the cultural invention that frequently accompanies such programs of resurgent ethnicity." For an analysis of the long term collective memory (*memoria larga*): Rivera Cusicanqui, 'Oprimido pero no vencidos'.
36. This metaphor is Andrés Guerrero's, see his "Imagen Ventrílocua."
37. This is of course the line of argument in Wolf, *Peasant Wars*.
38. Gonzalez, "Neo-colonialism".
39. See for Peru: Glave, *Vida, símbolos y batallas*, p. 244. This symbolic significance of the celebration of the Centennial could also be seen in Argentina, where the labor movement used it for massive demonstrations. See Skidmore, "Workers and Soldiers," p. 96.
40. For this period: Ayala Mora, *Historia*.
41. This is very clear in the writings of the distinguished Ecuadorian liberal Juan Montalvo (1832-1889). See: MacDonald Spindler & Cook Brooks (eds.) *Selections from Juan Montalvo*; especially "Lectures to the people," pp. 67-89.
42. Kristal, *Andes*. For a similar analysis of the consequences of the Leguía government: Burga, "Profetas."
43. Baud, "Libertad de servidumbre."
44. Report of the Governor of Azuay to Minister of Justice, June 6, 1909, in AGA, Gob. L. 57 (Justicia).
45. It is difficult to assess how much 'justice' was done in the courts. For a negative view: Gonzalez, "Neo-Colonialism," pp. 11-12.
46. Such a restoration can be noted after most revolutions. See for the Mexican example Knight, "Popular Culture."
47. Letter of Governor Federico Malo to Teniente Político de Quingeo, Feb. 26, 1918, in Gob. L. 123 (Obras Públicas). He writes: "Espero que agotando todas sus energías, procure si no sobrepasa a la última minga hecha por el teniente política Sinicay, con 400 hombres, siquiera nivelarse en cuanto sea posible."
48. Rivera Cusicanqui, 'Oprimidos pero no vencidos'.
49. Burga & Flores Galindo, *Apogeo*, pp. 119-29; Burga, "Profetas." Also: Flores Galindo, *Buscando un Inca*, pp. 308-343.
50. See for the results of the crisis in Guayaquil: Pineo, "Reinterpreting." For Peru: Burga & Flores Galindo, *Apogeo*, p. 121.
51. For instance: Jacobsen, *Mirages*, pp. 337-351. Jacobsen incidentally places great emphasis on the results of the 1920-crisis, see pp. 343-344.
52. As far as I know, this hypothesis has not been explored as yet. For an interesting starting point: Kristal, *Andes* and Rénique, *Sueños*. Also Davies, *Indian Integration*.
53. For southern Ecuador: González & Vázquez, "Movilizaciones campesinas." For Peru and Bolivia: Gonzalez, "Neo-Colonialism"; Stern, *Resistance*. For a recapitulation of the Peruvian historiography, see also the essay by Lewis Taylor in this book.

54. Ramos Zambrano, *Tormenta altiplánica*, p. 66; Deustua & Rénique, *Intelectuales*, p. 77; Rénique, *Sueños*, p. 79.

55. There are some indications that information was exchanged between Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador. See for instance the information presented by Rafael Quintero and Rene Arze in Deler & Saint-Geours, *Estados*, pp. 571-573.

56. Platt, *Estado boliviano*; Rivera Cusicanqui, '*Oprimidos pero no vencidos*'; Langer, "Native Cultural Retention."

57. Mallon, *Defense*; Manrique, *Campesinado*.

58. Jacobsen, *Mirages*, pp. 198-258; Flores-Galindo, *Arequipa*. Also: Glave, *Vida*, pp. 239ff.

59. Eric Langer, "Native Cultural Retention," p. 172. For a discussion of the *memoria larga*: Rivera Cusicanqui, '*Oprimidos pero no vencidos*'.

60. Platt, *Estado*.

61. An empathic understanding of the local implications of peasant rebellion can be found in: Oré, "Pasado y presente."

62. The quotes are from Deustua & Rénique, *Intelectuales*, pp. 74-8; and Flores Galindo, *Buscando un Inca*, p. 301ff.

63. The best descriptions of these movements can be found in: Kapsoli, *Pensamiento*, 1980; and Burga, "Profetas," pp. 473ff. Also: Glave, *Vida*, pp. 243-244.

64. The Leguía Government has been subject to widely diverging interpretations. See Davies, *Indian Integration*, pp. 68-95; and Kristal, *Andes*, pp. 186-193 and *passim*.

65. The debate about the significance and meaning of 'incaic' and indigenous symbolism in Andean rural society is central for Andean historiography. See, for instance, the discussions among its main protagonists (Alberto Flores Galindo, Manuel Burga, on the one hand, Henri Favre, Anibal Quijano on the other). This discussion was very explicit in the assessment of the work of José María Arguedas, see Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, *¿He vivido en vano?*. Also the discussion in: Deler & Saint-Geours, *Estados*, pp. 571-577; and Flores Galindo, *Buscando un Inca*.

66. This is the conclusion of: Mallon, *Peasant and Nation*.

67. See Palomeque, *Cuenca*, and her "Historia económica de Cuenca." Also: Espinoza & Achiq, *Proceso de desarrollo*. To a certain extent the Mantaro valley in Central Peru shows a similar pattern, see: Mallon, *Defense*, also her "Nationalist and Antistate Coalitions."

68. The metaphor is from: Kristal, *Andes*.

69. In the Andes, hacendados often protected 'their' *colonos* from military service or abuse by state officials. In many parts rural elites organized armed peasant bands to resist state intervention. See for instance: Taylor, *Bandits*.

70. Mallon, *Peasant and Nation*. There are also many similarities between the dynamics of indigenous rebellion and ethnic relations portrayed in Schryer's book on the Huasteca region of Mexico, see his *Ethnicity and Class Conflict*.

71. Condarco Morales, *Zarate*.

72. For the Peruvian case: Glave, *Vida*, pp. 245-246 He writes: "*El propósito era hacer ver ante el Estado benefactor y protector, que no se cumplían sus prevenciones a favor de la raza.*"

73. The importance of education is stressed in: Flores Galindo, *Dos ensayos*, pp. 16-17. Also: Rénique, *Sueños*, p. 80.

74. One of the most thorny problems in the analysis of these rebellions concerns the issue of leadership. The question is, of course, whose interests were served by them. Many rebellions were led by the wealthier, more ambitious peasantry. See for instance: Rénique, *Sueños*, p. 77.

75. See for a similar interpretation: Jacobsen, *Mirages*, pp. 348-349, 355-356.

76. Cited in: Collins, *Unseasonal Migrations*, p. 60. For a similar conclusion: Platt, "Ethnic Calendars," pp. 287-288. This vision was also expressed in the work of José María Arguedas.

77. Some historical fieldwork and interviews in the region suggest that it did in some way. Elderly peasants remember the rebels as 'los Incas', but it is not yet clear what that means.

Ethnic Civil War in Peru

The Military and Shining Path

DIRK KRUIJT*

Introduction

Peru is in trouble. It has been in trouble for quite a number of years, and it will be in trouble for the next ten, twenty years. The economy, society and political system of the country is slowly disintegrating. Since 1980, an ethnic civil war has been going on, accountable for twentyfive thousand casualties and twenty billion dollars in property damage. After the spectacular capture of Shining Path's mystified leader Abimael Guzmán in September 1992, the government announced the end of the war and the terror regime. Two years later, the army considers the end of the anti-guerrilla campaign a question of another couple of years. Meanwhile, poverty and violence resulted in an unprecedented process of informalization of economic and social relations and political and moral consciousness. Consequently, the Peruvian economy is a mess. It is the logical effect of an unnerving series of short term, contradicting experiments, rival policies and dramatic changes in economic strategy, running from orthodox state capitalism in the 1970s, orthodox *laissez faire* in the early 1980s, heterodox state intervention in the late 1980s and heterodox adjustment in the early 1990s.¹

Peruvian society is a jungle. Of the estimated national population of twenty-four million, one million belongs to the cohort of refugees. The misery in the capital is beyond proportion: of its estimated population of eight million, more than sixty percent survives in the informal sector.² Informality affects the functioning of the legal institutions, the political parties and the public sector.³ Shining Path and an assorted variety of organized drug traffickers and urban criminals permeated society with violence. 'Counterterrorism' on behalf of the police and the military

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explains the rest of the death under the peasant population and the slum dwellers.

Peruvian politics is in a chaos. Traditional political parties ceased to represent significant segments of the national population in the late 1980s. The Left, until 1988 in charge of Lima's municipal governments virtually disappeared. The Right and the Center suffered a spectacular loss in the presidential campaign of 1990. An absolute unknown, Fujimori—whose most significant virtue seemed to be a political virginity combined with an intuitive insight in the day-to-day opinions of the unorganized masses—acquired the presidency. Then, amidst a nationwide political crisis and a civil war that reached the suburbs of Lima, the President realized an *autogolpe*, exercising a new brand of civic-military relationship of 'armoured democracy,'⁴ an uneasy alliance between the presidency and the military, legitimized by a new *constituyente* of political novices.

Since then, the country continued to fight its war against misery, poverty, criminal violence, drug maffia's and the guerrilla solitary. The difference with the situation twenty years ago is impressive. In 1975, Peru's reformist military government still thought it could complete the program of 'structural reforms,' elaborated and executed in order to prevent the causes of the guerrilla uprisings in the 1960s.⁵ It enjoyed international prestige as a Third World leader, having concluded successful negotiations with the United States about expropriations and with the Soviet Union about sophisticated weaponry. However, Peru in 1994-95 is an international pariah, criticized because of its chronic human rights violences, succumbing under the dead weight of civil war, drug war and bankruptcy. This contribution seeks to relate the sustained deterioration of Peru with ethnicity and revolution in its country-side, which means that, contrary to the preceding Chapters, my approach does not offer an analysis of Shining Path per se.

Armed Forces and Civil Society

The Peruvian armed forces—that is the army and more especially the intelligence services—keep an interested eye on domestic political affairs. Military control over national politics has been a standing tradition since the nation's Independence. Within the armed forces, especially in the army, a new type of officer emerged in Latin America after World War II: the 'military intellectual.' Military intellectuals hold staff functions in the higher echelons, at training schools for colonels and one-star generals, and within the intelligence services. In Latin America, intelligence is preoccupied with internal rather than foreign enemies of the nation and with the strategies and tactics needed to combat them. A derivation of this is the self-imposed task of producing a military ideology. Thereby the prescription of the role of the armed forces in national development and national politics came to be included in the intrinsic tasks of the intelligence services and the training schools.

The literature pays little attention to the vital role of intelligence in the formation of nationalist cadres and geopolitical authors.⁶ The *Plan Inca* of the military governments in the 1970s—Velasco, 1968-75, Morales Bermúdez, 1975-80—was formulated by a five member team, all of them former or future intelligence directors.⁷ Including in the 1980s, the years of civil government, the intelligence services were considered to be 'leftist,' the object of Belaunde's (1980-85) and later García's (1985-90) distrust. Even some of Fujimori's (1990-92, 1992-) cabinet members and closest advisors have or have had intelligence ties, this time associated with his trusted advisor Montesinos.

Army intelligence became incorporated in the public sector during the last years of the military government.⁸ In the 1970s, army, naval and airforce intelligence merged with comparable police and civil services into the *Sistema de Inteligencia Nacional* (SIN).⁹ In each ministry, in all branches of the public sector an intelligence sector was created, headed by a colonel who reported directly to the office of the prime minister. During García's presidency, the three armed forces—each with its own organizational culture and own minister—and the three police forces—three rivals—were incorporated in one new ministry: Defence and Internal Affairs, to be commanded by army generals.¹⁰ Armed forces and police now are considered to act as a coherent system of *Fuerzas del Orden*. In 1982, an anti-terrorist detective department *Dirección contra el Terrorismo* (DINCOTE) was created as a specialized task force within the police. The department started in a miserable atmosphere and with a virtually non-existing infrastructure.¹¹ García provided better terms. Recently under the Fujimori administration, especially since his *autogolpe* in april 1992, DINCOTE (whose special task force finally captured Guzmán in September of that year) was provided with more authority, men and money. Roughly the same can be said about military intelligence. But police not military intelligence was able to infiltrate a high level of Shining Path's political and combat organization.

The Peruvian security and development theses remained substantially the same since the fifties, endorsing national development as an integral part of the national security conditions. In the 1960s, the military obtained a sublime possibility to put the theory into practice. After a short campaign against 'conventional' (Che Guevara-like) guerrilla-movements in the late 1960s, the Peruvian army took control over the national government to execute a revolution. The 'Revolutionary Government of the Armed Forces' elaborated a reform programme and carried out most of it. The reforms, conceptualized as a coherent anti-poverty strategy, were to prevent another guerrilla uprising in the future. I think it is not an exaggeration to affirm that those 'structural reforms' were an operational translation of the military security and intelligence theses. The reforms were elaborated by the military, executed in military style and under complete military guidance.

In fact, a body of twelve colonels, a kind of political staff of the president—the armed forces and intelligence elite, the majority of whom

later obtained cabinet posts—drafted all reform decrees and additional legislation. This military committee—*Comité de Asesoramiento a la Presidencia* (COAP)—acted as think tank,¹² an ‘inner parliament,’ a steering committee of the public sector and designer of the macro-policy from 1968–80. COAP designed and recruited the principal staff members of the reform apparatus: the new line ministries, the national planning institute (INP), the mass movement system (*Sistema Nacional de Movilización Social*: SINAMOS), the state enterprises and the regional administration. COAP was the armed forces elite, and it recruited the lower-echelon elite (*espadas de honor*, numbers-one of the army schools) during the twelve years of the military governments.

As a consequence, the marrow of the Peruvian armed forces was given on-the-job-training in reforms and administration from 1968 till 1980. As another consequence, the armed forces top brass in the 1980s and the early 1990s—and the next five years if Fujimori does not carry out a purification in the upper ranks—consider themselves the heirs of the ‘good military governments, without corruption, terrorism and desolation.’ In private they speak with pride about the *docencia militar*—when they were in charge of ministries or regional development corporations—and lament the absence of someone of the stature of *el general* (Velasco). It is, of course, nostalgia, but the nostalgic tone is mixed with grief about civil incompetence and indolence.

In describing the military government years, I mainly emphasize the strong points of the programme of ‘structural reforms,’ nation building through development and guerilla prevention through ‘good governance’. Building up a strong ‘peruvianized’ economy—through expropriations and nationalizations—the Velasco military governed through a strong public sector. It gave them the instruments for their ‘revolution from above’ with authoritarian and paternalistic rule, and with State presence in each provincial village as well. The public sector was a command structure for ‘development’ and ‘people’s participation.’ It meant security in the city and in the province, water and sewerage in the slums, the peace judges in the indian communities, the alphabetization campaigns, the visiting nurse in the highland villages, the community worker in the jungle. It meant law and order for all, the rich and the formerly excluded and marginalized as well. It meant the benefit of the doubt for the unions, sympathy for the poor, the admission of new popular organizations, the ear to the *Quechua*-speaking Indians.

And it meant CINAMOS, that complex institution of civilian training officers and counterintelligence and security people, idealists and opportunist. CINAMOS became a powerful organization, capable of large-scale deployment of personel, vehicles and auxiliary material in the regions. CINAMOS was present, at the regional and the local level, assisting in the establishment of mass organizations for peasants, deeply influencing the formation of the national peasant federation *Confederación Nacional Agraria* (CNA), that unified in 1977 some 160 peasant leagues with 4500 local unions and a total of 675,000 members.¹³ CINAMOS help-

ed to set up workers' communities in industry, trade, mining and fishery, and was empowered to recognize or dissolve cooperations. It started to organize 'federations for landless peasants,' organizing and unifying local squatter movements in the urban and metropolitan slums. It created 'revolutionary youth organizations' in provincial universities. And it controlled, together with the national planning institute, the performance of the local bureaucracy. Probably it was the only decade of this century, that the State was present in the most remote regions, the most forgotten villages.

The benign and nationalistic Velasco-years constituted a seven-year period of contained hope, of mass mobilization, of experiments, of reforms carried out half-way and interrupted by the governments in the 'restaurative period' of first Morales Bermúdez and then Belaunde during his second term. During the Velasco years the *ancienne régime* of landowners and 'oligarchy' was replaced by military intellectuals and civilian technocrats. The years thereafter, popular frustration exploded, particularly in the post-Land Reform Indian areas and the metropolitan and urban slum *barrios*. The last two years of the military government were years of bitter confrontation between the government and the heirs of the revolution. The government started the first adjustment and austerity programme, accompanied by a package of anti-popular and repressive measures. Half-organized local protests, followed by regional national strikes paralysed the country. The government called for elections of an *constituyente* that should codify most of the reforms and prepare the way for civil democracy.

By then, the military were 'tired,' 'exhausted.'¹⁴ During the last months before the change of government, the three junta members decided to maintain the continuity of military command.¹⁵ By mutual consent with the president-elect, Belaunde, they nominated themselves the new commander general of the army, the navy and the air force, leaving the appointment of the three military ministers to the new civilian government. So Belaunde lived the first year of his presidency in peaceful coexistence with his former adversaries. Even worse: general Hoyos, one of the co-authors of Velasco's *Plan Inca*, had been appointed as the army's chief of staff. After his death in 1981, another *velasquista*, Miranda, who had drafted the public edition of *Plan Inca*, took office as his successor. It became a standard presidential policy to keep the military at a distance and to look to others for support.

Army ideology did not change after the years of military government. The old Peruvian *adagium* that 'security = development' is one of the major themes the military students still discuss.¹⁶ The army still recruits the same ideal type of officers it attracted three, four decades ago. So it reproduces its ideology and its officers corps. Apparently, it also reproduced its geopolitical enemies: the northern border with Ecuador and the Southern with Chile are of traditional Peruvian concern. The three principal military regions are Northern Zone (I), Lima (II) and Southern Zone (III); Highland (IV) and Jungle (V) being the forgotten

ones. Even in the late 1980s, only twenty percent of the military forces was directly dedicated to the containment of the guerrilla and other 'sources of terrorism.'¹⁷ Only recently the Central Government decided to create a new military region VI (Huallaga) in order to coordinate the anti-guerrilla and anti-drug war.

During the 1980s and the years of Fujimori, the United States military diplomatic establishment defined the drug problem as priority number one.¹⁸ New and more adequate anti-guerrilla-equipment was not obtained. The economic crisis and the hyperinflation in the late 1980s and the early 1990s had a catastrophic impact on the maintenance, the budget, the salaries and on the officers' moral. When I interviewed the retired army elite in December 1990 and 1991, I noticed that they lived on \$ 300 a month. I met active duty army captains, commanders of anti-terrorist units in the emergency zones, on leave in Lima and working as freelance taxidriviers to buy their children a Christmas present. During my extended interviews in 1994, I became aware of the fact that serving in the Huallaga military region VI was considered to be extremely attractive among the military officers as an easy way to complement their salaries.¹⁹

In addition to the 'forces of public order,' the military and the police, its private equivalents proliferated from the mid-1980s on. In the urban and metropolitan areas, private police companies constituted a booming industry. The generalized climate of tension and fear, violence and terrorism, created a demand for protection and vigilance. The slum population invented home-made defense instruments like staves, sticks and bicycle chains. In the mine encampments and the industrial cordons, the workers employed self-defense, virtually transforming themselves in local private armies. The government thought about a rural militia and distributed fire arms to organized peasants. These *rondas campesinas* became the semi-institutionalized fourth branch of the armed forces, in 1991 and 1992 marching with the regular army, the navy and the air force at Independence Day.

The *rondas* established themselves as a 'local correcting and defense force' during the early 1980s, balancing between the *fuerzas del orden* and Shining Path. In the late 1980s, the *rondas* were mostly influenced by and subordinated under the regional military command structure.²⁰ When the *rondas urbanas* acquired popularity in the slums, the metropolitan middle classes in Lima bought themselves police cars and uniforms and acted as a regular police force at night; their vigilance corps were recognized as *serenazgo*-units and trained by the police. Recently the coca peasantry in the Huallaga Valley took their arms and formed a self-proclaimed militia. The legal Left and—during the García years—the governing APRA-party (*Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana*) as well created paramilitary units; the APRA-inspired 'Comando Rodrigo Franco' earned a reputation as a 'political death squad' among its terrified adversaries.

The informalization process of social institutions in Peru, running

from the disintegration of the public sector to the rise of an entire 'private public sector' of NGO's, advanced to the military sphere and the police forces as well. It requires a sharp eye to distinguish between the actions of the regular armed forces, the police, the para-military units and the death squads. Sometimes nobody knows who killed whom. Was it Shining Path? A frightened *serenazgo* member? Did the drug mafia give the order? Or was it a political settlement? Was a presidential advisor involved?²¹

Shining Path and the Civil War

If Peru is the land of Job, Ayacucho is the place where his children died. Ayacucho and the surrounding departments are stigmatized with the wounds of poverty, illiteracy, exploitation and underdevelopment. The Land Reform of Velasco was halted prematurely in these parts of the Andean highland. For centuries the capital of a miserable region of medium-sized haciendas and forgotten Indian communities, the city of Ayacucho obtained a regional university in the fifties. Soon, the *alumni* would compete with the students of twenty other provincial universities, most of them better related with structural sources of income and employment. Most of the Indian students returned to their villages. In the early 1960s, a parochial philosopher, Guzmán, went to teach the students at the university and its related normal school. Guzmán became the undisputed leader of a maoist splinter of the Peruvian Communist Party, Shining Path.²² While the pro-Moscow wing allied with the Velasco government and other neo-marxist party leaders participated with success in the elections of the 1980s, Shining Path's leadership chose the anonymity of a diligent cell structure, the cocoons to be matured for a final 'People War,' Guzmán took his time to strengthen his organization and to acquire strong roots among the indigenous and poor peasantry. The very moment of his first armed presence was a brilliant choice: the election day of the first democratic president in May 1980, when the military felt weak and the future civilian magistrative in Lima would be powerless.²³

Shining Path grew during the relatively prosperous years of the military governments. Their progressive educational reforms favoured lower-class universities and similar institutions. A clash between the military and the university students in the early 1970s brought an uneasy distance between the government and the Ayacucho people. But the emphasis on cell structure, ideological pureness, slow proselitism, absolute loyalty and devotion, and strict morality gave them a protective ambience and contributed mostly to the movement's impenetrability in the following years. Shining Path had sought and acquired a strong popular base and started to fight in its home-region.

However, two other important reasons explain their fabulous growth and consolidation in the short period between 1980 and 1982. First, the new Belaunde civilian government did not trust the army and

thought it better to keep them quiet. Velasquista generals commanded the army, and army intelligence was considered to be the heir of the Velasco team. Belaunde downplayed the threat, depicting the movement in cabinet sessions as 'petty cattle-lifters.' Thus instead of the army, Lima police forces—untrained and unfit for guerrilla-fighting—were mobilized against the guerrilla.²⁴ The indolent President transformed the metropolitan police into Shining Path's principal arms supplier! Secondly, the movement's tactics to destroy blindly public sector's infrastructure, and the continuous expulsion—or execution—of local magistrates, teachers, rural police officers and public health personnel aggravated by the withdrawal of funds and people by the central government and the lack of interest in sustainable local development in Lima, provided the guerrillas a genuine monopoly on pressure, power and political legitimation in the Ayacucho region and the surrounding departments.

Apparently, Shining Path's ideology reflected a variety of transplants from other continents. Peru's economy was 'semi-feudal.' The ethnic civil war was explained—in orthodox Stalinistic concepts—in terms of class. Public messages referred to disputes by Jiang Quing, Lin Biao and the Gang of Four. Dead dogs were found hanging with signs: "*Deng Xiaoping, Son of a Bitch.*" The messages appeared to be incongruent and anachronistic, imported from other times and other worlds. But the ideology explained all things or explained all things away. It was the crude and simple *abracadabra* of the crude and effective presence of a crude and poor movement in the crude and desolate milieu of extremely poor peasants and slum dwellers. It symbolized a crude and violent justice—displayed by the selective assassination of 'bad' people. A crude and cruel morality—that implied the public punishing of adulterers and drinkers. A crude and merciless redistribution—emphasizing the necessity of small plots of land and the minimum of food and cattle for survival. And a crude and haranguing pedagogy—teaching people, really humble and acquiescent people with deep respect for teachers and apostles.²⁵

Shining Path used a vocabulary that varied from region to region, from one population segment to another. It incorporated sympathizers and recruited new membership using inducement and coercion, confying gradually more in terror and violence:

*"The urban cell members receive political and military instructions. Focal point is 'el pensamiento-Gonzalo' or Guzmán's thinking [his *nomme de guerre* is Gonzalo]: The linear succession of historic phases since the creation of the universe, the appearance of mankind, the social organizations and the necessary evolution towards communism following Marx, Lenin and Mao, whose nucleus is the elimination of the existing society by the purifying action of the People's War. The new society will be basically agrarian, self-supporting, theocratic, dictatorial and moralistic (the old Inka ethics). Emphasis is put on class struggle against concrete enemies, such as wholesalers and retailers (bour-*

geois), rich peasants (kulaks) and political enemies (members of the government parties and the revisionists and opportunists of the legal left). The military training concerns elements such as physical condition (extended marches and night exercises, surpassing the effects of hunger, thirst and fatigue), technical instruction (knowledge of local attack and defence possibilities, inventory of suitable building and safe houses, practice in short and medium range arms and home-made bombs), psycho-sociological awareness (conviction of the truth of the doctrine and the justice of the actions, recruiting other brother-in-arms and hidden aides-de-camps to form the '1,000 eyes and 1,000 ears' of informers and watchdogs); and operational activities (pass on information, write down slogans, put up bombs, participate in armed assaults and special raids).

[...] The rural bases are real military training camps in situ. Their members receive theory and practice as well, based upon el pensamiento-Gonzalo and the characteristics of the local situation. They are trained in the identification of friends and foes. In the use of fire arms, dynamite and home-made bombs. In espionage and surveillance, proselytism and intimidation. Finally, they participate in combat operations and urban terrorism. They are allowed to assault groups of six to eight persons, based on cell structure and fragmented command.

[...] Rural control is stricter than urban rule. Landowners of medium-size properties are forced out. Independent leaders of the Indian communities were changed for more obedient officers. Smallholders pay regular tribute. Local market people do business under Shining Path's regulations, otherwise they risk losing their trade or their live. Regional Offices of the Ministry of Agriculture, Education and Public Health are threatened or paralyzed, their technical assistance reduced to zero. The clergy is under control. Church services and mass celebrations are permitted, but the sermon's global content should be previously authorized.

[...] The basic objective is to establish political and military control over agricultural production and distribution, and control over the deliverance to the regional centers to facilitate posterior overmastering and domination of the urban population. They proceed in the following order:

- discovering conflicts between leaders and members of cooperatives, landlords and tenants, proprietors and peasants without land, rich and poor community leaders;
- installing military presence to influence the conflict in a favourable sense towards groups or persons upon whose sympathy one can count;
- armed support for the choosen individuals and groups and progressive marginalization of the opposition, effectuated by local land reform, privatization and distribution of land and animals, and legitimized by a 'popular assembly' by Shining Path's representatives;

- *imposition of mitimaes, i.e. the migration of confiable peasants and military from older zones under control (bases), who receive the best lands and who act as leaders of the assault groups and as political supervisors in the new zones;*
- *transformation of the new zones in regular 'bases,' where they establish the type of production, the quantities for local consumption and regional commerce, the social and political life style, as well as the morality in public and private affairs;*
- *consolidation of the bases as self-supporting defensive zones.*²⁶

These were the procedures in provinces. With the extension of Shining Path's realm to the metropolitan areas of Arequipa, Trujillo and Lima, the ingredients of the persuasion and terror cocktail changed. The first areas of infiltration were the urban slums and the industrial cordons. The first category of persons to be intimidated were the independent or leftist union leaders, slum leaders, local mayors and councillors, and the directorate of the local development organizations. Sometimes they were 'persuaded' to retire, sometimes a 'popular tribunal' had to be organized to condemn the obstinate representatives and blow them up with dynamite after trial. With the appointment of a more cooperative leadership, Shining Path established training schools and selected supervisors. Public sector officials, NGO-officers, lawyers, doctors and journalists were paid a warning visit at home or in the office. Car bombs and coach bombs provoked panic among the inhabitants of the industrial zones and the middle class areas. The '1,000 eyes and 1,000 ears' were rumoured to be omnipresent. And to demonstrate their potential for public control, Shining Path organized periodically 'armed strikes' in metropolitan areas, organizing selective punishing by killing disobedient taxidriers and shopkeepers.

Shining Path is—or, at least until Guzmán's arrest, was—composed of a strong political Central Committee with a personal cult towards the sacralized leader, and a network of regional and provincial committees.²⁷ In principle, military and operational planning are realized at the regional level. Although the overall strategy is—was—a matter of national concern, most of the movement's flexibility and perseverance can be attributed to the regional and local decentralization. Shining Path is—was—strong where the government—the military, the police, the public sector—is weak, and that is mostly in the highland misery villages and the metropolitan poverty belts. During the twelve years of the 'People's War', Shining Path operated—in the strictly military sense—prudently: defensively against military formations, avoiding direct contact, allowing only ad hoc raids against isolated units and provincial police-stations. Until the 1990s, the organization reflected basically an uncomplicated attack-defence strategy, operating through a loose structure of 'military columns.'

There are a few ranks, without uniforms or complicated command hierarchy. A *commandante*—women's representation in the higher ranks is surprisingly high—controls a small, versatile unit of ideologically

immaculate, and highly motivated loyalists. This nucleus—an estimated guess gives a hard core of 3,000 to 7,000 persons (1992)—was supported by local sympathizers and novices. They are mostly recruited—was it because of a vague sympathy, a deep resentment or by coercion?—in the ‘liberated areas’ in the highland department or the pauperized metropolitan slums. A secondary support structure is—was—a network of lawyers, medical personal and paramedics, and students and other sympathy organizations, including a sort of diplomatic representation in foreign countries. When Shining Path tried to expand its range of operations to Bolivia, Ecuador and Chile in 1992,²⁸ the first organizations and persons to be ‘touched’ for sympathy and support, were the local NGO’s and the local doctors.

Until recently, Shining Path took and maintained the initiative. Favoured by the central government’s indolence in the early 1980s, the Ayacucho region was easily transformed into a guerrilla stronghold. When in December 1982 the regular army took the *plaza* of Ayacucho and a special military command for the emergency-zone was created, the movement avoided open confrontations but continued exercising constant pressure by surprise attacks. At night, guerrilla-columns controlled the departments in the South-Central highlands. When in September 1982, Shining Path’s nineteen year old *commandante* Edith Lagos died by police fire, a multitude of 30 thousand persons were present at the burial and the conservative archbishop Frederico Richter Prada celebrated the solemn funeral mass.²⁹ The movement’s popularity among the peasants lasted until the mid-1980s, when Shining Path columns began to cruise systematically the highland departments from Ecuador to Bolivia. The local *comuneros* usually refused to prepare food for the pursuing army units.

The guerrillas suffered their first serious set-back in the Alto Hualaga Valley, the most important coca-producing region in the world, while trying to establish control over the taxable regional economy. Its columns were resisted and initially driven out. But after a second effort in the late 1980s, the better part of the valley was under control and the urban middle class in the regional capital Tarapoto, from the local supermarket owner to the police inspector, paid their tax quota on a regular, sometimes daily base. Since then, it tried to surround and penetrate Lima, making its presence visible in the metropolitan slums and distributing land and animals in some of Lima’s rural coastal valleys. The movement could not easily penetrate the labour unions and the industrial organizations. Thus a selective wave of terror against the legal left and the fabric of independent slum organizations, added to an armed strike that paralyzed Lima around Independence Day in 1992, contributed to a generalized sense of demoralization. This war of nerves was suddenly substituted by a wave of official euphoria after the capture of Guzmán and Shining Path’s Central Committee.

A Preliminary Balance

Shining Path is by no means the only agent contributing to the Peruvian horror script. A second guerrilla-movement, Tupac Amaru—abbreviated MRTA, *Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amaru*, named after the 1780s rebel—started its operations in the early 1980s, partly as a competitor to Shining Path. If there is officialdom in guerrilla-warfare, Tupac Amaru belonged to the ‘formal sector’ of uniforms, military-style command and ‘normal’ behaviour, including their public appearances and the *romanesque* bravado of its leadership.³⁰ Both Shining Path and Tupac Amaru tried to acquire control of the Alto Huallaga, Shining Path being the major force of the two and the ultimate winner in the area.³¹ The same can be said about its confrontations with the regular army.³² Being the smaller, the weaker, the more predictable and the more ‘civilized’ of the two, the performance of Tupac Amaru was—until its dissolution in 1993—normally considered to be less significant than the more mysterious Shining Path.

Ordinary urban criminality is also to be taken seriously. Spectacular raids, kidnapping and hijacking began to be chronic during the García presidency. Mass discharges of suspected criminal police officers, unemployed ex-conscripts of the armed forces, former members of the private police organizations—a booming branch in the 1980s—mixed up with petty criminals in the metropolitan areas. The problem became so acute, that the National Chamber of Industry and Commerce, in the 1986 collective negotiations with the government, formulated an ‘effective protection against kidnapping’ as the most important priority on behalf of the private sector. Sometimes urban criminality dropped, then rose again. It never disappeared. Its presence sometimes confounded with guerrilla terrorism or anti-subversive police and military activities.

The drug economy is another factor that contributes to the process of informalization and violence. Originally mainly a Peruvian affair with its local drug aristocracy,³³ laundering money through the *Banco Amazónico* and establishing fragile ties with the regional military, it became a matter of *colombianization* and a division of labour between foreign and Peruvian involvement in the early 1980s.³⁴ Ten years later, only the coca production in the Alto Huallaga Valley alone provides the source of income for some threehundred thousand people. Nobody tried to analyze deeply the interactions between the drug lords, the drug traffickers, Shining Path, Tupac Amaru, the police, the army, the navy, the air force and the government.³⁵ The economic impact of the coca is enormous, the coca share in the national violence statistic should be proportional.

Since the arrest of Guzmán, the character and the intensity of the civil war—‘terrorism’ as it remained paraphrased in the hygienic politico-military jargon—has changed substantially. Some sixty percent of Shining Path’s Central Committee is behind bars; of every twenty-five members, nine are free.³⁶ At the regional level, most of the fighting

machine of Shining Path remains intact: only the Comité Norte has been 'neutralized,' whereas the four others are virtually undetected. The same can be said about the zonal and subzonal committees. An estimated guess of DINCOTE in february 1994 provided a number of three thousand guerrilleros, mostly organized in small columns and cells. Shining Path as a coherent clandestine political organization broke into smaller components. As a military organization at the national level, Shining Path is reduced to regional significance, although some of its brigades, under their new names, display the same violence and surprise tactics as before. October 1994 for instance, combined explosions of the metropolitan electricity plants provoked the same panic as in 1992, when Lima's population felt itself under siege. The guerrilla is forced into the defensive and the poor people in the urban *barriadas* and slums lost their fear. They denounce former Shining Path members to the local authorities and sometimes ask for raids by army special forces. The 'razzia cum development' tactic has become official policy. Fujimori, accompanied by task groups of a special army brigade, makes an unannounced trip to an urban slum and while the anti-guerrilla troops comb out street by street, army hairdressers, army painters, army paramedics and army dentists provide their gratis services at the president's request!

Supposedly, Shining Path's campaigns were defined in some brilliant strategic master plans. In retrospect,³⁷ those plans were more of a propagandistic than a military signature. Guzmán—behind bars—stated that the expansion of his guerrilla-forces from the province of Cangollo in Ayacucho (1980) to the surrounding rural provinces of the department of Ayacucho (1982) occurred so quickly and so unexpectedly:

- that the central committee not exactly know how to use the strategic advantages of a disappearing State in the Peruvian highland.
- that the counteroffensive of the army—when the Armed Forces were given military and political responsibility in Ayacucho and other 'emergency zones' was extremely severe:³⁸ some six thousand people, mostly adults, of an adult Indian population of twohundred thousand in the five provinces of Ayacucho, disappeared or were reported death between January 1983 and October 1984.
- that this countercampaign suddenly lost its force in 1984, on explicit command of Belaunde's government.
- that when the army, protesting against presidential tutelage, from 1985 to 1988 left the initiative to Shining Path and limited itself to strict self protection, the movement developed again a perspective of a war to be won.
- that, when the army finally organized the peasant armies of the *ronderos* in the late 1980s, the army's pressure started to be felt.

In 1990 DINCOTE almost captured Guzmán; one of the 'strategic documents,' found in his clandestine residence estimated the Indian popula-

tion more or less controlled as two hundred thousand, one percent of the national total, living in two percent of the national territory. At the same time, sixtyfive percent of the departments and provinces were declared 'emergency zones' or combat areas.

Basically, Peru's civil war was an ethnic war, fought mainly in the remote rural and Indian zones in the departments of Ayacucho and Junin. During the campaigns of Shining Path and the police from 1980 to 1982, and during the offensives and counteroffensives of the guerrilla and the Armed Forces, two relatively alien fighting machines disputed the military and political power in the Peruvian highland. Only from 1990 to 1992 Lima—and in Lima mostly the inhabitants of the metropolitan slums—formed part of the war scenario. The real war victims were the Indian *comuneros*, the Indian and mestizo war refugees, the people whose villages were destructed, whose properties damaged or confiscated, whose children and relatives murdered or mutilated.³⁹

Ultimately, apparently enlightened intellectuals and their following and recruited *guerrilleros* launched a 'people's war' on behalf of the Peruvian Indians,⁴⁰ but—at least in the long term—with little compassion and relatively little insight into Quechua society, Quechua and Aymara ethnicities and ethnic aspirations. Quechua was a despised language, and Spanish the speech of progress and scientific marxism-leninism-maoism-gonzaloism. Andean symbology was completely neglected in the literature and political papers distributed by Shining Path. The Peruvian Armed Forces fought their anti-guerrilla as a war of law and order in the first place, not using an intelligent ethnic protective symbolism as could be supposed.⁴¹ In this respect, the Peruvian army acted in a comparable way as Guatemala's Armed Forces in another tragic and isolated ethnic civil war:⁴² on behalf of the Indians fighting the Indians, protecting them against communism by massacrating the rural population. In the end, this war transformed the Indian highlands into a killing zone, Lima in an anomic city and Peru into the most spectacular poverty and informalization scenario of the Latin American continent.

Endnotes

1. For a detailed discussion, see Glewwe & De Tray, "Poor"; Gonzáles de Olarte, *Economía bajo violencia*; Ruccio, "When Failure Becomes Success"; Thorp, *Economic Management* pp. 67-143; and, Pastor & Wise "Peruvian Economic Policy."

2. Data obtained in an interview with Minister of Labour Augusto Antoniolli on September 10, 1992.

3. See Matos Mar, *Desborde popular*; Franco, *Otra modernidad*; and Pásara *et al*, *Otra cara de la luna*.

4. This is the expression used by colonel D.E.M.R. Letona, then (1992) Chief of Staff of the Minister of National Defence of Guatemala and now (1994) the director of the civil-military study center ESTNA in Guatemala. See Koonings, "Sociología de la intervención militar" for a general discussion.

5. See Kruijt, *Revolution by Decree*, p 135.

6. Data obtained from extensive interviews with the generals Jorge Fernández Maldonado and Edgardo Mercado Jarrin in 1986; Kruijt, *Revolution by Decree*, pp. 50-55. A second interview with general Fernández Maldonado was held in December 1990.

7. General Edgardo Mercado Jarrin and the colonels Jorge Fernandez Maldonado, Leonidas Rodriguez Figueroa, Enrique Gallegos and Rafael Hoyos. Hoyos would be the director of national intelligence during a substantive part of the Velasco years.

8. Reported in Kruijt, *Entre Sendero y los militares*, pp. 85-86, 101 ff., 113 ff.). I interviewed general Sinesio Jarama in February 1991.

9. Most of the following arguments comes from an interview with general Edwin Diaz, former chief of the *Sistema de Inteligencia Nacional* during the García and early Fujimori years (1986-91), September 11, 1992.

10. Analyzed in Kruijt, "Perú," pp. 96-96. I consulted also Palmer, "National Security."

11. Gorriti, *Sendero Luminoso*, pp. 223 ff.

12. Kruijt, *Revolution by Decree*, pp. 113ff.

13. Kruijt, *Revolution by Decree*, p. 121.

14. In the words of general Ramón Miranda, Minister of Education from 1975 to 1977 and army's Chief of Staff in 1981 and 1982; in Kruijt, "Perú," p. 83.

15. Interview with general Carlos Quevedo, president of the COAP from 1976 to 1980, in Kruijt, "Perú," p. 74.

16. See Rodríguez Beruff, *Militares*, on this subject.

17. Palmer, "Shining Path in Peru," p. 165.

18. Palmer, "Peru," pp. 73-76.

19. See the military report of Guerra, *Experiencia regional*.

20. See for a detailed account Starn, *Hablan los ronderos*.

21. See for an analysis of the informalization process around the presidency Abad Yupanqui and Garcés Peralta, "Gobierno"; Daeschner, *War of the End of Democracy*; Jochamowitz, *Ciudadano Fujimori*; and the memoirs of Vargas Llosa, *Pez*. The best analysis is González Manrique, *Encrucijada Peruana*.

22. Officially called the Communist Party of Peru, by the Shining Path of José Carlos Mariátegui, in honour of Peru's most original Marxist theorist. The best analytical publications about Shining Path are those of Tello, *Sobre el volcán*, and, *Perú*; Degregori, *FFAA*; Gorriti, *Sendero Luminoso*; and, Palmer, *Shining Path of Peru*.

23. The military high command in Lima consulted the presidential palace and obtained a "Don't worry!" But the army commander sent troops by helicopter to restore law and order and let the population vote again. See the interview with an—at his request—anonymous General Commander in Kruijt, *Entre Sendero y los militares*, p. 105.

24. Without any exception, all general commanders between 1980 and 1992—I interviewed most of them personally—blame Belaunde for his negligence and complete lack of interest.

25. Degregori, *Qué difícil es ser Dios*, p. 19, emphasises the fact that in Shining Path's hagiographic manuscripts Guzmán is always depicted as an unarmed teacher.

26. Quoted from "Sendero Luminoso en el Norte del País," an extensive unpublished document, written by United Nations-officials in May 1991, a team of sociologists with family ties in the departments dominated by Shining Path. Another interesting and detailed account (not used here) gives Strong, *Shining Path*.

27. Tarazona-Sevillano, "Organization," gives a coherent insight. I used her data, publications of the well informed *Si* (1991; 1992) and the update, published in the special number of *La Republica* of September 14 (1992), two days after Guzmán's arrest.

28. I used the reporting in *Si* and I interviewed related diplomatic and development representatives in September and October 1992.

29. Richter Prada was partly responsible for the discontinuation of the Land Reform in Ayacucho.

30. Tello, *Perú*, pp. 109-110.

31. See Palmer, "Shining Path in Peru," pp. 162-163; and González, "Sendero versus MRTA," "Coca," and, "MRTA."

32. Kruijt, *Entre Sendero y los militares* pp. 76-77.

33. See Haring, "Región amazónica peruana," for a description of the Peruvian drug economy in the 1960s and 1970s.

34. See Palmer, "Peru," p. 68, for a discussion.

35. The weekly magazine *Caretas* published sometimes a special report. The October 6, 1986 number related the names of five high-ranking police officers (four generals and a colonel) and a retired army general with mafia boss Reynaldo Rodríguez Lopez. His legal advisor was the now presidential advisor Vladimiro Montesinos.

36. The following data are quoted from a confidential briefing, offered by general Carlos Domínguez Solís, national director of DINCOTE, to representatives of the Diplomatic Corps on February 8, 1994.

37. The following analysis is based upon interviews in February 1994 with spokesmen, operating very close to the security and anti-guerrilla apparatus.

38. See the interview with general Adrián Huaman, the first army commander in Ayacucho, in Kruijt, *Entre Sendero y los militares*, pp. 86 ff., and the memoirs of his colleague, Noel Moral, *Ayacucho*.

39. See for a more detailed account the special number of *Ideele*, "Perú Hoy" (1993).

40. See on this subject Smith, *Ethnic Revival*, and, *Ethnic Origin* in general and the analysis presented by Burgler, *Eyes of the Pineapple* on the case of Kampuchea.

41. See for instance Psaila, *Redefining National Security*.

42. See for instance Aguilera, *Fusil y el olivo*; Figueroa, *Recurso del miedo*; Jonas, *Battle for Guatemala*; and Sohr, *Centroamérica en guerra*.

Appendix
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Bibliography

Appendix

Snapshots of the *República de Indios*

ARIJ OUWENEEL

1.

A few weeks before the CEDLA ONE-DAY-SEMINAR, anthropologist Jan Rus sent me a copy of the Mexican Newspaper *La Jornada* of October 28, 1994. One message in particular caught my eye. It was about *el proyecto de autonomía*, the project for autonomy, for 58 indigenous communities in the Mexican state of Chiapas. The Zapatista Revolt of January 1994 had functioned as a catalyst for a kind of semi-autonomy, a *status aparte*, for indigenous communities within the Mexican state. The project seemed new, but actually was very old. The reporters commented:

"En las zonas de la frontera, norte, Altos y Selva de Chiapas las acciones de la declaración de la autonomía ya se llevan a cabo y la vieja idea de la República de Indios del siglo pasado nuevamente ha entrado a escena con mayor fuerza, esta vez con perspectivas reales de realizarse."

Did the Zapatista Revolt result in a return of the *república de indios* of the Spanish period? And this on the instigation of the 'Indians' themselves? If so, historians of the Spanish period of Latin America find themselves for the first time in the spotlight of political debate.

The prospect before us was confirmed on March 3, 1994, when President Carlos Salinas de Gortari of Mexico (1988-94) declared that the President—including the President-Elect who would assume office by the end of 1994—would develop a *General Law for the Rights of Indigenous Communities* which would include "the communities' demand to govern themselves with political, economic and cultural autonomy." [The text of the President's answer can be found in *Cultural Survival Quarterly* 18:1 (1994), p. 13.] The President also would work out "a solution to the numerous agrarian conflicts" that has "to be connected to the discussion, approval and elaboration" of that General Law. In the end the Mexican state has to "respect the culture, traditions and rights and dignity of indigenous communities which includes the concrete expression of these in government, judicial and cultural spheres."

The question, of course, is what will become of this. Perhaps we do not need to be very pessimistic, for the project is not unique to Latin America anymore. Other indigenous groups in Latin America have succeeded already in acquiring

recognition as separate, autonomous indigenous enclaves. Colombia and Bolivia are cases in point, where ethnic groups were recently defined as 'indigenous' and were able to impose on the national governments their demands for self-determination. In Colombia, the autonomous indigenous municipality involves political power, secured territory and a separate legal code. Instead of a thorough assimilation of indigenous peoples—the principal aim of the national governments since independence from the Spanish Crown—the state accepted demands for territorial ownership rights, administrative autonomy within the nation-state, cultural self-determination and a new legal order that recognizes traditional Indian legal forms and norms.

In this appendix I will look for the historical roots of indigenous *status aparte*. What seems to be at stake here is the way in which the well-known and often discussed jural segregation of the two *repúblicas* keeps on playing an important role. Indeed, my main conclusion will be that the indigenous population of Mesoamerica, and probably also of colonial Peru, experienced 'autonomy' for about three full centuries, under the leadership of a self-proclaimed nobility. Of course, this conclusion will not be surprising to most present-day historians. They have since long lost any illusion about a homogeneous, classless and harmonious 'communal' society in indigenous America. However, during the ONE-DAY SEMINAR some participants still viewed the *república*-system as the main tool of Spanish colonialism, neglecting the fact that internal divisions within local Mesoamerican and Andean societies and 'ethnic' rivalries between indigenous peoples had been present since pre-Conquest times.

2.

The *repúblicas* are mostly seen as one of the negative results of Spanish colonialism. The generally accepted view sees the 'Indians' as inhabitants of colonial units that grew up in the tug of war between conquerors and conquered. Eric Wolf writes [Wolf, *Europe*, p. 380]:

"Racial designations, such as 'Indian' or 'Negro,' are the outcome of the subjugation of populations in the course of European mercantile expansion. The term Indian stands for the conquered populations of the New World, in disre-

gard of any cultural or physical differences among native Americans."

There is little reason to dispute this. Indeed, though 'native' peoples of Latin America still constitute a sizable percentage of the population, it would be misleading to treat them all as part of a homogenous group. The link that can be found between these peoples is the shared historical experience characterized by dispersion, survival and renewal. It is very well known that the 'Indianness' of the different peoples of Latin America is a forced identity, that has been thrust upon them by legislation, politics and economic dependency. But should we not ask ourselves the question if this is all there was to it?

The word 'república' in the Spanish empire recurs frequently in official documents. When I started my research more than a decade ago, I thought that the literature on the *república de indios* would be enormous. To my surprise, this was not the case. Of course, Spanish theory and practice as regards the treatment of the Indians has been studied and, above all, debated. Indeed, the bibliography on Bartolomé de Las Casas for instance is huge. [See the bibliographical essay belonging to Elliott's chapter in the *Cambridge History of Latin America*.] A great deal of time and energy was also invested in the discussion on labor regimes like *repartimiento* and *mita* as well as on public figures like *encomenderos* and *corregidores*. However, I dearly missed a thoroughly researched treatment of the characteristic of the repúblicas. Also no adequate general book on the details of tribute yet exists. Nevertheless, the researcher will come across some studies on the topic, a few that can be classified as 'traditional' and some as 'modern.' The 'traditional' works are mostly based on the documents concerning Spanish policy and authority. In these works echoes of the well-known Black Legend are being heard.

The authoritative picture of the position of the 'conquered races' in the Spanish Americas was drawn by C.H. Haring in 1947. [Haring, *Spanish Empire*.] This North-American historian linked the reconstitution of the Americas to the problem of labor supply. At the time, the Spanish empire was seen as a typical colonial power, only interested in the extraction of resources like silver, gold and plantation products. Because it was clear to the colonial powers that native labor was to be had only under compulsion, a kind of disguised slavery of what Haring labelled as the 'weaker races' was the inevitable result. "*The Indians at first acquiesced,*" Haring wrote [*Spanish Empire*, p. 38], "*but primitive peoples are rarely able to accumulate a store beyond their immediate needs, and as the demands made upon them*

became intolerable, they revolted." According to Haring, Spanish legislation in the early sixteenth century responded to this problem by legalizing the forced labor of free Indians. However, at the same time the Crown attempted to protect the Indians from uncontrolled exploitation by introducing payment for their labor. Also, the Indians had to be gathered into villages, under the administration of a protector, and provided with a school and a missionary priest. Each family was to have a house and land which might not be alienated. Curiously, the república legislation itself and its political-philosophical foundations were hardly discussed by Haring. His focus was strictly on labor decrees and comparable Spanish policy. To my mind, he failed to take the first step.

The work of another well-known North American scholar, Charles Gibson, kept to the same line of analysis. Like Haring, he pictured the indigenous communities from the labor decrees and Spanish policy on tribute payments. In his *Spain in America* (1966), after describing Spanish administrative institutions like *corregimiento*, he wrote [*Spain in America*, p. 148]:

"All the large Indian communities of the seventeenth century came to be reorganized in accordance with peninsular Hispanic forms, and their municipal governments were direct imitations of those of whites."

Gibson believed that Indian officeholders were utilized at the subordinate levels of the hierarchy for the enforcement of Spanish rules. Although it meant only partly the destruction of native government, Gibson stressed that this reorganization was to exercise a controlling influence over the individual lives of a mass population, especially where labor duties were concerned. He described the local rulers, the *caciques* (nobles or self-proclaimed nobles), as mere intermediaries between the 'dominant' Spanish society and the 'subordinate' Indian society. The *cacique* was the main product of Spanish policy, as 'collaborators' within an evil system. Gibson concluded that under Spanish rule, "*Indian society was brought to the depressed position it holds today.*" [Gibson, *Spain in America*, pp. 136-159.] In this 'colonial picture' Gibson found no room for a detailed analysis of the república system. And he did not revise his position in his contribution to *The Cambridge History of Latin America*, published in 1984 [Gibson, "Indian Societies under Spanish Rule."].

The North American historian Peggy K. Liss recapitulated this argument in her *Mexico under Spain* (1975) [Liss, *Mexico under Spain*, p. 43. (The same position also in Burkholder & Johnson, *Colonial Latin America*.)]:

"Although Indians were to work for

Spaniards, the crown decreed that they must live separated from them. Natives were to remain in their own communities, often termed by the Spanish government repúblicas, and so apart from the undesirable influence of Spanish immigrants and in a condition most amenable to official control."

Again, jurisdictional separation is suggested but not elaborated. On the contrary, Liss believes that 'repúblicas' and 'communities' are synonymous. This suggests that the differences between the communities were institutionalized by the Spanish Crown, to keep the indigenous subordinates divided.

Historian Lyle McAlister, in his *Spain and Portugal in the New World* (1984), built his argument about the native societies under Spanish rule mainly on the distinct juridical status of the Indians. Although McAlister stressed the 'conquered position' of the Indians he did recognize the foundation of autonomy implied in Spanish law [McAlister, *Spain and Portugal*, pp. 395-396. (See also, Góngora, *Studies*, pp. 116-119.)]:

"The crown recognized the 'miserable' conditions of the Indians by various measures. It continued to appoint high-ranking civil and ecclesiastical officials as their 'protectors'; it accorded them special testamentary rights; and it declared them immune from the direct jurisdiction of the Inquisition. Perhaps most important, it established general Indian courts (juzgados de indios) in Mexico in 1573 and in Lima in the early 1600s to take cognizance of suits between Indians and Spaniards and between Indian parties themselves."

Interestingly, this means that he saw all Indians belonging to one 'Republic of Indians.' He made another astute remark, sometimes forgotten in current historiography: the classification of the commonality of Indians into *indios de pueblo*—who were bound by law to live in fixed communities, pay tribute, and serve in *repartimientos* and *mitas*—and *indios forasteros*—who had migrated (McAlister: "escaped") out of their communities and had settled in other jurisdictional units like haciendas, Spanish towns or even other pueblos. The *forasteros* had an ambiguous legal status and sometimes did not belong to the 'Republic of Indians.'

The General Indian Court of the Audiencia of Mexico was studied by Woodrow Borah. [Borah, *Justice by Insurrection*.] It was a task inherited from another well-known historian, Lesley B. Simpson, in the 1950s. Simpson had gathered material since the early 1930s and Borah was writing his book until the late 1970s. The book is to stand as the definitive study of this important institution. Established by Viceroy Luis de Velasco II the Court began functioning in 1592. It did so until

1820. The 'legal insurance' was based on a special form of indigenous tribute: the payment of a half-real each year. In return, the Indians who went to the Court were exempt from legal fees. Borah described the *Juzgado de Indios* as a powerful instrument against abuse. The Indians knew how and why it functioned, learned the appropriate litigation techniques and secured protection of their lands, status and whatever other issue seemed important to them. The Court not only served as protection but like-wise underscored the separate status of the 'república de indios.' In short, Borah's argument is in harmony with McAlister's.

Seen from this perspective—McAlister and Borah wrote in this line since the late 1950s—Farriss' opinion of the synonymy of the words 'repúblicas' and 'communities' seems a step backwards. [Farriss, *Maya Society*, p. 168.] Once again, the problem from the indigenous rulers and states that these rulers governed was approached within the limited scope of "individual repúblicas de indios." But on the other hand, this rule is depicted as semi-autonomous, which brought the interpretation a step further. As long as the 'repúblicas' existed in Yucatán, Farriss affirmed [*Maya Society*, p. 378], their formal structure helped to sustain the hierarchical organization of Maya society. The república officers were chosen from the traditional pool of indigenous Yucatec elite families. They were not entirely reduced "to constabulary force for the local agents of the Crown" and retained considerable freedom of action, independent of and sometimes even in defiance of the provincial Spanish officers. The 'repúblicas' in Yucatán formed the basis of a formal system of self-government, that were able to keep pueblo-integrity.

In his recent survey book on colonial Guatemala, Oakah Jones Jr. extended the argument—using the work of McAlister and an article of Sidney Markman. [Jones Jr., *Guatemala*, pp. 88, 162.] He repeats the argument of the separation of the república to protect the Indians from encroachments of Spaniards. Jones also detects the semi-autonomous status of indigenous rule under its own elected officials. And, most important, I think, he underscores the observation that the Crown consciously established the repúblicas as "two governmental entities," a concept of "coexisting states." The 'republic of Spaniards' encompassed so-called *gente de razón*. A Spanish American might have belonged to this 'republic' because of his place of birth, *limpieza de sangre* (purity of blood), education, economic position, and lifestyle. However, the member of the 'republic of Indians,' wrote Jones Jr., had a distinct juridical and societal status and was governed by its own institutions theoretically patterned on Spanish mod-

els.

It was recognized that the notion of a free community of Indians came from Las Casas. Góngora confirmed that in Mexico the most persevering and exemplary attempt was made by the missionaries during the late 1580s. [Góngora, *Studies*, pp. 116-117.] The system prevailing in Mexico constituted a model for the Andean highlands as well, although there the urge towards reform came from civil officials rather than from the regular clergy, especially with Viceroy Francisco de Toledo's program of 'forced resettlement' in the latter part of the sixteenth century. The Crown tried to create a nucleated village, referred to as the *reducción*. Curiously, Mörner spoke of "the urbanization of the Indians into special towns of Mediterranean type to facilitate their Christianization." Although many deserted their new settlements, he affirmed that "most reducciones sooner or later took root." [Mörner, *Andean Past*, p. 62.] Stern explained this achievement by referring to the demoralization that must have gripped native Andean societies by 1570. The Indians "had to accommodate themselves to the reality of defeat," and were not able to mount effective opposition to a tough-minded campaign. However, some decades later on the reducciones might have been deserted again. Spalding presented evidence that the reducciones of the Huarochiri-region kept their lands. "The kin groups of Huarochiri continued to hold the lands they had cultivated at the time of the Spanish invasion even when they had to travel for days to reach their fields." [Spalding, *Huarochiri*, pp. 158 and p. 179 (quote).] The reducciones fragmented and dispersed soon after their installation. Whatever the 'real' history of the reducciones might be, one point should be emphasized: despite its obvious importance, in these studies the juro-administrative background of the indigenous townships remained once again undiscussed. Only Spalding mentioned the 'republic' into which 'Andean society' was legally defined. She added that the internal customs and relationships of this 'republic' were to be respected and maintained by outsiders. [Larson, *Colonialism*, pp. 66-74; Stern, *Peru's Indian Peoples*, pp. 76-79; Mörner, *Andean Past*, quote from p. 60.]

In recent years, more confirmation of the república as an autonomous political entity came out of the archives. For example, Robert Haskett published ample evidence of administrative (semi-)autonomy in his valuable monograph on indigenous rulers in the central Mexican province of Cuernavaca. He shows convincingly how the Indian elite of the pueblos successfully grafted elements of their pre-Hispanic heritage onto the new order. Although they belonged to subjugated stra-

ta, the indigenous rulers were able to maintain their political position and were able to continue with their traditional ways of self-government. The caciques had not only acquiesced to colonial domination, but had directly influenced the history of their peoples on their own terms. The cacique was not foremost the result of Spanish policy but mainly of his own positioning into the new order. The Spaniards merely confirmed this position. Sure, there was dislocation and change, but indigenous government was far from destroyed. And, Haskett concludes, "there were simply never enough Spanish officers or priests to oversee the political life of every municipality, a circumstance that allowed for the survival of many older ways." [Haskett, *Indigenous Rulers*, p. 199.] In short, the indigenous rulers were not part of a 'dual' system of alienated indigenous officials separated from the commoners in their municipalities. In fact, all members of the ruling group participated wholeheartedly in pueblo activities and possessed full legitimacy.

As Michiel Baud recently pointed out [Baud, "Latin American Histories.,"] historians nowadays seek a way out of the dichotomy between 'Spanish colonialism' and a 'subordinate Indian society.' In describing the ways of adaptation of indigenous social and economic institutions in response to changing circumstances, Peruvian historian Glave for example rejects the image of a defensive indigenous society desparately clinging to its culture. [Glave, *Vida, símbolos y batallas*; Baud, "Latin American Histories," p. 92-93.] Without underestimating the inequalities and repression that did occur, it has become common ground to discuss the relations between the Spanish and indigenous spheres as being shaped in ever-changing variations, influenced as much by Spanish policy as by local social, economic and cultural conditions. The strategies of adaptation chosen by the indigenous populations became the focus of most recent works. Colonial society was one social arena in which different social actors competed for scarce resources and political influence.

Of course, I realize that this picture of the historiography of the repúblicas is nothing but a series of poorly reprinted snapshots. The authors cited have written much more on the relationship between Spaniards and Indians than summarized above. But, I think it will be clear, first, that historians and anthropologists are in need of substantial studies of the república-phenomena in the Spanish Americas, and, second, that if anything resembled modern aspirations of indigenous autonomy it must have been the *pueblo de indios*.

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