

THE RISE OF INDIGENOUS MOBILIZATIONS IN PERU, MEXICO, AND ECUADOR:
FROM THE HACIENDA TO NEOLIBERALISM

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The Political Conditions of Latin America's Indigenous Communities

Throughout history, a variety of indigenous movements emerged in Latin America demanding rights and citizenship. Indigenous peoples exist and have existed on the margins of social, economic, and political life since the Spanish conquistador set foot on the American continent. Removed from their lands and harnessed to the colonial enterprise, the indigenous people became subjects and objects of the Europeans, their descendants, and their economic agendas. The colonial pursuit of wealth and power expropriated the indigenous peoples of their primary right to land. This deprivation led to the loss of native economic, social, and political independence. This loss of autonomy, however, did not occur without resistance. Rallying around their primary right to land, indigenous communities organized movements to reclaim the great social losses engendered by colonial legacies. The persistence of feudal land distribution and labor practices created the restive indigenous forces that would pose the biggest challenge to the power of Latin America's landed elite.

Indigenous organizations seeking rights, land, and citizenship emerged amidst the contradictions that the development of modernity created in Latin America. As capitalism began to triumph over the feudal hacienda, power feuds and resentment amongst the elite, growing merchant classes, and subalterns emerged at a time when the state structures were weak and permeable. It was at this moment precisely, which allowed indigenous movements to arise within civil society and pressure the regime at local, regional, and national levels for change. Despite the increasing attention to the question of indigenous politics, the strength and organization of these mobilizations has varied enormously. The indigenous mobilizations of Perú, México, and Ecuador illus-

trate the different nature of these movements despite confronting similar conditions of repression, poverty, and marginalization.

In both México and Ecuador, indigenous communities form sizable minorities, but the differences between their indigenous movements could not be greater. Ecuador contains one of the strongest indigenous movements in Latin America — its only near rival in this regard is Bolivia. Ecuador's indigenous movement has successfully formed a pan-indigenistic national front and has attained political representation in both national and local politics through the Partido Nacional Plurinacional Pachakutik. Meanwhile a number of regional groups emerged in México without any unity at a national level. The iconic Zapatista movement in the Chiapas region (that emerged in the 1990's) was the only indigenous mobilization to transcend regional boundaries, but its political legacy remains localized. The same applies to the Popular Assembly of the People of Oaxaca, which 10 years after its founding remains a local, albeit strong, group. More striking still is the comparison of these two indigenous mobilizations with Perú. Indigenous peoples form a majority of the population in Perú, but are even weaker and more fractionalized than their Mexican counterparts.

History and Theory

The arrival of the Spanish conquistadores was a watershed moment for Latin America's indigenous populations, as it marked the destruction of internal indigenous relations of economy, authority, and culture. Conquistadores replaced native social organization with a neo-feudal system, imported from medieval Spain designed to extract wealth and exact control over the new empire (Stern 1993). Cortés, Pizarro, and their fellow allies and conquistadores received *en-*

*comiendas*¹ and *latifundia*, in the Viceroyalties of New Spain and Perú respectively². *Latifundios*, also known as haciendas, comprised huge tracts of land, larger than 100 hectares, adequate for agricultural production or mineral extraction. *Encomiendas* granted the *encomendero* lord the right to command Indigenous tribute and labor. In exchange, the *encomendero* promised his allegiance to the crown's military and political needs and was responsible for the material and spiritual well-being of the indigenous peoples entrusted to his care. The parallels to European feudalism are self-evident and the legacy of these structures endures.

Moore analyzes the political roles played by the landed upper class and peasantry in an agrarian state's transformation to a modern industrial capitalist state (1989). Moore identifies three routes to modernity, namely democracy, fascism, and communism, tracing the strength of the peasantry, the bourgeoisie, the landed upper classes, and the central government vis a vis one another. Feudal institutions, common to all pre-capitalist states, hold possibilities for democracy, communism, and authoritarianism alike. It is the specifics of these relationships that determine a polity's route to modernity. Of particular interest to this study are the peasant's location within the possible pathways to modernity Latin America and the preconditions stipulated by Moore as necessary for a peasant uprising.

The *hacienda* deposed the natives of their most productive land and established extreme land concentration. In addition, the *encomienda* turned the previously self-sufficient Indian into a ward of the state. Indigenous communities were thus relegated to laboring in commercial agricul-

¹ The *encomienda* grants a native born Spaniard, who has done a great service to the crown, the right to command the labor of a given number of indigenous peoples within a certain region.

² The territory today known as México, was called the Viceroyalty of New Spain during the colonial era. The modern day territories of Perú and Ecuador composed the Viceroyalty of Perú.

ture and resource extraction. As Europeans and their descendants occupied the cultural, political, and economic cores of the former colonies, indigenous populations quickly adopted the qualities of a rural peasantry. Latin America's situation is thus reminiscent of those European countries that evolved into authoritarian governments: patterns of large landholdings, the entrenchment of a powerful landed elite, the survival of a large peasantry, and a weak or dependent bourgeoisie continued well into modernity.

This authoritarian "revolution from above", as Moore calls it, inhibits democracy where a "group in society with an independent economic base", a bourgeoisie, creates a democratic version of capitalism by breaking or significantly reducing the political power of the large landholding class (1989). Like their counterparts in Europe, the *hacendados* of Latin America engaged in labor-repressive agriculture to develop a modern capitalist authoritarianism. Instead of relying on the workings of a labor market to maintain and increase agricultural production, these landed elites used repressive methods to maintain a labor force and extract surplus. The *encomienda* was the earliest of such labor-repressive methods. Even past the colonial era, Perú, México, and Ecuador employed laws, structures and institutions of a semi-feudal tint that ensured the continuous creation of a surplus for the benefit of the landed elite.

While land tenure created authoritarian tendencies, the supremacy of Latin America's agricultural elite did not go unchallenged. Indigenous populations resisted the *encomienda* and *latifundio* for their destruction of local relations of kinship, economy, and politics and the inescapable conditions of exploitation and poverty they inflicted upon a previously self-sufficient people. Indigenous people first demanded changes to internal *hacienda* relations. Rebellions on *haciendas* were common in Ecuador, México, and Perú alike but were swiftly repressed by the

state. Velasco labels these early rebellions as "pre-political" indigenous mobilizations, given they did not yet seek to alter the structure of national society (1983). On their own, these early mobilizations do not indicate the formation of a strong, united indigenous movement in the state's future. Nevertheless, these uprisings provided indigenous leaders with previous organizing experience.

Meanwhile, "political" indigenous movements emerged as capitalism infiltrated the countryside (Velasco 1983). The expansion of capitalism altered labor relations and the periphery's relationship to national and global markets as well as national and local political structures. Modernization necessarily requires an alteration of the rural landscape; pre-capitalist modes of production, such as the hacienda, must change as industrial growth, the spread capitalist endeavors, and the creation of new relationships with foreign capital alter the demands of cities. Nevertheless, the landed elite had a vested interest in maintaining the hacienda mode of production as the source of its economic, political power, and seigniorial status in the face of modernization. The rural elite's inability to develop and strengthen a commercial impulse in the countryside created the potential for other actors to call for agrarian reform and advance their own interests within the changing economic environment (Moore 1989). An unsuccessful turn towards commercial agriculture on behalf of the landed elite lead to a general deterioration of the prevailing social system as it faced the contradictions of its mode of existence that was neither capitalist nor pre-capitalist in its entirety. Peasants, in this instance, became the first source of rebellion as their intimate proximity with the decaying hacienda affected their livelihood. Meanwhile, other sectors would also seek to break the power of a pre-capitalist landed elite if and when they sensed that land tenure was an obstacle to the state's modernization efforts.

Modernization thus provided opportunities for further protest against the *latifundio* system and created more pressures for agrarian reform. With the advance of commercial agriculture and urban industrialization, indigenous unrest revolved around Latin America's highly unequal land tenure system and the persistence of pre-capitalist labor relations in an increasingly capitalist world. Indigenous actors sought equitable land redistribution, rights over resources, and an end to pre-capitalist labor practices, as a means to reclaim their lost autonomy. Other social sectors, advancing their own interests, also became involved in the struggle for agrarian reform. A growing bourgeoisie or, as in Perú's case, the military, worked against the landed elite when the landed elite did not share an interest in the country's capitalist development. Agrarian reform traditionally followed periods of widespread peasant unrest. Nevertheless, given that other actors were also involved in the struggle for reform, suggests that peasants interests were not the only ones to drive reform. When bourgeoisie or elite political access subordinates peasant interests to those of modernization, agrarian reform fails to solve the pressing issue of inequality which confronts Latin America's indigenous peoples.

As Moore highlights, the emergence of peasant mobilization depends not only on the absence of a strong commercial impulse amongst the landed elite, but on the strength or weakness of the landlord's relationship to the peasantry. If the lord directly or indirectly participates in peasant life, mobilization is much less likely than when the lord is absent. The successful *hacendado* controlled every aspect of rural life within the limits of his *hacienda*. He provided peasants with: small plots of land for their own use, defense against rival indigenous communities where rivalries existed, opportunities for a spiritual life within the hacienda limits, and assumed social responsibilities toward the workers of his hacienda. As long as peasants perceived that they re-

ceived some rewards and privileges for their services, they would accept aristocratic privilege and their own obligations as legitimate (Moore 1989). Where the hacienda system worked robustly, indigenous peoples became increasingly dependent upon colonial and hacienda authorities. The dependencies created by the colonial system resulted in self-sustaining economic and social structures that nurtured asymmetrical power relations.

While the strength of pre-capitalist work relationships determined the extent of peasant grievances accompanying colonial exploitation, the existence of "radical peasant solidarity"³ incited political action (Moore 1989). México and Ecuador exhibit radical solidarity, but the same cannot be said of Perú. Perú, on the other hand, illustrates what Moore calls "Conservative peasant solidarity". Conservative solidarity inhibits cooperative relationships by giving those peasants with a small plot of land a humble yet recognized niche in the prevailing social structure. In the latter case, the social and political system coopts the more well-off, better educated peasantry, thus deradicalizing the sector most capable of forming an organized threat to the existing order. This political maneuver has the secondary effect of creating cleavages amongst the peasantry. While this is the only insight Moore provides on the concept of peasant solidarity, it lacks detail and nuance given Latin America's highly diverse population.

La Madrid accurately portrays "ethnic mixing" or *mestizaje* as a decisive factor in Latin America's quality of peasant solidarity (2012). By *mestizaje* La Madrid refers to both the biological process of mixing between people of European and indigenous descent that began in the

³ Moore uses the term "radical peasant solidarity" to describe a solidarity amongst peasant groups that favors rebellion and seeks the redistribution of resources along equitable lines. "Radical peasant solidarity" is achieved when individual peasant grievances become collective, and peasants become militant on account of new and sudden impositions on their economic and social conditions.

colonial era, and the cultural process of assimilation whereby indigenous people abandon their native customs and begin to identify as mestizos, that is, of mixed descent. *Mestizaje* has had two major consequences in Latin America. *Mestizos* have come to represent the large majority of the population in Latin American countries as self-identification as *mestizo* has risen due to the negative associations with the indigenous race⁴. While *mestizo's* might be sympathetic to indigenous interests there is no guarantee that they will be allied to the indigenous cause. *Mestizaje* has therefore blurred ethnic boundaries without entirely eliminating ethnic attachments or ethnic differences.

Mestizaje's assimilationist tendencies and the widespread prejudices against indigenous populations hindered the emergence of strong indigenous movements with national appeal. Lower percentages of self-identification as "indigenous" resulted in smaller and smaller groups sympathetic to or willing to defend indigenous culture and concerns. As La Madrid highlights, indigenous parties emerging from a strong indigenous movement tend to fare better where the self-identified indigenous population is large. Where a strong ethnic consciousness exists, self-identified individuals are more likely to organize and persist with their claims to land, resources, and self-determination.

While the abandonment of indigenous identities effected by *mestizaje* hinders peasant solidarity, the blurring of ethnic boundaries promoted by the mixing process can assist an indigenous movement in its hunt for urban allies. Moore reminds his readers that "by themselves, peasants have never been able to accomplish a revolution" (1989). Peasant revolutionaries must find allies in other classes. Unable to find allies in the traditional white elite, *mestizaje* allows indige-

⁴ This is at least true for those countries that contained a significant Indian population.

nous movements to potentially find supporters sympathetic to their cause in the urban proletariat and the peasants who are comparatively better-off — if they have not been coopted. When ethnic identification exists along a continuum, it proves easy for those with ethnic ties to join ranks with an indigenous peasant movement, especially if the group in question shares the same grievances or desire for structural change.

In conclusion, while Moore's general theoretical framework cannot be applied in Latin America without significant modifications (Huber 1995), its focus on agrarian class relations and the development between state and social classes proves thoroughly helpful in identifying the sources of weakness or strength in the trajectories of indigenous mobilization across Latin America. By analyzing the political consequences of class structure and the development of relations between the state and social classes, Moore allows us to systematically analyze the rise of a politically effective indigenous mobilization. Moreover, Moore's framework allows us to make projections about the political trajectories of Latin American countries. Latin America's landed elite stands as an anti-democratic force. The end point of political development must be affected by other social actors and coalitions of these, including peasant-state coalitions, if Latin America is to alter markedly authoritarian tendencies. The formation of indigenous movements is therefore a relevant question to the future of Latin American democracy.

The Argument in Short

The literature on the subject has attributed the relative success or failure of indigenous mobilizations to various factors, including ideology, internal structure, and ability to utilize inclusionary appeals. Becker's extensive work on Ecuador's ethnic movement, however, cannot

explain the limited regional power of Mexico's Zapatistas, nor can it explain the so-called "Peruvian anomaly". With the exception of the Andean countries, namely Perú, Ecuador, and Bolivia, indigenous movements have been studied on a case by case basis. The lack of comparative studies on ethnic mobilizations has resulted in theories that have very specific implications for individual countries but have very little to say about the prospects for indigenous mobilizations in the Latin American region as a whole. Most importantly, these case studies identify only those factors which lend strength to an indigenous movement once it has been established without identifying the historical preconditions that allow an indigenous mobilization to take root within the state in the first place.

This study addresses these gaps in the scholarly study of indigenous movements by identifying the conditions under which Latin American indigenous movements emerge and find political spaces to participate in the process of nation building. Given that the present condition of Latin America's indigenous communities is a product of the social, economic, and political relations imposed by Spanish conquest and colonization and its enduring legacy, it follows that Latin America's indigenous populations should be studied in light of these underlying and evolving structural relations (Mariategui 1974). This study addresses the conditions of Perú, México, and Ecuador's indigenous mobilizations through Barrington Moore's structural analysis of the pathways to modernity from a feudal past. Each state's particular experiences and forms of capitalist expansion result in different political trajectories for indigenous peoples.

Agrarian reform is a crucial step in Latin America's process of modernization given the historical significance of agricultural production in Perú, México and Ecuador's economies. As Barrington Moore suggests, peasant movements tend to emerge when the landed elite fails to

turn towards appropriate modes of commercial agriculture (1989). In Perú, México, and Ecuador alike, agrarian reform attempted to dissolve anachronistic structures and institutions which impeded the consummation of capitalist development in the nation's countryside. Agrarian reform was not only an expression of class relations and class strength in the process of modernization, but an opportunity for peasant movements to arise and participate in the process of nation building. While indigenous movements have made significant cultural demands, changes in land tenure, labor relations, and access to resources indicate that agrarian reform is very much an indigenous concern. As indigenous groups exerted pressure for agrarian reform, a colonial elite and a rising bourgeoisie also struggled to advance their interests in the face of economic transformation. Therefore, the analysis of agrarian reform and the historical and structural conditions which surround it provides significant insights into the emergence and politization of an indigenous movement. The question to be asked of agrarian reform is whether it was a result of modernization influences from above or successful indigenous peasant pressures from below.

Structural changes brought about by agrarian reform indicate the political influence of the indigenous peasantry on nation building. As Stavenhagen points out in his discussion of México's 1915 reform⁵, new land tenure patterns that emerged from reform can result from political requirements or economic requirements. The former is motivated by the requirements of social justice and the latter by those of the market (1989). In other words, agrarian reform can be geared towards a nation's economic development or towards social development and this focus can be discerned by the stipulations of the reform laws themselves, their manner of application,

⁵ México's 1915 reform legislates the break-up of *hacienda* estates. It is encapsulated in Article 27 of México's Constitution of 1917.

and their economic and social results. Although direct involvement in policy-making might not be a possibility for indigenous movements, indirect influence must not be overlooked. Ecuador's agrarian reform, for example, shows significant indirect influence from indigenous actors, as the dissolution of pre-capitalist labor relations along with the hacienda began well before reform was institutionalized by the military government. Perú's agrarian reform, on the other hand, shows no indigenous peasant influence as the strength of Perú's hacienda labor relations suffocated indigenous peasant organization both before and after reform. Meanwhile, México's reform created social benefits for certain groups of peasants and brought about more economic troubles in the realm of agricultural production than the ones that existed prior to reform.

Moore's argument in "The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy" provides significant insights into the reasons for the so-called "Peruvian anomaly", the unusual strength of Ecuador's indigenous movement, and the intraregional success of México's indigenous actors. Indigenous movements emerge and find room to participate in the nation-building process when 1) national social cohesion is low; 2) the rural elite is largely unsuccessful in its turn towards commercial agriculture; 3) pre-capitalist relations between lord and peasant weaken; 4) peasant solidarity is high, and; 5) alliances with non-peasant supporters can be consolidated at either national or regional levels. Moreover, whenever peasant pressures influence agrarian reform, indigenous actors are branded as agents of social change and their political strength is enhanced. If agrarian reform is imposed from above, even when it serves the interests of the indigenous peasantry, it hinders further possibilities for indigenous organization by creating cleavages and resentments, that lower the solidarity of this subaltern group.

The *hacienda's* strength in Perú did not allow for a coherent indigenous movement to form in response to the exploitative, pre-capitalist forms of land tenure and labor relations that prevailed in agricultural areas. Agrarian reform was necessarily imposed from above, which hindered the ability of any grassroots indigenous mobilizations to alter the agrarian landscape after reform. Meanwhile, the *decaying* hacienda structures and declining standard of peasant living created political openings in both Mexico and Ecuador that allowed indigenous peasant organizations to rally around the issue of agrarian reform. The effects of agrarian reform in Ecuador and México, however, are strikingly different. Ecuador's agrarian reform was unable to address the prevailing bipolar land distribution, which drove indigenous communities to confront the issues of land rights and self-determination through other avenues. Meanwhile, México's redistribution of large *hacienda* estates satisfied the indigenous peasant demand for land in the vast majority of the country. While this neutralized future organizing efforts where agrarian reform had been completed, periphery areas in southern México did not experience the effects of the reform and it is here that indigenous peasant grievances continue most strongly.

As this study suggests, literature on ethnic politics has overlooked the importance of structural relationships and the effect of the landed elite's commercial impulses on the possibility of indigenous mobilization. Handelman and Becker are both correct in their analysis of indigenous peasant solidarity as a determining factor of mobilization. Handelman has highlighted the strong cleavages running across Perú's indigenous population as a serious obstacle to forming a cohesive challenge to the entrenchment of the country's elite while Becker calls attention to the high degree of solidarity experienced by Ecuadorian indigenous peasants as the source of the movement's national strength (1981, 2003). Nevertheless, both overlook the evolution or lack

thereof of hacienda relations and the effect this has had on peasant organization. Additionally, México's case demonstrates that low or high peasant solidarity is not the only factor determining indigenous mobilization.

Meanwhile, as Huber points out, Moore overemphasizes the role played by upper classes in the process of modernization without giving sufficient attention to subaltern classes, non-state actors, and actors not accountable to an electorate (1989). Moore's analysis, for example, has little to say about Perú's military government advancing reforms that promote democratic development within a traditionally authoritarian political structure. In addition, Moore overlooks subtler forms of political influence carried out by subalterns. Full-scale peasant revolution never occurred in Ecuador, nevertheless the organizing strategies of Ecuador's peasants induced the military government to carry out agrarian reform, despite elite objections.

The implications of this study on the emergence of indigenous political organization and agrarian reform are of a synthetic sort. Few scholars have studied the rise of indigenous mobilizations in relation to land tenure, structural relationships between the *hacendado*⁶ and *peón*⁷, and the timing and form of modernization in the state. Those who have, have not done so comparatively, and thus end up overemphasizing certain factors that might appear to be more decisive for a particular case of indigenous mobilization. Meanwhile, a comparative study of indigenous movements in the context of underlying structural relationships creates a more comprehen-

⁶ *Hacendado* is Spanish term for landlord, the *hacendado* is the owner of the large *hacienda* estate.

⁷ *Peón* is the Spanish term for peasant. Traditionally, the *peón* works the land of the *hacendado* in exchange for a plot of land, legal protection, and or a meager wage.

sive picture of the factors that permit or deny the political organization of Latin America's indigenous peoples.

Definitions

Following Stavenhagen, this study defines an *indigenous community* as one that can be considered descendent of Latin America's original inhabitants and manifests cultural characteristics that distinguish it from the rest of national society (2012). Membership is therefore based upon a given set of attributes, be they race, phenotypes, and language. If we are to assume that people often belong to multiple ethnic categories, and identification may vary over time and circumstance, then *indigenous population* must include all people who self-identify as indigenous and all people who share the attributes of an indigenous community, regardless of how they self-identify. Indian, *indio*, *indigena*, native and ethnic will be used as synonyms for indigenous.

Given this study's reliance on Moore's methodology in "Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy", it is of singular importance that the terminology be defined. *Modernization*, the driving force behind diverging class interests, is the process whereby a 'traditional' agrarian society is transformed into a society based on trade and industry (1989). While a traditional agrarian society is held together by a hierarchical power structure, modern society is unified by its capitalist pursuit of growth and expectations of further growth. When defining *capitalism*, this study will use a fairly simple definition of capitalism, based upon Moore's own description surrounding capitalist impulses. By *capitalism* this study refers to a political and economic system in which a free market regulates the production and consumption of goods and services, while allowing for private ownership of production. *Pre-capitalism*, as opposed to capitalism, relies on

labor-repressive methods to ensure the production of goods and services. That is, pre-capitalist labor relations are characterized by a series of politically and socially coercive methods to manipulate the supply of labor available for agricultural production.

Also of importance to this study, a *social class*, or just simply a *class*, refers to an objective position within the existing social structure. Class is relational and determined by material standards of living, as well as by access to political power and income generating resources (Lenin 1960). Within this study, as within Moore's study, references to the rural elite, the indigenous peasantry, the bourgeoisie, and the proletariat, be it rural or urban, will be common. A *rural elite* holds land and political power. The rural elite controls agricultural production and derives their income from rents on their land. The *peasantry*, on the other hand, does not generally own the means of agricultural production and has no direct access to political power. The peasantry includes three distinct classes in traditional Marxian theory, which proves helpful to Moore's analysis when applied to Latin America (Lenin 1960). Rich peasants employ labor and own land. Middle peasants, own or rent land, but do not employ labor. Middle peasants make their income off the surplus of their own land when the agricultural year has fared well, and when it has not, middle peasants sell their remaining labor. Poor peasants, do not own land, and make their income by selling their labor. An *indigenous peasantry* is endemic to Latin America, and is a peasantry that self-identifies as indigenous or shares in the traits of an indigenous community. The timing and form of modernization in each country will determine the particular social position of the indigenous peasantry.

A *bourgeoisie* exists in a capitalist system or a system transitioning into any form of capitalism. As the employers of wage labor, the bourgeoisie derive their income from trade and mar-

ket exchanges. Lenin traditionally includes in the bourgeoisie persons who serve the capitalist class in high administrative positions, such as the high military and civil officials (1960). Finally, a *proletariat class*, distinct from the peasantry, is the modern working class of the capitalist world. The proletariat have no means of production of their own and sell their labor in a free market in order to live. Unlike the peasantry, they are not attached to any pre-capitalist forms of labor relations. Modernization, however, might turn the poor peasantry into a rural proletariat, which comes with a wide set of political consequences. Meanwhile, the peasantry may also travel into the industrial cities, shifting its class identification and allegiances towards the urban proletariat.

This study will rely on the Weberian definition of a *state*. A *state* is the means of rule over a defined territory. The state has a monopoly over the legitimate use of violence within its territory. A means of rule, therefore, can assume different forms. A state can be democratic, authoritarian, or socialist, or somewhere on the spectrum of these. Moore characterizes an *authoritarian state* by the reactionary revolution from above (1986). While Moore associates authoritarian states with a coalition between the landed upper class and a weak bourgeoisie that cannot take power in its own right, other variants of authoritarianism may take place. The lack of a bourgeoisie could also result in authoritarianism if the elite is stronger than the peasantry. Nevertheless, a dependent bourgeoisie, namely the military high command, might turn against the landed elite and enact legislation within the authoritarian spirit “from above”. Additionally, patterns of large landholdings concentrated in the hands of few characterizes authoritarianism. This feature gives the privileged few economic power and political power. As Moore highlights, however, authoritarian governments can acquire democratic features while attempting to preserve as much

of the original social structure as possible. A bourgeois revolution that is both capitalist and democratic is characteristic of Moore's *democratic state*. In democratic states, the peasantry is eliminated or transformed into some other social formation and a revolution breaks the power of the landed elite. Finally a *communist* states reflect a peasant revolution against a weakly commercial landed industrial class and equally weak or still weaker bourgeoisie (1989).

Methodology

The overwhelming majority of this study relies on the collection and interpretation of qualitative material. Barrington Moore's structural analysis and comparison constitute the primary form of qualitative analysis. The points of comparison are the structural relations in Perú, México, and Ecuador, and how these affect the political activation of each state's indigenous mobilization. While knowledge of historical conditions is important for this study, the critical junctures that evidence and determine the political activation of indigenous movements are periods of agrarian reform. The point of focus, therefore is agrarian reform, and with it an analysis of the main actors and their motivations.

Qualitative studies of change require a degree of quantitative study, whenever quantification is possible. The structural changes to land distribution effected by reform are illustrated by land census information in the eras prior to and after reform. These statistics are problematic, however. The highly political nature of agrarian reform and the agrarian landscape provide opportunities to manipulate such statistics. The 1928 report on Agricultural Studies stresses that different statistics are collected for different purposes. Thus, the statistics presented in this study are not entirely accurate, they are the only way to represent the changes to the agrarian landscape.

Population censuses are another point of quantitative comparison. The wording of these surveys, however, is not equal across all three countries, which also makes these statistics problematic. Nevertheless, these studies provide a rough idea of the changing percentages of indigenous and mestizo populations within the urban and agricultural populations. These percentages help ascertain the approximate strength of an ethnic consciousness. As greater numbers of self-identified indigenous individuals and large populations that speak an indigenous language, or feel attached to indigenous culture, mean a larger support group for emerging indigenous mobilization.

Ecuador and México are the main cases of comparison, while Perú will follow as a shadow case. Sections are organized on a case by case basis. Each case will first look at the particular historical conditions of indigenous labor and colonial legacies. Afterwards, the study will discuss the concrete process of modernization in each country and how indigenous communities and other social actors are affected by these processes. Finally, this study will analyze agrarian reform laws themselves and their structural effects.

Ecuador: The Potential of the Rural



The Encomienda, a Building Block

In Ecuador, as in México and Perú, colonial institutions affected the subsequent development of indigenous mobilizations. In other words, agrarian reform in Ecuador, México, and Perú was an attempt to eliminate anachronistic colonial institutions that hindered economic, political, and social modernization. Agrarian reformers underestimated the powerful legacies of these colonial institutions. Ecuador's colonial institutions and pre-capitalist economic pursuits deeply affected national social cohesion, setting the stage for political openings in the country's future. More importantly, as Moore highlights, the political effects of modernization are a result of the landed elite's response to commercialization.

After conquest, Ecuador's economy was swiftly organized around agricultural production, the depletion of easily accessible mineral wealth left the Spanish crown with no other choice. The Sierra highlands' temperate climate and fertile land provided the perfect opportunity for rich agricultural production. Although the tropical Pacific lowlands did not present the same economic opportunity, its access to the Pacific was key to the import and export industry, and its weather would allow for the subsequent establishment of large cacao and sugar plantations. Remoteness and inhospitable climate proved the Amazon basin and the Galapagos islands ill suited for colonial exploitation and these remained at the fringes of colonial control. Regionalism was established by the crown's economic endeavors created two nations within one state, beholden to the same national administration.

The high productivity of the Highlands and the importance of Guayaquil's port created regional economic, demographic, and political competition. Nevertheless, the pre-colonial Highlands' dominance endured even past colonial times as Quito became the political and economic seat of present day Ecuador. The Ecuadorian colonial elite was divided over regionalist economic and political pursuits. The contrasting agricultural structures of the Highlands and the coast created different needs that were often at odds. The Highlands, which were developed first, revolved around agricultural production for the domestic market. Highland productive units existed in the form of *haciendas*, which relied on large amounts of cheap native labor. The plantation estates on the coast, however, made use of migrant labor. The mechanization of plantation production, reduced the need of labor on these units. Therefore, while the *hacienda* benefitted from having large numbers of indigenous peasants tied to the land, the plantation estates did not share this same need. These economic and social disputes created low levels of social cohesion amongst

the early Ecuadorian elite. Nevertheless, the low level of national social cohesion provided no political or social spaces for indigenous groups to maneuver into Ecuador's national discourse as independent agents. The highly stratified society along with the manorial conditions under which Ecuador's indigenous population lived, interfered with large-scale peasant organization at this stage.

Ecuadorian colonial society was organized no differently than in the rest of Spain's Latin American Empire. Five principal groups composed Ecuadorian social structure and each class had a function that only it could perform for "the benefit of the common good". The social classes that existed in the Ecuadorian colony were: 1) native-born Spanish or *peninsulares* - this category included the *encomenderos* and *hacendados*; 2) the *criollos*, sons and daughters of Spaniards, but born in colonial territory; 3) *mestizos* and *mulatos*⁸; 4) the indigenous populations; and 5) black slaves. This classification established both a legal order and a social order that would endure well past colonial times. *Peninsulares*, *criollos*, and assimilated *mestizos* — and in some cases indigenous royalty — thereafter occupied positions of political and economic power at national and regional levels, while bastard sons of Spaniards, *mulatos*, freed black-men, slaves, and indigenous peoples existed as wards of the state.

The stratification of colonial society created an image of the Indian as a passive object of policy and history, despite ongoing indigenous resistance to colonial dominion. The crown enacted paternalistic laws to protect the indigenous peoples from white abuse. But *hacendados* and *encomenderos* were effectively not subject to these laws. *Hacendado* impunity furthered indigenous subordination to Europeans and their descendants. Institutionalized class racism quickly

⁸ A *mulato* is a person of mixed European and African descent

became a common feature of Spanish colonies with any racial diversity. While a social classification of this type served Spain's feudal economy, it hindered the promotion of liberal rights that would enable the emancipation of Ecuador's indigenous communities once capitalism had developed within state boundaries (Mariategui 1974). Dissent in a highly stratified social environment cannot alter the fundamental relations of power, as the group that dissents merely becomes another class, unable to break from subordination (Moore 1989).

In 1544 Ecuador was added to the Viceroyalty of Perú. Ecuador's dependence on Lima, however, should not obscure the significant power Ecuador's elite held over military, religious, and territorial proceedings within its district limits. In agreement with the Crown, the land of indigenous communities was expropriated as per the right of conquest. Between 1534 and 1550 according to their "quality and merit"⁹, Pizarro and his conquistador allies received *encomiendas* and grants for the most productive lands in the conquered territory. Colonial administration continued to expropriate land and sell it to the highest bidder, creating the large *haciendas* or *latifundia* characteristic of the colonial Latin American landscape.

Although the *encomienda* itself was not inheritable, land was. The *encomienda* had allowed conquistadores to carve out huge, profit producing tracts of land without having to pay for the true costs of labor. The low cost of labor led *hacendados* to disregard the effects of commercial extraction on the native population. A labor supply was readily available in the sierras, but not so on the coast where laborers were imported as slaves or extracted from the sierra when

⁹ Crown officials would allocate larger *encomiendas* to conquistadores and high ranking military officials who had expanded Spain's empire by conquering lands that had been previously unexplored. The *encomienda* was thus a source of prestige and political power. Smaller *encomienda*'s were given to military men of good standing who decided to stay on the American continent permanently.

troublesome indians were kicked off the *hacienda*. The different demands and sources of labor deepened Ecuador's regionalism. As *haciendas* and *latifundia* could be inherited, the land tenure patterns and labor relations of the *encomienda* continued well after its demise. Once the *encomienda* had been phased-out, *haciendas* remained in the hands of landlords who had previously received an *encomienda*. What is more, the same men who had received the *encomienda* participated actively in colonial political life. And thus Latin America's landholding elite became entrenched.

The expansion of the *hacienda* drove indigenous communities off their lands. The result was a proliferation of new hispanized settlements, or *reducciones indígenas*, near *haciendas* and productive areas. These *reducciones* had two significant effects on future indigenous mobilization. Firstly, *reducciones* gave the *hacendado* and colonial authorities greater control over native communities. The *hacendado* and the church gained even more power over the native population and permeated every aspect of this transformed indigenous existence, contributing to the stability of the *hacienda* structure and national politics.

Once the *hacienda* had been consolidated, competition for land was quelled. The *hacendado* often organized parties and events that would involve the entire *hacienda* community. What is more, he would take on specific social responsibilities to the peasants as the *padrino*¹⁰ of certain workers' children. As the *hacendado* and the church became actively involved in daily peasant life, colonial authorities also gained ground. Whenever an Indian had a complaint against someone else, reliance on colonial authorities for justice was generally inevitable. This close

¹⁰ As the *padrino* to a worker's child, the *hacendado* would make small gifts to the child as a token of his appreciation for the parents' hard work. The *padrino* would guarantee that in the event of the parents' death, the child would be assured a living, working on the estate.

proximity to colonial authorities made early rebellion on a large scale difficult and perpetuated indigenous subordination to the Europeans.

Indigenous people under an *encomienda* were a cheap source of labor for production of agricultural goods. Nevertheless, the chief purpose of the *encomienda* was the extraction of tribute from native communities. Tribute would be distributed amongst colonial authorities and the *hacendado* himself, so as to "aid the development of the Spanish Empire" (Yeager 1995). When agricultural output could not pay the assigned tribute in full, the remaining balance could be paid in land, metals, money, or direct labor services. Whenever extraordinary forms of payment remained insufficient, the individual would become indebted to the *encomendero*. These inheritable debts often tied entire indigenous families to a system of *concertaje*¹¹ (Becker 2009). *Conciertos*, as these indebted laborers were called, received a negligible wage in exchange for their labor.

As Becker notes, Indian laborers became property of the *hacendado* and would be purchased and sold together along with the *hacienda* as part of the property (1999). This practice deepened the economic subordination of indigenous peoples who had already been removed from their lands and stripped of their human rights. Moreover, by acknowledging that Indians existed at the fringes of humanity, *concertaje* deepened pre-existing biases against the indigenous population. These biases prevented colonial government from viewing the indigenous communities as viable political actors given their lack of political and economic independence.

¹¹ *Concertaje* replaced the *encomienda* as Ecuador's source of indigenous labor. *Concertaje* represented a contract of debt peonage. The indebted Indian worked for the *hacendado* in the fields and in the *hacienda* house until his debt was paid off. His family was expected to contribute their labor to settle the debt. If the Indian died before his debt was expunged, the remainder of the debt was inherited to his closest kin.

Concertaje and its economic, political, and social effects remain the most pervasive legacy of pre-capitalist Ecuador. *Concertaje* continuously ensured that cheap indigenous labor remained available to the land holding elite. These benefits for Ecuador's elite prevented *concertaje's* liquidation despite active indigenous resistance.

Three persistent trends affected the subsequent political organization of the indigenous community and Ecuador's transition to modernity. The first of these patterns was regionalism. Diverging interests between the Coast and the Sierra produced a divided Ecuadorean elite. While the Sierra's fertile valleys generated great wealth for *hacendados*, modernity would soon challenge the economic and political supremacy of this ruling class. As disagreements between elites became more pronounced, some room for political maneuvering was opened for the indigenous subalterns. The second trend was economic, political, and social stratification on the basis of ethnic membership. State sanctioned stratification prevented Ecuador's indians — as well as other classes purported to be of "lesser value" — from obtaining political or economic positions that could challenge racial prejudices and enable them to organize effectively against the repressive system. The third trend was the permeating legacy of the sierra's powerful *latifundia*. The *latifundia* were the stronghold of pre-capitalist labor relationships, and thus the major target of agrarian reform. Robust manorial relationships stifled peasant unrest. In addition, these pre-capitalist relationships prevented free movement of labor required to modernize and industrialize by tying the indigenous peasantry to the *hacienda* through *concertaje*. While this inherently oppressive system relegated Ecuador's indigenous populations to substandard levels of citizenry, modernization created the political opportunities for subalterns to organize and modify their standing.

From a "Liberal Revolution" to Agrarian Reform

Many scholars identify the 1920's as Ecuador's period of modernization. Nevertheless, the roots of Ecuadorean modernization go further back than the large scale-industrial development of coastal plantations and reflect the growing economic and political power of Ecuador's coastal landowners and their need for a mobile supply of labor. Capitalist development was asymmetrical in Ecuador. The sierra was always well behind the coast. This unequal development and the eventual triumph of the coast over the highlands created the desire for agrarian reform.

During Ecuador's modernization, the indigenous population existed in a transitional zone between pre-capitalism and capitalism. This transitional zone was characterized by increased political instability as the Quito and Guayaquil elites grappled over political dominance, a deterioration of the *patrón-peón* relationship, and rising peasant solidarity along with greater interaction with a dissatisfied urban class as infrastructure improved communication and travel. Grassroots indigenous organizations arose with the intensification of this transitional zone. These rising organizations demanded changes to pre-capitalist labor relations, land distribution, and access to natural resources. Ecuador's period of modernization therefore illustrates Moore's argument about the importance of the commercial interests of the landed aristocracy; a landed aristocracy that is not commercially minded is likely to face revolution from actors opposed to their interests (1989).

Ecuador's modernization began in 1895 with president Eloy Alfaro's "Liberal Revolution". Alfaro assumed power after a coup that toppled Ecuador's Conservative Party. The Conservative party defended the interests of large land-holders, the church, and higher-ranking

military officials (Haney & Haney 1987). These three sectors of society had controlled the Ecuadorean highlands through repressive measures from colonial times to the early Republic. The Liberal Party represented a rising tide of coastal interests that hoped to break the power of the traditional elite, which would allow Guayaquil greater political and economic leeway to expand its trading ventures with Perú, Chile, and the United States. Eloy Alfaro and the liberals viewed the sierra as backward both socially, given its insistence on protecting *concertaje*, and economically, since its economy revolved around agricultural production for the internal market — which in turn depended on preserving *concertaje*. *Concertaje*, moreover, ran contrary to the coast's growing economic interests. In order to keep up with demands from the world market, the coast would require a growing supply of labor. *Concertaje*, which tied indigenous labor to the *hacienda* for an indefinite amount of time, prevented the migration of labor to the coast and its ports and cacao, sugar, and banana export plantations.

In 1895 Eloy Alfaro's "Liberal Revolution" began its program to create a united, secular state that was integrated to the world economy, and could continue to grow through a fluid labor market. Firstly, Alfaro broke much of the Catholic church's power in Ecuador with the "Ley de Manos Muertas"¹², which transferred all clerical property to the state (Becker 2009). The state then rented these lands out at prices only the wealthy could afford. While this process provided the Ecuadorian state with additional revenue with which to build the infrastructure necessary for a modern state, it did little to alter Ecuador's land distribution. The high price of rent meant that only *hacendados* and wealthy merchants had access to state owned *haciendas*. Indigenous peasants were still denied the access to these lands, therefore the economic, political, and social

¹² "Ley de Manos Muertas" translates literally into "The Law of Deceased Hands"

chasm that divided natives from the white population remained. What is more, feudalistic labor relationships remained grounded in these *haciendas*. In this sense, Alfaro's revolution is called only "liberal in practice" (Becker 2008). Alfaro successfully challenged the feudal power of the Ecuadorian church, but his reforms still protected the core of feudal relations of power: the *hacienda*.

The rise of state-owned *haciendas* and the growth of commerce, however, marks the demise of the highland *hacienda*. Absentee landlords became more common as *hacendados* divided their time between their personal estates and those they rented (Becker 2009). On certain *haciendas*, especially those owned by the state, the importance of the *patrón* in community life diminished. The balance between privileges and labor was disrupted as peasants began to experience the decay of their social environment. Moore argues that exploitation is an objective feeling, rather than a subjective sentiment. As long as peasants perceive the benefits they receive in exchange for their labor are either fair or generous, they will not consider themselves exploited (Moore 1989). However, when the burden outweighs the benefit, feelings of exploitation are natural and the link between lord and peasant ceases to be a source of social stability.

The most important legacy of Alfaro's revolution, however, was investment in Ecuadorian infrastructure. For the first time, a railway connected Quito to Guayaquil and roads and ports were improved upon and expanded at an unprecedented speed. New infrastructure increased peasant exposure to economic and political changes and facilitated communication across indigenous peasant communities. The small size of Ecuador, in comparison to most Latin American countries, meant that this exposure was relatively more widespread in Ecuador than in Mexico or Perú, where more remote areas remained out of contact with urban centers until much later

in the century. Infrastructure gave rise to new connections and promoted indigenous peasant solidarity. Individual peasant grievances, indigenous peasants realized, were shared by all laboring in or near *haciendas*. Peasant communities began to organize into rural regional syndicates that demanded changes in labor relations. Links were created between rural syndicates and Ecuador's communist and socialist parties, which in turn radicalized the demands of rural syndicates and contextualized the indigenous struggle within a larger class struggle that was appealing to both urban indigenous workers and rural communities.

The Liberal Revolution also “ended” the *concertaje* system. While on paper, Alfaro claims to have ended the miserable life of Ecuador's *conciertos*, the reality of the matter is that Alfaro did not significantly alter this very feudal Ecuadorian structure. *Concertaje* was replaced by the *huasipungo* system (Becker 2009). Like *concertaje*, the *huasipungo* was a service tenancy relationship, which allowed an Indian a small, subsistence plot of land — a *huasipungo* — on the hacienda. In exchange, the Indian agreed to work on the *hacendado's* land or home. The *huasipungo* also granted *huasipungeros* certain rights over hacienda resources: including water rights, the collection of firewood, and the right to graze personal livestock on designated hacienda lands (Becker 2009). Unlike *concertaje*, the state regulated the *huasipungo*. Ideally, once a *huasipungo's* debt was expunged, the *indigena* would be free to move elsewhere. Nevertheless, *hacendados* still depended on indigenous labor and were likely to manipulate or extend the contract of service (Becker 2009). In addition, *huasipungeros* became very attached to their small plot of land, as these not only provided a connection to the strong oral and cultural tradition of their ancestors, but also enabled basic economic survival; if the low wage paid by the *patrón* was insufficient to feed the family, at least the plot could produce some form of sustenance. There-

fore, state administration of indigenous populations did not work out as expected, yet it did produce a more fluid labor market fueling the growth of banana plantations in the 1950's. Yet as the state assumed authority over indigenous populations, it again confirmed the bias of indigenous passivity and denied indigenous freedom and self-determination. *Hacienda* conservatives and early Guayaquil liberals alike had no intention to emancipate Ecuador's indigenous peoples from economic, social, or political oppression.

In the early stages of Ecuador's modernization, feudalism continued and the *hacendado's* economic power was never truly jeopardized. Nevertheless, Alfaro's revolution sowed the seeds for an indigenous mobilization that could pose a real and immediate threat to the prevailing social structure. Alfaro's reforms created links between rural organizations and urban interest groups, which would, in the future, give indigenous demands a wider base of support. Additionally, infrastructure heightened peasant solidarity and allowed capitalism to infiltrate the countryside and challenge the feudal structures of production on the *haciendas*. The early 1900's, therefore, marked the beginning of a "transitory period" in which both capitalist and feudalist forms coexisted. As cacao exports grew, the growing power of Guayaquil intensified the rifts between the coast and the highlands. Low elite cohesion allowed dissatisfied groups, such as the rural syndicates of the 1920's to organize and successfully challenge the system — as in the case of the state-owned Pesillo hacienda in the 1930's¹³. By 1944 rural syndicates had already orga-

¹³ The Pesillo Hacienda was one of Ecuador's state owned *haciendas*. In December of 1930, Indigenous workers organized a strike, along with workers from Moyurco and La Chimba haciendas. The Pesillo workers presented a petition to the government with various demands, including raising salaries, a forty-hour workweek, returning huasipungo plots, and compensation for the labor of women and children. The overseers of the Pesillo and Moyurco *haciendas*, agreed to a settlement with the workers for an eight-hour day, one day off per week, payment of labor for women and children, and dismissal of workers only for bad conduct or insubordination. The workers then ended the strike.

nized around the Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios. The Indigenous Federation of Ecuador contextualized ethnic claims within class struggle and stressed the importance of agrarian reform in the process of Ecuador's democratization and the emancipation of subalterns.

Barrington Moore cautions his readers about applying his thesis in areas of the world that are dependent on more developed countries for economic production. In these countries, he argues, it is often unclear whose political and economic power foreigners are strengthening (Moore 1989). The growth of banana exports in the 1950's intensified this transitional period. The United Fruit Company's new role in Ecuador's economy illustrates how foreign investment and foreign influence magnified the importance of the coast. Foreign influences strengthened Ecuador's capitalist-minded merchant class, without overpowering them entirely. Internal migration to the coast rose in the 1950's, fueling the growth of Ecuador's agricultural export industry (García 2013). Demand for labor rose, and *huasipungeros* saw an opportunity to leave feudalism for the possibility of a real wage.

The 1954 census, however, showed that despite the Liberal Revolution and the burgeoning economic activities of the coast, Ecuador's land distribution remained unchanged. That is, Ecuador preserved feudal inequalities. Its Gini coefficient was .86, a product of the concentration of land, both in the Sierra and on the Coast, in the hands of few owners. The agro-export crisis in the late 1950's deepened inequalities (Castro). As agriculture became largely concentrated on exports, Ecuador was forced to import foreign goods to satisfy domestic demand, even for staples. This crisis of Ecuadorean agriculture led to a marked decrease in living standards for the urban proletariat in the cities, the rural proletariat on the plantations, and the *huasipungeros* on the haciendas (Velasco 1983). Unrest became widespread in the sierra and on the coast. The

huasipungero movement demanded an end to the *huasipungo*, its replacement with a real and fair salary, and land redistribution along equitable lines in order to give subalterns an access to the national economy. The FEI, the organizing force behind peasant revolts expressed its solidarity with the Cuban Revolution in 1959. Indigenous solidarity with Castro, along with the FEI's close relationship with Ecuador's Communist Party, struck fear among Ecuadorean elites. Rural pressures convinced some landowners to liquidate their *huasipungos* early in the 1960's (Becker 2008). The *huasipungeros* received the less productive areas of *hacienda* land. Although these *indígenas* were liberated of feudal bonds, they still lacked the resources —such as technology, access to loans, and irrigation — to put their land to productive use and reduce the inequalities created by centuries of subordination.

Unrest intensified in the early 1960's as the "transitional period" of Ecuador's modernization increased pre-existing inequalities. In 1961 Indians marched into Quito and pressured the government for change in the countryside; in 1962 Indians on the Pesillo Hacienda petitioned the government for land redistribution and retirement of *huasipungeros*; in 1962 peasants took over the Tenguel Hacienda owned by United Fruit and forced them to sell. The government did not do anything to address indigenous demands and the increasing militancy of indigenous organization. Ecuador's military became frustrated with the inability of elites to address growing unrest and in 1963 Ecuador's liberal government experienced a military coup. In 1964 Ecuador's military government enacted the "Ley de Reforma Agraria y Colonizacion" which intended to "correct defects through better distribution and use of land" (Becker 2008). The *huasipungo* had to be phased out over a 12 month period, afterwards workers were to be paid entirely in cash (Becker 2009). State-owned haciendas were turned into cooperatives and were placed under the adminis-

tration of the Agrarian Reform Institute. A cap on landownership was instituted, and *hacienda* lands that were not currently in production were to be expropriated and redistributed to indigenous peasants.

Ecuador's 1964 reform was aimed at agricultural modernization. Redistribution was limited and it was only the least productive lands that were allotted to former *huasipungeros*. The indigenous demand for land was "satisfied", but the inequalities that prevented full integration of indigenous populations into society remained. Indigenous people owned land, but the state did not provide any access to resources that would allow indigenous people make their land economically productive. Moreover, racial discrimination confined the indigenous population to the margins of citizenship. Low productivity meant that indigenous landowners still had to labor for former *hacendados* in order to sustain their family. Inequalities, however, meant that the now mobile laborers could be easily exploited. The influence of the *huasipungero* movement on Ecuador's agrarian reform should not be belittled despite the limited social gains achieved by reform. Increased indigenous militancy at a time when international communist fears were strong, forced Ecuador's government to redistribute lands and eliminate feudal labor practices. The fact that *hacendados* had already begun to liquidate the *huasipungo* on their own suggests that indigenous unrest influenced elites to make property concessions without the state stipulating the necessity to do so. Barrington Moore calls this, and this study will agree, "negative victory". Indigenous peasants were only the wood in the fire that altered land tenure patterns. Fear of communist and indigenous insurrection served only as the impetus for agrarian reform. However, reform was not motivated by the ideals of social justice proposed by the indigenous organizers.

Instead, elite interests of modernization prevailed over indigenous demands for equitable land redistribution and citizenship rights.

Ecuador's land reform proceeded slowly, which intensified indigenous unrest through the early 1970's. In 1973, Ecuador's military government enacted a second agrarian reform law, essentially a re-statement of the one that had been enacted a decade earlier, except that it eliminated the landownership cap and replaced it with stricter controls over haciendas. The law maintained that haciendas would now be expropriated if they did not productively utilize 80% of their cultivable land and did not meet Ministry of Agriculture production levels (Becker 2009). The necessity of a second agrarian reform suggests that hacendados were still reluctant to modernize their haciendas and engage in capitalist enterprise and that the state remained reticent about confronting the landed elite. This second reform opened up new lands for redistribution and finally forced remaining hacendados to modernize their landholdings. The final obstacle to modernization was eliminated, Ecuador's land distribution finally allowed for a mobile labor force that could work in medium and large highly-productive, technologically advanced agricultural production units.

Ecuador's 1974 agrarian census shows that reform laws occasioned significant changes in land distribution. The percentage of estates larger than 1,000 hectares was reduced, and the number of estates smaller than 2 hectares grew exponentially (Becker 2008). *Minifundios*, as these small estates are called, were an intentional effect of Ecuador's agrarian reform. *Minifundia* composed a new, private agricultural sector from the old indigenous peasant *huasipungeros* who did not settle state owned cooperatives. *Minifundios* were too small to provide two adults with full employment and sustenance for an entire family, therefore individuals who had benefitted

from the reform were still tied to the sierra and coastal elites. Nevertheless, landownership represented a step forward for the indigenous people who had benefitted directly from reform. Inequalities amongst the indigenous peasantry grew as a result of agrarian reform as not all were able to receive a small plot of land for personal cultivation. Landless peasants were forced to become itinerant day workers on commercial estates. The economic and social inequality present since colonial times remained and continued to prevent indigenous populations from integrating into Ecuador's polity.

Despite the limited social gains from reform to Ecuador's indigenous population, the transition to modernity initiated a political and social process that allowed for grassroots indigenous movements to acquire political and organizational experience. What is more, their pressure from below instigated an agrarian reform that altered Ecuador's land distribution and provided many indigenous peasants access to land. Racial discrimination, intensified by structural arrangements inherited from the colonial era, hindered the integration of Ecuador's indigenous into national society and furthered their economic marginalization. The first half of Ecuador's 20th century corresponds with Moore's preconditions for peasant unrest. National social cohesion in Ecuador was low, as regionalist pursuits divided Ecuador's elite and dissatisfied urban classes sought out alliances to break elite power. This created political openings and opportunities for organization and cooperation between urban communists and indigenous peasants. Prior to reform, Ecuador's landed elite was reluctant to turn towards commercial agriculture. The *hacienda* gave them economic and political power along with social status, which were challenged by the growing forces of capitalism.

Huasipungeros existed in between capitalist practices and feudal labor relations. The contradictions that began to emerge on the *hacienda* as a result of its encounters with capitalism led to a deterioration of the surrounding social system. As the *patrón* lost interest or lost his grip over the *peones*, the relationship that had previously been a source of stability crumbled. Peasant solidarity was strongly felt across the highlands and the lowlands alike, as grievances were shared amongst a people with similar — if not the same — ethnic features. Thus Ecuador's long transition to modernity liberated Ecuador's indigenous peasants from manorial oppression and enabled their political organization despite modernity's inability to increase their standard of living or challenge their social and economic marginality.

Pachakutik: The Road Continues

Modernity did not signal an end to indigenous organization in Ecuador. Instead, politically conversant and socially powerful indigenous mobilizations have grown. The limits and shortcomings of agrarian reform kept indigenous grievances alive. The era prior to reform had set the foundation for a politically conversant, organized indigenous movement. After reform, indigenous movements were thus ready to rise up to the challenge of defending indigenous cultures. Agrarian reform had not killed these links and structures, but rather the failure of reform revived these structures at a national level. Although Ecuador's elite had already transitioned into capitalist production, it never surpassed its regionalist disputes. Economic crisis in the 1980's intensified elite discord and the dissatisfaction of urban and rural proletariats alike. The weakness of regional government structure allowed indigenous leaders to acquire experience and enhance connections with urban groups that legitimated indigenous struggle. An ethno-nationalist dis-

course thus gained strength at local levels across the country. Labeled as “the gained decade”, the 1980’s allowed indigenous organizations founded in the late 1970’s to interact with regional systems of politics weakened by crisis. Meanwhile, indigenous unrest continued at a national level, exposing the high degree of peasant solidarity even after agrarian reform. Revolutionary peasant solidarity continued as a result of subaltern’s self-identification with Ecuador’s indigenous populations. Surveys have identified Ecuador’s indigenous population to range from anywhere between 15% and 30% of the total population (La Madrid 2012). In any event, indigenous populations formed a sizable group that was increasingly politically conversant.

In June, 1990 the *Pachakutik*¹⁴ uprising paralyzed Ecuador for a week. Indigenous participants, both urban and rural, blocked roads, effectively cutting off the food supply to Ecuador’s cities. The uprising was organized by CONAIE, *Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador*, the heir to the FEI. The participants in the mobilization had moved beyond agrarian reform and linked neocolonial dependency to racial discrimination and economic marginalization and forced the government to negotiate. Their chief demand was the creation of a plurinational and pluricultural Ecuador, which included self-determination, defense of land, bilingual education and civil rights for indigenous communities. The growing acceptance of indigenous influence in regional politics created the opportunity for an indigenous party to participate at a national level while national unrest kept the indigenous concerns at the forefront of the national consciousness. This enabled Amazonian leaders to form Movimiento Unidad Plurinacional Pachakutik - Nuevo País to campaign for indigenous rights and turn the indigenous population

¹⁴ Pachakutik comes from the Kichwa language. *Pacha* means “time or land” and *kutik* means “return to”. Becker translates *Pachakutik* into a “return in time” or “cultural rebirth” (2009, 2008, 2006, 1999).

into the only popular sector capable of achieving real social gains. Indigenous participation in electoral politics recognized the indigenous voice and the ability of Ecuador's indigenous to speak for themselves.

The successful evolution of Ecuador's indigenous organizations suggests that indigenous issues will be expressed if indigenous integration to national society is hindered by economic and social inequalities and racial bias. Political participation challenges racial biases of the *indigena* as a passive object of policy. The Movimiento party's success in the 1998 Constitutional Assembly elections challenged biases against indigenous political participation. The ability of indigenous movements to affect policy can lead to social and material gains in the future. However, as the case of Ecuador demonstrates, an indigenous movement cannot grow and confront the challenges of modernity if it is not given a political opening in which to maneuver. These factors emerge at the crossroads between feudalism and modernity, as elites are challenged by capitalist interests, the manorial relations under which indigenous populations live and labor begin to crumble, and new economic opportunities arise with the capitalist influx in the countryside. Inequality fuels the indigenous struggle, which through pressure and confrontation, influences both national politics and racial biases and effects social and political gains within the confines of civil society.

*México: Zapata Vive, La Lucha Sigue!*¹⁵



The *Hacienda* as a Pivot

Cortés and his troops were unprepared for the vast cultural and geographic diversity they encountered upon their arrival in México. Although conquest was a demographic disaster for indigenous populations all across México, the fall of the Aztec empire in 1521 was not a definitive defeat for the indigenous populations of the periphery. Cortés had to organize a series of separate campaigns to defeat the native peoples of Guerrero, Michoacán, Oaxaca, and Chiapas, amongst others. Small pox and battle decimated native populations. The decrepitude of the conquered indigenous people allowed colonial institutions to embed themselves deeply in the work-

¹⁵ “Zapata vive, la lucha sigue!” translates into “Zapata lives, the struggle continues!”. This is a chant used by the Zapatista rebels of Chiapas to call attention to the continuity of the indigenous peasants’ struggle.

ings of the polity. While no region remained free of colonial control, rugged terrain and difficult travel conditions allowed the periphery to form local systems of patrón-client relationships relatively independent of the colonial state apparatus.

After conquest, New Spain became the world's primary supplier of silver, producing much wealth for the Spanish crown. (Van Young 1983). Spanish men with *encomiendas* in Zacatecas, Tlaxcala, San Luis Potosí and Guanajuato benefited enormously from this lucrative industry¹⁶. Although Seville ran a tightly regulated monopoly on the trade of valuables, the port of Veracruz flourished from trade. Mining encouraged the proliferation of large estates for the extraction and refining of ore for export. Not all lands in New Spain were suitable for mineral extraction. Central and Southern México developed an hacienda economy, producing various agricultural products for the internal market and products of greater value — such as sugar, vanilla, and coffee — for export¹⁷. Despite these economic differences, however, México did not develop the intense political regional divisions exhibited by Ecuador.

Because of the Viceroyalty's immense size, the colonial administrative apparatus evolved into a highly de-centralized structure. The Viceroyalty was divided and then subdivided further. Municipalities, the smallest administrative units, were governed by *cabildos* or town councils on which sat *encomenderos* and *hacendados* (Joseph & Henderson 2002). México's colonial apparatus diffused elite hostilities. This structure allowed the landed elite to manage their interests

¹⁶ States to the North and North West of Tlaxcala will be referred to as the Mexican North or simply, the North.

¹⁷ Central México refers to the Valley of México (México City, Estado de México), Puebla, Hidalgo, and Tlaxcala. Both Morelos and Puebla border what this study will refer to as Southern México. Southern México most notably includes the states of Oaxaca and Chiapas, as well as all states to the South of Puebla and Morelos.

with some freedom, observing crown laws as guidelines and suggestions rather than steadfast pronouncements. Northern elites did not resent the power of Valley elites, and Southern elites did not conspire to seize the riches of the North, as each was allowed to pursue their own economic interests within the limits of local power networks. Strong localized identity gave way to what is known as *la patria chica*, which translates literally into hometown, but its implications go beyond those which are associated with a hometown. *Patria chica* suggests a deep emotional attachment to the local. Local identification and the accompanying relations of power, economy, and culture, supersede the national structure. The locally recognized power of *hacendados* quelled any inter-state hostility that could emerge from national economic and political competition. Moreover, at the national level, colonial elites enjoyed a reasonable sense of unity under the Spanish crown and the Catholic faith.

The relative independence allotted to *hacendados* consolidated the power of the colonial elite and diminished elite hostilities. Additionally, colonial centers of wealth shifted. No region was allowed permanent economic hegemony over the national economy. The production of silver collapsed in the mid-seventeenth century, when mercury was diverted to mines in Bolivia and Perú. The contraction of the mining industry diminished the power of the North and forced extensive rather than intensive agriculture upon it (Van Young 1983)¹⁸. Once the economic power of the North had decreased, the economic power of Central and Southern México increased in comparison. Sugar and coffee plantations, along with agricultural production for local markets

¹⁸ After the contraction of the mining industry, the North diversified its economy. Silver extraction was maintained, albeit at a lesser level, and cattle ranching was introduced to the Northern economy.

swelled the power of Southern and Central elites. The shrinkage of the mining market caused feudalism to set in further as New Spain's economy shifted towards agricultural production.

European diseases had decimated the native populations. Disease brought by the Europeans, however, had the additional effect of strengthening feudal bonds of service and labor. The "Borah-Chevalier Thesis" posits that since the Spanish Conquest, Mexico's countryside was dominated by large, underproductive landed estates owned by patriarchal lords and worked by impoverished, servile, indigenous population (Van Young 1983). The *hacienda* and the debt peonage that accompanied it were the results of depression and economic retrogression. Feudalization is portrayed as an adaptive strategy. Oaxaca and Chiapas were not as densely populated as the port city of Veracruz or the Valley, which had previously been the core of the Aztec Empire. This gave feudalism greater credence as an economic strategy of survival.

The Mexican *hacienda* widely varied in size, as lands were assessed for their capital value and distributed accordingly. Land in the Valley of México was very valuable, and developed a mixed livestock and farming regime. Proximity to México City also linked these *haciendas* to markets and the commercial interests of the silver traders. In the Valley, debt peonage was not as common since labor was relatively plentiful. *Haciendas* were smaller in size and can be described as post-feudal, but pre-capitalist. While the patriarchal structure and seigneurial mentality remained, there were strong commercial interests amongst landlords and free-wage employment was a common feature (Van Young 1983). The *hacienda* represented shelter and economic security to the rural indian laborer. What is more, proximity to markets and trade routes promoted *mestizaje*. The natives of the Valley were the first to interact with the Spanish. The proliferation of small haciendas in a densely populated space displaced the natives who had already lost their

traditional social and political structures. The traditional ethnic consciousness was slowly eroded by the assimilationist policies of the Crown and the daily interaction with Iberians.

The landholding elite of the periphery, however, did not share the strong commercial impulses of the Valley elite. The small size of the native labor force led elites to resort to feudalization and debt peonage alike. *Haciendas* in the north and in the rugged terrain of Oaxaca and Chiapas were larger than those of the Valley. These *haciendas*, however did not encroach upon indigenous settlements, as land was plentiful and population density was low. An ethnic consciousness remained strong and intact, as most indian villages were not affected by *hacienda* growth (Waterbury 1975). Remoteness from markets and ports led to a slower rate of *mestizaje*. Indigenous identity was not challenged by strong assimilation forces as it was in the Valley. Nevertheless, the socioeconomic role of the southern Mexican *hacienda* resembles that of the Ecuadorean *hacienda*. Landlord hegemony was supreme. Indebted peons were property of the *hacendado* until the debt had been liquidated. The marginalization of indigenous populations in the periphery was extreme. The *hacienda* was the locus of rural life, economically and socially, but it remained isolated from the national market. Racial biases were reinforced by the economic and social status of the *indígenas* of the south. *Indígenas* who were not in debt were still tied to the *hacienda* and even when they did not work on the *hacienda*, they were still required to pay tribute to the *hacendado*. Poor road networks made travel to México City long and difficult. Meanwhile, employment and certain economic security were readily at hand on the nearby *hacienda*.

The diffuse nature of the political system along with the profound segmentation of society occasioned by the racial and ethnic caste system meant that colonial society was nearly im-

immune to peasant rebellion. México's caste system was vast, and continuously expanded as colonial society became more complex. The nominal authority of the monarch, however, and the paternalistic laws overseen by the *corregidor de indios* and his native elite assistants created the circumstances for a rebellion, but none that could challenge the status quo. Any opposition to the system would create another segment within the system (Moore 1989). Thus, colonial elites squashed or co-opted radical sectors of peasant society. Their interest was the affixing of the shrinking pool of indigenous labor to the *hacienda* through peonage and other means.

México's regional development during the colonial era had significant repercussions for the subsequent political organization of indigenous populations. The diffuse nature of the colonial system prevented large-scale indigenous mobilizations and relegated indigenous communities to work within the limits of regional structures whenever these were available. The relatively faster development of the Valley and Veracruz initiated the process of *mestizaje*, which somewhat successfully assimilated the debilitated indigenous populations of the area. The capitalist orientation of the urban elite successfully transformed the Indians of the City into a rural proletariat. Difficult travel across the country meant that the periphery existed in relative isolation. Indigenous communities in Oaxaca and in Chiapas relied on the *hacienda* as the sole source of accessible employment and could not risk rebellion.

This very same regional development, however, positively affected the possibilities for subsequent indigenous mobilization. In Morelos, a little ways south from the City, a mixed *mestizo*-indigenous peasantry remained under the *hacienda* structure. Their proximity to the city meant that these peasants would be the first to experience the effects of modernization and take advantage of the political openings that would come their way. Feudalization as a survival strate-

gy in the North and South meant that the landed elite would be increasingly reluctant to turn towards commercial agriculture. Feudalization protected their privileged status. Unwilling to replace debt peonage with wage-labor, the *haciendas* of the periphery would face the greatest internal and external pressures come the era of modernization. Additionally, isolation of the periphery's haciendas helped maintain an ethnic consciousness by slowing down the process of *mestizaje*. Isolation of *haciendas* and indigenous villages alike meant that these would only be affected by modernization at a much later date.

Modernization: A Revolutionary Coalition

The colonial legacy of la *patria chica*, along with the relative isolation of the North and South from the central state apparatus, affected México's modernization. The immense economic and political power of regional elites prevented the uniform application of laws and measures. México's modernization is thus a product of various regional projects and interpretations of the reigning national constitution. Conceptually, México's modernization occurs in three distinct phases. The first phase, known as *la Reforma* [the reform], occurs during the mid nineteenth century. The Porfiriato is the second phase of México's modernization and lasts the duration of Porfirio Díaz's rule over México. The third phase is brought about by the Mexican Revolution and the ensuing agrarian reform. Because of México's regional political structure, each one of these efforts must be visualized as occurring at both national and regional levels. The national promulgation of the law in this case represents the "ideal". Meanwhile, there are different iterations of the reality of these laws and reforms at state levels.

México's long War of Independence left the state in bankruptcy. Fighting damaged private property, infrastructure and reduced the productive capacity of mines and *haciendas* alike. Lucas Alamán describes the elite's horror at the indigenous peasant masses Father Hidalgo mobilized in the name of Independence as he passed through each state. Mobs gathered around Hidalgo's cry and ravaged *haciendas* and state property (2002, 175). Meanwhile, the *criollo*¹⁹ elite gathered around the cause for Independence to protect their *haciendas*, resist the increased economic control of Spain's Bourbon Reforms, and achieve the political stature which the colonial system had denied them. The *criollo* triumph paved the way for capitalism by breaking away with Spain's policy of mercantilism. However, the elite of the new republic lacked the necessary resources to develop the Mexican economy and had developed fear of the animosity and destructive capacity the rural masses had exhibited towards the Spanish elite during the War for Independence. México's early modernization efforts must thus be understood within the context of elite's vehement protection of private property.

Independence unleashed elite hostilities. The unifying effect of the crown and the church was gone. Elites struggled to organize the new republic and broke away into two camps: the liberals and the conservatives. Liberals wanted a new federal structure that would break away entirely from the colonial regime. Conservatives wanted to reproduce the colonial order where a centralized state would replace the Spanish crown as the source of unity and stability. Factionalism after Independence created immense political instability at the national level and prevented commitment to specific economic policies. These low levels of social cohesion are reminiscent of those in Ecuador after their independence from Spain. In Ecuador, elite conflict created politi-

¹⁹ *Criollo* was the label designated to Spaniards born in the Viceroyalties.

cal openings for peasant indigenous movements, but not so in México. Peasants and Indigenous communities had joined the struggle for Mexican Independence and suffered the most from the devastating war and its aftermath (Tutino 2009). Moreover, the *hacienda* still remained the locus of economic security for indigenous peasants. Economic uncertainty would not permit indigenous communities to rebel and destroy their main source of sustenance. Feudal relations, therefore, remained intact after Independence.

Liberal and Conservative disputes paused in 1854 with the liberal triumph over the conservatives in the Battle of Ayutla in the state of Guerrero. The defeat of Conservative general Santa Anna marks the beginning of México's first stage of modernization known as *la Reforma*, the period of Reform. Liberals intended to transform México's backward agricultural landscape into an "enterprising, modern, scientific countryside" (Joseph & Henderson 2002: 239). The reformers, however, identified the Church, the Indian communities and landless peasants alike as hindrances to their national agricultural project (González y González 2002). The Catholic Church had colluded with México's landholding elite, supporting the feudal relations that had prevailed since early colonialism. The Indians and the landless peasants maintained communal land underproductive, because they did not own the land personally, the reformers believed. Reformers intended to assimilate Indians into national society by transforming them into small and medium landowners.

Liberals therefore hoped to transform México's agricultural landscape by breaking the power of the Church and imposing private property by eliminating communal forms of ownership favored by the indigenous populations. The Lerdo Law, promulgated in 1856, ended the special protection indigenous communities had previously enjoyed and expropriated Church and

communal native lands alike (Cochet 2009). Liberals had hoped expropriation would create a class of small and efficient agricultural producers (De la Peña 1983). However, expropriated lands were bought by foreigners, wealthy merchants who sought elite status or pre-existing *hacendados*. Thus, the liberals created a new class of *hacendados* and the demise of many indigenous peasant communities.

The unintended effects of the liberal constitution were most strongly felt in Morelos. Its proximity to México City meant that indigenous properties were expropriated with relative speed. As a small state, with great productive capacities, and a large indigenous population, the encroachment of the hacienda created a class of landless peasants that had nowhere to go but the exploitative *hacienda* and its sugarcane plantations (De la Peña 1983). Debt peonage gained more ground, as the supplementary sustenance gathered from indigenous community holdings was no longer available. With the revenue generated from the sale of church and indigenous lands, the state built railroads to integrate the national market. By 1873 the railroad connected Morelos, México City and the port of Veracruz. Proximity to markets and trade led *hacendados* to intensify production and increase their profits. As a result, the condition of the indigenous peasants declined rapidly. Liberal Reform disrupted the balance that existed in the near countryside. Feudal ties dissipated as a growing number of landless peasants felt exploited under the contradictions of México's rapid modernization. Peasant guerrillas organized around the demand for land reform, and their approach became increasingly militant (Waterbury 1975). Guerrillas attacked hacienda property and stole livestock and grain to help support their community. Yet these guerrillas addressed issues locally rather than at a national level — a feature of Mexican politics inherited from the colonial era.

Liberal Reform reached Chiapas and Oaxaca at a later date. Local elites used the Lerdo Law to appropriate the natural resources of indigenous communities. The relative independence indigenous communities had previously enjoyed was destroyed. Church and communal holdings were also sold to foreigners who invested heavily in the South's coffee industry (Reina 1988: 240). Instead of challenging the power of local *hacendados*, foreigners added to it by working within the same system of feudal relations. The extreme marginalization of these areas, however, hindered peasant mobilization. Without an ability to communicate with the interior, the indigenous peasants of México's south remained in ignorance of the unrest in Morelos, the North, and the dissatisfaction of urban intellectuals. The persistence of feudal relations, along with the peasants' economic reliance on the *hacienda*, did not present conditions favorable to mobilization.

México's second phase of modernization encompasses the duration of Porfirio Díaz's leadership — that is, the restive years leading up to the Revolution. Porfirio Díaz, a member of Oaxaca's elite came to power in 1876. México was anything but a modern nation; transportation was still difficult, the national market was small, as was the agricultural export industry the Liberals had hoped to create. In his pursuit of economic growth, Díaz intensified expropriation under the Lerdo Law, further entrenching the power of México's *hacendados* and foreign landholders (Joseph & Henderson 2002 273). The mining industry in the North expanded, as did the tobacco plantations in Oaxaca, and the lumber camps and coffee plantations of Chiapas. Díaz also built a modern transportation and communication system and invited more further investment.

As the demand for Mexican exports grew, so did the demand for labor. and indigenous peasants suffered enormously. The contradictions between capitalist desires and feudal practices became more and more evident. Diaz was committed to create a modern México. However, he

maintained the hacienda as the primary axis of the Mexican economy, preserving feudal labor practices. The gap between *hacendados* and peasants grew exponentially with the growth of new industries and the integration of the national market.

Conditions in the Central South deteriorated rapidly and the separate guerrilla movements of Morelos united under Emiliano Zapata²⁰. Meanwhile the miners of the North also protested rapid development and organized around Francisco I. Madero²¹. The expansion of the mining industry required an expansion of the available labor pool. The mining elite resorted to enslaving the Yaqui Indians of Sonora and demanded more time of their wage laborers. Responding to the degeneration of México's political and social environment, Francisco I. Madero incited mine workers to rebel against the Diaz regime. Francisco Villa, a peasant guerrilla leader of the Northern state of Chihuahua, who like Zapata raided and redistributed local *haciendas*. In this sense, it is again seen how México's revolution is best conceived as a synthesis of regional projects that resulted in national change. The transportation system, which Diaz had built, facilitated communication between the North and the South. Thus, the peasant guerrillas of the South²², led by Emiliano Zapata, joined the rebellion, which by 1910 had become the Mexican Revolution. The

²⁰ Emiliano Zapata was a *mestizo* of close *Nahua* descent.

²¹ Francisco I. Madero was a member of México's Northern mining elite who had run against Porfirio Díaz and was incarcerated.

²² Chiapas and Oaxaca were late to join the revolutionary struggle. Largely in part because the railroad did not reach the south until late in the Diaz dictatorship. The expansion of industry was late to reach Chiapas and Oaxaca and the indigenous and peasant communities did not yet share the grievances of the peasant communities of Morelos. *Hacendado* power, thus remained largely unchallenged.

Revolutionary motto of “*Reforma, libertad, ley y justicia*”²³, expresses subaltern desires for fair treatment and a real integration into the national economy. Revolutionary forces demanded a return to democratic political power, the reform of labor laws, the redistribution of *hacienda* lands, and assistance for the peasantry.

Mexico’s Revolutionary war was immensely destructive. Over the course of Revolution new political factions appeared at national levels. The *federales*, the federals, represented the status quo of the Díaz regime and engaged against the North-South worker-peasant alliance led by Madero and known as the *maderistas*. When Madero came to power in 1911, the Zapata forces of the South and the Villa forces of the North broke away with Madero, who — in their view — had made significant concessions to the old regime (Calvert 1969). Peasant revolutionaries wanted a real break in the Mexican power structure. In 1913, Madero was assassinated and Victoriano Huerta, a Díaz supporter, assumed the presidency illegitimately. Venustiano Carranza, a mid-sized landholder of Coahuila, formed the Constitutionalist Army, which included the Villa and Zapata factions. The Constitutionalist, however, were divided: Carranza’s bourgeois-elite interests wanted adherence to democratic values while Villa and Zapata demand land redistribution and an alteration of the power structure. The Constitutionalist forces triumphed over Huerta in 1914, but fighting did not cease. Villa and Zapata broke away Carranza as they had broken away from Madero before.

Hoping to end the ravaging battles, Carranza ratified the Constitution of 1917. The new constitution represented the partial triumph of Zapata’s forces and Madero’s political desires; radical agrarian reform was finally institutionalized by Article 27 and workers rights were recog-

²³ “*Reforma, libertad, ley y justicia*” translates into “Reform, liberty, law, and justice”

nized by Article 123. México thus entered the first phase of reform. Article 27 established that the ownership of all lands and waters is vested in the nation and restored the Indian communities the special protection which the Reform period had taken away (Cochet 2009). Indian communities could claim restitution of communal land which had been sold earlier. Lands were restituted under the *ejido* system. A peasant would receive a small plot of land for private use from a collective unit, called *ejido*. Individuals owned the product of their labor but not the soil they labored on. Agrarian reform at this stage did not question the distribution of lands in the Mexican countryside. Large properties were therefore not impacted by reform, unless the newly incumbent Constitutionalists had a political reason to expropriate lands. Approximately 3-4% of Mexican territory was redistributed to 780,000 peasant families (Cochet 2009). The forces of Villa and Zapata retained their legitimacy in opposition to the Carranza regime, because the majority of the peasantry was excluded from reform.

Peasant uprisings and fighting continued until 1921, when Alvaro Obregón assumed the presidency and Emiliano Zapata was assassinated (Agricultural Studies 1928). The first phase of agrarian reform continued its slow pace until Lázaro Cárdenas was elected president in 1934. Prior to Cárdenas, Mexican politicians were reluctant to destroy large estates as this could endanger México's welfare and economic interests (Agricultural Studies 1928). Cárdenas understood that the Revolution had no meaning if the *haciendas* were not destroyed and social justice was not pursued. Cárdenas rewrote the agrarian code and expanded agrarian rights significantly. Laborers in *haciendas* were given the right to claim the *hacienda* land they worked on. Private property was limited to 100 irrigated hectares, 200 dry hectares, or the surface area necessary to maintain 500 livestock units (Cochet 2009). This second phase of agrarian reform finally landed

a blow at the *hacienda* system and transformed the agrarian landscape. In only six years 19 million hectares were redistributed — twice as much as was redistributed over the previous 20 years. The beneficiaries of the Cárdenas regime totaled around 730,000 peasants (Cochet 2009).

Agrarian reform, soon encountered its limitations. The individual *ejido* holding was not an economically viable agricultural unit and credit was scarce for *ejidatarios*, because of inadequate government funding and rampant corruption. The *ejido* sector was significantly less productive than the private sector and was incapable of providing subsistence for a peasant family. Not only were *ejidos* given the least productive lands, as *hacendados* decided what part of their land they would keep and what parts they would hand over to the government, *ejidatarios* were dependent on the state for the distribution of resources that would make their plot of land more productive (Stavenhagen 1966). The wait for state funding was long. Otherwise, the resources never arrived. Peasants who could bought small plots of land, smaller than 5 hectares, called *minifundia*. Unintentionally, agrarian reform occasioned a rise in *minifundismo*, which was also insufficient to support a peasant family. *Minifundistas* resorted to selling their labor seasonally in medium size farms and the remaining large landholdings that had managed to avoid reform. Nevertheless, reform accomplished what had not been accomplished before: the power had shifted away from the *hacienda* and the landed elite to regional sectors and the rising rural-urban bourgeoisie — at least in the near periphery. Oaxaca and Chiapas both experienced counterrevolutions which slowed the process of redistribution and diminished the effects. Some *haciendas* and large landholdings in these areas were left intact. The cycle of indigenous-peasant exploitation and poverty continued in these states.

Although the Mexican Revolution did not originate in peasant interests or mobilization, peasants joined the workers' movement of the North and peasant demands became crucial tenets of the revolutionary agenda. Without joining the Maderista movement, Zapata's guerrilla groups would have remained a local force incapable of national change. México's Revolution confirms Moore's claim: without strong allies outside its class, the peasantry cannot effectively alter the social system (1989). What is more, México's modernization illustrates that industry cannot expand peacefully or productively if feudal ties are not broken. If the landed elite wishes to maintain its power, it must turn towards commercial agriculture entirely or face the increasing number of tensions and contradictions between feudal practices and capitalist expansion. Once again, Moore's thesis is confirmed: peasants organize when their social system deteriorates (1989). In México, the peasantry's social system deteriorated rapidly as the elite held on to debt peonage to maintain its labor force through modernization.

Neoliberalism, a New Challenge to the Agrarian Landscape

México's agrarian reform did not follow the same path as Ecuadorean reform. México's reform was both more extensive and intensive. Reform slowly satisfied the indigenous peasant demand for land, and the state provided resources — albeit haphazardly. In Ecuador, peasants were given land, but were still denied access to resources. México's indigenous peasants rallied behind the *ejido*, but this same structure failed to reduce the economic and political gap between indigenous peasants and political and economic elites and the middle classes. Ecuador's reform was significantly less radical, as peasant interests were subordinated to coastal modernizing interests. Ecuadorian industrialization would enlarge the gap between whites and indigenous peas-

ants, keeping indigenous grievances alive and indigenous organizations active even immediately after reform.

The feudal power of the Mexican *hacienda* was broken by the legacy of the Revolution, but the state had become the *patrón*. In doing so, the state quelled any indigenous peasant dissatisfaction by providing tangible benefits to cooperative *ejidatarios*. Although the state had created some sort of peace through agrarian reform, the *ejido* stood in the way of the development of export agriculture. As long as the *ejido* remained in place, lands would no longer be concentrated in the hands of a few, nor would land be owned by foreigners who could threaten México's sovereignty (Fernandez y Fernandez 1957). The *ejido* also guaranteed that land remain underproductive, as the state was the only one who could provide the *ejidos* with the capital to increase *ejido* production (Calderón 1986).

By the 1970's agrarian reform had slowed considerably, and the Mexican government had begun to take measures to revert the effects of reform. Subsidies and government aid destined for the *ejidos* were reduced to negligible levels. During the 1980's these subsidies ended entirely with the debt crisis (Sánchez Moret 2008). In 1992, towards the end of the crisis, Article 27, which had granted peasants the rights over land and resources in the countryside was amended. This signaled the end of a reform inspired by issues of social justice. *Ejidors* were privatized and *minifundios* were discouraged. Motivated by neoliberalism, President Salinas [incumbent 1988 - 1994] opened up Mexico's agrarian landscape to foreign ownership and large-scale investment that would promote medium and large landholdings for export agriculture by signing the North American Free Trade Agreement [NAFTA] in 1993. Rural subsidies were eliminated as

were protective tariffs. Thus ended the rural social contract that had presided since the Revolution.

Agrarian indigenous communities in Chiapas immediately protested what they saw as a retrogression in México's agrarian and social policies. On New Year's Day, 1994, three thousand armed and masked Zapatista rebels, led by the iconic Subcomandante Marcos, occupied Chiapas' main towns and burned down government buildings in the state's capital as a demonstration of their vehement opposition to Mexico's government, its army, and its neoliberal policies. The living standard for the indigenous communities of Chiapas was already in decline. Salinas' elimination of government subsidies on corn and coffee had forced small indigenous producers out of the agricultural market (Montenegro 2006). NAFTA was the final nail on the coffin for the troubled populations of the Chiapas highlands. Foreign industries would be able to capitalize on cheap resources and labor; the exploitation of the countryside and its workers would begin anew and with renewed force.

The Mexican government responded with force to the growth of Zapatista support in Chiapas, but the national revolution the Zapatistas had hoped for never came. Industrial development and the centralized commercial agriculture of the 1950's never reached Chiapas, leaving the indigenous peasantry of the agrarian reform untouched. Liberalization in the 1970's did not lead to the same rates of *mestizaje* in Chiapas, as it did in Morelos, where the self-identified indigenous population totaled less than 2% of the state's population by 1990 (INEGI). In Chiapas, nearly 1/4 of the population still self-identified as indigenous and shared the same attachment to the land as their ancestors did. Indigenous and peasant grievances alike were kept alive by Chiapas' relative backwardness.

México's process of import substitution industrialization [ISI] created an urban middle class that no longer identified with México's rural and indigenous populations²⁴. Moreover, ISI promoted migration to industrial centers, which further assimilated indigenous workers into the urban *mestizo* proletariat. Although ISI did not last, its economic and social effects remained. Indigenous and rural concerns no longer had a national appeal. The effect of the Zapatista uprising thus remained local. Unable to produce effective negotiations with the state, the Zapatistas declared the 27 regions under their control as autonomous from the Mexican government, isolating the Zapatistas from the national political consciousness.

While the Zapatistas engaged with the Mexican military in Chiapas, the indigenous communities of Oaxaca made their own local demands on the government. Oaxaca has the most diverse and numerous indigenous population in México. In 1990, 800,367 out of 1,997,098 Oaxacans identified as indigenous and spoke a language other than Spanish (INEGI). Prior to the 1990's Oaxacan indians had already organized at very local levels against government corruption. Since the 1960's ethnic organizations, assisted by the *normalista*²⁵ teachers of the countryside, protested government corruption and the marginalization of indigenous peasants (Kraemer Bayer 2004). Some movements, like those of the *triqui* and *juchiteco* communities were turning increasingly violent as the government denied communities access to resources (Cánedo Vasquez 2008). These movements experienced an upsurge because of their encounters with the Zapatista

²⁴ Import Substitution Industrialization attempted to replace foreign imports with national products in order to reduce foreign dependency and foster national industry. México followed ISI policy from the mid 1950's until the debt crisis of the 1980's.

²⁵ *Normalista* teachers emerge from the Normal Schools created by the Constitution of 1917. Normal Schools offered agrarian instruction in the countryside. These schools gave courses in Spanish and created a body of rural teachers inspired by the socialist ideals of the Revolution.

leadership. In 1994, *mixes* and *zapotec* communities organized behind the Worker-Peasant-Student Coalition of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec (COCEI), and demanded the long-promised improvements in infrastructure from the state government. Concerned with the events in neighboring Chiapas and the effect that these might have in Oaxaca if no recognition of indigenous demands was made soon, the Oaxaca state government approved municipal rule by “*usos y costumbres*”²⁶. Recognition has integrated indigenous issues to municipal politics. Nevertheless, state-wide conflict in Oaxaca remains. The historical exclusion of the indigenous population continues to lead to uprisings, rejection of neoliberalism and the national government, and the erosion of state dominance.

The modern indigenous mobilizations in Oaxaca and Chiapas illustrate the reasons why México’s indigenous movements remain local. México’s industrialization has been more rapid and more extensive than that of Ecuador and has promoted urbanization at faster rates. This societal transformation has diminished the appeal of indigenous peasant movements at a national level. The Zapatistas never gathered enough support for a national revolution, because their demands did not appeal to the white and *mestizo* urban proletariat and middle class. Indigenous communities must resort to local power structures, as did the Oaxaca communities, or take the Zapatista course and create autonomous structures that are entirely independent from the state. The opportune timing of Oaxaca’s indigenous protests allowed for their inclusion in Oaxaca’s democratic governance. However, the militancy of the Zapatistas at the early stages of their movement placed them at the margins of civil society. The gap between México’s indigenous rural

²⁶ “*Usos y costumbres*” translates literally into government by custom and tradition. This amendment to Oaxaca’s state constitution recognized indigenous cultural and political autonomy. In short “*usos y costumbres*” allowed selection of municipal leaders based on cultural tradition, not state regulations

populations and the rest of national society continues to grow. Neoliberalism, the newest iteration of modernization, fails to address this gap and only makes it deeper and continues to marginalize and deny México's indigenous communities.

Perú: An “Anomaly” in Context



The Legacy of the Toledan System

The colonial structures and institutions of Perú left the most enduring legacies. Perú's colonial framework revolved around the crude extraction of wealth. Conquistador utopias, however, were challenged by conditions of the indigenous populations at the time of conquest.

Smallpox arrived in Perú before the conquistadors, and the Inca civil war²⁷ had also laid its toll on the native population. Faced with a shrinking native labor pool, Spaniards had to resort to

²⁷ The Inca Civil War began in 1572 and lasted until 1532 (Handelman 1981). It was fought between Huascar and Atahualpa, two members of the Inca elite, over the accession of the Inca throne.

measures above and beyond those employed by the Mexican and Ecuadorean elites to extract the abundant deposits of silver in the Potosí. The extensive exploitation of Perú destroyed native ties of kinship and security whilst increasing the feudal character of labor relations. The subsequent effects of Perú's colonial system entirely prevented indigenous participation in the process of nation-building once the time for agrarian reform had arrived.

Perú's conquest was much like México's in that Pizarro and his men had to collaborate with natives to defeat the Incas. Once the Inca's were defeated, however, no subsequent expeditions were organized to exact allegiance from the surrounding local populations. The fall of the Inca empire was definitive for Perú's indigenous populations. The Inca empire fell in 1532, and ten years afterward the crown recognized the Viceroyalty of Perú. The coastal city of Lima was established as the unchallenged political nucleus of the Viceroyalty. Its distance from silver mines and fertile valleys meant that all wealth flowed through the country to Lima and then to Spain. This economic trend impoverished the far periphery.

Perú's lavish wealth was built upon the *encomienda*, which permitted large-scale extraction of silver deposits in the Potosí mines and rich agricultural production in the valleys alike. Land grants in Perú were called *mercedes*, and a native Spaniard could petition for them in front of the Peruvian *cabildo* (Stern 1993). Land distributed for *mercedes* was directly expropriated from the indigenous population. Thus the destruction of local kinship ties occurred rapidly, leaving no indigenous networks intact. *Reducciones* sprung up around these *mercedes* providing the elite with labor. Between 1540 and 1543, 42 *mercedes* were allotted to 20 residents of the Huamanga province (Stern 1993). This pattern of top-heavy land distribution persists until present time.

Most of Perú's indigenous population was concentrated in areas of agricultural production. Once the *encomienda* had ended, agricultural units did not face a labor shortage. The mines, however, were threatened by the *encomiendas* termination. *Reducciones* in mining areas were not as large as those in the valleys. Moreover, work in the mines was arduous and dangerous, and Peruvian *indígenas* were reluctant to work there willingly. Perú's colonial system entered a crisis of labor and responded much like the Mexico's. Colonial elites strengthened feudal bonds. In 1572, Virrey Don Francisco de Toledo established the colonial *mita*. The *mita* was a system of tribute and rotating forced labor. According to the age and health of the *mitayo*, he would be assigned a certain amount of time of labor under Perú's colonial elite. *Mita* labor was allotted to elites and lesser landowners according to their political stature and the size of their economic holdings.

By saving colonial economic endeavors, the Toledan System, which established the *mita*, created a sense of unity amongst Peruvian colonial elites. Moreover, by distributing indigenous labor even amongst lesser landowners — which the *encomienda* had not done — colonial government created a general sense of solidarity amongst Spanish colonials. While lesser landowners could resent elite wealth, the Toledan System gave them tangible benefits and maintained their cooperation. The *mita* promoted intense exploitation of indigenous communities. Colonials would extract the greatest amount of labor possible before the *mitayo's* time expired. Moreover, *mitayos* had the practice of bringing their wives and children along whenever they were assigned to an *hacienda* or mine far from their community. The *mitayo* was given a modest wage and food rations, but if the family had been brought along, then extraordinary purchases would be necessary. The *mitayo* would become indebted to the *hacendado*. Moreover, while the *mitayo* was not

laboring the community field, his family and community would lose the the resources the *mitayo*'s labor could have provided. The *mita*'s effect upon native communities was profound.

The *mita* presents a radical point of difference between colonial Perú and other Latin American colonial societies. It exaggerated feudal relationships to the degree that these were brought out of balance. The traditional *hacienda* system was reliable because privileges were awarded in exchange for labor. The *mita*, however, became unreliable, because of the immense costs it brought upon native populations. Indigenous resistance consisted in avoiding the *mita* or running away from it. Large-scale organization against the *mita* was difficult, as the Toledan system had established a fearful coercive arm to maintain the system. Natives had to press for rights through legal avenues²⁸. Legal battles allowed some native communities to decrease tribute requirements by claiming a declining community population. Nevertheless, dependence upon colonial institutions to resist exploitation tied native populations further to hispanic power. In Stern's words "the natives' very success at using Spanish juridical institutions created forces in everyday life and struggle which undermined the possibility of organizing a wider, more unified and independent movement on behalf of the peasantry" (1993; 135). The judicial politics of colonial Perú reinforced socially costly internal divisions along community, ethnic, and even class lines.

²⁸ This is not to say that indigenous peasant rebellions did not exist. In 1700, a member of the indigenous elite, Tupac Amaru II, led the largest indigenous revolt in the history of Perú. The rebellion was supported by indigenous communities in both North and South Perú. The Bourbon Reforms, which tied Perú's economy further to the Spanish crown, created immense economic hardship for rural indigenous communities, and divisions amongst colonial elites. With a repressive state apparatus in place, however, the rebellion was crushed and Tupac Amaru executed. The immense defeat of this rebellion weighed heavily on Indigenous consciousness, however. Reinforcing their future use of judicial avenues.

When the Toledan System became unreliable, elites imported black slaves and engaged with indigenous peoples under contracts of debt peonage and *yanconaje*, or personal bondage in exchange for a later wage or plot of land. Instead of looking towards a system of wage labor to solve the crisis of the colonial system, Perú's elites continued to strengthen coercive bonds over subaltern populations. Perú's colonial system limited the scope of the subsistence economy available to native populations. The high level of coercion employed by Perú's colonial system along with the profound loss of economic autonomy left Perú's indigenous populations no alternative but to work within the system, which in turn, reinforced their subaltern status.

Perú's Top-Down Modernization

In Perú, feudal structures persisted until the middle of the 20th century (Handelman 1981, Mariategui 1974). The economic power of the *hacienda* began to crumble as the mining industry expanded. Nevertheless, feudal relations of power along with a coercive apparatus remained available to the Peruvian elite. The expansion of the mining industry required a modern workforce. Instead of challenging the *hacienda* structure, Augustino Bernardo Leguía, dictator of Perú from 1919 to 1930, invited Japanese immigrants to labor in the mines. The Peruvian oligarchy remained entrenched through Perú's early modernization. Roads were built using a *mita*-like system. Peruvian males, aged 18 through 60, had to volunteer their labor one week out of every year to the construction of Perú's road system. This burden fell mostly upon Perú's indigenous population, which did not have the resources to avoid conscription. The expansion of mining and industry prompted massive urban migration, promoting the process of *mestizaje*. *Mestizaje* in Perú heavily diluted indigenous issues. There are many negative associations to be made with the term

indio or *indígena*. This has led many to abandon their ethnic identity, a process Caveró calls *desindianización*, or de-indigenization (1983).

Leguía opened Perú to greater foreign investment. By the 1960's *hacendados* and foreign investors continued to encroach upon native communities. Peasant unrest in the Central Andés and the Eastern Andean Slope became common. Supported by urban radicals, indigenous communities would invade *hacienda* lands and create peasant federations. The militancy of these federations distressed the Peruvian elite. However, they were still unwilling to relinquish traditional *hacienda* labor relations. The *hacienda* provided status and power. It was the keystone of Perú's old order. Responding to the elite's inability to resolve the growing militancy of the countryside, the Peruvian military staged a coup de état in 1968 and subsequently enacted Perú's agrarian reform law. Perú's agrarian reform expropriated the largest *haciendas* only, and was thus extremely limited in its scope. *Hacendados* in the Andes were allowed to keep 55 irrigated hectares or 100 unirrigated hectares (Handelman 1981). On the coast, *hacendados* could maintain up to 150 hectares of their property.

Reform assumed that Perú's industrialization required further integration of the agrarian population to the consumer market. Only the largest *hacendados* were expropriated, because the military reformers wanted to promote an agrarian middle class that would increase agricultural production and participate in the modern sectors of Perú's economy. Land was redistributed in the forms of agricultural cooperatives. These cooperatives fell under the control of government technocrats, which deeply disillusioned the peasants who had been organizing for land. Reform proceeded slowly and benefitted only 33% of rural families (Caveró 2008). The slow pace of reform, allowed *hacendados* to break up their holdings in order to disguise the size of *latifundia*

and avoid expropriation. Perú's agrarian reform was not only limited in its scope, it created intense divisions between rural indigenous populations. The beneficiaries of reform were integrated to the state structure, while those who had not received land began to harbor resentment towards the Peruvian government. What is more, semi-feudal relationships remained as the agrarian power structure had not been broken by reform. *Gamonalismo*, as the practice of semi-feudal relations is known, allowed *hacendados* to maintain pre-capitalistic economic and social relations with their old peons (Mariategui 1974). Cooperatives created by reform did not always provide subsistence. Indigenous peasants thus continued to go back to the *ex-hacendado* for labor to supplement their earnings from the cooperative.

Dissatisfaction with reform amongst peasants gave insurgent organizations greater popularity in areas untouched by reform. In the 1980's, Sendero Luminoso, a Maoist insurgent guerrilla organization vowed to destroy Peruvian society through peasant revolution. Sendero gathered most of its support in the Sierra, where reform and aid had been minimal and the effects of the 1980's debt crisis were most felt (Yachana). The terrorist guerrilla group armed indigenous peasants and targeted Sierra landholdings, which were later distributed amongst the group members. Sendero accomplished what the state had been unable to do, and filled a power and resources vacuum left behind by the Peruvian state. Despite its concerns with the "peasant condition", Sendero cannot be labeled as an autochthonous indigenous movement. Sendero was born in the San Cristobal of Huamanga University in Southern Perú, and its leadership party was not indigenous. Sendero relied upon Maoist indoctrination of the native communities, further indicating that Sendero was not a grassroots indigenous organization, but rather an external one supported by indigenous peoples. The Peruvian government's response to Sendero only radicalized

the indigenous peasantry. Indigenous communities saw no sense in joining the state that had neglected their interests to battle the organization that was providing for their interests. Sendero's special relationship with indigenous communities hindered subsequent peasant indigenous mobilizations within the confines of civil society. After Sendero, no productive form of indigenous organization has emerged in Perú.

Perú's modernization left the vast majority of its indigenous population far behind. Despite military backing, agrarian reform was unable to break the power of the cohesive Peruvian elite. The slow pace of reform allowed *hacendados* to circumvent reform and retain their holdings and power. The persistence of *gamonalismo* in the areas touched by reform, preserved traditional power relationships. Modernization also led indigenous peoples to abandon their ethnic identity. Wishing to be disassociated with poverty and backwardness, the indígenas who moved to the city adopted a proletariat identity. Cleavages amongst Perú's indigenous populations emerged and deepened with capitalist expansion while the elites continued to amass wealth. Peasants were divided along ethnic lines and class lines, and, with the emergence of Sendero, political lines as well. The expansion of capitalism in Perú augmented the legacies of the colonial system. Perú's land tenure has changed little, and the elite still holds both the means of production and control over the state apparatus. The gap between the rural and the urban has grown and indigenous populations continue to be excluded from the political, economic and social life of the state.

However, grass-roots and non-radical indigenous organizations exist. These organizations focus on local issues, and, like the indigenous communities of colonial times, make large use of judicial politics to achieve their goals. AIDSESEP, the Interethnic Association for the Develop-

ment of the Peruvian Rainforest, is now the chief representative of Perú's indigenous communities in the Amazon and CONCAMI, The National Coordinating Committee of Communities Affected by Mining in Perú, represents the interests of Northern indigenous communities in the vicinity of mines. Both of these movements have organized around the environmental effects of Perú's integration to the global markets. The indigenous component to their organization is secondary. While the structural conditions in Perú remain inhospitable to indigenous mobilization, the environmental movement presents an avenue by which some indigenous autonomy can be reclaimed. Environmental deterioration might prove a new challenge to Perú's political order while providing indigenous organizations an opportunity to participate in the political system as actors rather than subjects. The urban support for environmentalism is strong, and could bridge the political chasm between Perú's urban whites and *mestizos* and the rural *indígenas*.

Conclusion

The political development of indigenous mobilizations in Latin America has varied widely. A powerful indigenous movement with national appeal emerged in Ecuador prior to the 1960's, and this movement — though transformed — remains a powerful force in Ecuadorean politics. In neighboring Perú, no such movement has emerged. The indigenous organizations that exist are primarily focused on the environmental effects of globalization, rather than on the autonomy and recognition of native communities. México's indigenous mobilization achieved great national influence in the early 1900s by joining forces with the workers' struggle of the Northern mines. Presently, there is no national indigenous movement to speak of. Intraregional indigenous actors, however, hold significant influence at municipal and communal levels. The transformation of each state's structural conditions engendered this diverse development of indigenous mobilizations.

A confluence of factors has permitted the emergence of politicized indigenous organizations in Ecuador and México, while denying such a possibility in Perú. Five factors promote the emergence of indigenous movements and their subsequent politization: 1) a low level of national social cohesion; 2) reluctance on the part of the landed elite to transition fully into commercial agriculture; 3) a weakening of pre-capitalist labor relations in the midst of modernization; 4) a high level of indigenous peasant solidarity; and 5) the indigenous peasants' ability to form alliances across ethnic and class boundaries. By and large, these are the same factors Moore identifies as conducive to peasant mobilization in "The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy". Moore's model, when applied to Latin America, echoes Mariategui's words. In

Latin America, the revolution that will break the status quo will emerge from the countryside (Mariategui 1974).

In both México and Ecuador, the factors mentioned above surfaced to varying degrees during the state transition towards modernity. The expansion of industry and modern agriculture, along with greater national integration, exposed a number of contradictions between the capitalist desires of the landed elites and their desire to retain seigneurial status through feudal relations of land and labor. These contradictions created political openings for indigenous organizations to participate at different state levels. Indigenous participation challenged the status quo and pre-existing racial biases against the indigenous population, creating social and material gains for rural subalterns. In contrast, Perú's modernization exposed these contradictions, but the persistence of feudal social and economic relations reduced the windows of opportunity available to indigenous peasants.

The national success of Ecuador's indigenous movement resides in the colonial legacies of Ecuador and their historical development. Ecuador's colonial elite was divided over issues of economics and power. This Coastal-Sierra feud persisted and even deepened through modernization, creating an unstable state system. Urban dissatisfaction with Ecuador's elite resulted in the birth of the Communist and Socialist Parties of Ecuador. In the Sierras, this same dissatisfaction was expressed through the creation of peasant syndicates in the early 1920's. Additionally, Ecuador's economic and social divides were heightened as the Coast launched itself into the agricultural export industry while the Sierra retained the feudal *hacienda* tradition. Indigenous peasant livelihood deteriorated as did the traditional feudal relations that had governed their social and economic lives. Organized indigenous peasant dissatisfaction in Ecuador's rural areas

quickly lead to a demand for agrarian reform. Access to land, these movements held, would enfranchise the indigenous population and give them access to the capitalist dynamism of the Coast. Meanwhile, the liberals of the Coast had their own interest in agrarian reform. Feudal labor relations prevented the creation of the mobile labor force required for the progress of modernization. Moreover, Ecuador's process of modernization created a relatively efficient system of transportation, which allowed for better communication between dissatisfied urban classes and rural indigenous organizations. The Ecuadorean Indigenous Federation contextualized class struggle within the indigenous struggle, and gave the indigenous movement a broader appeal.

Increased peasant militancy in the 1960's forced a top-down agrarian reform in Ecuador. The *huasipungo* was forever eliminated, and peasants were given small plots of land from expropriated *haciendas*. While reform satisfied indigenous demand for land in Ecuador, it failed to provide the resources necessary to make that land productive. Thus, reform was unable to lessen the economic gap between Ecuador's indigenous populations and the whites and *mestizos* of the country. Indigenous communities were still not integrated into Ecuador's polity, hence native grievances were kept alive. Meanwhile, elite regional divisions remained. The instability of Ecuador's state structure, and the robust networks between indigenous organizations and the Communist and Socialist Parties of Ecuador, maintained the indigenous movement alive in Ecuador whilst giving it a broad national appeal.

In México, political stability has been much greater. Colonial expansion resulted in a legacy of regional development. Feudalization was employed as a survival strategy to different degrees in different areas. Densely populated areas were less affected by feudal structures, because the indigenous supply of labor was ample. Meanwhile, the rugged and distant periphery

experienced the strongest feudal structures, as indigenous labor was sparse and thus had to be tied down to *hacienda* lands. During its modernization process, México's elite intended to use the *hacienda* as the basis of its capitalist expansion. This resulted in immense exploitation and widened the gap between the urban and the rural, the white *mestizos* and the *indígenas*. While indigenous peasant solidarity was strong in periphery areas, this solidarity was localized by the difficult travel conditions in México. This same difficulty made exchanges between indigenous populations and dissatisfied urban classes difficult, but not impossible.

By 1910, the condition of the indigenous peasant had deteriorated rapidly and guerrillas had formed to expropriate large *haciendas*. The peasant movement united with Northern unrest in the mines. A worker-peasant coalition thus spearheaded the revolution. The socialist ideology that motivated this coalition is encapsulated in México's 1917 Constitution, which gave voice to México's first — and only — agrarian reform law. Agrarian reform created communal structures out of expropriated haciendas, and distributed these amongst indigenous communities. The state provided the resources the *ejidos* required to make their land productive. México's new government had thus integrated indigenous peasants into México's state structures. Reform, however, proceeded regionally. What is more, reform hindered modernization by creating an underproductive rural landscape, unsuitable for large-scale export agriculture. When México's agrarian reform ended officially with the ratification of NAFTA, areas that had been largely untouched by reform had retained an ethnic consciousness. These communities still existed at the margins of the state structure. In Chiapas and Oaxaca, therefore, grass-roots indigenous movements remain and have strong local influence.

In contrast, although Perú's national politics can be characterized as unstable, the power of the landed elite has never been challenged. Since the colonial era, Perú's elite has shown a high level of social cohesion. The weakness of Perú's bourgeoisie has led it to identify with the landed elite and its economic and political endeavors. Perú's colonial enterprise created strong feudal relationships that persist. The highly oppressive nature of the Peruvian state thus denies any sort of grass-roots challenge to the status quo. Indigenous communities have traditionally resorted to state institutions to voice their demands. This, in turn has reinforced elite hegemony over the impoverished indigenous populations of the Sierra. Moreover, the situation of poverty and exploitation associated with rural indigenous life, has led many of Perú's indigenous people to abandon their ethnic identity for that of the *mestizo*. Low levels of indigenous peasant solidarity hinder any sort of efforts at politicized indigenous organization. Moreover, Perú's reform — imposed from above — damaged peasant solidarity even further by creating a plethora of internal divisions amongst indigenous peasants. Perú's structural development has been inhospitable to the birth of political indigenous organizations.

Indigenous movements emerged in the transitional period between the *hacienda* economy and capitalist industrialization. The deterioration of indigenous peasant livelihoods and the crumbling of feudal relations of power and labor contributed heavily to the politization of the indigenous struggle. In México and Perú, indigenous communities remain largely excluded from the polity. In the words of Subcomandante Marcos “struggle is like a cycle, it can begin anywhere, but it will never end”. Neoliberalism continues to widen the gap between México's white and *mestizo* cities and the indigenous periphery. The same trend is visible in Perú. Indigenous communities are left behind as the rest of the nation becomes prosperous. Unless neoliberal poli-

cies are balanced by appropriate social policies that benefit indigenous peasants, this trend is likely to continue. In Ecuador, however, the struggle is different: it seeks to achieve total integration and equal recognition of indigenous political participation. Ecuador's indigenous movement has successfully entered the arena of electoral politics. Indigenous communities — at least in this respect — are not left behind. Ecuador's indigenous mobilization has produced a conceptual shift in Ecuador that has yet to occur in Perú and México. Indigenous peoples are viewed as political actors rather than objects of policy. Indigenous communities are capable of utilizing the state structure to achieve national recognition of indigenous social gains. There is still hope for this conceptual shift to occur in México and in Perú. Environmentalism presents the newest challenge to the status quo, and its urban adherents are growing. There is yet another avenue by which indigenous communities can assert themselves in and gain the recognition that has been denied for over five hundred years.

Y tengo que apagar la vela, pero no la esperanza. Esa... ni muerto. — Subcomandante Marcos

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