

**North-South, First World-Fourth World Engagement:
Working towards Solidarity**

**Submitted by Dave Brophy, Master of Environment candidate
Department of Environment and Geography
University of Manitoba (U of M)
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**North-South, First World-Fourth World Engagement:
Working towards Solidarity**

BY

Dave Brophy

**A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University of
Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the degree
Of
Master of Environment**

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ABSTRACT

This work is based on six months of research in the rural Indigenous community of Choquecancha in the region of Cuzco, Perú, as well as interviews with ten residents of Canada with experience in various forms of international development and solidarity work in the South and Meso-American and (in one case) Caribbean regions. Throughout the various stages of research, my interpretation of the findings was guided overall by the intent of understanding how Northerners like me might best engage Indigenous Peoples.

The focus of my research when I initially arrived in Perú was Andean Indigenous agriculture, and how it was being affected by the spread of industrial agricultural techniques and by market forces. I hoped to gain an understanding of those issues with a view to determining how best to support local and global development through the maintenance and expansion of ecologically sustainable Indigenous practices.

However, I would soon discover that the scope of my experiential learning in Choquecancha would take me well beyond the sphere of agricultural development. While the understanding of local ecology that underlay the Indigenous agriculture was indeed remarkable, what was more striking for me as a 'Westerner' was the radically non-'Western' way of living in and seeing the world with which that ecological knowledge was integrated. As a result I increasingly paid attention to the *multi-faceted* distinctiveness of life in Choquecancha, as well as to the context of relations to outside social actors in which Choquecancha's Indigenous inhabitants maintained that uniqueness.

By improving my knowledge of the history of the relations of the Andean Indigenous Peoples to the 'outside world' I was able to better apprehend the social struggle that accounted for their persistence amidst a hostile and distinct society. As my

thinking changed concerning the nature of historical and on-going relations between Indigenous Peoples on the one hand, and dominant societies on the other, I began to reflect more on the significance of my own presence and activity in Choquecancha. I thus re-focused my research lens on what I represented there, namely, the development apparatus.

A literature based investigation into the historical impacts of the development apparatus as a whole on Indigenous Peoples in the Andes and greater South and Meso-American region was instructive in contextualizing reflections on my own personal experience. Moreover, the interviews with various Northerners who had personal knowledge of Fourth World-First World exchanges in 'Latin America' and the Caribbean provided further context, with a more fine-grained quality.

The most important result of my analysis of the interview conversations was that it afforded me a more nuanced understanding of the ideologies that underpin the various approaches of which the interview participants were representative. I discovered that the principles of mutual respect and reciprocity that are so often invoked as being the basis for all manner of North-South First World-Fourth World interactions was most authentically expressed in exchanges based on solidarity in struggle.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

In the modern era, Euro-centric historical narratives have cast Indigenous Peoples¹ in various minor roles; from the horrific, as savages perilous to the refined 'races'; to the tragic, as unfortunate casualties of Progress's steady march; to the romantic, as bearers of an innocent nobility long lost to the rest of humanity. But whether it has been expressed with sad regret or smug satisfaction, based on history or strictly idealistic, the view prevalent within dominant societies regarding Indigenous Peoples' *fate* has rarely differed in essence: sooner or later, they would be extinguished.

Concerning the Americas, the dominant myths of modernity have told of the 'New World', with little if any mention of the Indigenous Peoples that were here long before European immigrants began to arrive. This is a significant omission, considering that estimates of the human population of the Americas at the time that Christopher Columbus set sail on his fateful voyage range from 70 to 125 million (Churchill, 1998; Dunbar Ortiz, 1984; Hill, 1992; LaDuke, 2002).

The First Peoples of the Americas were concentrated around centres of civilization that variably grew and underwent decline. At the time of the European invasions there were at least a dozen of these centres, comparable to their counterparts in the 'Old World' (Dunbar Ortiz, 1984).

¹ Although I do not wish to perpetuate the habit of Colonisers denying Indigenous Peoples the right to define themselves, for the sake of clarity I would direct the reader to the following definition, which largely reflects my own understanding, put forth by the Special Rapporteur of the UN Economic and Social Council Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities: "Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that have developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing in those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal systems" (cited in Posey, 1999). Subsequently I use 'First Peoples' and 'Indigenous Peoples' interchangeably.

However, the multiplicity, diversity, and sophistication of Indigenous Peoples in 'pre-Columbian America' have been overlooked in most Euro-American portrayals of 'New World' history, from Hollywood movies and magazine articles, to high school and scholarly texts (Churchill, 2003a). The reason is clear if one considers the historical record of appalling bloodshed caused by the Europeans as contact gave way to invasion; such misrepresentation and the collective forgetting that it engenders is a matter of denying a past too obscene to accept.

The many documented first-hand accounts of brutality exercised by the invaders of the Americas towards Indigenous Peoples are astounding (Galeano, 1973). The death toll caused by the terroristic warfare employed to pacify First Peoples, the ensuing enslavement of large numbers of the survivors, as well as the spread of diseases of European origin to which Indigenous Peoples had never been exposed—and to which their vulnerability was severely exacerbated due to the social crisis into which the invasion had thrown them (Díaz Polanco, 1997)—was utterly catastrophic. Some estimates hold that after two centuries of war and domination by Europeans, the total population of Indigenous Peoples in the Americas was reduced by as much as 90% (Churchill, 1998).

As Indigenist scholar Ward Churchill asserts, notwithstanding the far greater recognition of other historical acts of genocide, the holocaust of American Indigenous Peoples is “unparalleled in human history, both in terms of its sheer magnitude and in its duration” (1998). Indeed, its duration has yet to be determined, as the dominant Euro-American societies continue to subordinate Indigenous Peoples and attempt to assimilate them.

But at the beginning of the 21st century, while the inhabitants of the Fourth World² remain among the most oppressed and exploited of people, the notion that they are doomed by fate to perish is no longer tenable. Over the course of more than 500 years, and counting, of genocidal and assimilationist attacks, the 'West' has indeed succeeded in wiping out entire Peoples. Nevertheless, many Indigenous Peoples have effectively resisted obliteration, indeed, still account for the majority of the world's distinct cultures by far³.

Maori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) writes,

The 'fatal impact' of the West on Indigenous societies generally has been theorized as a phased progression from: (1) initial discovery and contact, (2) population decline, (3) acculturation, (4) assimilation, (5) 'reinvention' as a hybrid, ethnic culture. While the terms may differ across various theoretical paradigms the historical descent into a state of nothingness and hopelessness has tended to persist.

Thus, in Euro-Centric conceptions, the 'reinvention' phase is basically equivalent to elimination, in the sense that the Indigenous culture is assumed to have been wholly supplanted by the 'hybrid, ethnic' one. Tuhiwai Smith goes on as follows:

Indigenous perspectives also show a phased progression, more likely to be articulated as: (1) contact and invasion, (2) genocide and destruction, (3) resistance and survival, (4) recovery as Indigenous Peoples.

Indeed, if the presence and leadership of Indigenous Peoples among the most powerful social movements of the contemporary world—not least in South and Meso-America (Langer & Muñoz, 2003)—are any indication, the process of recovery in which

²The 'Fourth World' is a term coined by Shuswap leader and author George Manuel, who co-published a seminal book by the same name in 1974, in which he wrote: "The 4th World is the name given to Indigenous Peoples descended from a country's aboriginal population and who today are completely or partly deprived of their own territory and its riches...The peoples to whom we refer are the Indians of North and South America, the Inuit (Eskimos), the Sami people [of northern Scandinavia], the Australian aborigines, as well as the various Indigenous populations of Africa, Asia and Oceania" (Manuel, 1974)

³Indigenous Peoples make up at least two thirds of the world's approximately 6,000 distinct cultures (Gray, 1999).

Smith asserts they are now engaged is an exciting and promising one—with important implications for all people, Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike.

My own experience interacting with members of a *Runa*⁴ community in the Central Andean countryside near Cuzco, Perú confirmed without question the reality of the ‘survival’ and ‘recovery’ of an Indigenous People—one situated near one of the former bastions of European colonial domination in the Americas in fact.

However, I must admit that my research initially focused solely on Indigenous agriculture, with a view to characterise how it was being affected by industrial agriculture and market forces, and to identify the reasons that the *Runa* maintained their ecologically diverse approach. It was only as I participated with the community in their daily work and social interactions that I began to see that my focus was too narrow.

This was not least a result of my mistaken acceptance of the old ‘noble savage’ myth. The particular version to which I had succumbed depicts Indigenous Peoples as the last living remnants of pristine, land-based societies, innately attuned to nature (Zimmerer, 1996). Although perhaps based on a well-intentioned desire to respect Indigenous cultures, the ecological noble savage notion actually perpetuates the racist image of First Peoples as having no history (Wolf, 1982).

Two separate incidents I experienced while in, respectively, Cuzco—the former capital of the Inca Empire and most reputed destination in all of South America for tourists who take a special interest in ‘pre-history’—and Choquecancha—the Andean Indigenous village where I did my research—were illustrative of the way in which Indigenous Peoples of the Andes are objectified as relics of the past by ‘Westerners’ like me who come as visitors to the region.

⁴ *Runa*: (Quechua) Person, or people who belong to an *ayllu*. With the exception of proper names, definitions for italicised Quechua and Spanish words will be footnoted where they first appear and listed in the Glossary.

In Inca times *Inti Raymi*⁵ was an important annual religious event that celebrated the *maíz*⁶ harvest and gave thanks to the Sun. The event takes place in Cuzco annually even now; however, although the same physical location is used, the site is considerably altered, not least because Sacsayhuaman, where one of the decisive battles between the Inca and Spanish armies took place during the 16th Century siege of Cuzco, is now a park where the ruins of a great citadel lie (Hemming, 1970). Furthermore, rather than being a sacred ceremony of profound significance to a whole civilization, *Inti Raymi* now takes place as a theatrical performance, as much for the benefit of tourists as for the Peoples of the Andes.

The choice seats for viewing the *Inti Raymi* performance are located inside a fenced off area where the spectacle takes place, but these are reserved for the wealthy who can afford to pay for them. Nevertheless, many others come to watch for free, from a somewhat distant but adequate vantage point on a hill overlooking the stage and surrounding area.

I along with my friends Jen (a Canadian) and Daniel (a Briton) had heard that the free area tended to fill up and that it was a good idea to get there early to find a decent spot. Heeding this advice, we arrived a half-an-hour or so before the show was scheduled to begin. While the expensive bleacher seats were occupied mainly by internationals, the free area was peopled with locals and tourists alike.

One group in particular stuck out for me, a group of *Runa* who had come in from the country. Their rural origins were unmistakable: They shared a bag of *coca*⁷ leaves, chewing and talking, in Quechua of course, as they waited for the performance to start.

⁵ *Inti Raymi*: (Quechua) Inca festival that was held annually in praise of the Sun.

⁶ *Maíz*: (Spanish) Maize.

⁷ *Coca*: (Quechua) 4000-year-old domesticate of a leafy plant indigenous to the Andes.

As the scheduled time for the play to begin approached, then passed, more spectators continued to arrive in hordes. Space became increasingly limited; the corridors that had been left to allow walkers to find their seats were filled with a constant stream of passers-by. The group from the country sat behind one of the corridors. Initially they had a decent view of the performance grounds, but the late-comers, many of them English-speaking tourists, kept coming. Eventually they saturated the space directly in front of the *Runa*, despite the latter's gestures and voicing of protest. Being literally stepped on, and completely blocked off from a view of the play, the *Runa* got up and left, disgusted, before the performance had even begun.

A light-skinned, Spanish-speaking man sitting next to us, having seen the *Runa* get up and leave, was upset⁸. He indicated as much to the young British woman who had just managed to find a seat beside several of her friends by traipsing through the middle of the seated rural travellers. I translated to her what the man was saying, which allowed me to express my own disapproval indirectly.

Oblivious at first, she was genuinely sorry to discover that her intrusion had been the last straw for the *Runa*, causing them to leave. Nevertheless, it was she and I, and a lot of other people for whom the *Inti Raymi* performance was only an exotic curiosity, a Cuzco-in-June 'must-see' in the travel guide, who were about to enjoy the show, while the group from the country walked away.

⁸ I remember thinking he was probably an Argentinean or Chilean tourist. Despite his half-hearted intervention at *Inti Raymi*, it bears mention that the 'noble savage' myth affects not only 'Westerners' from the North but many South and Meso-Americans, too. Mexican anthropologist Bonfil Battalla (1996) writes of his own country: "Every schoolchild knows something about the precolonial world. The great archaeological monuments stand as national symbols. There is a circumstantial pride in a past that is somehow assumed to be glorious, but that is experienced as something dead, a matter for specialists and an irresistible attraction for tourists... We do not recognize a historical connection or a continuity with the past. Some believe that Mesoamerican civilization was destroyed by the European invasion; others seem to regard that event as a sort of redemption. What remains of Mesoamerican civilization is regarded as ruins, some of stone but others still living. We accept and utilize the precolonial past as the history of the national territory".

I can only speculate as to what the *Inti Raymi* depiction would have meant to those *Runa*. Yet their entitlement to view the ceremony, as a representation of an important part of their own history as Andean people, is self-evident. But they were denied the opportunity because my fellow 'Westerners' and I did not question *our* sense of entitlement to being entertained, or to being there at all.

Our imaginations had been captured, at least for the afternoon, by the mystery of the distant past, the glamour of the Inca. Somehow, the opportunity to catch a glimpse of an ancient rite, and even take a few pictures that would serve as proof of the cultural enrichment that we had undergone on our South American adventures, was more important than showing respect to these people. Because of our greater numbers, and perhaps also our superior audacity in jockeying for position in the crowd, our lesser claim to see the show won out.

If, as visitors to Cuzco, 'Western' travellers' fleeting interest in the local ancient civilization were anything more than an expression of fetishism for the exotic, such indifference towards the *Runa* would be ironic. After all, they are the modern day bearers of the Andean civilization that far outdates, before and after, the Inca Empire; indeed, the civilization out of which the Inca Empire grew. But Westerners' consumption of Andean culture has little to do with an appreciation for it as anything more than a spectacle⁹.

In remote villages like Choquecancha, where tourist visits are few, the consumption of Indigenous culture as a spectacle is relatively rare. But that is no guarantee that the integrity of the community's way of life is not threatened by dominant society's insatiable acquisitiveness.

⁹ Tuhiwai Smith (1999) writes: "Trading the Other is a vast industry based on the positional superiority and advantages gained under imperialism. It is concerned more with ideas, language, knowledge, images, beliefs and fantasies than any other industry...As a trade it has no concern for the peoples who originally produced the ideas or images or with how and why they produced those ways of knowing."

Given Perú's international prestige in certain influential circles as the cradle of Andean Civilisation, the state government is always eager to showcase the 'national' cultural inheritance. This may mean occasionally appropriating 'archaeological discoveries' from backwater locales such as Choquecancha, in order to ensure that they will be properly appreciated, no matter the local significance of the artefacts.

For example, while I was in Choquecancha one day, I happened to be with the President of the village when a group arrived from the National Institute of Culture. One of the visitors presented the community President with a form. It did not ask permission for but simply stated what the government agency had sent them to do: an archaeological dig in the village plaza.

After the dig was underway, Guillermo¹⁰ expressed to me his discomfort with the situation. The team of *mestizo*¹¹ visitors had made assurances that, were anything special to be unearthed and made available to the wider public in an urban centre, Choquecancha would benefit by way of the 'discovery' raising the village's profile as a tourist attraction. But Guillermo was understandably sceptical of the merits of such a deal.

These stories are exemplary, I think, of the way that the construction of Indigenous Peoples as ancient artefacts causes them to be disrespected and even made invisible in the present day. This dynamic is perpetuated, not least, in ecology oriented discourses (Zimmerer, 1996). In fact I believe that was a major reason for my own mystification concerning the *Runa* past.

I am not suggesting that having an ecological orientation in research is in and of itself a problem. I intend to make it clear in subsequent pages that my experience in

¹⁰ Names have been changed for confidentiality.

¹¹ *Mestizo*: (Spanish) Person of the dominant, Indigenous-European 'hybrid' society.

Choquechancha confirmed for me that the people there possessed an exceptional knowledge of local ecology. I would in no way wish to convey a dismissive or indifferent attitude towards the profound and unique relationship of the *Runa* and other Indigenous Peoples to their respective homelands, an appreciation of which may be critical to 'Westerners' in addressing the inherently unsustainable nature of our own respective cultures.

Nevertheless, it *was* problematic that, due in no small part to narrow, racist preconceptions, I found myself regarding the *Runa* even at the end of my stay in Perú as bearers of a fragile and ancient 'ecotopia' that had to be protected. I remained largely ignorant of the struggle through which they had maintained, amidst a distinct, hostile society, the unique way of living in and seeing the world that distinguished them as a People.

More notable, however, is the fact that my ignorance of the history of struggle for Indigenous self-determination was by no means unique. Moreover, the persistence of widespread 'amnesia' concerning Indigenous Peoples' histories, in spite of the attention that in recent decades strong Indigenous movements have demanded, can be seen as the result of effective repression and cooptation of those movements.

The efforts of Cointelpro¹² to infiltrate and thereby undermine the American Indian Movement in the US, for example, were an obvious manifestation of *repressive* reaction (Churchill, 2003b). The ecological noble savage myth, meanwhile, is a manifestation in dominant culture of the *cooptation* of Indigenous Peoples' efforts to collectively reclaim *their* respective cultures. Channelling those efforts into strictly

¹² This is shorthand for the infamous 'Counter-Intelligence Program' of the United States Federal Bureau of Investigations.

individualistic and commodified pursuits gave rise to the feelgood mythologies such as that by which I was seduced (Churchill, 2003c).

Fortunately for me, the 'empirical evidence' that I encountered in the field forced me to question the preconceptions with which I had arrived as a researcher in Perú. As a result I learned a great deal more than I expected. Furthermore, wholly new questions came up that required examining relationships shared by the *Runa* with other social actors, historically and in the present day.

To begin addressing the issues that had come up I set out to gain a better understanding of the history of the *Runa* and other Indigenous Peoples of the Andes and greater region, much of which I present in Chapter II.

As I already mentioned, while I retained an appreciation for the exceptional ecological sensibility held among the *Runa* following my fieldwork in Choquecancha, I had also encountered many other unique attributes in the *Runa* way of seeing and being, my interpretations of which I describe in Chapter III. In turn, having a greater appreciation for the *multi-faceted* distinctiveness of the *Runa* led me to consider the context of relations to outside social actors in which the *Runa* had maintained that uniqueness, which I outline in Chapter IV.

In light of the changes I had undergone in my thinking whereby I now better apprehended the politically charged nature of historical and on-going relations between the *Runa* and other Indigenous Peoples on the one hand, and dominant societies on the other, I began to reflect more on the significance of my own presence and activity as a 'development researcher' in Choquecancha. A literature based investigation into the impacts of the development apparatus as a whole on Indigenous Peoples in the Andes and

greater South and Meso-American region, which I present in Chapter V, was instructive in contextualizing that personal experience.

Finally, for a more fine-grained account of some of the most recent Fourth World-First World exchanges in 'Latin America', I interviewed ten Canadians who had interacted with rural Indigenous Peoples in the South and Meso-American and (in one case) Caribbean regions doing development and solidarity work. I present my analysis of those interview conversations in Chapters VI and VII.

Throughout these various stages of research, my interpretation of the findings was guided by the overall intent of understanding how Northerners like me might best engage Indigenous Peoples as they struggle for self-determination.

CHAPTER II: AGRARIAN AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN THE ANDES AND GREATER REGION: AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

This section sets the stage for the discussion of my experience as a researcher in the Andes. While the agro-ecological emphasis with which I began my research is reflected, I provide the basis for the sense of historicity that I sorely lacked while in Perú and that is essential to an understanding of the *Runa's* struggle for self-determination. This particular rendering of the history reflects my own mode of understanding the past; it is therefore a Eurocentric account that inevitably differs from that of the *Runa* and other Indigenous Peoples.

Ecological Complementarity

One of the most persistent characteristics of Indigenous social organisation in the Central Andes has been described as, 'ecological complementarity' or, 'vertical control' (Murra, 1985). For centuries prior to the Europeans' invasion, human economies in the region were embedded in the social organization of the distinct Indigenous Peoples, many of which accumulated wealth through innovations that 'domesticated the cold', by way of freeze-drying meat and, most importantly, *papa*¹³, to make *ch'arki*¹⁴ and *ch'unio*¹⁵, respectively.

The resulting abundant food stores enabled these highland-based Indigenous Peoples to extend their habitation to ecological tiers at lower altitudes. By establishing settlements in multiple, non-contiguous zones, the People as a whole could access the products of diverse Andean landscapes. This strategy played a decisive role in the prosperity of numerous Andean societies for which, unlike others in Meso-America, no oral tradition of famine in historical times exists (Murra, 1985).

¹³ *Papa*: (Quechua) Potato.

¹⁴ *Ch'arki*: (Quechua) Dried meat.

¹⁵ *Ch'unio*: (Quechua) Freeze-dried potato.

The Dual Economy of the Inca Era

The renowned Inca Empire, which had only recently reached its height of expanse when Pizarro and the other European invaders arrived, brought significant changes to the localities it came to encompass. As the Empire expanded rapidly in the 15th Century across the western half of South America, the Inca unified many Peoples under their common rule, often through diplomatic means, although not without instances of military coercion. By 1450 the Inca domain stretched from the northern parts of present-day Chile and Argentina, to the south of contemporary Colombia (Hemming, 1970).

In the areas under Inca rule, peasant agriculture continued following the long-held pattern of vertical control, but an imposed state-run sector of the economy also converted large areas that had formerly served the peasant economy. The state-run economy relied on the labour of teams of the Inca' (free) subjects, deployed under the *mita*¹⁶ system of tribute labour to construct spectacular infrastructure such as the giant, staircase-like mountain terraces that are still visible today in the Sacred Valley of Urubamba (Zimmerer, 1996).

State-run agriculture was much less diverse than that of the peasant economy. By producing large quantities of basic goods like *ch'unio*, it served to accumulate large food stores for military campaigns and redistribution in cases of crop failure. Other more prestigious agricultural goods like *maíz* and *coca* were produced, more for cultural (and ideological) than immediately practical purposes. Less expansive, yet still important, were state-run projects that produced other highly valued, non-agricultural products like salt, textiles, gold and silver, adding further to the wealth of the Empire (Hemming, 1970).

¹⁶ *Mita*: (Quechua) Labour tax.

Thus, considerable land and labour resources were deployed under the Inca for strictly surplus production. Much of the state-run agriculture concentrated on a relatively few prestigious items originating from beyond the highland areas out of which Andean civilization had grown. But the peasants nevertheless continued their agro-pastoral subsistence activities, which concentrated on grazing American camelids, and on cultivating the diverse tubers and grains that had been domesticated in the Andes and had long served as staples of the region's peoples (Zimmerer, 1996).

Spanish colonisation and silver extraction

The conquest of the Inca occurred in 1533, at which time, fortuitously for Pizarro and his posse, the Empire was in a severely weakened state due to epidemic disease and civil war (Hemming, 1970; Zimmerer, 1996). The invasion and colonization that followed brought fundamental changes to the social organization of life, constituting a transformation that was qualitatively different than the changes that had occurred with the rise of the Inca.

Social relations in the Spanish-controlled region of the Americas were re-organized around the extraction and export of precious metals. Spanish American silver, and to a lesser but still significant extent gold immensely enriched the ruling classes of Spain and imperialist Europe generally. Indeed, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the European supplies of silver and gold were increased by 300% and 20%, respectively, as a direct result of American exports of the precious metals to Europe via Seville (Wolf, 1982).

The two focal points of the Spanish colonial economy were the silver mines of the Sierra Madre mountains in what is now México, formerly part of New Spain, and, most

importantly, at Potosí, on the *altiplano*¹⁷ of present-day Bolivia, which in colonial times was part of the Viceroyalty of Perú (Wolf, 1982). Thus, the agricultural orientation of both subsistence and surplus production that had obtained under Inca dominion of the Andean region now shifted decisively.

Agro-pastoral production of Andean staples like *papa* and *quinua*¹⁸, and the herding of *llama*¹⁹, *alpaca*²⁰, as well as newly introduced 'Old World' grazers, continued under Spanish rule; however, these endeavours were now subordinated to the demands of a colonial ruling class that regarded such elements of the 'Indian' economy as only peripheral. Indigenous subsistence and surplus agro-pastoral production were still necessary, but only insofar as they contributed to the vastly more lucrative enterprise of silver mining.

Impacts of Spanish rule on the colonized Peoples

The reconfiguration of social relations with the onset of Spanish control constituted a major upheaval for the Indigenous Peoples, causing the dramatic decline in their numbers that occurred after the European invasion. Indigenous slavery (until 1542), and then the labour tax (named *mita* in the Andes after the relatively moderate Inca policy), fuelled the all-important mines (Wolf, 1982). Every year in the Andes, thousands of Indigenous workers fulfilled their *mita* obligations working at Potosí. In certain areas many others were forced onto plantations that provided goods to Potosí, like sugar as in Lares (where I did my research) and most importantly, *coca* as in Paucartambo (Guzmán, 1994; Zimmerer, 1996). The latter, a millennia-old crop of the Andes, was especially

¹⁷ *Altiplano*: (Spanish) High plain.

¹⁸ *Quinua*: (Quechua) Indigenous Andean grain crop.

¹⁹ *Llama*: (Quechua) Well-known Andean camelid of the same name in English.

²⁰ *Alpaca*: (Quechua) Andean camelid of the same name in English.

important in the mines, where it was used by workers to dull fatigue and hunger and to perform rituals of spiritual significance.

The Spanish *mita* system was based on rotational labour contributions from the various communities in a given province of the Peruvian Viceroyalty. A certain number of 'man-hours' were required to be provided every year by each Indigenous community, which, it is important to note, were not the same under Spanish colonisation as those that had existed before 1533.

In fact, the *Runa* communities, or *ayllus*²¹, of the Spanish-controlled Andes were formed in the late 16th Century by the colonizers, who forcibly re-grouped and re-settled survivors among the Indigenous Peoples. The resettlement program was designed to facilitate religious indoctrination and the suppression of rebellions, as in Canada's reserve system (Simmons, 1995), as well as to aid in the collection of tribute (Wolf, 1982; Zimmerer, 1996).

Officially, the Peruvian Viceroyalty guaranteed the basis for subsistence among peasants. In fact, however, the re-settlement program, more out of Euro-centric ignorance than malice, imposed major changes to land tenure that threatened Indigenous Peoples' capacity to obtain what they considered to be a proper livelihood, not least by undermining the sectoral fallow system (Zimmerer, 1996). The pre-colonial pattern of land tenure consisted of land holdings comprising multiple ecological tiers, owned and in many respects managed communally, while use rights were granted to individual households, allowing each family control of at least one plot in each production zone within the communal territory.

²¹ *Ayllu*: (Quechua) Sociopolitical, landholding, and ritual group, the symbolic basis of which is normally expressed using hydrological concepts.

In contrast, the colonial officials executing the re-settlements allotted land based on a scheme of strictly private ownership. But fortunately, the traditional pattern eventually became the norm once again, as the *Runa* effectively resisted officials' attempts at maintaining the imposed system (Zimmerer, 1996).

It proved more difficult however, for the *Runa* to overcome other more overtly abusive policies of the Royal officials. In addition to the labour tax, the *Runa* had to pay tribute in goods. The *corregidores*²² who each controlled a particular province often forced the Indigenous inhabitants of 'his' domain to produce particular goods for export to Lima, paying prices well below what they were worth. As the sole merchant in his district he could make further profits by forcing 'his Indians' to buy imported items, these now at inflated prices (Stern, 1987).

While epidemics of smallpox, measles, and other diseases of European origin struck Indigenous Peoples repeatedly, the colonial rulers refused to recognize the forever-worsening toll that taxes in both labour and goods were taking (Wolf, 1982). The burden of meeting the colonisers' demands increased acutely as each community was required to maintain rates of tribute that had been determined based on population levels of the late 16th Century, even though Indigenous Peoples were dying all the while at alarming rates. In the southern Peruvian highlands, for example, the Indigenous population halved in just fifty years, between 1570 and 1620 (Zimmerer, 1996).

18th Century Indigenous rebellion and the emerging landlords' Republic

Tribute, including its most abusive form as forced production, sale, and purchase of commodities, and the labour tax that were imposed on the Andean Indigenous Peoples, as well as the increasingly common theft of Indigenous land outright, bred rampant

²² *Corregidor*: (Spanish) Administrator of a province.

dissension. By the 18th Century this led to a long period of successive rebellions. Indeed, between 1720 and 1790, in the region constituting present-day Perú and Bolivia, Indigenous peasants led no less than 100 uprisings against the ruling classes (Stern, 1987).

From 1780 to 1782 full-scale civil war broke out as a rebel army, led by Túpac Amaru II of the Quechua-speaking Peoples of southern Perú and by the Katari brothers of the Aymara-speaking Peoples of the Bolivian *altiplano* attempted to regain political control over the region (Campbell, 1987). The violent conflict caused 150,000 deaths, fully one tenth of the population at the time. Ultimately resolving in favour of the colonial Royalists, the civil war nevertheless shook the whole of the Americas (Hall, 2003).

In addition to creating violent unrest, the excruciating pressure of the labour tax and tribute within Indigenous communities was a major factor that contributed to forming a market of 'free' Indigenous workers for employment in the mines, on plantations, and for other large-scale projects. At Potosí, for example, many Indigenous workers who arrived as *mita* 'temps' decided to stay, instead of returning to their tribute-laden communities (Wolf, 1982).

Many others ended up on *haciendas*²³, which began to be established in the early 17th Century in some areas, becoming widespread throughout the Peruvian Andes by the 18th Century (Zimmerer, 1996). Often the *hacendados*²⁴ used violence to steal Indigenous land and deprive local communities of its use. However, the *haciendas*, like the Potosí mine, ironically offered an 'escape' for many Indigenous peasants who

²³ *Hacienda*: (Spanish) Private landed estate.

²⁴ *Hacendado*: (Spanish) Estate owner.

decided that serfdom would be better than holding on to an independent land title, if it would bring freedom from the colonial state's exorbitant taxes (Wolf, 1982).

Thus, by the 18th Century in the Spanish-controlled region of the Americas, there were about as many people living in Indigenous communities entirely dependent on the *hacendados* as there were in independent, tribute-paying ones (Wolf, 1982). Often, members of independent, tribute-paying Indigenous communities were also required to work for a local *hacendado* in order to access sufficient land to meet their own subsistence needs. The agricultural lands of the independent communities were often insufficient in quantity or quality to provide all community members with an adequate livelihood (Guillet, 1979).

Thus the *hacendados* were a major force by the 18th Century, and in the 19th Century, following the Independence Wars of the 1820s, emerged as the ruling class. Although the great estates were characterized by low productivity and profitability, they nevertheless divided and expanded profusely at the expense of the already deprived Indigenous Peoples.

'Post-Colonialism'

Following the 'demographic collapse' of the 17th and 18th centuries, by the beginning of the 'post-colonial' era Indigenous Peoples of South and Meso-America had begun to recuperate in numbers (Remy, 1994). In many cases, however, they were made worse off in the wake of the 19th Century Independence movements (Weinberg, 2000; Wolf, 1982). In the most extreme cases, Brazil and Argentina, the newly formed nation-states followed a policy of annihilation vis-à-vis the Indigenous Peoples, but most other governments handled the 'Indian problem' through policies of cultural rather than physical genocide (Van Cott, 1994).

Expulsion of Iberian rule from the region effectively removed the legal and political mechanisms that had ensured a modicum of protection for Indigenous Peoples' rights during colonial times. The monarchies had held an interest in mitigating the maltreatment of Indigenous Peoples by the colonial ruling classes, because they benefited greatly from the labour of the 'Indians', through tribute to the Crown.

Moreover, the Iberian metropolises claimed to be upholding the public interest through the interventions of the Royal officials and clergy who spoke out in the name of humane relations between the colonizers and Indigenous Peoples. Ideologically, this reinforced Royal authority against the interests of the *Conquistadores*²⁵ and their descendants, who wished for nothing more than to carry out their economic activities in the colonial territories as purely private enterprises (Díaz Polanco, 1997).

In Perú, following Independence in 1821, the state still required Indigenous communities' tribute as a source of income. Thus, the Republican constitution recognized the collective land rights of Indigenous communities. By 1845, however, the Peruvian state's revenues through other means had become adequate to abandon the protection of Indigenous lands. Unlike in other South and Meso-American countries, notably México (Weinberg, 2000), it was not until this policy shift in 1845 that usurpation of Indigenous lands by powerful *criollos*²⁶ and *mestizos* became rampant in Perú (Remy, 1994).

Through the latter half of the 19th Century and into the first two decades of the 20th Century, with no official recognition from or interaction with the state, Indigenous communities in Perú were atomized and obliged to fend for themselves amidst the corruption of local power circuits. Yet, the *ayllus* persisted. The *Runa* lobbied for schools in their communities in order to become literate in Spanish, as this was their only hope of

²⁵ *Conquistador*: (Spanish) Conqueror.

²⁶ *Criollo*: (Spanish) Person of European ancestry born in the Americas.

participating in Peruvian politics, if only through the ballot box. But landlords forcefully resisted these efforts and their ongoing clashes with the *Runa* over the control of lands lead to frequent violence after the turn of the 20th Century (Remy, 1994).

Through the early 1900s in Perú and elsewhere in the region, rural unrest combined with the emergence of a movement of *mestizo, indigenista*²⁷ intellectuals, put increasing pressure on state governments to reconsider policies concerning Indigenous Peoples. Revolution in México in 1910 led to constitutional changes. Due in part to demands by the many Indigenous peasants who fought for the 'national' cause, including the legendary Emiliano Zapata, these alterations afforded new protections for Indigenous communities' collective rights to land (Weinberg, 2000). Similarly, in Perú constitutional changes took place under Leguía in 1920 that re-established state recognition of the *ayllus* and official protection of Indigenous communal lands (Remy, 1994). Yet, the disproportionate concentration of land ownership remained obscene throughout South and Meso-America.

Beginning in the 1930s, the Peruvian economy underwent a shift away from primary production, with agriculture and mining as its focal points, to a greater emphasis on urban, industrial production based on manufacturing. At the same time there emerged a 'new middle class' made up of professionals, white-collar workers in the increasingly bureaucratized state, and a *petit bourgeoisie* established in the areas of communication, transportation, and other service industries. Together these groups acquired increasing political influence throughout the mid-1900s. Eventually, in 1962, this resulted in the election of the first-ever Peruvian government to come to power on the basis of a populist

²⁷ *Indigenista*: (Spanish) Non-Indigenous person who advocates for Indigenous Peoples.

platform, this promising to wrest concessions from the landed oligarchy on behalf of the growing masses of urban Peruvians (Guillet, 1979).

The *Runa* in the countryside were also having an increasing influence on national politics. Indigenous-led peasant uprisings in the late 1950s and early 1960s led to preliminary attempts by national government to appease the growing movement. Indigenous communities in the valleys of La Convención and Lares (where I did my research) were at the focal point of rural rebellions in the early 60s. The Provincial Peasants Federation of La Convención and Lares (FPCC) was formed in 1958.

In 1962, the FPCC elected the Cuzco-born and Quechua-speaking *mestizo* revolutionary, Hugo Blanco, as secretary-general. They soon began to take back the lands that the *hacendados* had stolen from them over the previous century. However, within a year the police and army had forced the FPCC into retreat (Blanco, 1972).

The mass mobilizations of La Convención, Lares, and other rural regions in the early 1960s inspired the formation of several small guerrilla cells made up of middle-class radicals of urban origins, who re-located to the countryside in the hopes of recruiting support from the Indigenous communities. Although these campaigns lacked the mass support of the FPCC mobilizations, their tactics nevertheless drew severe military repression, culminating in a US Counter-Intelligence Agency (CIA) backed operation that effectively wiped them out by the end of the 60s (Guillet, 1979; Blum, 1998).

The success of the Peruvian army in quashing the guerrillas boosted the confidence of the military leadership dramatically. This would have significant political implications for the future of the country as a whole.

The social origins and ideological persuasions of the army leadership in the 1960s were such that its members identified with what they perceived to be the interests of the middle and (especially urban) lower classes (Guillet, 1979). Their socio-political perspective was anti-oligarchy, anti-Communist and anti-Imperialist. In keeping with those views, many military leaders were critical of President Belaúnde from the outset of his election in 1962.

They were disappointed in his government's failure to act decisively in response to the peasant uprisings, and then the guerrilla movements. Furthermore, he increasingly came under scrutiny for his compromising stance towards the coastal oligarchs of Perú and towards US business interests, despite having been elected on a populist platform (Guillet, 1979).

With newfound confidence, the military leadership now regarded themselves as key actors in bringing Perú into the 'modern' era. They decided that if Belaúnde would not deliver to the people what they wanted and what he had promised, *they* would. Thus, in 1968 the armed forces led by General Velasco ousted the President in a bloodless coup (Guillet, 1979).

Following the coup, the Junta²⁸ instituted historical reforms. The first was the nationalization of the US owned International Petroleum Corporation. Most importantly for the *Runa*, they enacted a radical land reform law, including expropriations of the major coastal plantations (Guillet, 1979). Such measures were regarded by some as the most fundamental political-economic changes that had occurred in any country of South or Meso-America since the Cuban Revolution. In any case, the significant institutional

²⁸ *Junta*: (Spanish) Military government.

reforms that were made shifted control of the Peruvian state decisively away from the former coastal oligarchy.

The Land Reform

Implementation of the land reform began in 1969, nine months after the Velasco regime took power. The expropriated coastal plantations and many other re-possessed lands across the country were placed under the control of 'Peasant Cooperatives', which by 1971 controlled more expropriated lands at the national level than any other form of state-recognised 'production units'. In the highland regions of Junín, Pasco, and Puno, hundreds of thousands of hectares of *hacienda* lands were expropriated and placed under 'Social Interest Societies', another form of cooperative production unit created by the military government. Many Indigenous communities bordering on large, former cattle *haciendas* of the central and southern highlands were forced into these Societies, which initially were given tenure of about a third of the land expropriated nationally (Guillet, 1979).

The preference of the military government for granting land to the Cooperatives was at least in part because of a desire for control:

As [had] happened in other agrarian reform in Latin America...the government in power...found a means of institutionalising control over [the rural poor] by placing beneficiaries within corporate bodies that at some point respond[ed] to centralized control at the regional and national levels (Guillet, 1979).

The newly designated 'Peasant Communities' were pre-reform 'Indigenous Communities' that would now, in addition to any pre-reform holdings, have tenure of additional lands expropriated from adjoining *haciendas*. The Peasant Communities were allotted fewer expropriated lands by the Junta as compared to the Cooperatives, but were

nonetheless the predominant form of recognized production units in many remote highland areas post-reform (Zimmerer, 1996).

The military government attempted to structure the Peasant Communities, too, in a way that would afford it considerable influence concerning production. New legislation was enacted for this purpose that would force Peasant Communities' organization to follow the structure stipulated by the General Law of Cooperatives (Guillet, 1979). Nevertheless, the *Runa*'s resistance to the Cooperative model that the state was trying to impose was effective, as the application of the General Law of Cooperatives to the Peasant Communities was rescinded in only six months (Zimmerer, 1969).

Thus, in some instances Andean Indigenous communities were able to affect the implementation of the land reform to enhance its benefits to them. However, while the land reform came about in part as a result of momentum built up from on-going rural unrest, it is important to note that the peasant movement was at a relative lull at the time that it was implemented owing to the heavy military repression that had occurred mid-decade. As a result, their capacity to participate meaningfully in the changes that were being affected was limited compared to what it would have been seven to ten years earlier (Guillet, 1979).

It also bears mention that the long lag time that passed between the uprisings of the *Runa* in the late 1950s and early 60s and the actual implementation of land reform allowed *hacendados* to liquidate much of their valuable farm capital, including livestock, equipment and eucalyptus trees, in anticipation of resource redistribution (Guillet, 1979). In some cases they even sabotaged farm infrastructure (Zimmerer, 1996).

Similarly, as the estate owners apprehended the political momentum building behind reform, they intensified agricultural production in the years leading up to 1969.

This caused increased soil erosion and nutrient depletion of the lands that the resident and adjoining *Runa* communities would soon inherit (Zimmerer, 1996).

Thus the *Runa* benefited substantially from the land reform to the extent that it freed many of them from having to devote most of their work to production for the local *hacienda*, and allotted many of them more land. However, if the Velasco regime was 'on their side' insofar as being opposed to the coastal oligarchs, with whom the highland *hacendados* were politically aligned, the Generals were less-than-ideal agents of change from the standpoint of the *Runa*, and other oppressed layers of Peruvian society for that matter:

General Velasco's Revolutionary Government of the Armed Forces planned land reform in order to modernize peasant production, end the skewed concentration of land ownership (eighty-seven percent of the country's agricultural land was held by four percent of its population), and defuse political opposition that included a variety of pro-Communist parties, peasant and trade unions, and popular social movements. The military Junta discouraged and repressed popular participation as part of its public concern 'to prevent Communism' (Zimmerer, 1996).

The Generals' authoritarianism thus ensured that the "much-needed economic and social reform" would occur strictly in accordance with *their* vision of a new Perú. What alternative institutional changes might have taken place in 1969 had there been greater popular participation in implementing the reforms is impossible to say.

The *Runa* and the Left

The rural uprisings that began in the 1950s inspired urban-based populist and leftist parties to attempt forming alliances with the rural poor. The most prominent factions were the populist American Popular Revolutionary Alliance (Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana-APRA) and the Communist Party of Perú, both of whom waffled opportunistically with regard to their respective positions vis-à-vis the 'peasants'.

As noted above, the Cuzco-born, Quechua-speaking *mestizo*, Hugo Blanco, led the most significant alliance in the 1960s linking one of the international, revolutionary movements of the Left with the *Runa* and other poor inhabitants of the rural highlands. Blanco's political organization, the Frente de Izquierda Revolucionario (Revolutionary Left Front/FIR), which was associated with the Trotskyist movement of the new-left, appealed to the *Runa* of Lares and La Convención, which constituted its rural stronghold, in large part because of the sensitivity expressed by Blanco as FIR leader to their collective oppression. Despite his middle-class background, Blanco had long been conscious of the *Runa* plight, having grown up listening to them tell his father, who often took on *Runa* cases in his legal practice, first-hand accounts of the injustice they suffered at the hands of the landlords and other *Mistis*²⁹ (powerful non-Indians) (Camejo, 1972).

Though it was ultimately eliminated, as the focal point of the peasant movement in the early 60s the FIR helped pave the way for the land reform of 1969. Blanco's respect for the *Runa* was instrumental in allowing a modicum of success for the FIR as a *Runa-Misti* alliance. But the fruitful, if imperfect Left-Indigenous collaboration involving the FIR would in retrospect prove to be exceptional compared to the political relationship the Left would characteristically share with the *Runa* in the coming decades.

In the late 50s and 60s, the FIR was part of a more general surge of popular movements across the country that together created a great deal of dynamism at the grassroots level. Although the Velasco regime was authoritarian and particularly repressive of the labour unions, other sectors on the Left in Perú continued to thrive and even grow after 1969 (Solfrini, 2001). The significant popular organization associated with the Left during the prior decade, and the space created by the Junta's progressive

²⁹ *Misti*: (Quechua) Non-*Runa* person.

reforms, allowed for further development of popular power, albeit within the significant constraints imposed by the military government's intolerance for radicalism.

Unfortunately for the *Runa*, however, the political organizations of the Left that came to prominence during this time were for the most part 'worker' oriented, focused on the urban 'proletariat'. Furthermore, to the extent that the Leftists of that era engaged with the rural Indigenous Peoples, they were "eager to promote a unitary peasant-based class consciousness... They... viewed ethnicity as a divisive factor inimical to their projects of social transformation" (Zamocs, 2003). Thus, "Indians became peasants," deprived of having their *Runa* identity validated (Langer, 2003).

In spite of this, the *Runa* benefited from the political influence of the Left so long as it supported land reform. This was largely true for Indigenous Peoples throughout the South and Meso-American region. Yet, the 'Latin American' Left was decidedly urban oriented, a reflection of its origins in the cities.

The urbanisation and accompanying changes to the political landscape in the mid 20th Century that, as we have seen, took place in Perú were part of a more general trend occurring across South and Meso-America that created social forces favouring populist governance. From the 1930s to the 1960s, the concentration of wealth and power in many countries in the region was significantly diminished under governments such as those led by Cárdenas in México (1934-40) and Perón in Argentina (1946-55 and 1973-74) (Demmers *et al*, 2001).

Emerging out of the Great Depression, "the 'classic' populist regimes... were known for both their anti-oligarchy and anti-communist tendencies...." They nationalized export industries, invested in public health and education, and promoted industrialisation

through 'import substitution' interventions, but all-the-while exhibited strong urban bias (Demmers *et al*, 2001).

With the exception of major subsidies to large-scale agricultural operations in the most fertile and market-integrated areas, populist South and Meso-American governments of the mid-1900s neglected the countryside, which exacerbated the marginalization of the rural poor. Dissatisfaction among *campesinos*³⁰ of Indigenous, *mestizo*, and other ethnicities gave rise to widespread demands for radical land reforms (Demmers *et al*, 2001).

As we have seen in the case of Perú, the rural movements alone were a political force to be reckoned with. But in the post-WWII era they were lent further strength by the labour movements in the cities, which had gathered considerable power by then. Both were influenced by the international revolutionary Left, especially after the Cuban Revolution of 1959 (Demmers *et al*, 2001).

Sooner or later, substantial agrarian reforms were won across the region. For example in México the land redistribution promised during the Revolution early in the century was finally fulfilled to a significant degree in the 1930s. However, as in Perú, the rural poor in most countries in the region had to wait until later for similar change. For instance in Bolivia and Ecuador, both Andean nation-state neighbours of Perú, agrarian reform was won in the 1950s, and 1960s and 70s, respectively.

But once land reform occurred, a shift resulted in the dynamic of future potential political collaborations between the *Runa* and their would-be allies on the Left. Of the parallel Ecuadorian case—in many ways Ecuador is similar to Perú insofar as its Indigenous population is made up principally of Quechua-speaking Andean Peoples and

³⁰ *Campesino*: (Spanish) Peasant.

comprises the same proportion (40%) of the overall 'national' population—Zamocs (2003) writes:

The ascendancy of the Left [among the rural poor] had been largely due to the fact that the struggle for land generated great receptivity to radical appeals. But the peasants' access to land redefined their situation, and they began to respond to other appeals perceived as more in tune with their new needs and the political realities of the period following the agrarian reform.

Similarly, the strained relations between Andean Indigenous Peoples and the Left as a result of class reductionism on the part of the latter were intensified in Perú after 1969, once land reform had been significantly instituted.

The Beginnings of the neo-liberal era

The Left soon faced challenges more generally, not only in terms of flagging support from Indigenous Peoples. The economic austerity that struck countries of South and Meso-America in various forms beginning in the 1970s began in Perú with the replacement of the Velasco regime through a 1975 coup by another military government led by General Morales (Solfrini, 2001). Morales ruled until a constitutional, transitional government was formed in 1978, led by Haya de la Torre. Then in 1980, Belaúnde, the same man who had been overthrown by the Velasco military regime, was newly elected as President (Solfrini, 2003).

The governments of Morales and Belaúnde both followed neo-liberal programs, implementing structural adjustments imposed by the international financial institutions (Crabtree, 1992).

Alan García, leader of the most well-established of all Peruvian parties, APRA, succeeded Belaúnde as President in 1983, promising a shift back to a more statist macro-economic approach, in defiance of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank (Solfrini, 2001). But García, too, would soon give in to the demands of the capitalist

classes for financial austerity that were becoming ever more accepted by governments around the world (Crabtree, 1992).

The end of the reforms instituted by the Velasco regime and the changing political climate internationally did not immediately put an end to popular engagement in progressive politics, at least in the cities of Perú, where it persisted from 1975 through much of García's term (Solfrini, 2001). But the worsening economic crisis, as well as internal divisions, finally reversed the long ascendancy of the Left in the late 80s.

The inner strife was caused in considerable part by the emergence of a new political formation, the Peruvian Communist Party-Maoist, or Sendero Luminoso ('Shining Path' [SP] in English). They applied violent tactics to targets across the political spectrum. In addition, their operations caused bloody reprisals from the military, the leaders of which often ordered indiscriminate violence. In the early 80s, especially, the military's brutality not only took a great toll among the civilian population in general, but also was used to eliminate many Leftist militants associated with factions outside of the SP but nevertheless despised by the state's armed agents (Solfrini, 2001; Starn, 2003).

One of the early appeals of the SP to many *Runa* communities was that the Party exhibited proficiency for 'decisive' action in matters of justice. This was significant because although the land reform had mitigated economic disparities in the countryside to some degree, municipal and regional politics and the workings of the judicial system in the rural areas remained vulnerable to the corruption of the *ancien regime*. This was largely due to the state's weakness outside the cities as a result of the central government's strong urban bias, leaving legal and political institutions relatively unchanged in the countryside despite having had progressive reforms applied to them in the cities (Starn, 2003).

However, not long after the rise of SP in 1980, their tendencies toward dogmatism, authoritarianism, and ruthless acts of mass violence against Indigenous communities who generally did not support them were already costing them the limited allegiance they had won among the *Runa* during their early development (Starn, 2003). It took some time, but the result was the eventual defusing of the SP movement, which was all-but-extinguished by the mid-1990s.

Official politics in the 1990s were dominated by a Japanese-Peruvian who burst onto the national scene as an independent Presidential candidate at the dawn of the decade. But unlike the first populist President of Perú's neo-liberal era, García, who tried but failed to resist the growing international hegemony of structural adjustment, Alberto Calca embraced it. Indeed, he was among numerous 'neo-populists' of *fin-de-siècle* South and Meso-America who managed to successfully apply the populist approach to electoral politics, only to diverge once in power decisively to the right of the 'centre-left' policies that had been the hallmark of classic populism (Solfrini, 2003).

Currently Alejandro Toledo is Perú's head of state. A Harvard-educated economist, husband to a US anthropologist, and a neo-liberal through and through, the *mestizo* President occasionally carried an Inca flag during his election campaigning and sometimes refers to himself as '*El Cholo*'³¹ (a term used to describe someone who is 'half *indio*'³², half *mestizo*). Notwithstanding the public image *Toledo* has tried to portray, however, his government's policies have earned much opposition from the popular classes. For example, a near-done-deal to privatize Perú's water had to be undone due to several general strikes across the country, which I witnessed while in Cuzco in 2002. Today, his popularity remains extremely low.

³¹ *Cholo*: (Quechua, derogatory) Someone who is in transition to becoming a *mestizo*.

³² *Indio*: (Spanish, derogatory) An Indigenous person.

CHAPTER III: *RUNA* LIFE IN CHOQUECANCHA

I did my research in Perú between February and August, 2002, spending about half the time in Cuzco, the country's third largest city, and the other half in the rural Indigenous community of Choquecancha. The research was based on experiential learning, and I have 'written it up' based on my end-of-the-day journal notes, which I took intermittently, and based on my memories.

As I indicated earlier, my research in the Peruvian Andes exposed me to a great deal more than I expected. Although I began with a focus limited to agro-ecology, I was soon struck by the radically non-'Western' character of *Runa* society and consequently broadened the scope of my observing.

I admired much of what I perceived *Runa* culture to be. Nevertheless, because I had to make sense of what I saw using my own 'Western' epistemology, and, perhaps more importantly, because I failed to engage the *Runa* of Choquecancha concerning my thoughts on the merits of their society, I left with a thoroughly one-sided interpretation of *Runa* life. Unfortunately that is all that I can present here.

Admittedly, the accounts that members of colonising societies have left of their 'research adventures' have often had a powerfully negative influence on the way that Indigenous Peoples are perceived by dominant societies. The earliest ones have perhaps had the most far-reaching impacts, but contemporary ones like mine also add to the 'archive' upon which 'we' draw when constructing Indigenous Peoples (Tuhiwai Smith 1999).

Most such accounts are written in a way that implicitly appraises Indigenous societies using 'the West' for a 'yardstick'. In other words, it is assumed that the ways in

which 'other' societies live in and see the world are irrational or otherwise distorted, in contrast to 'the West'. Such an approach:

...assumes that Western ideas about the most fundamental things are the only ideas possible to hold, certainly the only rational ideas, and the only ideas which can make sense of the world of reality, of social life, and of human beings. It is an approach to indigenous peoples which still conveys a sense of innate superiority and an overabundance of desire to bring progress into the lives of indigenous peoples—spiritually, intellectually, socially, and economically (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999).

In my own account of the 'research adventure' I had in the Peruvian Andes, which follows, it may well be that some or even all of my interpretations of life in Choquecancha do not reflect the meanings attributed by *Choquecanchinos*³³ themselves to the elements of their culture that I will comment upon. However, it is not my intention to imply that *my* interpretations are 'true' and theirs 'false'. On the contrary, the depth of understanding of the *Runa* of the significances of their own culture is surely much greater than mine.

Therefore, this chapter is only meant to be an illustration of the process through which I began to question the basis of my presence and activity in Choquecancha. My intention is to emphasise the aspects of *Runa* life that forced me to reflect on my own way of seeing the world and that of the society to which I belong; to consider the *possibility* of radical alternatives to life in the 'West'.

Choquecancha

The creation story of Choquecancha is as follows:

Ancestors of the *Runa* of Choquecancha emerged from the spring waters of [the community], being the offspring of the coupling of the sun father and moon mother in Lake Titicaca. Sibling offspring of the same union emerged from the springs and rivers in other *Runa* communities, being thus bound to the *Runa* of Choquecancha by kinship ties.

³³ *Choquecanchinos*: Inhabitants of Choquecancha

The *Runa* do not share these kinship ties with the Peruvian *Mestizos* whose ancestors came from Spain, or who have lost their own ties to their ancestors. The sacred spring in the community bounds the social area and is also seen as a spiritual power source connecting the *Runa* of Choquecancha to other *Runa* communities and to the supernatural world as well as to the sources of ancestral power (Seibold, 1990).

The *Runa* community of Choquecancha is located at 13°S, 72°W, on the east side of the Eastern Cordillera of the Andes, about 120 km north, by road, of Cuzco, Perú (Seibold, 1990). The communal territory is over 8000 hectares (ha) (Miguel, personal communication), ranging from 2700 meters above sea level (masl) at the river base of the valley, to 4000 masl at the apex of the mountain ridge above (Hurtado, 1992). Both the mountain and the principal settlement, or *ayllu*, which is located at 3000 masl on the west-facing side of the Lares valley, are called Choquecancha. The principal settlement has a population of about 800 (Juan, personal communication), but there are another dozen or so smaller satellite *ayllus* scattered throughout the mountain territory that are part of the community, which together add about 2000 more to the total population (Miguel, personal communication)³⁴.

Although most men and many women who live in Choquecancha speak Spanish, the vernacular language in the community is Quechua, the indigenous tongue spoken in *ayllus* throughout much of the Central Andes. The geographical demographics of the community are such that children and youth tend to live in the smaller *ayllus*, occupied principally with agro-pastoral activities. Young adults and newlyweds generally move to the main settlement, and “manage stores, hold political offices, become prolific weavers and farmers and form the most productive parts of community life” (Seibold, 1990).

³⁴ Non-community members who reside sporadically in Choquecancha include the Catholic priest for the valley of Lares—a Belgian, who makes occasional visits to Choquecancha to lead services at the chapel, but lives in the district capital—and the teachers and nurses who work at the school and medical post. These government employees stay in the community only during the week, returning to their families in Calca or elsewhere on weekends and holidays.

Towards the end of middle age, the tendency is to return once again to one of the smaller *ayllus* and a quieter, slower-paced life of mostly agro-pastoral activities.

In the principal settlement, because of the neglect of the Peruvian government, running water was made available to each household only in 1988 (Seibold, 1999), and now about 10% have electricity, but it was made available only a couple of weeks before I arrived, in March of 2002 (Miguel and Diana, personal communication). Most homes are lit by kerosene lamp, and cooking takes place at an indoor, adobe hearth, using locally harvested fuel wood.

Choquecancha has a primary school that was built in 1968. In the *Runa* village of Qachín, which is visible directly across the valley from Choquecancha, there is a secondary school where youth from various villages throughout the Lares valley study. Choquecancha's school, medical post, spring-fed water cistern and faucets, and the rectory beside the Church for the priest when he visits, were all built in the late 1980s. The money for materials came from an *entrega*³⁵ given to the community by the García government amounting to about US\$10,000 (Seibold, 1990).

Although no *comuneros*³⁶ own their own vehicles because of their marginalized status vis-à-vis the Peruvian economy, there is an unpaved road, which was built in 1968, leading up from the highway to Choquecancha's plaza. On the plaza there is a two-storey civic building with offices for elected village authorities, communal storage space, a few spare bedrooms used when the community hosts visitors, and a large paved courtyard (opposite the plaza), where community assemblies are held. In addition to the civic building and the medical post, the Church with its bell tower is the other prominent building on the village plaza.

³⁵ *Entrega*: (Spanish) literally, Delivery.

³⁶ *Comunero*: (Spanish) Community member.

Choquecancha's agro-pastoralism

One of the age-old characteristics of Indigenous economy across the central Andes is that livelihood strategies depend on a variety of activities that exploit the diverse ecologies of multiple altitudinal zones. As Murra (1985) notes, "it is remarkable that, in spite of the pressures exercised against everything Andean and those who created them during the [last] 450 years...we still encounter among highland peasants a preference for locating their fields in complementary fashion, on several different ecological tiers".

Indeed, the highland agro-pastoralism that is widespread throughout today's central Andean countryside is quite uniform, insofar as it involves ubiquitously the simultaneous use of lands located in multiple altitudinal ranges. Collective ownership of land is also typical among Andean Indigenous communities. However, individual households nevertheless manage agricultural production at the field level, while community-level decision-making is instituted to "support the households...by limiting access to some lands, managing communal pastures, scheduling agro-pastoral activities, enforcing rotation schedules, and maintaining communal infrastructure (roads, terraces, irrigation canals)" (Brush and Guillet, 1985).

Agro-pastoralism in Choquecancha follows the broad, central Andean pattern. The terrain between 2700 masl, where the annual temperature high reaches 16.54°C, and 2900 masl is comprised of plots used for the early planting of *maíz* and the earliest of three *papa* plantings. To a lesser extent this zone is also used for intensive vegetable gardening, these plots often being irrigated and cultivated only in alternate years.

Otherwise, the low altitude terrain below 3400 masl is used for annual plantings of *maíz*. At 3400 masl one begins to encounter plots used to plant *papa maway*³⁷ (the early-

³⁷ *Papa maway*: (Quechua) Early-emerging potato crop.

emerging potato crop). Between 3400 and 3500 masl, both *maíz* and *papa maway* are planted, but beyond 3500 masl, one does not encounter *maíz* (Hurtado, 1992).

In the *puna*³⁸ zone, ranging from 3700 to 4000 masl in Choquecancha, temperatures are colder, reaching below zero Celsius overnight during the dry season, May through August. This is where the *siembra grande*³⁹, or 'big' *papa* planting takes place, and is also the principal livestock grazing area (Hurtado, 1992).

Much of the cultivated land in the community is managed according to a sectoral fallow system. For both of the principal *papa*-growing zones, those of *papa maway* and *papa grande*, cultivation from year-to-year is rotated amongst several sectors as a way to avoid degrading the soil through over-use. Every year the community as a whole decides which sector they will cultivate.

CROPS

In addition to the staple Indigenous crops, *maíz* and *papa*, many other crops, both Indigenous and introduced are cultivated by the *Runa*. Some are planted as companions to the staple crops, particularly in the *maíz* zone, where squash and legumes are often spatially interspersed with the maize. In the middle and upper crop zones, secondary crops are planted separate from the *papa*, either spatially or temporally. The latter occurs when a given sector is cultivated for two or three immediately successive years. In this case, a *papa* crop is planted in the first year, followed in one or two subsequent years with plantings of one of the other Indigenous tuber crops, such as *oca*⁴⁰ or *olluco*⁴¹.

³⁸ *Puna*: (Quechua) Uppermost part of an Andean inter-montane valley, including the mountain ridge joining adjacent valleys.

³⁹ *Siembra grande*: (Spanish) Literally, 'big planting', this term refers most often to the principal potato crop.

⁴⁰ *Oca*: (Quechua) Indigenous Andean tuber crop.

⁴¹ *Olluco*: (Quechua) Indigenous Andean tuber crop.

Interviewing a number of *Runa* from both Choquecancha and the neighbouring village of Qachín, I learned that at the very least, the respective crop regimes of the *maíz*, *papa maway*, and *papa grande* zones of the two communities comprised eleven, eleven, and four distinct crop species respectively. The following tables illustrate the crop diversity cultivated in the *maíz* zone and *papa maway* zone by the *Runa* to whom I spoke:

<i>Maíz Zone</i>							
Crop “*”=Indigenous	Miguel and Diana	Guillermo and Illurina	Pablo and Sara	Gabriel and María	Javier and Anita	Ricardo and Sylvia	Cesar and Rosa
<i>Maíz</i> *	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Broad bean	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Green peas	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Squash*	X	X	X	X	X	X	
<i>Quinoa</i> *	X	X	X	X		X	X
Wheat			X	X	X	X	X
<i>Nuña</i> bean* ⁴²	X	X			X	X	
<i>Papa</i> * (irrigated)			X				X
<i>Hortalizas</i> ⁴³							X
Cabbage			X				
<i>Linaza</i> ⁴⁴					X		

<i>Papa Maway Zone</i>							
Crop “*”=Indigenous	Miguel and Diana	Guillermo and Illurina	Pablo and Sara	Gabriel and María	Javier and Anita	Ricardo and Sylvia	Cesar and Rosa
<i>Papa</i> *	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Oca</i> *	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Olluco</i> *	X	X	X	X	X	X	
<i>Año</i> * ⁴⁵	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Broad bean	X	X	X		X	X	X
Green peas	X	X	X			X	X
<i>Tarwi</i> * ⁴⁶	X	X					X
<i>Quinoa</i> *	X	X					
Barley			X		X		
<i>Achoq</i> * ⁴⁷							X
Wheat			X				

⁴² *Nuña*: (Quechua) Indigenous Andean legume.

⁴³ *Hortalizas*: (Spanish) Vegetables.

⁴⁴ *Linaza*: (Spanish) Flaxseed.

Papa Grande Zone

While the lower and middle of the three principal agricultural zones are both somewhat heterogeneous in terms of what crops are planted by different households, the upper zone varies little in this respect. The four typical crop species, all of which are Indigenous tubers, are *papa*, *oca*, *olluco*, and *año*. But even though the species diversity of the upper zone is lower than that of the other two zones, the varietal diversity *within* species is exceptional, particularly in the *papa* crop, for which the Andean region is the world's centre of origin and diversity.

I had the opportunity to see a significant proportion of the *papa* diversity in Lares at the valley's First Annual *Papa* Festival, which I helped to organize. Held in the plaza of the Lares district capital, the festival attracted many *Runa* from various *ayllus* of the Lares valley and a few *mestizos* from the district capital. They brought their biggest and best specimens from among the diverse types that remained of the previous year's harvest. Individuals or groups competed for cash prizes within several categories.

The displays prepared by the competitors exhibited a truly impressive assortment of *papa* varieties—many dozens in total! To visualize a scene comparable to that at the festival, one might imagine replacing every fruit and vegetable in the produce section of the supermarket with a distinct *papa* type, each with its own name, characteristic shape, and unique hue or multi-colour pattern—quite a site to behold!

Speaking to many *Runa* over the course of my stay in Lares about the prodigious assortment of crops employed in their agriculture, I learned that production for household consumption is a major driver of diversity. The majority of the harvested crops each season is used directly for sustenance within the household, while a smaller proportion

⁴⁵ *Año*: (Quechua) Indigenous Andean tuber crop.

⁴⁶ *Tarwi*: (Quechua) Indigenous Andean legume.

⁴⁷ *Achoq*: (Quechua) Indigenous Andean tuber crop.

may be sold or bartered, depending on factors like market prices, crop yield, and the resource endowments of a given family.

When the *Runa* choose what crops to plant they base their decisions on many criteria, associated not only with culinary attributes, but also those related to agronomy and processing. A major agronomic consideration, for example, is pest resistance, which has become increasingly important in recent decades, as the damage caused by late blight and the Andean weevil has accelerated with widespread agro-chemical use in lowland export agriculture (Ortega⁴⁸, personal communication).

As the chiefs of domestic activities in the home, *Runa* women must be mindful of the processing-related traits of the crop plants available to them. Ease of peeling, for instance, is not the least of factors affecting their decisions. The length of time required to cook a particular cultivar is another consideration, since the hearth runs on scarce fuel wood, the collection of which demands precious labour time.

Thus the *Runa*, being not only consumers but also seed selectors, planters, weeders, pickers, diggers, peelers, sellers, and cooks of the plants upon which they depend for sustenance, take into account a great many factors in making decisions about their food. But the appeal of dietary variety is nevertheless a particularly significant consideration. Indeed, culinary preference may be, more than any other single criterion, the touchstone of *Runa* cultivar selection. It certainly seemed so as I asked one *Runa* man about the reasons that native *papa* diversity has eroded in recent decades. He claimed that the tastiest varieties were the first to be lost to late blight (*La rancha*⁴⁹), the worst of the Andean *papa* pests. *La rancha* might be a pest, he said, but it still has to be given credit for good taste!

⁴⁸ Peruvian entomologist Ramiro Ortega is one of the world's foremost scientific experts on Andean tuber crop ecology. He works at Universidad Nacional San Antonio Abad in Cuzco.

⁴⁹ *La rancha*: (Spanish) Potato late blight.

The *Runa*'s appreciation of culinary diversity was further evident in the creativity that they employed in preparing the Indigenous crops for eating. For example, *papa wathiya*⁵⁰, which is not, as I guessed when I first heard the term, a distinct variety of *papa*, refers to a particular process for cooking *papa* that provides ready-to-eat sustenance, literally straight out of the earth. I was invited to partake in this during the big *papa* harvest out in the fields, where freshly dug tubers were buried in soil and covered with burning coals to roast.

Ch'unio is another *papa* food that is prepared in the fields. Once one of the pillars of the Inca Empire, it is still highly valued, both for its long-term preservation in storage, as well as its distinct texture and taste. The 'bitter' *papa* varieties are used to make *ch'unio*. They are planted as part of the big *papa* crop in the *puna*, close to the mountain ridge where overnight temperatures drop below zero in the dry season.

When the bitter varieties are harvested in May, they are not immediately transported to the village. Instead, the *Runa* dig a hole in the ground on-site. The crop is then stored in the hole until the cold nights of June come. At this time, the *Runa* return to the high altitude fields to once again unearth the *papa* and spread them out in a single layer on the ground. Over several days, exposed to below-zero temperatures at night and direct equatorial sun during the day, the tubers undergo a freeze-drying process.

One day in June when I was in Qachín, the *Runa* village directly across the valley from Choquecancha, I went with Gabriel to check on his family's batch of *ch'unio*, which had already been exposed for a couple of days and nights. As we approached the crest of the hill leading up to the plateau where the *ch'unio* was being prepared, a rich aroma of 'roasting' *papa* filled the air.

⁵⁰ *Papa wathiya*: (Quechua) Potato cooked buried in the earth with hot coals.

Another traditional culinary process that I observed while in Choquecancha was that which is used to make the maize-based beer, *chicha*⁵¹. During the *maíz* harvest a portion of the year's crop of *maíz amarillo*⁵² was set aside especially for preparing this brew. Even Alejandro, the 12-year-old son of Miguel and Diana, knew how to make *chicha* from watching his mother make it, a task with which I helped her one day in August when she was busy preparing for the community's anniversary celebration.

Not only did *chicha* feature prominently at Choquecancha's anniversary; it was the beverage of choice on other special occasions as well. During the festivities preceding the annual pilgrimage to a sacred mountain in Bolivia, for example, several men with jugs of *chicha* were charged throughout the evening with serving it up to anyone who cared to indulge.

As I observed these rich traditions I was greatly impressed by the creativity and diversity of the Choquecancha *Runa*'s culture. I soon began to appreciate that for the *Runa*, agro-pastoral activities were much more than simply a means of subsistence; they were part of a distinct mode of social organisation. Moreover, their livelihood activities fit into an integrative worldview, which incorporated an ecological sensibility to be sure, but also signified much more.

***Runa* cosmology**

The *Runa* understood their interdependent relationship with the earth not only in practical but also spiritual terms. They frequently paid tribute to *Pachamama*⁵³ symbolically through ritual. There were, indeed, many rites of this nature. For example, during the *maíz* harvest, a rare two-cob maize stalk was sought out and set aside as a

⁵¹ *Chicha*: (Spanish) Maize-based beer.

⁵² *Maíz Amarillo*: (Spanish) Bright yellow maize variety used to make beer.

⁵³ *Pachamama*: (Quechua) Earth Mother.

symbol of the fertility of the earth and used for various ceremonies. During the *papa* harvest, the workers set aside the biggest tubers for similar purposes.

The most common ritual honouring *Pachamama* were the small offerings of drink, alcoholic or otherwise, either poured on the ground or spilt towards the mountain gods, or *Apus*⁵⁴. In fact, whenever the *Runa* have a drink, no matter the situation, a drop is first offered to the earth (Seibold, 1990). They perform this ritual even in the urban environs of Cuzco, where many folks pay regular tribute to *Pachamama* over beer or soda pop.

A story told to me by Guillermo provided a further illustration of the cosmological significance of Earth-*Runa* reciprocity. One day he, Diana, and I walked from Choquecancha to the district capital of Lares to catch a bus heading in to Calca. We chatted for some of the hour-and-a-half-long walk to pass the time.

When I commented on the weather, saying that I was surprised at all the rain that we were having, Guillermo agreed that it was remarkable for July, normally the heart of the dry season. But he had an explanation for the anomaly. There was a lot of talk, he said, about the fact that the unusual weather likely had to do with a destructive oil development project that had started up in La Convención, to the North. In addition to all the rain, a further indication of the detrimental impact that the oil project was having was that many of the workers employed in it were dying.

To the Indigenous miners at Potosí, Bolivia, capitalist production has similarly been interpreted as having a disruptive effect on the balance of nature (Taussig, 1994). When Indigenous Peoples, whose worldviews differ so greatly from that of 'the West', perceive characteristics and practices of dominant societies as perverse, they provide

⁵⁴ *Apu*: (Quechua) Mountain God.

valuable insights into the peculiarity of our assumptions about what is 'natural'. In the case of the oil development in La Convención, while a typical 'Westerner' might have viewed the project as a rational initiative to exploit petroleum, the world's most valued commodity, the *Runa* perspective was very different; it was a violation against Mother Earth.

Social Reciprocity

Just as the *Runa*'s knowledge of and reverence for the earth was remarkable to me as I participated in agro-pastoral activities, so too was the highly cooperative quality of social organization at the community level. As the *Runa* went about their daily life, which revolved largely around the cultivation of crops and herding of livestock, it was readily apparent to me that they performed these activities with a strong sense of social reciprocity.

During the labour intensive phases of the agricultural year, most of the village inhabitants can be found daily in the area of the communal territory where the *Runa*'s timely work is most needed. Individual fields are worked by members of multiple households. This arrangement, referred to in Quechua as *ayni*⁵⁵, is based on the direct exchange of labour. Thus, many hands make light work, field by field, as members of various households take turns helping one another attend to each other's plots.

Working in the fields in Choquecancha and Qachín was one of the most memorable activities that I experienced during the time I spent there. I participated in the big *papa* harvest, the maize harvest, and the early planting of *papa*. These were very social activities, with steady banter and laughing. We spent most of the time working alongside one another, sharing the same tasks.

⁵⁵ *Ayni*: (Quechua) Reciprocal work exchange.

Often, both men and women worked together on the principal tasks, such as digging up the *papa* tubers or plucking and peeling maize cobs. There were certain jobs performed predominantly by one or the other gender. For example, selecting seed tubers during the *papa* harvest for the next year's planting was done by the women, while during the *maíz* harvest cutting the stalks was performed only by men. However, such occasional division of labour did not interrupt us from working *together*, in the company of one another.

Nor was this 'togetherness' limited to any one group working the same field. Because of the communal designation in the *papa* zones of a particular sector to be worked by all, and due to the contiguity of household plots in the annual *maíz*-planting zone, there were always many other *comuneros* working together nearby, one field over or two fields down. Even if other groups weren't in plain view, there were frequent reminders of the communal bustle, such as horses traipsing by with bags of manure on their backs.

In keeping with the *Runa*'s holistic world view, the cooperative quality of everyday life was frequently expressed symbolically during agricultural work through rituals affirming their shared relationships of reciprocity. I participated in some of these rites when I joined the work bees in which members of various households, usually related by blood or *compadrazco*⁵⁶, worked together to tend to each household's plots.

The work bees were interspersed with regular breaks when everyone would come together to rest. At this time alcohol was sometimes shared, each person in turn being offered a swig from the host's bottle. The host of the work bee also gave *coca* leaves to all the helpers. I was frequently offered *coca* leaves from other members of the group,

⁵⁶ *Compadrazco*: (Spanish) System of co-parenting.

too, a courtesy which I reciprocated, helping myself to some leaves in the bag that was being shared. In all instances, the formality of the offerings was conspicuous. Most notable to me was that the *coca* leaves were presented to the receiver in small groups of about 3 to 6, and assembled in the grip of the bearer in a particular formation, similar to the way one holds a hand of cards.

These highly formalised offerings of alcohol and *coca* were striking to me as a 'Westerner'. The only analogy familiar to life in Winnipeg that I can think of is the conventional exchange of verbal thanks between customers and cashier that commonly accompanies our frequent commercial transactions. But such a superficial expression of mutual gratitude bears little resemblance to the deep reciprocity that concretely characterizes the relationship that exists among *Runa comuneros*. Their direct and face-to-face mutual aid in day-to-day activities is plainly evident.

This deliberate expression of social reciprocity by the *Runa* was also apparent beyond the community level. As I have already noted, one of the characteristics of Indigenous economy across the central Andes is that livelihood strategies depend on diverse activities that exploit multiple ecological tiers. The pre-colonial pattern along the lines of which many highland-based Peoples exploited multiple non-contiguous ecological tiers at lower altitudes is now largely eroded. However, it is still common for contemporary trade networks to follow the caravan routes that transported diverse Andean products to-and-fro under former social systems (Murra, 1985).

For example, in the Lares valley *trueque*⁵⁷, or barter, is practiced regularly between highland and upper Amazon inhabitants at the weekly markets. On market day there are trucks that come down from Calca, bringing cheap manufactured goods such as

⁵⁷ *Trueque*: (Quechua) Barter.

toilet paper, soda pop, or batteries, which are paid for mostly with cash. But from the other direction women from *El Valle*⁵⁸, which is a term that *Lareños*⁵⁹ use to refer to the reaches of the upper Amazon that extend into the lowest portion of the Lares valley, come up with varied products of the rainforest, with which they barter with the *Runa*. These transactions are generally cashless.

The women from *El Valle* are predominantly *colonos*⁶⁰, *Runa* who migrated from the highlands and make their living primarily as commercial agriculturalists. By the 1950s, enterprising highlanders who as migrant or permanent estate workers had acquired access to sufficient land on upper Amazon *haciendas* to produce a surplus for sale were already competing with the *hacendados* for market share. But following the Peruvian land reform of 1969, many more *Runa* who had worked on the lowland *haciendas* but had never had enough resources to produce commercially, entered the cash cropping economy of *El Valle*. Acquiring ownership of plots that, before the expropriations, they had rented from *hacendados*, made this possible for them (Fioravanti-Molinié, 1982).

Thus, many *colonos* are distant cousins, or even remain *comuneros* half the year⁶¹ of the *Runa* with whom they barter. As such, the tasty native varieties of *papa*, *maíz*, and other highland products brought down into the plazas for trade by women of Choquecancha, Qachín, Pampa Corral, and other local *ayllus* are not unfamiliar to the *colonos*. Furthermore, the *coca* and fruit that the latter produce in *El Valle* are reserved almost exclusively for their exchanges with highland friends and relatives; *colonos* '

⁵⁸ *El Valle*: (Spanish) In Lares, the Northern end of the valley that extends into the Upper Amazon.

⁵⁹ *Lareño*: (Spanish) An inhabitant of the district capital of Lares or, less commonly, an inhabitant of any community in the Lares valley.

⁶⁰ *Colono*: (Spanish) Coloniser.

⁶¹ Especially among the young people who have inherited little land from their families, which is increasingly ordinary, it is not uncommon to buy a plot in *El Valle* for cash cropping while also maintaining limited subsistence production in Choquecancha.

production for larger markets is devoted to a few major cash crops like coffee and tea (Fioravanti-Molinié, 1982).

It seemed to me, therefore, that the regular transactions that take place between *Runa* and *colonos* manifest not only market relations, but also the maintenance of a deliberate inter-dependency. This continuity is remarkable in light of the extensive market penetration in *El Valle*. It is indicative, I think, of the depth to which the *Runa* value ecological complementarity and social reciprocity; so much so that they continue to hold sway as basic cultural principles even among the *colonos*, who have drifted from but nevertheless maintain some connection to the realm of the *ayllus*.

Seeing first-hand the unique mode of social organization in Choquecancha, and gaining an improved appreciation of the *Runa*'s holistic world view, within which their conception of interdependence with *Pachamama* was integrated with many other cultural elements, refined my perspective as a researcher. Moreover, I was fascinated by the ongoing distinctiveness of the *Runa*'s identity as a People vis-à-vis the rest of Peruvian society.

CHAPTER IV: RUNA-MISTI RELATIONS

As we have seen, the *Runa* were by no means unacquainted with interactions with powerful outsiders, or *Mistis*. Agents of Church and State had had intermittent relationships with the Indigenous communities for centuries, and the *Runa* had themselves ventured out into *Misti*-dominated domains extensively. However, their struggle for land reform had considerably changed their status vis-à-vis *Mistis*, and thus the quality of their interactions with the latter. The following, for example, is Hugo Blanco's description (1972) of the empowerment that the *Runa* experienced through their collective campaign to take back their lands:

In Cuzco, for centuries, the Indian had slouched along the streets with his *poncho* and his whispered Quechua; he had never dared, even when drunk, to mount the sidewalk or speak his Quechua out loud with his head held high. He was fearful of the *Misti* (non-Indian), who was the master of the city...

The mass meeting[s] put the Indian on top of the monster. A concentration of *ponchos* in the main plaza, the heart of the city... Quechua, out loud from the throat; Quechua shouted, threatening, tearing away the centuries of oppression.

Thus, in the post-reform era the *Runa*'s relationship with the (former) *hacendados* was considerably altered. Nevertheless, their better social standing with respect to the ex-landlords, as well as to the *mestizo* middle classes more generally for that matter, did not amount to liberation from oppression. Rather, they now had to deal with more subtle forms of systematic discrimination.

The *Runa*'s negotiation of the improved but nevertheless persistently disadvantageous social conditions took place increasingly beyond the *ayllus*, especially in the cities during the post-reform era, as their trading activities and urban migration grew. This had considerable implications for *Runa* identity, as we shall see.

Moreover, during the period after 1969, not only did the *Runa* share a 'new' relationship with other sectors of Peruvian society; they also were introduced to the likes of me—a 'development person'. Initially the face of the development apparatus was mostly that of agricultural extension agents employed by the government. However, nationals and internationals involved with non-governmental organisations increasingly became the norm. In this section, I will outline the influence on *Runa* identity of increased trading, urban migration and the development apparatus.

The ex-landlords' adaptations to the land reform of 1969

After the agrarian reform of 1969, the former *hacendado* class were able to capitalise on the on-going marginalisation of the *Runa*. Many of them adapted to the redistribution of lands in a manner that allowed them to continue exploiting the Indigenous communities. Often, ex-landlords moved off the *hacienda* to the closest town, where they invested significant liquidity salvaged in anticipation of the land expropriations in real estate, transportation and merchandising assets. Thus, they profited as 'middle-men' from the increasing commercial activities of the *Runa*. The town-based local elites in the rural highlands also derived much of their wealth as creditors, since the costs of manufactured goods from the cities climbed faster than prices for agricultural produce (Zimmerer, 1996).

When I was in Perú, the continuing parallel between *Runa-Misti* and centre-periphery relations was very much evident even in the remote valley of Lares (in which Choquecancha is located), where a centre existed in the tiny district capital, the site at which most local commerce took place. On market day, the plaza served as a showcase for highland products brought down from the hills by the *Runa*, and jungle fruit brought

up by *colonos* from the upper Amazon. But also on display in plain view were local class divisions drawn along ethnic lines.

The businesspeople that ran the stores, restaurants and hostels in town were relatively light-skinned in many, but not all cases. Nor were they incapable of speaking in Quechua. Nevertheless, their common preference for Spanish, and simply their appearance of being very much at home in the plaza, the commercial hub of the district, distinguished them from the *Runa*, who although making up the majority of the market day crowd were clearly out of their element.

Another obvious determinant of wealth and power in the valley of Lares which I observed, perhaps especially apparent to me because of my frequent travelling between there and Cuzco, was access to means of transportation. Control over motorised mobility was the basis upon which a relatively few *mestizos* derived considerable prestige and a much greater income than the *Runa* who made up the bulk of their clients.

The professional drivers who travelled regularly between Lares and Calca, a town much larger than the former and capital of the neighbouring district and province, normally called the latter 'home'. They nevertheless were familiar, and were in some cases even related by blood or *compadrazgo* to families in the Lares valley; not only town-folk in the capital, but even *Runa* in the *ayllus*. Yet, despite being well-known in the valley, those who provided the only vehicular transport available to the people of Lares offered their services unpredictably.

To travel from Lares one has the option of riding on one of a few mini-vans or the odd bus, which specialize in moving human cargo, or one of the merchant trucks. Aside from a couple of choice seats in the cab alongside the driver, the trucks offer only bumpy rides on the back amongst bags of *papa*, cases of toilet paper, or the occasional livestock.

As the condor flies, Choquecancha is easily short of 100 kilometres from Cuzco, which was my usual destination when travelling from Lares, yet the trip there is a full-day ordeal. This is due in large part to the mountainous terrain that one crosses. Cuzco and Lares are separated by two mountain passes, both of which are several hundred meters above the two towns. The steep ascent and descent require that a long and winding route be taken.

However, topography is not the only reason that makes the trip lengthy. To illustrate it is most instructive to consider the journey in the Cuzco-Calca-Lares-Choquecancha direction. Along the route between Cuzco and Calca, which is part of the tourist circuit, Greyhound-style buses offer regular trips over a paved highway, which take just one hour. But the inferior quality of the road beyond Calca dramatically slows the rate of travel on the second half of the journey.

It is necessary to arrive in Calca on one of the early-morning buses from Cuzco to secure a spot on a mini-van or truck bound for Lares, because they leave only once a day. After the driver of the vehicle has managed to recruit enough passengers and merchandise to fill up, the journey begins. But owing to the narrowness and ill-maintained quality of the unpaved road, the drive from Calca into Lares takes about five hours, even though the distance is comparable to the Cuzco-Calca jaunt. Finally, if Choquecancha is the ultimate destination, the journey is not yet over, as the walk from Lares's capital to the *ayllu* takes another hour-and-a-half.

Thus, on top of the monetary expense of travelling from Choquecancha into the larger centre of Calca, or the relative metropolis of Cuzco, the time and energy involved in such journeys also hamper *Runa* mobility. The difficulty involved in making these

trips is of course all the more daunting if one is trying to market goods, which is often the purpose of rural travellers' expeditions to the city.

In summary, it appeared to me during the course of my research that the *Runa* of the Lares valley experienced significant marginalization at the level of the district, with disproportionate wealth and power controlled by a relatively few *mestizos* located in the small capital-town and in Calca, the capital of the neighbouring district.

Furthermore, the centre-periphery dynamic at the local level was compounded by a similar tendency operating at a parallel but larger scale, namely, the marginalization of the rural highlands as a whole within the 'national' economy. This exacerbated the physical isolation of the valley as a result of inadequate investment in transportation infrastructure on the part of the government.

Urban bias

The land redistribution of 1969 represented for the *Runa* the most significant victory they had ever won in making demands of the Republican government. Nevertheless, just as it was with *Runa*-government relations throughout the 20th Century up until 1969, the *Runa* continued to be disadvantaged throughout the post-reform era as a result of successive governments favouring urban and lowland economic growth at the expense of highland agriculture. In the case of the Velasco regime, for example, the Generals' otherwise significant reforms did nothing to address the lack of basic infrastructure in the Indigenous communities, where formal medical services, clean water, and electricity were all still absent well after 1969 (Zimmerer, 1996; Seibold, 1990).

Likely the most important consequence of the government's urban orientation for the *Runa* however, was that the greater land and labour resources newly afforded to them

through the land reform were devalued by the accompanying macro-economic policies. Typical of populist governments throughout South and Meso-America during the 20th Century, the military regime's priority was to accelerate industrialization. Continued dependence on trade for capital goods meant that further developing the strength of the domestic industrial sector required the expansion of capital intensive export agriculture (Thorp, 1992).

Large-scale, lowland production was targeted by the Junta to increase food exports for foreign exchange by providing subsidized credit for machinery, petrochemicals and other inputs. Meanwhile, subsidies for imports were put in place to provide cheap food to low-wage urban workers. Such policies adversely affected the previously-stable domestic market for *papa* and other products of Indigenous agriculture (Zimmerer, 1996).

As a result, the *Runa* experienced a considerable 'pull' to the cities and lowland areas where the bulk of public investment was being directed by the military government, and 'push' away from their communities into migrant wage labour due to the devaluation of their local economic activities. Migration between the Indigenous communities and other locales, as well as integration with the cash economy, increased as a result.

Although the Junta's macro-economic interventions neglected Indigenous agriculture, it is important to note that the force exerted by their policies nevertheless succeeded in drawing even the *Runa* towards increasing market integration both in terms of production and consumption. In addition to an increasing array of commercial artefacts, even at home, the most important aspect of these changes was greater exposure

to and familiarity with white- and *mestizo*-dominated domains, heightening the influence of *Misti* culture within the *Runa* communities.

To be sure, the dynamics of the *Runa* communities' relationship with the dominant society outlined above were not entirely new. Efforts at 'modernisation' dated back to the turn of the century. Members of the ruling classes had accrued significant profits from exports during the late 19th Century boom in international trade. These entrepreneurs, allied with a modern-minded Republican government, invested their recent 'earnings' in diverse industries and transportation infrastructure that integrated local markets, improving domestic and international commerce. At the same time they increased their economic and political influence, for the first time as a truly 'national' bourgeoisie, over localities throughout the Peruvian territory (Mallón, 1983).

I have noted in the last chapter the demographic shift that resulted from these economic changes in the 20th Century, which saw increasing urbanisation and growth of the middle classes. These transitions involved not only *mestizos* and other non-*Runa* groups such as Afro- and Chinese-Peruvians, but also, undoubtedly, members of Indigenous communities. Nor did the process of *mestizaje*⁶² in Perú, to which these changes contributed, begin only *then*, certainly. However, the period after 1969 was quantitatively if not qualitatively unprecedented in terms of urban migration among the *Runa*. Therefore the ethnic dimension of the urban bias that characterised government policies was particularly influential in the post-reform era.

The centre-periphery dynamic of *Runa-Misti* relations after 1969

Governmental investment in infrastructure in post-reform Perú favoured urban and lowland areas not only because they promised a higher return on investment, but also

⁶² *Mestizaje*: (Spanish) Condition of being Mestizo.

because they were *criollo*- and *mestizo*-dominated. Conversely, remote areas like Lares were neglected not only because of a strictly economic rationale, but also because of a cultural belief in the 'natural' poverty of 'Indian country'. Although factors such as geographic demographics, and the uneven terms-of-trade between agricultural and industrial products informed policies affecting rural-urban dynamics, the relationship between the centre and the periphery were also intertwined with ethnic relations.

Because the reforms of the Velasco regime were based on the expropriation of US-owned capital and land formerly controlled by *hacienda* and plantation owners, whose ethnic backgrounds tended towards whiteness and Europeanism, the reconfiguration of power after 1969 diminished the status of the 'lighter, upper classes.' But this relative shift benefited the lower classes unevenly.

As I have already noted, the middle and lower classes, especially of the urban and lowland areas, made up the favoured constituency of the Junta. Exactly what genealogical and cultural patterns determined the biological and ethnic similarities and differences between the 'darker, lower classes' of *those* areas, and the *Runa* of the highlands, is impossible to determine. But assuming that the social construction of 'darkness' was often associated as much with the cultural expression of indigeneity as with skin colour and other physical features, the *Runa* were 'darker' than the popular classes of the cities and export-producing areas.

The latter, despite their physical similarities to the rural *Runa* in many cases, were favoured in government policy over the inhabitants of the *ayllus*. This was at least in part because even the most recent arrivals to the cities and lowlands, including those who came only temporarily as migrants from the rural highlands exhibited a tendency in the eyes of the government towards assimilation.

While I would not suggest that migration away from the *ayllu* is necessarily assimilating in all cases, it is important to acknowledge that *Runa* assimilation contributed to the gains made, particularly during the late 20th Century, by sectors of Peruvian society that aspired to consolidate a sense of Peruvian nationhood, transcending historical animosities between different Peoples residing within the state territory. But I would also emphasise that the *process* of *mestizaje* is indeed a protracted phenomenon, and by no means inevitable. The existence of the term, '*cholo*,' which is used by *Runa* and non-*Runa* alike to characterize an '*Indio*' whose belonging seems to lie vaguely between the Indigenous and *mestizo* domains, speaks to this fact.

There is thus an ambiguity and fluidity of ethnic identities amongst Perú's peoples, especially in the highlands, which "produces a sort of continuum between Indigenous (Andean) and white persons. Therefore, ethnic identifications are circumstantial, associated with economic, gender and age-related variables, and may even vary within a single family" (Remy, 1994).

Nevertheless, many among the major self-identifying Indigenous sectors of the rural highlands and Amazonian lowlands, whose communities are referred to broadly in official Peruvian discourse as '*comunidades indígenas*'⁶³ and '*comunidades nativas*,'⁶⁴ respectively, distinguish themselves markedly from other sectors, even if they do not reject the idea of Peruvian nationality outright.

At the other extreme, among the dominant sectors, there are those who embrace Peruvian nationalism but insist on thinking of it strictly as a project of transplanted Hispanicism. Some even go so far as to deny that the majority of Peruvians are of mixed

⁶³ *Comunidad indígena*: (Spanish) Peruvian legal term for highland Indigenous communities.

⁶⁴ *Comunidad nativa*: (Spanish) Peruvian legal term for Amazonian Indigenous communities.

lineage. I encountered an overtly ideological expression of this view while waiting in line at a photocopy shop in Cuzco.

A well-to-do woman who looked to be in her 50s, and who I would have identified as a relatively affluent urban *mestiza*, struck up a conversation with me, asking what I was doing in Perú. When I told her that I was a student spending much of my time in the countryside, she promptly took it upon herself to relieve me of any potential 'confusion' concerning the difference between the '*Indios*' with whom I was getting acquainted and the rest of the country. Although she conceded that there had been occasional mixing, the majority of Peruvians were of European ancestry as far as she was concerned.

In Lares I had a similar encounter with another *mestiza* woman who appeared to be of about the same age and social status as the one in the photocopy shop. She and her husband, likely from Cuzco, happened to be in Lares the day of the seed festival, on their way to enjoy the local hot springs. After browsing the *papa* that were on display in the plaza for a while with mild interest, the woman approached me and asked where I was from. She was delighted to hear that I was from Canada because her son had been to university in Saskatchewan.

Having surmised that I was one of the organizers of the festival, she went on to say how wonderful it was that I had come from so far away to work with these poor *campesinos*. Gesturing towards the ponchoed man who stood looking on just a few feet away, she commented that, clearly, they were in need of all the help they could get.

I protested with embarrassment that in fact it was the other way around; *I* was learning a great deal from my hosts. As she left, I awkwardly re-iterated to the same man who had overheard us that I considered myself the student, not the teacher. I hoped to

clarify that although I seemed to have more in common with this woman than with him and the other *Runa*, I did not share her contemptuous pity towards them. But could I really expect to be viewed as anything more than just another paternalistic *Misti*?

As official photographer at the festival I wondered whether participants felt objectified as I snapped photos of them presiding over their *papa*. Of course, I always asked permission to take a picture, and some folks knew that I would do my best to get a copy of the photo made for them on my next trip to Cuzco, but clearly these pictures were not for them. I might give away a copy here to Illurina, a copy there to Fernando, but the collection as a whole I would keep, and the best shots would be sent off to the donors who had contributed financially to the festival, so that they would have proof of what a success the event had been and how well the money had been spent.

This was not the only time that I suspected a degree of scepticism, or in some cases outright hostility, if only based on the expressions on strangers' faces about my presence in the district, ostensibly as a well-intentioned development worker and benign researcher. Nor was this impression entirely imagined as I found out upon hearing a rumour concerning the fundraising that I had done for the festival.

Apparently, the fact that I co-organised the event with Juan, who would soon be running for district mayor of Lares, was viewed by Juan's rivals as meddling in local politics. According to the gossip, I had access to exorbitant amounts of North American dollars. I *had* solicited about US\$1500 for prizes, the purchase of seed tubers for an *in situ* crop diversity conservation project, and other miscellaneous expenses, but this was far less than what the rumours told.

I relate this story not as a criticism of people in the district for being cynical or 'ungrateful'. Rather, I think it illustrates that, not surprisingly, people have had past

interactions with outsiders who have supposedly come as agents of development that have had mixed results at best. Furthermore, it stands to reason that those of us who come from the North may well be perceived with the deepest level of scepticism. After all, we are least capable of understanding local realities, least likely to stay long enough to begin getting a sense of the challenges and aspirations of local people, and perhaps most prone to do-gooder delusions.

In Cuzco where many non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are based, the failures of the development industry are also well known. While in the city one evening, I saw an excellent comic play at one of the premiere venues for the performing arts, Casa Garcilaso, composed and performed by a local theatre group. Satirising the development industry, it depicted a case of extremely cynical exploitation of the poor under the guise of humanitarian aid. However, this was not entirely a joke. Although the performance was absurdly funny, the evening closed on a serious note. As the director wished the audience goodnight, he reminded us that the production had been only an embellishment of practices common among many organizations based in Cuzco.

A woman who often stood in the doorway of her shop on a street that I frequented in Cuzco expressed a less animated but similarly telling commentary on the development industry. She had the austerity and force that struck me so often in interactions with Peruvian women who made their living as buyers and sellers. Candidly, she stated that she didn't mind foreigners as long as they spent money, but many other nationals felt differently. Outsiders who came to work in NGOs were regarded with resentment by many among the unemployed, she said, for taking away opportunities for *them* to work, which they would gladly do if given the chance.

Notwithstanding the critical sentiment expressed towards misplaced or hypocritical 'philanthropy' that runs as a common thread through all of the stories just related, it is important to note a major difference between the racist attitude that exists among many urban *mestizos* towards the *Runa*, on the one hand, and the scepticism and resentment of both the former and the latter towards the development establishment, on the other.

The exchanges I had with the woman in the photocopy shop and the mother of the man who studied in Saskatchewan, in Cuzco and Lares, respectively, illustrated what one might call the oppression of the Fourth World, to which the *Runa* are subjected on a daily basis within Perú. By contrast, the oppression of the Third World was the underlying phenomenon being identified in the sardonic critique of bogus philanthropy expressed by the theatre troupe, as well as in the shopkeeper's description of the common characterization of Northern development professionals' work as just another manifestation of imperialism⁶⁵.

The *Runa*'s oppression, with which I was associated by virtue of my being a *Misti*, encompasses but is not limited to the domination of the global South by the global North. As a subordinated People within the nation-state of Perú, they are obliged to contend with the compounded forces of Northern neo-colonialism and the oppressive internal social dynamics of the Peruvian nation-state resulting from the legacy of its colonial origins.

⁶⁵ Tuhiwai Smith (1999) writes: "Imperialism tends to be used in at least four different ways when describing the form of European imperialism which 'started' in the fifteenth century (1) imperialism as economic expansion (2) imperialism as the subjugation of 'others'; (3) imperialism as an idea or spirit with many forms of realization and (4) imperialism as a discursive field of knowledge." In the above passage concerning "Northern development professionals' work as just another manifestation of Northern imperialism", I use the term to express the third and fourth notions of imperialism listed by Tuhiwai Smith. However, subsequently I use the term, according to Tuhiwai Smith's scheme, in the first and second senses.

It is difficult to distinguish between the ways in which rich Northern countries contribute in the South to the oppression of dominant societies (the Third World), on the one hand, and that of Indigenous Peoples (the Fourth World), on the other. Nevertheless, in the following section I present an overview of development policy going back to the 1930s, emphasizing their effects in South and Meso-America and attempting to draw particular attention to how they have impacted rural and Indigenous Peoples of the region's nation-states.

CHAPTER V: INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT: A RETROSPECTIVE

Agricultural Modernization in the 20th Century

Following recovery from the Depression of the 1930s, the modernization of agriculture became an important objective for state governments in South and Meso-America. Although industrialisation was the ultimate objective of economic planners, a major role for agriculture was important given South and Meso-American states' continued dependence on trade for capital goods (Thorp, 1992).

Thus the effort to develop strong domestic industrial sectors required the expansion of capital-intensive export agriculture. In the minds of the planners, this would not only increase production of the crucial primary exports, but would also free up labour for a burgeoning industrial sector (Cardoso & Fishlow, 1992).

Agri-businessmen and *campesinos* with sufficient resources to adopt the modern technologies were targeted and assisted in making the transition through government subsidies for purchases of machinery, petrochemicals, and other inputs. In addition, roads were built or improved in targeted areas to ensure access to markets for the growing surpluses (Gonzales, 1999).

Following the recovery of war-torn European economies in the latter years of the 1940s, the international focus of the US, now the firmly established leader of the capitalist industrial countries, turned to what was to be eventually called by the French the 'Third World', the resources and political allegiance of which would be contested for several decades to come. The two contenders, of course, were the US led 'First World' and the 'Second World' led by the Soviet Union, the only country considered to have industrialised under 'socialism' (Sachs, 1992).

The importance of the non-industrialised countries in the emerging foreign policy of the US was highlighted in the inauguration speech of the newly elected President, Harry Truman, on January 20, 1949:

We must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas.

The old imperialism—exploitation for foreign profit—has no place in our plans. What we envisage is a program of development based on the concepts of democratic fair dealing (President Harry Truman, quoted in Esteva, 1992).

During the 1950s and 1960s, policies concerning domestic food supply in South and Meso-American countries reflected a commitment by state governments mesmerised by industrialisation to keep prices low for the growing number of urban workers. This was facilitated by the ready supply of food 'aid' and cheap imports provided by the US and other rich countries that dominated the newly formed development apparatus (Friedmann, 1998).

In the US, where the drought of the 1930s contributed to the generalised economic stagnation of the Great Depression, governments had been forced by public unrest to subsidise farmers in order to ensure affordable food provisions. The policy of agriculture subvention was entrenched by the onset of the Second Great European War (WWII), and further reinforced throughout the war years when surplus production in the relatively undisturbed US agriculture industry was especially profitable under the conditions of global conflict (Friedmann, 1998).

Indeed, by the 1950s governments that had bought and redistributed farmers' surpluses to alleviate hunger and social unrest domestically during the Depression extended this model to the international scene. This amounted to food dumping, which

was practiced most widely by the US, whose farmers were significantly propped up by it. Although it imposed severe competition on the recipient countries' rural poor, who might otherwise have found domestic markets for any modest surpluses, the urban-oriented governments of South and Meso-American states were not concerned (Friedmann, 1998).

Also in the 1950s, international research programs were established to generalize on a global scale the industrial model of agriculture that now flourished in the US. The so-called, 'Green Revolution' (GR), in keeping with the mono-cultural US model upon which it was based, focused only on rice, wheat and maize, and prioritised large-scale, capital-intensive production (Buttel *et al.*, 1985).

One of the impacts of the GR in many countries was to exacerbate social inequities in the countryside because of its bias towards export-oriented production, favouring relatively well-endowed farmers who were best positioned to benefit from subsidies for the capital-intensive technologies. This not only reflected the urban bias of state governments keen to improve export surpluses in order to subsidise industrialisation, but also the interests of trans-national corporations (TNCs) producing the inputs associated with the GR (Escobar, 1994).

The promotion of capital-intensive agriculture, which displaced many small-scale producers, alongside import-substitution industrialisation programs led to significant urbanisation and economic growth in countries throughout South and Meso-America. Especially in the cities, states invested considerably in social and physical infrastructure.

Nevertheless, industrial and other forms of urban employment were not adequate to provide livelihoods for all the dispossessed rural labourers, to say nothing of the social upheaval caused by the urban migrations (Portes & Hoffman, 2003). Thus, wealth disparities had grown by the 1970s within countries of South and Meso-America.

Moreover, the growth in the domestic wealth gap of South and Meso-American nation-states was reflected at the global level, where the disparity in material living standards between poor and rich countries had also increased, despite the expressed purposes of the development project over two decades prior. Equally troubling for the popular classes of South and Meso-American nation-states was that economic growth was beginning to stagnate throughout the region. Indeed, high levels of 'national' debt, in many cases accumulated under the aegis of dictatorial 'Western'-backed governments, mounted throughout the 1970s.

The recession in South and Meso-America during the 1970s was part of a more general economic stall that also reached the economies of the North, which precipitated a broad shift in the global political economy. "Neo-liberalism as a political economic doctrine [went] back to the late 30s", but was not widely accepted until after the global economic crisis of the 1970s (Harvey, 2003). The election of Margaret Thatcher as British Prime Minister in 1979 was one of the significant markers indicating the success that neo-liberal ideologues had achieved by the end of that decade.

An important result of the hegemony of *laissez-faire* economic policies in the realm of agriculture was that "SAPs [Structural Adjustment Programs] hypocritically 'kicked away the ladder' (i.e., protectionist tariffs and subsidies) that the OECD nations [Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development member states in the Americas are limited to México, the US and Canada] historically employed in their own climb from agriculture to urban high-value goods and services" (Chang cited in Davis, 2004). Many agriculturalists in impoverished countries were devastated by the competition of the global market to which they were so abruptly subjected.

However, any discussion of neo-liberalism must not be limited to questions about the slope of the global economic playing field, so to speak. To do so would suggest that it is first and foremost an earnest debate about the pros and cons of free trade. In fact, Northern imperialist states are not willing to take the lead as it were, by actually following the liberal economic principles that they espouse themselves.

Indeed, many Southern countries' opposition to the World Trade Organisation (WTO), for instance, has been largely based on the hypocrisy of rich states in demanding liberalisation only for those industries that are already dominated by the corporations with which they are aligned. Meanwhile, they refuse to do the same for those industries in which global competition is relatively balanced, especially agriculture (Harvey, 2003).

Having to compete with heavily capitalised, large-scale, and often massively subsidised Northern agriculture forced an unprecedented level of migration to cities on the part of rural people, with accompanying social upheaval, in the region of South and Meso-America during the final decades of the 20th Century (Bryceson cited in Davis, 2004). Indeed, the trend continues, projected to soon cause a shift in the global pattern of human habitation from predominantly rural to urban, if that momentous ecological turning point has not in fact occurred already (*The Challenge of the Slums: Global Report on Human Settlements*, 2003 UN publication cited in Davis, 2004).

Most of the rural poor who move to the cities end up in shantytowns. But, in contrast to the inner-city slums of early Western European industrialisation, which were created under circumstances otherwise similar in many ways to those surrounding today's Third World hyper-urbanisation, contemporary slums in the South sprawl around the perimeters of the major cities. Unlike the post-WWII era, however, when many of the new arrivals to Third World cities could find formal work, levels of urban economic

growth in the South today are not even close to creating jobs at pace with the rural-to-urban flow. Indeed, even many of the people who entered the urban middle classes of Southern cities during the post-WWII phase are losing their jobs (Portes & Hoffman, 2003). Yet, paradoxically,

The global forces 'pushing' people from the countryside—mechanization in Java and India, food imports in México, Haiti and Kenya, civil war and drought throughout Africa, and everywhere the consolidation of small into large holdings and the competition of industrial-scale agribusiness—seem to sustain urbanization even when the 'pull' of the city is drastically weakened by debt and depression (Davis, 2004).

A mitigating intervention that might have abated the devastation of the countryside and that was actually still being discussed early on in the neo-liberal era, namely, agrarian reform, was unfortunately not implemented. In the 1970s, land redistribution was still being pushed by the most radical elements within the development apparatus, echoing the calls of rural social movements, Indigenous-led movements not least among them, for more effective agrarian reform (Zamocs, 2003). This was particularly true for South and Meso-American countries, most of which had undergone land redistribution programs that had largely failed by the 1970s.

One would expect proposals for land reform to have been embraced in the new era as a 'modernising' measure for South and Meso-America, as it was still mirroring through residual forms of colonial social relations, the main cause of persistent concentrations in land ownership. Such a policy would have been in keeping with the neo-liberals' espoused ideal of free competition. But apparently agrarian reform as a strategy for rural development was judged to be too interventionist, and was thus shelved (Mallón, 1992).

Instead, the development apparatus made other policy adjustments in the 1970s. While still focused on international agricultural research institutions as was the case in

the GR strategy of the 50s and 60s, it now called for incorporating a wider range of traditional crops and prioritizing the needs of small farmers, as opposed to a strictly 'economies-of-scale' orientation (Buttel *et al.*, 1985).

Social equity concerns aside, as they apprehended the dramatic reduction of genetic diversity in crops worldwide due to the mono-cultural approach they had been promoting, agricultural scientists now out of necessity had to pay attention to marginal agriculturalists. Breeders were ironically forced to seek out the seeds of those left behind by the GR in whose fields a high proportion of the remaining 'global genetic resources for agriculture' remained (Mooney & Fowler, 1990).

The scarcity of agricultural genetic resources became a limiting factor in the work of crop breeders due in no small part to the unanticipated pest problems associated with the GR. But pest problems due to genetic uniformity were only part of a broader environmental impact that limited the capacity for sustained productivity gains, and in some cases caused declines in agricultural systems based on the GR model (Buttel *et al.*, 1985).

Meanwhile, as the limitations of the GR were coming to light in the 1970s and 80s, major advances in biotechnology were being made. The centrality of the GR in mainstream agricultural development thus began to decline, while the role of public research in agricultural development also diminished (Alston *et al.*, 1998).

The *avant-garde* in agricultural development changed from the public to the private sector in the 1980s largely as part of the broader neo-liberal shift that was now well underway. The dominant role of the private sector in biotechnology research and development was a boon for many TNCs. The profitability of the new technologies was based in large part on the subordination of Indigenous communities' 'intellectual

property' to plant breeders' 'rights', a trend that steadily progressed from the 1970s onwards (Buttel *et al*, 1985).

TNCs' increasing role in agricultural development involving biotechnology exacerbated the negative influence that private interests had had on research during the era of the GR, thus further marginalizing small farmers. Indeed, the exploitative character of the increasingly corporate model of agricultural development was more insidious than that of the GR.

Ostensibly, the emphasis on achieving benefits to public welfare, brought about by the GR as a result of the leading role of public institutions in developing the technologies, somewhat mitigated the negative impact of the process on small farmers. In contrast, private interests bent on 'vertically integrating' their control over food production were now driving agricultural development. Corporate profits soared through overt appropriation of the knowledge of mostly Indigenous farmers, who could expect to be most adversely affected by the resulting changes to the food system (Buttel *et al.*, 1985).

In response to critics of the so-called 'Bio-revolution', proponents raise the Malthusian spectre for justification. Biotech enthusiasts claim that their 'revolution' is needed to ensure global food security in light of rising world population and global environmental degradation.

A similar rationale has been expressed within the development apparatus as it relates not only to agriculture, but also to environmental questions in general. In response to concerns about climate change, ozone depletion, acid rain, and other large-scale phenomena, a globally oriented environmentalist current has emerged as a significant facet of today's development discourse (Peet & Watts, 2004).

The hypocritical character of this trend parallels the benevolent claims that the TNCs use to justify the appropriation of Indigenous farmers' knowledge. The globalist discourse that casts environmental problems in a way that 'internationalises' the responsibility to deal with them obfuscates the fact that the highly consumptive over-developed countries are disproportionately at fault for global-scale environmental decline. Such ideological distortion serves to legitimise the renewal of imperialist power structures within the context of both unprecedented planetary fragility, and persistent, indeed amplified inequality (Loker, 1999) at the global level, even after five decades of 'development'.

CHAPTER VI: THE 'SECURITY' AND 'GROWTH' AGENDAS OF THE DEVELOPMENT APPARATUS

Chapters VI and VII provide a more fine-grained analysis of the development apparatus based on interviews that I conducted with ten Canadians. The people I approached who agreed to participate in the interviews varied in terms of their experience working in South and Meso-America (see figure below). I intentionally recruited participants who differed in terms of their structural positioning as individuals involved in development and solidarity work related to South and Meso-American Indigenous Peoples.

My own awareness of the field in terms of concrete practices and typical contexts of various development and solidarity initiatives was enriched considerably by speaking to the research participants. The interviews served as a means to providing a breadth of description (Geertz cited in Becker, 1996) of First World-Fourth World interaction.

Using ATLAS qualitative data analysis software I systematically analysed the interviews, on the basis of which I constructed sketches of the following: the structural context that obtains when Northerners head South to do development and solidarity work; the social theoretical underpinnings of the approaches to development and solidarity represented among the interview participants; and the micro-politics of Northerners' interactions as visitors to South and Meso-American Indigenous communities.

Throughout, my interpretation was guided by the intent of gaining some understanding of how Northerners, like me, might best engage Indigenous Peoples as they struggle for self-determination.

An interviewee, who teaches development studies at a Canadian university, characterised the 'development industry' broadly under three 'agendas'; those of 'Security', 'Growth' [in the economic sense] and 'Empowerment'. This is a useful basic

framework for discussing the structural, ideological, and inter-personal power dynamics, often characterized by a strong North-South component, that affect South and Meso-American Indigenous Peoples through the development apparatus. I will also use an additional category, which I will refer to as ‘Solidarity’, to characterize First World-Fourth World interactions that take place as part of Southern social movements.

Interview participant	Agenda	Sector	Experience interacting with South and Meso-American Indigenous Peoples
Roy	Growth	Governmental and Non-governmental	Research for local, regional and national development in the Caribbean
John	Growth	Multi-lateral, Governmental and Academic	Research for local and regional development in various countries, esp. Brazil
Tina	Empowerment	Governmental, Academic and Non-governmental	Research for local and regional development in Perú and local NGO project coordination in México
Pablo	Growth	Governmental and Academic	Research for local, regional and national development in various countries
Darryl	Empowerment	Governmental and Academic	Research for local development in various countries, esp. México
Lorna	Empowerment	Governmental, Academic and Non-governmental	Research for local development in various countries and regional NGO project coordination in Ecuador
Ricardo	Solidarity	Social Movements	Human rights accompaniment in conflict zones of México, Guatemala and Colombia
Nishi	Solidarity	Social Movements	Fundraising for social movement initiatives in México, Guatemala, Bolivia, Argentina and Chile
Paul	Empowerment	Non-governmental and Social Movements	Research for social movements in many countries
Mark	Solidarity	Social Movements	Human rights accompaniment in conflict zones of México and Colombia

In this chapter, I consider the Security and Growth agendas, in that order according to the level of subtlety with which the respective objectives of the two projects are typically pursued. Although interview participants said least about the Security

agenda, this was in large part because my questions were oriented more towards, firstly, the Empowerment agenda, and secondly, the Growth agenda. Nevertheless, several interviewees did address the Security agenda significantly. Moreover, as the belly of the beastly side of official development, it is important to consider the Security agenda in order to better contextualize the other forms of intervention that I will be going on to discuss.

The Security Agenda

The Security agenda, according to John, was the basis of the 'West's' international development initiative when it was first launched in the early years of the Cold War. But even now the Security agenda consumes the majority of official development funds, despite the fall of the USSR. Today, John says, "The biggest chunk of...development aid...goes to Middle Eastern countries". Indeed, the contemporary Security agenda is expressed predominantly in the official 'War on Terror', the focal point of which, as I write, is the US-led military occupation of Iraq. The occupation is being resisted forcefully in Iraq, just as the attempt by the US government to mobilize a 'Coalition of the Willing' before the invasion was launched was resisted by millions of people around the world.

The anti-war protests that rejected the 'anti-terror' rhetoric put forth to justify imperialism, most notably by the US Bush administration, were unprecedented. Not only were the sheer numbers of demonstrators previously unmatched, the 'pre-emptive' quality of the mobilization, which suitably matched the doctrine of pre-emption being promoted by the aggressors, was a historical feat of grassroots action. But the concentration of oil reserves that confers as both blessing and curse exceptional geo-

political importance on the Middle East drove the war makers to forge on in defiance in spite of the formidable opposition across the globe.

In post-Cold War South and Meso-America the US military has undertaken widespread direct and indirect interventions as part of the so-called 'War on Drugs', which can now be invoked with added fervour as a crusade against 'narco-terror' (Petras, 2003). Currently, México is playing host to a particularly cynical instance of the manipulative use of War-on-Drugs rhetoric to justify repression. The state administration in México (more-or-less a client of its US counterpart) has fabricated evidence of Zapatista involvement in marijuana production as a pretext for increasing militarization in the rebel-controlled zone of southern Chiapas (www.narconews.com).

In actual fact, the Zapatistas strictly forbid the consumption, let alone production of drugs, including alcohol, within their autonomous territories. Meanwhile, the role of the Mexican and US armed forces in drug trafficking is much more ambiguous. Yet, the falsity and hypocrisy of the allegations of drug trade involvement against the Zapatistas notwithstanding, using the War on Drugs as a façade to justify repression would so far appear to be achieving the desired results of the imperialists. The EZLN (Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional) was forced into a state of 'Red Alert' as of June 19, 2005 (www.ezln.org).

In instances of overt imperialism on the part of Northern governments, of which the above examples are characteristic, the Canadian state is also often implicated. However, it typically plays a 'behind-the-scenes' role. In the latest instance of foreign powers undermining democracy in Haiti, for example, Canada along with France and the US recruited a client regime to overthrow democratically elected President Jean Bertrand Aristide. Canadian personnel helped train the Haitian armed forces that are now being

deployed to violently repress popular mobilizations against the US, France and Canada-backed government (Podur, 2004; www.haitiaction.net).

In Afghanistan, Canada's 'peace-keeping' forces arrived after US soldiers had completed the dirtiest of the work there to allow the latter to depart for more of the same in Iraq. Moreover, although Canada played no official part in the invasion of Iraq, Canadian personnel were in fact deployed to Baghdad as assistants to US strategic planners (Podur, 2004)

These recent instances of intervention on the part of the Canadian state in international affairs suggest that this country's official foreign policy is characterized by following the US into other Peoples' houses, so to speak; but rather than barging in through the front, Canada's role is to enter through the back, quietly and on cue.

This interpretation of the relationship between the official foreign policy of Canada and the US is helpful in apprehending how our own government might be implicated in other imperialist adventures led by the great nation-state to our immediate south. In the following example from one of the interviews, mindfulness of US-Canada collusion in official foreign policy sheds light on its broader implications.

One of the interview participants, Ricardo, a Québécois whose father came from Colombia, had done volunteer work since the mid 1990s as a human rights observer and advocate. The main element of this work was popular education and lobbying the government while in Canada, and periodic stints of accompaniment with vulnerable and repressed populations in México, Guatemala and Colombia.

In Guatemala, Ricardo was involved in a Canadian-based initiative, a response to a call for international observers. Tens of thousands of Guatemalans, many of them Indigenous, had been internally displaced or forced to flee to México as a result of the

civil war of the 1980s (News from Americas Watch, 1990). The call came following official agreements made by the refugees with the Guatemalan government to ensure that those who had been displaced by civil strife would be allowed to re-settle and would be recognized by the state in their old or newly established settlements:

[Under] these agreements...they are recognized as non-combatants. The Guatemalan state...recognizes [their] right to return and have some land. The Guatemalan government would lend them money so that they could buy land and it would be communal.

There were a few [more] points...one of them was that these refugees were asking...that international support be recognized as part of this agreement...that international human rights observers could come and live with them and stay with them and accompany them all through the process.

It's important to say that that was agreed to because of the fact that the UN [United Nations] had...let the refugees down...All around this political process [of deliberations with the Guatemalan state] the UN had not really supported it. And so the refugees were...saying...“we cannot count on the UN when it's the moment for criticizing the Guatemalan state, and so we ask for international solidarity.” So that was why the organization first started operating (Ricardo, 9:15).

Over the course of his work concerning Guatemala, Ricardo became frustrated by the Canadian government's blasé attitude towards the reports of human rights abuses to which his group was drawing attention. Even though as he states above, his group had come into being largely as a response to the displaced people's criticisms levelled at the most prominent of official human rights institutions, the UN, not being an official institution Ricardo's group received very little recognition: “The Canadian government never really took account of anything that we were doing...It's like, when the Canadian government meets human rights groups, they give one group two minutes to speak.”

Furthermore, in the late 1990s the Canadian government was apparently in no position to attend to allegations against its Guatemalan counterpart made by Ricardo's

group or any of the other relatively low profile human rights organizations. According to Ricardo, the two governments were actually engaged in business at the time.

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) had been promoting a 'Canadian' technology, a microwave telephone system, and ultimately financed the instalment of the system for the Guatemalan government:

The Canadian government has this technology, which [it] is proud of because Canada is such a wide country...Throughout the world, Canada has made a name for itself installing these phone systems...I actually met...an ex-military guy who was going around the world installing these systems (Ricardo, 9:23).

The phone system was not deliberately intended by CIDA officials to contribute to harming people in Guatemala. However, Ricardo suggested that by self-interestedly promoting the technology, the government agency neglected to properly consider the uses to which it would be put. In Ricardo's eyes this amounted to complicity in acts of terror against the rural poor in Guatemala (among whom, incidentally, the *majority* identify as Indigenous):

The basic idea was [that] building the phone system...would help...Guatemalans...in remote regions communicate...But then, where are you going to put these phones? And in whose hands are they going to be? ...In most cases [they] just end up in the hands of the military.

[In Guatemala] CIDA paid for...[one of these] microwave telephone system[s]...which basically made it possible for the Guatemala army to communicate in remote regions [because] all these phones are in military bases. So...you're talking about helping the government that has been involved in huge...human rights violations (Ricardo, 9:23).

Stepping back to consider the broader context of this intervention, the good cop-bad cop division of labour between the Canada and US governments is once again evident. The US impact was far greater than that of Canada, which is bound to be true in most interventions involving both countries given the large power discrepancy between

the two states. But the modes of intervention employed in pursuit of the Security agenda in Guatemala by the two North American imperialist powers complemented one another.

In the 1980s and early 90s, the US contributed much aid to the Guatemalan military to terrorise the mostly Indigenous civilian population, thereby contributing to the Security agenda on the pretext that a high level of Communist tendencies lurked among the popular classes (Blum, 1998). During the relatively peaceful 'reconciliatory phase', as Ricardo pointed out, Canada did its part to advance the Security agenda by offering technical assistance. By facilitating communication between the state and inhabitants of far-flung rural areas, where the simmering national conflict had often hit hardest, the Canadian microwave phones would supposedly promote peace.

With the Cold War over and the War on Terror as yet inchoate, Canada's engagement in Guatemala in the 1990s took place at a conjuncture where the Security agenda was less ideologically charged by comparison to US involvement in the 80s. Nevertheless, the interventions of both the US and Canadian states were ostensibly justified by the contribution that each in their own way made to 'security'.

The US fulfilled its role as self-appointed 'Protector of the Free World', while Canada did its supposedly customary part of fostering cooperation and recovery within a war-torn society. The ideological value of maintaining its 'peace-keeper' profile internationally by helping to complete a process, presumed to be just, and begun through military intervention by the US, was favourable in ensuring that our government would have a role to play in future imperialist interventions.

Moreover, it is important to note the indirect perks for states like Canada that result from internal violence in Southern states created or abetted by imperialist interventions. As was pointed out by another research participant, whose experience in

South and Meso-America was also in human-rights observation, domestic insecurity often facilitates the extraction of resources for consumption in the North. Mark's comments here describe the way in which domestic political violence in Colombia intertwined with internal and North-South economic flows:

In Colombia...what people are experiencing...is the violent legacy of centuries of oppression. And it's been internalised into a civil war...Cycles of vengeance are so deep...the guerilla murders your brother [so] you join the paramilitaries to take revenge by killing guerillas...You kill someone [or] torture somebody and [then, in] that person's family, somebody joins an armed group, picks up a gun.

There's economic pressures [*sic*] that cause people to join armed groups. The economy is destroyed. Very few people in Colombia are making money and the ones that are making money are making a lot, while most other people struggle to find food.

The internal politics of the conflict are people pitted against each other...[The] instability that that creates allows for the extraction of resources and channelling them into our society...It benefits a few Colombians at the top, and it benefits...a lot of people [in Canada] (Mark, 11:33).

If what Mark says is true, the concentration of wealth occurring in Colombia, with the simultaneous enrichment of the North at the expense of the South broadly speaking, would seem to be a particularly callous case of plunder, from within and without, amidst tragedy. Bearing in mind that armed conflicts in the South affect Indigenous Peoples disproportionately (Churchill, 2003d), it seems reasonable to assume that Colombia's Fourth World inhabitants, highly marginalised at the best of times by virtue of their second-class status with respect to the 'national' society, have been among those most adversely affected by the civil war.

One hopes, at least, that Colombia might be an exception. After all, in comparison to the 1970s, 80s and early 90s, dictatorship, state terror, and civil war have subsided considerably in South and Meso-America overall.

In terms of subjection to the violence of civil strife, the Peoples of Perú, Guatemala and Chile, for example, who suffered much terror in the 1980s, were certainly better off by the mid-1990s. Their quality of life improved as a result of greater safety and security on a basic, physical level. Furthermore, minimal domestic conflict in individual nation-states dovetailed with the rise of free market ideals at the international level, resulting in significant economic growth throughout most of the Americas.

Yet, just as in Colombia, the gap between rich and poor grew in most countries of the region. Moreover, what is perhaps most troubling is that the conditions under which the concentration of wealth in the Americas as a whole occurred in the 1990s were not altogether different than the situation in Colombia that Mark described.

Even though circumstances in most other countries in South and Meso-America were relatively peaceful by comparison with Colombia, the 1990s nevertheless saw many of those nation-states similarly raided while in a state of upheaval. But rather than civil war, structural violence in the form of neo-liberal reforms caused the disorder.

The Growth Agenda

During the formative, Cold War years of the Security agenda, the level of economic growth in the US soared. Productivity was so high during the 1950s and 60s, in fact, that large sectors of the popular classes, including to some extent even Indigenous, black and other minority Peoples, enjoyed historically unprecedented material consumption in spite of relatively inequitable domestic distribution compared with many other countries (Harvey, 2003). Moreover, the post-WWII economic boom derived predominantly from investment, much of it public, within the boundaries of the nation-state, especially in the South and West, with foreign extraction playing only a very minor role. However, that form of the Growth agenda is long since defunct.

By 1970, from the perspective of the capitalist classes in the US, socially oriented public policies and investments that had been won by the labour, civil rights and other social movements, which remained strong, were not paying off quickly enough. Meanwhile, the strength of 'Third World' national liberation movements' resistance to US imperialism, especially in South-East Asia, was draining the US state coffers through military expenditures (Harvey, 2003).

Also hampering capital accumulation was the fact that other capitalist states, particularly Japan and West Germany, had gained considerable economic ground vis-à-vis the US. With its military capacity already over-extended by Cold War imperialism, and "threatened in the realm of production, the US...countered by asserting its hegemony through finance" (Harvey, 2003).

First, by printing more dollars, the US Treasury set in motion a wave of inflation worldwide. Then the US government de-linked the US dollar from the gold standard, which was the primary reason that the international system of controls set up after 1945 to prevent financial catastrophes like that which had preceded the Great Depression broke down in 1971, leading to a flurry of cross-border money flows (Harvey, 2003).

A pivotal event in the midst of the financial chaos was the oil crisis of 1973. The rapid escalation of OPEC [Organisation of Oil Exporting Countries] oil prices was actually orchestrated by the Nixon administration of the US in collusion with the Saudis and Iranian Shah. The manoeuvre was used to shock the economies of Japan and Europe, which at the time were much more dependent on Middle Eastern petroleum supplies than was the US (Harvey, 2003).

With the US economy surviving the oil crisis relatively unscathed, banks based in New York were able to profit most from the devaluations that occurred, a circumstance

that decisively turned Wall Street into the new financial centre of the global economy (Harvey, 2003). Under these conditions, the US state led the world into the neo-liberal era, in which the principal mode of resolving crises of capital accumulation would be the raiding of foreign state economies enfeebled by crushing debt.

Some describe this form of global political economy as ‘vulture capitalism,’ but the dominant ideology characterizes it differently. Neo-liberal ideologues assert that ‘financial austerity’, which throughout the neo-liberal era manifested increasingly in the imposed Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) of the US-dominated ‘multi-lateral’ International Financial Institutions (IFIs), is required when national economies fail due to “the fiscal profligacy of those who borrow” (Harvey, 2003):

The very idea that those who irresponsibly lend might also be held responsible is, of course, dismissed out of hand by ruling elites. That would require calling the wealthy property-owning classes everywhere to account and insisting that they look to their responsibilities rather than to their inalienable rights to private property and a satisfactory rate of profit. But...it is far easier politically to pillage and debase far-away populations (particularly those who are racially, ethnically, or culturally different), than to confront overwhelming capitalist class power at home.

Thus, the global offensive of the capitalist classes since the early 1970s under the rubric of neo-liberalism has often taken the form of Northern banks foisting the burden of their poor ‘investments’ in Southern states—often made while the latter were under dictatorship—on the popular classes, especially those of the most highly indebted countries of the South.

The costs have included forced privatization of public assets, limitations on the role of the state in economic policymaking, and significant roll-backs of government funding to social services, all in order to service debts to foreign creditors. The above measures have had obvious implications for rural areas already neglected by central governments. Indeed, by the 1990s rural inhabitants living in poverty in South and Meso-

America had increased both in percentage and absolute terms compared to 1970 (Loker, 1999).

The hegemonic status of neo-liberal ideology rests in part on the successful obfuscation of imperialist states' double standards in bi-lateral and multi-lateral dealings concerning market liberalisation. Without duping Southern governments, powerful state administrations from the North nevertheless use their superior political power, derived in large part from the importance of their domestic markets to export-dependent Southern countries, to impose reforms on Southern economies according to principles that they themselves abide by only incompletely at best (Petras, 2003).

According to John's framework, such interventions fall under the Growth agenda. As a consultant for state and official international organizations, including the World Bank, he was familiar with the contradictions of the Growth project: "Multi-lateral development agencies, International Financial Institutions...are heavily influenced, if not fully controlled, by Western governments, and also bi-lateral agencies, by definition" (12:6).

Even though he described himself as a liberal, John acknowledged that the imperialist nation-states that wield the most power within the multi-lateral international organisations promote the application of liberal economic policies opportunistically. He expressed scepticism, therefore, as to the feasibility of symmetric international market liberalisation, notwithstanding the universalistic rhetoric so often used in political discourse concerning the liberal economic globalisation project: "I don't think that you will have true free trade. [The idea] that this [hypothetical world] market would not be politicized in any way—that's a joke" (12:56).

Regardless of the contradictions between economic liberalist ideology and practice at the international level, however, John contended that the trend towards the wide application of free market principles could benefit marginalised rural and Indigenous Peoples within Southern nation-states. Given the often precarious situations that those groups face vis-à-vis land ownership, John expressed the belief that as a research consultant on Third World development he could be of most help by identifying the extant institutions that would best ensure security of land tenure, particularly for rural small-holders: “For economic development, I think that security of tenure is critical...This means...relying on institutions that are most likely to deliver security” (12:29).

In the case of land tenure regimes for Indigenous Peoples, John regarded it as his duty to evaluate both ‘customary structures’ and ‘the centralised apparatus’ as potential guarantors, and to determine whether communal or private land tenure would be most secure. But he was mistaken to distinguish the ‘customary structures’ from ‘the centralised apparatus’—that is, the state. In fact, the former are imposed as part of the latter.

Having apparently little or no recognition of the divide-and-conquer strategy upon which the imposition of ‘customary structures’ on Indigenous Peoples as instruments of domination is based, John conflated internal colonisation with failed self-governance. He not only expressed his impression that corruption at the level of Indigenous community leadership was widespread; he also asserted “the history of Indigenous Peoples on the continent is that...in a large number of cases, the [self-governance] structures have not been resilient. They break down” (12:31).

I do not wish to revert to the ‘noble savage’ myth by arguing that, since Indigenous Peoples today are largely atomised beyond the community level, they should

not be expected to resist the pressures they now face as well as they did at an earlier time, 'before they were corrupted by colonisation'. But it is one thing to recognise the corruption of Indigenous politicians who are used by the state to undermine their own People's self-determination, and quite another to make the strident statement that John does about 'the history of Indigenous Peoples'.

If Indigenous Peoples have not been resilient, resisting obliteration in the face of manifold genocidal attacks, of which the imposition of bogus 'self-governance' institutions is but one example, how does one account for the fact of their contemporary existence? But letting that question alone, John even dismissed what would seem to be an exception to his understanding of 'the history of Indigenous Peoples', namely, the Zapatistas of southern Chiapas, México.

The 'reading' of the Zapatistas as a self-organised, massive mobilisation of Mayan Indigenous Peoples struggling for self-determination was dubious, John suggested. Although he would surely deny it given his self-perception as an advocate in the halls of power for the rural poor, John apparently assumed in keeping with many other Western academics' 'understanding' of the 'inherent docility' of the Mayan Peoples (Churchill, 1995), that such a potent social movement could not possibly be Indigenous-led.

Instead, based on the findings of an academic colleague who did research on land registers in México, John suspected that the rural discontent in Chiapas and elsewhere in the Mexican countryside was based on a technical fault in the implementation of the neo-liberal Constitutional changes made under President Salinas in 1992. The problem was not that the land tenure regime for Indigenous *ejido*⁶⁶ and other communal lands was

⁶⁶ *Ejido*: (Spanish) Communal land.

being replaced by individual, private titles, but that under the new scheme the land was being parcelled out sloppily. For instance, individual plots were being designated to more than one person. The resulting administrative mess was thus the basis of opposition to the new policies.

According to John, it was the influence of the clever Subcomandante Marcos (a *mestizo* ex-professor of philosophy formerly of México City) that inspired the Zapatistas to take their name from the Zapoteca warrior, Emiliano *Zapata*, a heroic leader of the Mexican Revolution and the historical figure associated most with securing recognition of 'inalienable and imprescriptable' Indigenous control over *ejido* lands in the 1917 Constitution (Churchill, 1995). John alleged that only because of Marcos did the Indigenous peasants who formed the rank and file of the Zapatistas choose to launch the surprise military takeover of four towns in the highlands of Chiapas on the day that the North American Free Trade Agreement took effect, January 1, 1994.

John seemed to think such profound symbolism was all manipulation, the expression of an urban middle-class romantic's revolutionary fantasies under the guise of a self-emancipatory struggle on the part of the super-oppressed. However, there are reasons to believe that the Zapatista rebellion was authentically rooted in the collective experience of oppression and impoverishment of generations of poor rural and Indigenous Mexicans (Churchill, 1995).

The Constitutional reforms of 1992 under President Salinas that threatened to break up the *ejidos*, for example, were indeed regarded as a threat, but not because of land registry red tape. Rather, they were rejected as the culmination of two decades of state asset sell-offs that massively restructured the Mexican economy according to the interests of foreign investors and consumers (Weinberg, 2000).

Attendant to the new arrangement were rampant ecological destruction, especially as a result of oil extraction, and the ostentatious display of obscenely unequal exchange, particularly in the tourism and *maquiladora*⁶⁷ booms (Weinberg, 2000). It stands to reason that the consequent deterioration in living conditions for Indigenous Peoples and the *mestizo* rural poor of México represented to them a regressive attack, reminiscent of the worst instances of their historical domination, which demanded strong resistance.

Thus, we must not overlook the political significance of the Zapatista rebellion, which is only one of the most prominent examples of many other powerful Indigenous-led social movements that emerged in the 1990s. Nor should we fail to apprehend the parallels between the intense adversity faced by Indigenous Peoples during the era of classic liberalism in the latter half of the 19th Century, to which I have already referred in the case of Perú, and the heightened pressures that they have faced in the last few decades of neo-liberalism.

To be sure, Indigenous Peoples have had to struggle throughout the last five hundred years for their survival. But their resistance to obliteration has necessarily been fiercest when their very indigeneity—that is, the element of their respective identities that derives from being, as a People and since time immemorial, *of a Homeland*—has come under threat. Accordingly, the prominence of Indigenous Peoples in today's social movements around the world is a reflection of the fact that the integrity of their relationship to their respective Homelands has been increasingly called into question by external forces in the neo-liberal era.

The Mayan Peoples to whom the majority of the Zapatistas belong, as well as other Indigenous Peoples in struggle no doubt understand their efforts to self-determine

⁶⁷ *Maquiladora*: (Spanish) Assembly plant in Mexico along the border with the United States to which US materials and parts are shipped and from which the finished product is returned to the US market.

according to their own respective cosmologies. Nevertheless, the terms through which the latest Zapatista communiqué expressed to the world, through their spokesperson Marcos, their appraisal of the current geo-political conjuncture were decidedly condemnatory of neo-liberalism. The following is an excerpt from the English translation of the Sixth Declaration of the Lacandón Selva (www.ezln.org) called, "How We See the World":

Capitalism...makes [much of] its wealth from plunder, or theft, because they take what they want from others, land, for example, and natural resources. ...

Globalization...means that [the capitalists]...are trying to dominate everything all over the world. And the world, or Planet Earth, is also called the 'globe', and that is why they say 'globalization'....

We Zapatistas say that neo-liberal globalization is a war of conquest of the entire world, a world war, a war being waged by capitalism for global domination. Sometimes that conquest is by armies who invade a country and conquer it by force. But sometimes it is with the economy...the big capitalists lend [other countries] money, but on the condition that they obey what they tell them to do....

The one which wages the conquest, capitalism, does as it wants, it destroys and changes what it does not like and eliminates what gets in its way...And they despise those who are of no use to them. That is why the Indigenous get in the way of neoliberal capitalism, and that is why they despise them and want to eliminate them....

Indeed, in México and around the world one of the significant features of the neo-liberalist project has been that dominant societies' ruling classes have taken up the centuries-long campaign of genocide against Indigenous Peoples with renewed vigour.

One of the ways that this has occurred has been through the application by Northern imperialist governments of a double standard when dealing with the Southern counterparts in the realm of agricultural trade. On the one hand, agriculture-oriented Southern economies, despite relatively high efficiency and productivity in many cases, are disadvantaged in terms of international competition because of the relatively large subsidies provided by rich Northern governments to Northern farmers (Loker, 1999).

This reflects the self-serving Northern states' unwillingness to 'walk the talk' of trade liberalisation when it comes to industries that are not dominated by the corporations with which they are aligned.

Meanwhile, establishing and exercising 'intellectual property rights' (IPRs), including the patenting of living materials used in agriculture is being promoted by Northern governments in order to further the domination of Northern-owned TNCs on the world stage. Critics point out that the technologies that are monopolised through IPR regimes by Northern states and corporations constitute a massive seizure of social assets that can be likened to the earliest forms of capitalist 'primitive accumulation' described by Marx:

In Marx's analysis, the process of primitive accumulation was the violence of creating a 'free labor force,' with an eye on the role that British enclosures [of common lands on behalf of private interests], and imperialism, played in the process of uprooting the peasantry. But primitive accumulation is not a singular or one-time event, it is an ongoing process of dispossession as the market, and private property relations, enters new arenas, often driven by both the 'opening' of new market-friendly states...and by techno-scientific innovation.

The fact that the genome of humans or fruitflies or tomatoes or chickens can now be mapped presents the possibility that the new frontier of accumulation and profitability has opened up [to] the building blocks of human, plant and animal life. As Karl Polanyi might have put it, the very stuff of life has now been embedded in the marketplace—and disembedded from Nature (Peet & Watts, 2004)

Much of today's 'primitive accumulation' takes the form of IPR regimes that allow corporations to monopolise technologies that derive most of their value from the accumulated physical and intellectual labour of generations of Indigenous Peoples (Mooney, 1999). Designating exclusive property rights to those technologies in the name of corporate interests clearly represents a grave misappropriation, not to mention the fact that the spirit of the process by which Indigenous Peoples developed and continue to

develop the elements that form the basis of modern agriculture is fundamentally violated when living things are patented.

Originally from South America, but now working as a development professional for the Canadian government, Pablo commented in one of the interviews:

These techniques that are being used...outside feed from Indigenous techniques that are used in the so-called developing countries...Medicinal plants...the *coca* leaf...these things are...processed...there is a chemical or genetic transformation, and then they are being brought back to those countries in a different form and sold to those people there (Pablo, 7:33).

Pablo and another one of the interview participants, Paul, both referred particularly to an instance where Colorado State University attempted to patent the *quinoa* plant, which was domesticated in the Andes and is the source of one of the world's most high-protein grains. Pablo commented that this was:

an appropriation of...Indigenous processes...This is a constant battle of developing countries...Multinationals are using their power to...steal this Indigenous knowledge...and displace many people from...what they've been doing for...centuries, and perhaps thousands of years (Pablo, 7:33).

The example of *quinoa* is particularly interesting as it relates to the history of North-South domination in the Andean region. As I described in an earlier chapter, the quest for silver and gold largely drove the early colonisers' exploits. Their preoccupation with precious metals in fact led some native observers to conclude that gold was the Europeans' God (Díaz Polanco, 1997).

The obsession of the so-called *Conquistadores* with silver and gold was of course highly materialistic in actuality. In contrast to the spirituality of the Indigenous Peoples whom they colonised, that of the Christian colonisers conceived of a great divide between the Earthly and 'Heavenly' realms. Such fundamental differences in worldview caused the Europeans to spurn not only Indigenous spirituality, but also the whole of Indigenous Peoples' cultures, including their 'Indian food' (Zimmerer, 1996).

Ironically, as Hemming has pointed out, notwithstanding the historically unprecedented accumulation of bouillon that resulted from the European plundering of South and Meso-America, particularly at the silver mines of the Andean *altiplano*, today “the world’s annual potato harvest is worth many times the value of all the treasures and precious metals taken from the Inca empire by its conquerors” (Hemming, 1970).

It would seem as though the value of Andean Indigenous agriculture is now being slowly apprehended by the erstwhile colonizers of its practitioners, if the attempted appropriation of the *quinoa* plant is any indication. Yet, just as the valuation of silver and gold in the eyes of the Andean Peoples, who used them as symbols to demonstrate reverence to the moon and the sun, was very different than that of the Europeans in early colonial times, the newly ‘discovered’ merits of ‘Indian food’ are perceived through Indigenous Andean and Euro-centric lenses quite differently. The calculating acquisitiveness of ‘Western’ power holders vis-à-vis ‘natural resources’, among which elements of Indigenous agriculture are now held in high esteem, continues to be at odds with the profound respect that Andean Indigenous Peoples hold for their Earth Mother.

Similarities between today’s North-South relations and those that obtained in colonial times are also apparent in more general ways. There may now be a greater North-South political symmetry, for example, given the ‘multi-lateral’ structure, indeed the very existence of official international organizations. Thus, when the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) deliver SAPs to individual Southern state governments, say, there is perhaps a sense in which this is a matter of upholding the consensual standards of the ‘international community’ concerning fiscal austerity, even though the imposed reforms are designed outside the country to which they are applied.

But as we have seen, even those involved in the development apparatus acknowledge the hierarchical power dynamics at play behind the rosy picture portrayed through official discourse. Pablo expressed this historical perspective concerning the social organisation of the contemporary order of international relations, and its structural resemblance to the colonial system:

Developing countries' governments are so concerned about exporting as much as possible to get the hard currency [that] they are forgetting about the need to integrate their own [domestic] market, and to make sure that people who are producing within their countries are able to sell their products to other people in the same country.

We see that this is just a continuation of...an economic pattern that appeared during the times of the colonies, at least in Latin America...where roads, ports, means of transportation, and also communication were set up to extract commodities...from each of the colonies to the Centre (Pablo, 7:37).

Pablo's portrayal of Southern governments' 'forgetfulness' is overly sympathetic to the many state administrations of South and Meso-America that readily complied with imperialist neo-liberal forces in recent decades, an attitude which highlights the importance of recognizing class stratification in the South. Nevertheless, his point about the neo-colonial aspect of today's global political economy is well taken.

I would draw special attention, however, to the nationalist perspective with which Pablo clearly identifies. It is perhaps especially strong in Pablo's case, I might add, given the public-bureaucratic orientation of his career, which included white-collar work in government while he was still living in South America. In any event, it is important to note that Pablo, seemingly by default, lumps together the experience of Northern domination within the 'national' societies in the South, on the one hand, and that of Southern Indigenous Peoples, on the other.

Indeed, Pablo stated in our conversation, “When I’m talking...about Indigenous, local people, I mean *domestic* people” (Pablo, 7:31). He made this statement in the context of invoking “the old history of trading land [for] mirrors”. He compared such manipulative practices of unequal exchange used by the early colonisers with current forms of unequal exchange forced by First World nation-states onto their Third World counter-parts. In so doing he seemed to draw an analogy between the relationship of Spanish ‘*Conquistadores*’ and Indigenous Peoples at the time of contact, on the one hand, and that of today’s ‘Indigenous’ Southerners—the ‘national’ societies of the South, according to his conception—and Northern neo-colonisers (particularly corporate, high-technology monopolists), on the other.

In actuality, a form of strictly North-South domination has not replaced the oppression of Indigenous Peoples within Third World nation-states outright. The two oppressions may overlap, but they are nevertheless different. Yet, it is not uncommon for dominant ideologies such as that expressed by Pablo to construct a link between the ‘pre-Colombian’ past and contemporary times in such a way as to deny the legitimacy of present-day self-determination struggles of Indigenous Peoples within Third World nation-states.

Invoking with a sense of pride the historical fact of Indigenous Peoples’ prosperous existence on lands now controlled by ‘the Nation’—indeed, claiming those histories as the roots of the contemporary ‘national’ society—such myths all-the-while regard present-day ‘Indians’ as debased. Supposedly in a state of ‘half-assimilation’, they are deemed to be disconnected from a ‘glorious but long-lost’ Indigenous past, while at the same time unfit for modernity owing to their ‘backwardness’ (Greene, 2005).

However, the construction of and relationship with Indigenous Peoples on the part of dominant societies in South and Meso-America have not been monolithic. In fact, at certain times and places in the region the way in which dominant sectors of 'Latin America' have responded to the persistence of Indigenous Peoples' unique life ways and cosmologies could even be called 'progressive'. Such instances of relative enlightenment have been termed *indigenismo*⁶⁸, an overview of which will be instructive in the following discussion of the Empowerment agenda, the 'progressive' facet of the development apparatus.

⁶⁸ *Indigenismo*: (Spanish) Non-Indigenous persons advocating for Indigenous Peoples.

CHAPTER VII: THE 'EMPOWERMENT' AGENDA OF THE DEVELOPMENT APPARATUS

The power dynamics of First World-Fourth World interactions that take place through the development apparatus are most subtle as they play out under the rubric of the Empowerment agenda, which also happens to be the area onto which interview participants' comments shed the most light. Because a high degree of nuance characterizes the workings of the Empowerment project, analysis of it demands the greatest scrutiny.

Alongside the various manifestations of North-South domination in the 'Security' and 'Growth' agendas are the oft-beatified non-governmental organizations (NGOs). One of the structural effects of neo-liberalism's downsizing of the state was to give rise to a multitude of NGOs, some of which based themselves in Indigenous communities as part of their efforts to advocate for poor and marginalised constituencies. This chapter discusses the NGO phenomenon and its relationship to Indigenous Peoples' struggles for self-determination in the South, as well as alternative forms of 'Empowerment'.

'Aid' and Conditionality

Concerning official international financial assistance, Pablo very bluntly stated the following in our conversation:

Financial assistance is always attached to lending and interest and corrupting people in the recipient side...Countries tend to use international assistance as a way to condition the recipient country's development (Pablo, 7:72)

He could have been referring to the state-to-state loans for military spending that are billed by warmongers as 'security aid', or the structural adjustment programs sometimes labelled by their proponents as 'debt relief packages'. If so, the justifiability of his

scepticism concerning the motivation and effects of such 'aid' interventions would require little explanation.

But Pablo could also have been referring to the North-to-South economic flows that qualify as 'humanitarian', where money is supposedly offered with no strings attached. However, they too are often suspect in terms of the underlying opportunism and self-interest of the 'benefactor' state.

It is common, for example, that the recipient country must use the 'gifted' funds to buy goods from producers in the contributing country. For example, Roy, a Caribbean Canadian of African descent and development research consultant, explained to me in an interview that this is frequently the case with food aid. The terms under which recipient countries accept food aid from donor countries serves the interests of farmers in the latter, while undermining the former in terms of food security:

It's called dumping surplus food. [Much] of it is not of good quality, and some of it is what...Canadians don't want, but the farmers [of the donor country] must get some money for it. So the aid agencies...pay the [Northern] farmers and dump it to the poor people [in the recipient country]...It does not lead to food security (Roy, 2:16).

Therefore there is a sense in which the conditionality of so-called humanitarian 'aid' that rich Northern countries offer to Southern countries can be self-serving, because it fosters dependence of the latter on the former. Indeed, 'aid' should be considered a misnomer when this is the case.

There are other forms of aid, however, that are not so directly linked to lubricating the flow of Northern commodities to Southern markets. Various projects, often relatively small-scale but nevertheless numerous in the South, are supported with Northern funding yet are intended to mitigate the worst aspects of Northern led 'development' carried out under the rubric of the Security and Growth agendas.

Borrowing John's framework once again, this area of the development apparatus falls under the Empowerment agenda. Compared to the Growth agenda, and particularly the Security agenda, the Empowerment agenda in the South is supported with far fewer Northern dollars. "Part of bi-lateral money...the partnership stuff and so on, is devoted to [Empowerment], but...the amount of money [is] very small" (John, 12:66).

The World of NGOs

"The people who work on the Empowerment agenda" according to John, "are typically NGOs and people from social movements" (John, 12:66). In the case of NGOs, their involvement in Empowerment projects around the world is quite substantial. Indeed, by 2001 there were about 50,000 NGOs in the world (Kaldor *et al*, 2003). By comparison, there were about 60,000 TNCs in existence at the time⁶⁹. NGOs have proliferated since the 1970s both as an outgrowth of the 'new social movements' (e.g. civil rights, feminism, queer liberation, environmentalism) and as a structural aspect of advancing neo-liberalism (Kaldor *et al*, 2003; Petras & Veltmeyer, 2001).

NGOs vary in terms of social perspectives, sources of funding and political allegiances (Petras, 2003). The majority are either economic interest organizations or learned societies and research organizations (Kaldor, 2003). But almost a quarter (over 10,000) are 'value-based', and another significant sector is made up of service providers.

Politically speaking, NGOs can be divided into three broad groups: (1) the promoters of neo-liberalism, which have the most funding; (2) the reformists, which receive middle-range funding from private and public social democratic organizations to lobby for reforming ruling institutions like the WTO, IMF and World Bank and establish small-scale ameliorative projects to address the worst excesses of neo-liberal capitalism;

⁶⁹ Although, on average the resources controlled by NGOs pale in comparison to those controlled by TNCs, obviously.

and (3) the radicals, which mostly work within the anti-globalisation, anti-racist, anti-sexist and solidarity movements (Petras, 2003).

When I was in Perú, I discovered that Plan International⁷⁰ and World Vision were particularly prominent in the rural area where I did my research. In retrospect I should have expected to come across them. After all, along with MISEREOR and CARE they are among the biggest international NGOs operating in South and Meso-America, each having an annual budget in the hundreds of millions of dollars (US) (with the exception of CARE, which handles a measly US\$50 million) (Petras, 2003). Funding for their 'community' and 'family' development projects typically comes from the World Bank, the IMF, state funders like USAID and Canada's International Development Agency (CIDA), and the foundations of TNCs.

No matter how right wing these promoters of neo-liberalism may be, however, they nevertheless appear to be 'progressive' in terms of their stated methodology, because 'participation' has become a key concept even within the ruling development institutions. For example, the ideas of one of the most influential authors on participatory rural development methods, Robert Chambers (e.g. *Whose Reality Counts?* 1997), are cited widely in the publications of the World Bank. Therefore, those who wish to receive funding from neo-liberal development's institutional protagonists must at least pay lip service to involving their 'beneficiaries' in the development process, from start to finish.

Accordingly, the terms of financial support in many development initiatives require that the delivering agency is to work with the members of one or more

⁷⁰ Irrigation works in a sector of Choquecancha's agricultural lands were installed in 2000 with the help of Plan International (PI). Typical of infrastructure projects financed by external agencies, materials and technical assistance for constructing the irrigation works were provided by PI, while the community provided the labour. At the time that I was in Choquecancha, a few *comuneros* had been trained by PI as resource people for the rest of the community, but implementation of the new system was not expected to begin until 2002 (Mario, July 9).

communities in a given locality to facilitate the identification, elaboration and execution of equitable and appropriate strategies. The frequent designation of NGOs as key agents in this process is based significantly on the neo-liberal project's critique of the inefficiency caused by bureaucracy and centralisation of power within the state.

Part of states' centralist tendencies that neo-liberals criticize has to do with urban bias. As Roy pointed out in our conversation, addressing the neglect of the countryside is a central obstacle for rural development, especially in the South. He suggested that an important starting point for development in poor, rural areas of the South is to ask,

Is the macro-economic environment conducive to development of agricultural markets that support smallholder farming? If you know how developing countries operate, the answer is, no! Politicians are not interested in...the bushes! It doesn't bring votes! And therefore [the small farmer] gets shafted, right?

[In the South] you find that smallholder farmers will produce something [to] sell but...the post-harvest marketing infrastructure is just not there (Roy, 2:63).

As I have already noted regarding the area in which I did my research, the absence of 'post-harvest infrastructure', for example paved roads and reliable, affordable transportation services, indeed limited the economic options of *Choquecanchinos*.

But when the state fails to address social needs such as these, it is not necessarily true that Northern funded NGOs will do a better job in its place. While NGOs that work in the countryside are not driven by urban votes, they may nevertheless be poorly situated to serve rural constituencies, especially large NGOs, which tend to be based in capital cities even if their mandate is to serve rural areas.

Lorna, who worked for several years in the Andes with an international environmental NGO, and now works for the Canadian government as an administrator of international development funding, made the following point in our conversation:

The majority of NGOs, or at least their head offices, are physically located in a capital city, in a large urban centre... [Meanwhile] the beneficiaries of their work are spread out in rural areas. Often times NGO people aren't familiar with their own...catchment areas, so to speak. [Yet] they have the ear of the international NGO community, and that can be dangerous because you've got spokespeople who can make statements that...travel far and wide, now through the internet, that may not always be accurate (Lorna, 15:21)

In addition to the persistence of urban bias in NGO-mediated rural development, Lorna's statement quoted above also highlighted a more fundamental problem, that of accountability. While urban bias may cause elected governments, in the North as well as the South for that matter to neglect the countryside, members of democratic governments are at least in theory accountable to rural people as elected representatives. NGOs that function on the basis of Northern funding, however, are self-appointed and directly accountable only to their First World financiers; regardless of how their 'constituents' may assess their work, funding will continue to flow so long as the Northern donors are satisfied (Petras, 2003).

Indeed, development initiatives that are dependent on far-away Northern donors may reproduce in altered form the bureaucracy for which neo-liberals criticise the state. Lorna, based on her own experience as an assessor of community based development funding proposals, offered an example of how the international development bureaucracy, too, may sometimes fail in terms of providing funding for services that are much needed, due to the rigidity of its own inner workings. She described a project that she came across that was exceptional for its appropriateness vis-à-vis local circumstances, yet did not fit well with the checklist she was used to using in her evaluations:

As an outsider these days...when you go in to assess an institution, you look for coherency in its mission...its objectives and its programs. This place [the community centre that she was describing] probably would have

never gotten a very high rating...in coherency...but at the same time it was really responding to the needs of the area, and doing so in a really convincing way (Lorna, 15:31).

Pablo also offered an example of bureaucratic proclivities, in this case on the part of CIDA, which detrimentally affected a project that had actually passed the checklist test for funding eligibility but was later undermined because of top-down meddling from Ottawa. The project itself was in Paraguay. After describing the slow but steady progress that was made at the beginning of his involvement with the initiative, Pablo explained,

The bad thing came in terms of the way the overall project was managed from the central office [in Ottawa]. People who managed the project from Canada didn't understand at all what were the needs [*sic*] down there, in Paraguay.

What they were [most] concerned about was that [the project beneficiaries] should comply with what CIDA dictated them...no matter what. But [at the same time] it had to look nice on paper. It didn't matter if the project was a failure...

With this approach, the guy who was in charge of the project started making promises to people in Paraguay, promises that were unachievable, promises that [had] political implications, promises that [had] financial implications, promises that created a lot of expectations, and promises that were not within his capacity...to fulfil.

This attitude jeopardized the whole project...to the point that CIDA had to intervene. [Yet]...there was a contradiction, [because] the project worked well in the communities, but at the higher level things were not working well...

I don't know what happened finally, but when I left the project these...communities were working very well [together, but] because of the promises that were given by the central management [of CIDA], there were certain tensions between the regional government, and the communities and the municipalities...

It was a pity...This project could have been much better if there was a better handling of [it] from [Ottawa] (Pablo, 7:43).

NGOs and Accountability

Regarding the potential contradictions, such as those described by Lorna and Pablo, that can interfere with so-called 'participatory' development in Indigenous

communities when the process is dependent for funding on Northern donors, another interview participant, Tina, who also worked for CIDA drew out an important point as follows:

In my experience Indigenous People have a very different idea of what development means than the definitions that might exist in donor organizations like CIDA...I don't know how much space is given to people at the community level when they're accepting money...I think there are efforts, even inside CIDA, to begin to recognize that. But the problem...with self-development...is, you know, where are your resources coming from?

If you...truly want to be self-directed and you don't want to be [accountable] to foreigners, for example, you have to find ways of supporting your activities. So I think, then, that in order for local development to happen, there has to be a shift in the distribution of resources...That could be globally or inside countries...

It's...not good enough to say to people, 'Okay...you figure it out'. Because I don't think donors will ever just give money to people and let them do what they want with it...CIDA has to report back to Parliament and say, 'This is what our money is accomplishing'. And in order to do that they have to set up frameworks for [their funding recipients]...So it restricts people. It restricts Indigenous communities (Tina, 8:35)

It is indeed of utmost importance to recognise that 'community-based development' in the South involving external, and particularly Northern funding is often subject to a hierarchical power dynamic whereby the donors can potentially control the entire process. The euphemistic language that is used to describe these projects is not the least of factors that account for the all-too-common oversight of this structural fact.

Once the Northern influence that typically dominates NGO operations in the South is acknowledged, however, the idea that they should step in to undertake social tasks that were either previously ignored by the state, or are now beyond its capacity to address due to neo-liberal restructuring seems rather dubious. Indeed, for NGOs dependent on Northern donors, their appointment as supplements or substitutes for state institutions—that is, where private corporations are not willing or able to do so,

according to the neo-liberals—would seem as likely to exacerbate as to reduce the adverse effects of bureaucracy and centralised power, which were supposedly major causes for diminution of the state under neo-liberalism in the first place.

In fact, the failure of Southern states—which is real to be sure—to ‘complement the market’ in meeting social needs is not the impetus for most Northern support of NGOs. Rather, First World institutional financing of NGO initiatives in the South can be largely interpreted as a means to undermine Southern social movements (Petras & Veltmeyer, 2001).

Social movements opposed to neo-liberalism in South and Meso-America today, particularly those that are Indigenous-led—consider, for example, Bolivia and Ecuador in recent years (www.democracyctr.org; O’Connor, 2003; Zamocs, 2003)—have demonstrated themselves to be much more potent than any Northern-sanctioned institutional mechanism, ‘non-governmental’ or otherwise, to ‘correct’ those aspects of the neo-liberal order that lead to the insecurity and impoverishment of the majority of the popular classes. That is why the imperial powers want them reigned in.

Accordingly, as we have seen, much of the Northern funding of NGOs goes to those that accept neo-liberalism without question and act to smooth the process of ‘adaptation’ to it on the part of those most detrimentally affected. But there are also reformist NGOs that rely on First World institutional funding yet do not work openly and willingly as promoters of neo-liberalism. While still bearing in mind the working hypothesis of Northern support for Southern NGOs as subversive vis-à-vis social movements, I will now consider the reformists.

NGOs and ‘Alternative Development’

Reformist NGOs attempt to address certain adverse aspects of neo-liberal capitalism, either by working for reforms to ruling institutions like the IMF and the WTO, or, most often, by establishing ameliorative local projects, usually in socially, economically, and politically marginal communities. Occasionally though, lobbying the ruling institutions and working directly with people at the local level are coordinated in projects supported by modest amounts of funding from social democratic organisations or governments. In such cases it is sometimes possible to actually empower marginalised groups to directly articulate their demands of ruling institutions, as opposed to having them represented via professional advocates.

For example, during the murderous US counter-insurgency interventions in Central America in the 1980s, Scandinavian social democratic governments that opposed US foreign policy in the region supported anti-imperial efforts. They provided significant funding to organisations and networks that were legitimately tied to poor rural and Indigenous Peoples fighting to defend themselves against military and paramilitary attacks (Edelman, 2003).

One of the important outcomes of this process was the establishment of *Vía Campesina*, which is now a near-global network (it remains largely separate from a similar network in Africa) (Edelman, 2003). Paul, one of the interview participants who has researched and advocated extensively on issues of importance to peasants in the South, suggested that with appropriate reforms to multi-lateral institutions, particularly the Food and Agriculture Organisation, *Vía Campesina* could become an important and legitimate representative voice for peasants around the world within the international

institutions that exert so much influence on issues directly affecting their lives (Paul, 4:60).

To the extent that peasant movements are mobilised and of sufficient scale, the *Vía Campesina* network may indeed constitute an effective mechanism to articulate their demands at the international level. But it is important to recognise that the strength of the social movements in Central America was the basis for the formation of the *Vía Campesina* network.

By providing financial assistance for its formation, the Northern donors that thereby acted in opposition to the US in Central America seem to have supported the peasant movements there, for which they should be credited, but not without recognising that their support was only complementary to the self-activity of those movements. In other words, Northern donors' assistance in the infrastructural development of *Vía Campesina* as a trans-national representative body was a *response to extant* popular mobilisation in the South.

Furthermore, rare cases of Northern funding of social movements through grassroots organisations that legitimately serve the interests of the people of whom they claim to be allies can paradoxically undermine the organic quality of the work of those groups. Two examples from México and Guatemala that were cited in the interviews illustrated how dependency on funding from the North can have negative repercussions even for organisations rooted in social movements.

Interview participant Nishi worked as a fund-raiser for one of the solidarity organisations that formed in Chiapas after the 1994 Zapatista uprising. The initiative that she was involved in was established by activists from the Mexican Catholic Church, including former Arch Bishop of Chiapas Samuel Ruíz, who was later jointly appointed

by the Zapatistas and the Mexican state to mediate talks between the two parties.

According to Nishi, the group was “trying to bridge the Church with social organizations...coming out of the Zapatista solidarity work that had been galvanized” (Nishi, 14:36).

Although she regarded the initiative as legitimately committed to supporting the Zapatistas, Nishi observed a creeping bureaucracy within the organisation that began as the money she succeeded in soliciting started coming in:

I got a job...because, as an international, people considered me a ticket to money. I [could]...also...do translation to French and English...So what happens is, they get...a good amount of money from different organizations, like the Catholic Church in France, ...the human rights department of the Church kind-of-thing that gives money to [social movements]...a lot of money.

So they were able to get a nice office downtown, had a nice couch, set up with...computers, internet, fax, the whole kit in terms of [what] we have here [in Canada]. So it's good, they're able to do a lot more work. They're able to go into the communities more. They're able to get five people working on something instead of two...You know...they're able to become more efficient as an office and as social workers going into the communities and bringing back information about how the Church should be involved in this whole process of liberation for the Indigenous Peoples.

And they had a very grounded, down-to-earth perspective on it in the beginning, but as more and more money was coming in...then they have to have the reports, they have to have their books in order, they have to...set up a board of directors, a whole legal structure that goes with this money coming in to the NGO...you have to account for it now. You have to be accountable to your international supporters...that means putting in place legal structure and...defining the framework in which we are allowed to work with this money.

We offer them a proposal. They say... ‘This is what we're supporting this year: environmental issues and Indigenous issues’. [Then we ask ourselves] ‘Okay, so what kind of work have we been doing that can fit into the categories that they say they're funding?’

This is how people start changing their perspective. Because at a certain point they were listening to what was going on in the community and saying, ‘How can we figure out a way to be furthering what they're doing

at the community level?' And then at a certain point they start listening to the international funders.

[Also] the more money you get, the more you can do. The more you can do, the more people you get in, [but] you're not necessarily getting community people anymore... You're building up a whole institution that has [its own] mandate, and... you have to be much more attentive to what's going on in the international funding body.

It's a very slow process... in which many people are caught in Latin America... Little by little they have to sacrifice the work that they want to do because [of] ... the whole bureaucratic structure that they have to maintain... (Nishi, 14:69).

Ricardo offered a similar example, also related to foreign funding. But instead of problems arising as a result of the funding itself, he suggested that the *abrupt loss of financial support*, which can occur when Northern donors shift priorities, could be potentially damaging to grassroots organisations. Here, he describes the consequences of budget cuts by the international development apparatus on a Guatemalan human rights organisation with which he worked as a volunteer:

I worked with FAMDEGUA [Families of the Disappeared of Guatemala] for three months, I know their work... It's not a perfect organization, I mean... they are trying to do [what] they can... They try to support communities, and support people... who want to denounce [human rights abuses], who want to... try and resolve some things that happened [during the civil war], and who are asking for justice.

[When] the guerrillas... abandoned their arms... what happened was that... human rights organizations basically lost all the financing, because internationally it started being said, 'Now Guatemala is a country at peace'.

So organizations from Norway [and other] organizations... that were financing Guatemalan human rights organizations like [FAMDEGUA] said, 'Now... we are going to... finance... and support... the human rights organizations inside this democratic body that you have', which is the [Guatemalan] government [which is now]... using up all this money to do counter-productive projects...

[This] changed the way in which many organizations work, because many of them have no more money at all... For example, FAMDEGUA had a staff of thirty, [but] from one year to another it was cut to a staff of

five...People were saying, 'We've got to...make a living... We can't work as volunteers.' And there were internal disagreements because of that...So people just abandoned the ship (Ricardo, 9:35).

Ricardo explained that FAMDEGUA was started by a number of women who had met in graveyards, searching in vain for closure regarding their disappeared family members whom they expected were dead but could not be sure. The organisation became a hub for many families who had also had loved ones mysteriously lost. While FAMDEGUA was, as Ricardo put it, 'not a perfect organisation', particularly in terms of race relations—although many Guatemalan families of the disappeared were Indigenous, Ricardo explained, the organisation was dominated by non-Indigenous Guatemalans—it was nevertheless a *self-organised* initiative that articulated popular grievances against the Guatemalan state.

To the credit of the Northern donors that supported the likes of FAMDEGUA, in doing so they undoubtedly helped many Guatemalans call the Guatemalan state to account to some degree for atrocities committed against them. But the resources that they offered and that FAMDEGUA benefited from as a result cost the latter in terms of dependency. This may well have weakened grassroots organisation in Guatemala in the long run, to the extent that groups like FAMDEGUA were integral to it, because of the sudden re-allocation of Northern aid that Ricardo described.

Meanwhile, according to Ricardo there were still ample grounds for popular discontent in Guatemala. For example, he asserted that many of the politicians who were responsible for civilian massacres by the military and paramilitary remained in Parliament. More fundamentally, large sectors of the Guatemalan population, the majority of whom self-identify as Indigenous, remained systematically subjugated to the ruling elite:

The Indigenous populations are still...poorer than they were forty years ago. They're still living at the mercy of the bigger landlords. I mean, the landlords in Guatemala...kill and rape freely. Maybe they're a bit more worried about justice now, but...still...[they are] linked up with the government...These are people that nobody will challenge...because there is no way that they're going to get to the justice system (Ricardo, 9:78).

Given the persistence of such concentration of wealth and power within Guatemalan society and on-going corruption within the Guatemalan state, it stands to reason that military, paramilitary and guerrilla violence is not unlikely to flare up again in that country. If and when it does, the popular classes may be starting from scratch in terms of developing their capacity to organize and protect themselves, compared to where they were before the boom of Northern human rights funding—which allowed groups like FAMDEGUA to significantly grow only to be abruptly abandoned. Therefore, even with Northern donors that are at times capable of supporting worthwhile grassroots initiatives, the long-term effects—if not the intentions—of their interventions are questionable.

Localist 'Empowerment' and 'Ethnicist Indigenism'

The most common form taken by reformist NGOs that operate with Northern funding within South and Meso-American Indigenous communities are those that focus on locally oriented, 'community based' projects. To the extent that these include any element, explicit or implicit, pertaining to the affirmation or development of critical consciousness on the part of the 'beneficiaries', they are apt to be influenced by the indigenist tradition, to which I briefly alluded earlier but will elaborate on now.

The *indigenista* movement emerged at the beginning of the 20th Century in South and Meso-America. Among the most prominent Peruvians of the *indigenista* movement mid-Century was José María Arguedas. One of Perú's greatest literary figures of all time,

he wrote fiction and ethnography in Spanish, and poetry predominantly in Quechua (Murra, 1978).

The salient theme of Arguedas's writing was the Andes and the Andean Peoples, but his creative writing earned him more renown than his anthropological work, as it allowed him to put to use his poetic brilliance⁷¹. His creative writing perhaps also allowed him to better express the firsthand knowledge of the Andean world that he had 'collected' outside of and before his ethnographic work.

Although he could claim only very little Andean Indigenous blood, Arguedas was raised by the *Runa* women who worked as servants in the Peruvian highland home of his wealthy stepmother. He once said of his childhood,

Two things were sadly driven into my nature from the time I learned to speak: (1) the tenderness and limitless love of the Indians, the love they feel for each other and also for nature, the highlands, rivers, and birds; and (2) the hatred they felt for those who, almost as if unaware and seeming to follow an order from on high, made them suffer. My childhood went by, singed between fire and love (Murra in Arguedas, 1978).

Despite the international fame that he eventually came to have, and a cosmopolitan life of travelling and living abroad, Arguedas remained deeply fond of the Andean Peoples whom he considered to be his sisters and brothers. His conviction that their culture and way of life were in no need of 'developing' was unwavering. "Arguedas was continually criticized from the right and the left as a romantic, a visionary, and an antiquarian", wrote Murra, a leading Peruvian anthropologist and colleague of *Arguedas*. It is interesting to note the contempt of Arguedas's modern-minded contemporaries, regardless of political orientation, towards the Indigenous world.

⁷¹ The novel, *Los Ríos Profundos*, or, 'Deep Rivers'—it is available in English translation— is Arguedas's most acclaimed work and provides the 'Westerner' with a truly poetic rendering of Andean life.

Arguedas summed up his response to developers across the ideological spectrum in a poem in Quechua, *Huk Docturkunaman Qayay* (in English, "A Call upon or to Some Doctors"), in which he wrote:

They say that we don't know anything, that we are backwardness, that they'll exchange our heads for others, better ones....

They say that some doctors tell this about us; doctors who multiply in our land, who grow fat here, get golden....

We know that they want to misshape our face with clay; exhibit us, deformed, before our sons....

We will await them; we are the sons of the father of all the lord mountains; sons of the father of all the rivers....

It is apparent through the works of Arguedas that the *indigenista* movement at its best expressed a promising view of Indigenous Peoples on the part of *mestizo* South and Meso-Americans. *Indigenistas* among the latter regarded the First Peoples as bearers of alternative ways of life and worldviews that could serve as the basis for transforming the neo-colonial societies of the region for the better. But it is important to note that the *indigenistas*, however well-intentioned their initiatives may have been, were made up of non-Indigenous intellectuals with little connection to the Indigenous communities for whom they claimed to speak (Díaz-Polanco, 1997).

Although they prescribed seemingly pro-Indigenous programs, their relationship to the Indigenous Peoples was remote. Thus, as the *indigenistas* came to influence many South and Meso-American states concerning policies affecting the Indigenous Peoples, the effect in the final analysis was to co-opt Indigenous self-emancipation.

The theoretical basis of the *indigenista* policies started out with a cultural relativist orientation. However, as the program became entrenched within the state, the policies had to be adjusted to accommodate the basic goal of the anthropologists and

government officials who developed and applied them, namely, integration of the Indigenous Peoples with the 'national' societies. The notion that Indigenous and dominant cultures, though different, were of equal value, had to be made to come to terms with expedient assimilation.

Therefore, the agents of the state took it upon themselves to identify the 'good' and 'bad' elements of Indigenous life ways, the former fitting with assimilation because they were the most superficial:

The few 'cultural features' that were truly respected were visible rather than essential aspects and were transformed into objects of folkloric curiosity or subjected to a ferocious political manipulation and commercialization that ended up demeaning the Indians (Díaz Polanco, 1997).

Under the rhetoric of respecting Indigenous cultures as equally valid vis-à-vis the dominant cultures, the 'enlightened' approach to the 'Indian question' of the mid-20th Century was thus ultimately aimed at absorbing Indigenous Peoples into the dominant societies. This basic inner contradiction, not to mention the misplaced goodwill of non-Indigenous people appointing themselves to establish development programs for Indigenous Peoples, doomed the classical *indigenista* project to failure.

More recently, as a response to the Indigenous Peoples' movements that began in the 1970s, a new brand of *indigenismo* emerged. This new, 'ethnicist' indigenism can still be thought of as constituted by "policies that have been thought out and designed by non-Indians to be applied to others" (Díaz-Polanco, 1997). However,

whereas integrationism, seeking to foreground national dynamics, ended up undermining plurality and reinstalling a disguised evolutionist ethnocentrism, paradoxically, ethnicism resorts to an extreme culturalism to emphasize plurality and thereby loses touch with the national dimension.

[Ethnicists] convert the most elementary ingredients of ethno-popular perception...into a political theory that results in not only an arbitrary and paralyzing utopia but also all kinds of obstacles to the coordination of the

struggles of ethnic communities and other social forces interested against the national arrangement that is the basis for socio-cultural discrimination (Díaz-Polanco, 1997)⁷².

By prescribing an inward looking strategy for Indigenous 'community development', ethnicist indigenism effectively ignores the fact that institutions that are highly influential in but only minimally accessible to 'the community'—such as national or international markets, or the nation-state—are often central to undermining Indigenous political autonomy, economic capacity and cultural survival.

For example, the influence of ethnicist indigenism's culturalist aspect on NGOs working in Indigenous communities often places a premium on 'traditional ecological knowledge' (TEK). Undoubtedly, TEK is a major asset to Indigenous communities, but many NGO-mediated projects emphasise its importance as a means to development to the exclusion of other relevant issues, often in spite of their so-called beneficiaries' recognition of that fact (Zimmerer, 2004). This is an inappropriate approach in circumstances where factors of ecology are less influential on local development than, say, the market economy, in which case the utility and applicability of TEK may be undermined.

In describing his dissertation research in México, Darryl explained in our interview conversation precisely such a situation, which he had observed and thereby formed a nuanced understanding of 'sustainability':

⁷² Díaz-Polanco, quoted above, demonstrates in his writings a perplexing admiration for what he perceives as the exemplary achievements of the USSR and Sandinista Nicaragua in affording 'autonomy' to Indigenous Peoples within their respective states. In both cases there was much repression carried out on the part of the state against Indigenous Peoples. Therefore, by referring favourably to the USSR and Nicaraguan Sandinista regimes in discussing Indigenous Peoples' autonomy, Díaz-Polanco seems to betray an allegiance to authoritarian state capitalism, which can at best, no matter what elegant theoretical adornments are attached to it, be only opportunistically accommodating of colonized peoples' self-determination. Nevertheless, the basic point that Díaz-Polanco puts forward regarding 'ethnicist' indigenism is compelling, not least as a concept with which to understand the reformist variants of Empowerment initiatives undertaken within South and Meso-American Indigenous communities.

I...did quite a lot of research...on a...cover crop used to grow corn that [was] from the bio-physical point of view a beautiful technology, developed by farmers on their own...[It succeeded] in supporting the cultivation of corn indefinitely, without doing any damage to the soils in terms of nutrient balance, in terms of...physical soil erosion, biological life in the soils...[This was] a technology that by any agronomist's account is a sustainable practice... [But] that sustainable practice was pushed out...by other technologies that were much less sustainable [because the latter's adoption was] driven by markets.

So, the notion of biological sustainability isn't that useful in isolation from the set of relationships that drive the whole system including the social and economic system. And that's why...sustainability is not...in my view...an end state...It's not...something you arrive at, because it's a dynamic process...To put it in economic terms, [there are] shifting flows of costs and benefits to different groups...and to different resources; costs and benefits to the soil...costs and benefits to...people. [And that] tension, I think, reflects the fact that there's a dynamic relationship between the biophysical realities and the socio-economic realities, which are actually just a single reality (Darryl, 5:55).

Particularly fond of the most 'traditional' elements of Indigenous culture, to the extent of honing in on them in a myopic manner, ethnicist indigenism is thus inclined not to analytically incorporate the multi-dimensionality of development processes such as those described above by Darryl. In so doing it is prone to resurrect once more the old 'noble savage' myth, just as I had done in my own thinking as I arrived in Perú to do my research.

In my case, my narrow focus at the time on *Choquecanchinos'* TEK derived largely from a conviction that it alone provided the basis for a sustainable alternative to industrial agriculture, and even industrialism in general, the elimination of which I regarded to be an urgent matter for humanity. I thus projected my utopian aspirations onto the *Runa* in the hopes that they would embody the wisdom that the world needed to avoid destroying itself.

My assumption was that the *Runa* just wanted to be left alone to do what they had 'always' done, which I in turn assumed to be what everyone ought to be doing. In

retrospect, it is clear that this was a woefully idealistic and apolitical, not to mention presumptuous conception of the dynamics of the Fourth World-First World relationship. The interests of *Choquecanchinos* and my own were not the same. Nor could *Runa* self-determination simply depend on the likes of me.

Yet, such a voluntarist conception of *Runa* self-determination was also expressed in the interviews, although not singularly; the participants' views were in fact quite varied in this respect. As one might anticipate, there was a general congruence between each of the various views expressed vis-à-vis the possibility of and likely pathways to authentic Indigenous Peoples' self-determination, on the one hand, and the sort of work with Indigenous Peoples that the interview participants respectively chose to engage in, on the other.

To be sure, differences among the interview participants in terms of 'race', ethnicity, gender, sex, education level, age, whether or not one had dependents, whether or not one was a primary caregiver for dependents, and other such factors also would have contributed to their choice of work in the South. Nevertheless, I would suggest that the compatibility of each one's choice of work with his or her view of Indigenous Peoples' agency is worth noting.

Conceptions of Indigenous Peoples' Agency and the Notion of Solidarity

For example, John's portrayal of Indigenous Peoples in the Amazon emphasised desperation and debility, as follows:

[In the First World], the Amazon—it's a big myth. When you travel in the Amazon you can have a little trip in the forest, but mostly you are in places with red dirt, and it's very hot and it's difficult to get...water. And people are poor, and often sick. And when the Indians come out...people throw cookies to them...I visited the communities and some are quite developed, urbanized, [but in] others [there] are...alcohol problems, suicide...(John, 12:24).

In response to situations such as the one he described in the quote above, John's conception of his own role as a development researcher and consultant was not unreasonable. Ruling out substantial resistance on the part of Indigenous Peoples in light of the wretched state in which he regarded them to be, he suggested that neo-liberal policies were bound to be imposed on them: "The interventions *will* take place, the World Bank *won't* disappear tomorrow, and the governments *will* develop a program" (John, 12:6). Therefore, from John's perspective, the logical thing for him to do as a consultant regarding the 'inevitable' interventions was to approach his work with an attitude of, in his words, 'doing less harm' (John, 12:6).

Other conceptions of Indigenous Peoples among the interview participants were less crude. Paul was the one who expressed that which most resembled the ethnicist-indigenist orientation. A long-time advocate for Southern Indigenous Peoples and the rural poor, he demonstrated a high regard for their sense of democracy. However, in the final analysis Paul seemed to have an ambiguous stance as to the capacity of Indigenous Peoples to maintain their distinctive attributes themselves. The following excerpt from my conversation with him is indicative of his 'progressive' but nonetheless paternalistic view, whereby he suggested that the dominant societies that threaten Indigenous Peoples might also be the only ones capable of 'conserving' them:

The thing that stands out for me, whether you're talking about Thailand or India or Ethiopia or Bolivia [is that] by and large [Indigenous] communities are far more democratic than ours are. I mean there's far more equal decision making taking place there than what you see, you know, in Winnipeg. People really do have a role to play and they really do get consulted and they really do sort things out together and they do resist the outside pressures as best they're able to, and so on. Obviously they're not perfectly so, and obviously the pressures that come from outside are stronger than they can be, many of the times. But, to me, it's that democracy and capacity for consultation and participatory decision making that exists in most communities that is the thing [*sic*] that's most important to conserve (Paul, 4:114).

In keeping with his apparent assumption that certain attributes of Indigenous cultures *should* be maintained but are not likely to be *by Indigenous Peoples alone*, Paul's perspective on his own role and that of his organization vis-à-vis Indigenous and other social movements was as follows:

There's [an] argument that says that social movements are inherently conservative and over time even the most progressive social movements will fall prey to their own geographic inconsistencies and everything else...So...to say that you can rely on the social movements to carry on the human mandate for justice forward is naive and we [therefore still] need to have...civil society organizations that are 'stand alones', that live or die on their own...[as] '*agents provocateurs*'...with the social movements on the one side and governments on the other side. And I agree, frankly...I think it's bullshit to say that social movements will be able to do it all for themselves... (Paul, 4:88)

Nishi best expressed the final conception of Indigenous Peoples from the interviews that I would highlight. Her view was similar to that of Paul in that she also regarded Indigenous Peoples with high esteem with respect to their democratic and collectivist values. However, Nishi saw the value of such attributes in terms of resisting domination in a different light:

I have always respected what I've seen in communities in terms of their way of organizing the whole community. Everybody's organized. Everybody has a place. It doesn't matter if you don't talk well. Occidental thinking is that you have to be completely well packaged, high-performance, efficient, 'get-the-message-out'. You have to have a very good way of talking and presenting things. [The] Indigenous perspective is that everyone has something to say because everyone is feeling the impacts. And everybody has a place and is valuable, and can contribute...There's not one person that can move ahead without the whole collective moving as well, which is a different concept [than what is common in 'the West'].

I don't want to sound idealistic because there's a lot of problems [*sic*], too. Opportunistic politicians in communities, you know, that get a jeep from a political party [to] organize...people so they'll vote for [that party]....It happens all the time. But I think what I've learned in my time in Guatemala and México, Bolivia and Chile, which has been mainly with

Indigenous communities, is that there is that tendency that I see as their liberating force and it's about the collective (Nishi, 14:46).

Rather than Indigenous Peoples being dependent upon the goodwill of dominant societies to 'conserve', like specimens of endangered species, their traditions, Nishi suggested that in those traditions lay 'their liberating force'. Therefore, as well as bearing knowledge of great inherent value within their respective cultures, Indigenous Peoples themselves would have to be the ones to protect and maintain that knowledge.

Again, there was consistency between this conception of Indigenous Peoples' capacity for self-determination and the work that was chosen by those interview participants who shared it. According to John's framework, their work would fall under the Empowerment agenda, because the initiatives that Nishi, Ricardo and Mark had been involved with were connected to the self-activity of social movements.

However, John's notion of the Empowerment agenda was overly reductionist insofar as it lumped in activities that I would call solidarity work—projects that responded and took direction from social movements, such as those that Nishi, Ricardo and Mark were involved in—with 'NGO' work in general, without making any effort to distinguish among NGOs in terms of their various social perspectives, funding sources and political orientations.

Through their solidarity work, Nishi, Ricardo and Mark each had a considerable breadth of experience interacting with various Indigenous communities in struggle, from México, Guatemala and Colombia to Bolivia, Argentina and Chile. I found that that experience provided them with much insight into the challenges and benefits of their interactions as First Worlders with those Southern Indigenous communities. Indeed, the principles of mutual respect and reciprocity that are so often invoked as being the basis, and therefore justification for all manner of North-South interactions—even though the

majority associated with the development apparatus are in fact overwhelmingly unilateral, as we have seen—seemed to be most authentically and intimately understood among the interview participants by those involved in solidarity work.

Mark's comments offered the best articulation of a truly reciprocity-based understanding of constructive exchange between the Fourth and First Worlds. He was particularly insightful regarding the basic distinction between Indigenous Peoples on the one hand, and colonizing societies on the other in terms of the relationship that each has with 'The Land'. He maintained that on account of belonging to a Homeland Indigenous Peoples in fact have much to teach colonizing societies. Moreover, Mark suggested that within colonizing societies we have necessarily *undermined ourselves* in order to steal the land of and oppress Indigenous Peoples⁷³. Since this has obviously also undermined Indigenous Peoples there is a 'woundedness' that is mutual, and that therefore must also heal on a mutual basis:

I think...Indigenous communities, even when they are under threat...still have this sense of custody of The Land or belonging to The Land. And often the struggles or the threats against those communities are revolving around [land]...So because my work has mostly dealt with trying to understand the conflict and by understanding it be able to act in such a way as to provide people with safety, I've seen how different perspectives and a power imbalance where one group of people that doesn't see the land as a home enforces [that group's] ability to maltreat the land and the people that live on it. That is at the heart of, I think, most of the conflict in Latin America, maybe elsewhere in the world too.

The wounds that we have inflicted on ourselves here in the North in order to steal other people's resources and force our will on people, that's taken a certain toll on us. My family...arrived in Canada as refugees. I don't

⁷³ Mark's idea concerning the relational aspect of oppression, whereby First and Fourth Worlds both play a part in and therefore are 'wounded' by it, is similar to the philosophy underlying Paulo Freire's seminal work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970). Also, Mark's comments about the conditions within colonizing societies that facilitate colonization of other societies is comparable to the notion put forth by some social theorists, perhaps most notably Horkheimer & Adorno, regarding the origins of 'Western' reason. According to Horkheimer (1947), for example, the will to dominate is at the root of the Enlightenment; nature must first be understood before it can be controlled, and this does not exclude 'human nature'; indeed, dominating 'internal' (human) nature in oneself is the necessary precursor to the human domination over 'external' (non-human) nature, according to this line of thinking.

have a sense of place or home like somebody that's lived in one place for ten thousand years has. And that's a kind of a wound that we carry.

[Indeed] the dominant culture in Canada is [made up of] immigrants from the last couple of centuries and so [most Canadians] carry a certain woundedness of being homeless that a lot of Indigenous communities don't. That's not to say that [Indigenous Peoples are] not wounded, because there are things that we've inflicted on them and that they've inflicted on each other. And they've paid a different cost. They've paid the cost of our greed. They've paid the cost of our mistakes. They've borne the brunt of our wars.

So I think both oppressed and oppressor are wounded and it's not until people start to work together in a healthy way that those categories of oppressed and oppressor start to fade and we realize that we really can't be whole, North and South can't be whole apart from each other (Mark, 11:64).

I too believe that the human relationship to The Land is intertwined with social relationships; that health—or dysfunction—in one promotes the same in the other.

However I would also note (only to point out the obvious) that that belief alone is not enough to take on the formidable socio-ecological challenges of today. By way of conclusion I will discuss what that implies.

CHAPTER VIII: CONCLUSION

Peruvian entomologist Ramiro Ortega, one of the world's foremost scientific experts on Andean tuber crop ecology shared with me a great deal of his specialist knowledge concerning *papa* diversity in the Central Andes. However, in one of our conversations he also explicitly encouraged me to talk about the politics of crops and the knowledge associated with them. Ortega was eager to help me understand that although most of the world's agricultural resources and associated knowledge reside in the South, it is continually appropriated by Northern interests—'public' and private alike—and its integrity thereby undermined (Ortega, personal communication).

Ortega's comments regarding the politics of his specific field of expertise are true for the manifold issues that constitute the global environmental crisis. Indeed, the notion of ecology without politics is idealistic, and therefore holds no promise in adequately addressing the dire situation. Nevertheless, that being expressed, I regard the environmental crisis as a social issue of utmost importance.

I would only suggest that with respect to the questions that the environmental crisis raises, any responses *that avoid politics* should be rejected, not, however, the questions themselves. In other words, recognizing the political dimension of the crisis should engender not a sense of resignation, but a sense of challenge.

The political dimension of the environmental crisis comprises various issues including ethnicity, 'race', culture, regionalism, state relations, class, gender, sex, sexuality, age, and physical ability, among other factors, all of which by and large affect one another (Merchant, 1994). I have explicitly discussed ethnicity and 'race' (Chapters I through VII), in terms of the historical and on-going oppression of Indigenous Peoples; culture (especially in Chapter III), in terms of the basic difference in world views of

Indigenous and colonising Peoples; regionalism and state relations, in terms of the geographic distribution of resources and social power within nation-states (especially in Chapter IV) and between them (especially in Chapter V); and class, in terms of South and Meso-American Indigenous Peoples' relationship to the world's political and economic rulers (Chapters I through VII).

Despite the complexity of such a vast array of inter-relating issues, I would nevertheless suggest that simplifying it is feasible by applying one simple concept that largely incorporates the various factors. Juan Bañuelos⁷⁴ expressed the idea to which I refer while commenting on the Zapatista uprising, calling the war between the Mexican army and the Zapatistas a "confrontation between two designs for living: the indigenous way of *being* and *fulfilment*, and the neoliberal way of *possession* and *power*" (1995).

As we have seen, the survival of the 'indigenous way' has necessitated a long and on-going struggle on the part of Indigenous Peoples against the threats of colonising Peoples. The 'neo-liberal' way is one of the most recent historical instances of such menaces, and for many Indigenous Peoples also one of the most severe. Furthermore, this is a reflection of the fact that, however appealing the Indigenous way may seem when juxtaposed with the neo-liberal way, the latter is undeniably the dominant social mode today, increasingly a threat to the former, and without a struggle will remain so because a dominant minority benefits from the *status quo*.

Moreover, the neo-liberal way constitutes a threat not only to Indigenous Peoples, but also to many other groups as well; and they, too, are struggling against it. In other words, 'we' are not 'all in this together'. Creating an alternative to the way of 'possession

⁷⁴ "Juan Bañuelos was born in Tuxtla Gutierrez, Chiapas in 1932, the grandson of General Felix J. Bañuelos, who rode with Pancho Villa in the Mexican Revolution and was later governor of Zacatecas...He received the National Prize for Poetry...in 1968. His work has been translated into many languages" (Katzenberger, 1995).

and power' is not simply a matter of 'our' choice being the right one. Once we apprehend that certain groups—no matter if they are defined only in abstract terms such as those of North and South, the capitalist and working classes, men and women, whites and people of colour, or colonisers and colonised—conflict under the dominant logic of the present global system as oppressors and oppressed, that is a starting point for the radical social change that is needed.

Conversely, not all radical responses to the *status quo* are equal. For example, in Iraq and indeed throughout the Arab and Islamic worlds there is a strong resistance to US Imperialism (and that of the 'West' more broadly) that is costing the aggressors perhaps more than they expected politically, militarily and economically. However, while the fight of Arab and Islamic Nations for self-determination in the face of Imperialism and colonisation is clearly a righteous cause in principle, in the particular case of resistance to 'Western' aggression that is based on religious fundamentalism—a formidable political force in the world today—there is much that smacks of the 'possession and power' of the neo-liberal way.

Other struggles against ('Western' led) neo-liberalism, however, although they may each constitute less of a political force in the contemporary world than the movements headed by the likes of Osama Bin Laden, nevertheless articulate many of the values expressed through the Indigenous way. For example, the global justice movement—the origins of which have often been attributed to the Zapatista uprising of 1994—indeed incorporates various ideologies that are largely in accordance with the idea of 'being and fulfilment' as a basic principle for social organisation.

The global justice movement, still recovering from the right wing attack on civil liberties that was launched opportunistically in the wake of 9/11, nevertheless remains as

the modest but significant embodiment of opposition to neo-liberalism in the world today. In spite of its contradictions and fragmentation, at its best it has given voice to people of colour, queers, women, colonised Peoples, workers, and others among the oppressed and exploited. Having served as an umbrella for many of the 'new social movements' of the late 20th Century that grew out of the Left but rejected the authoritarianism and class reductionism of many of its most prominent traditions, it also involves movements that more recently have emerged specifically in response to the onslaught of neo-liberalism. As I have already pointed out, Indigenous-led movements have been at the forefront when they have joined this broad range of popular forces.

It stands to reason that to genuinely provide a viable alternative to neo-liberalism—one that does not resemble the narrow nationalism and religious fanaticism that a large part of the world is now rallying behind in reaction to the *status quo*—collaboration among social movements, including those led by Indigenous Peoples, must expand. Unfortunately, the Left's failure to treat Indigenous Peoples with the respect they deserve poses a challenge to such a collaborative relationship. Moreover, the power dynamics of interactions between sectors associated with the Left and Indigenous Peoples continue to favour the former over the latter. Nevertheless, to the extent that Indigenous Peoples and the Left can come together with a sense of solidarity in spite of that history, there is much that can be gained, not least in terms of developing a sense of 'strength in diversity'.

For example, regardless of the power dynamics obtaining in the relationship of the Left with Indigenous Peoples, insofar as the perspective of the former is 'Western' in orientation, the difference in the respective worldviews of the two sectors poses a

challenge to communication. However, that challenge, if met, may also constitute an important opportunity, by broadening the ways in which we all see the world.

Interview participant Nishi expressed this view. Her experience was that in projects in which Indigenous Peoples and sectors of the Left were working together, the former increasingly asserted themselves, especially in terms of self-expression in accordance with their own distinct cultures:

Indigenous organizations are normally dealing with the vestiges of Church, State, [and] Western thinking... [They are] also dealing with the vestiges of [the] Left, which is Western based thinking as well. ...Leftist, Marxist thinking...hasn't had a very easy or good dialogue with Indigenous [Peoples, because of a difference in] cosmovision, which [in the case of the latter] is more spiritual in perspective.

So Indigenous groups are, on varying levels...dealing with that uneasy relationship still...[They are] trying to affirm...their way of explaining things, the way they talk, the way that information is shared, the way they understand collective power. The Left [meanwhile] is trying to learn more and more (Nishi, 14:41).

While acknowledging the on-going power imbalance, perhaps reflecting her own difficulties in “trying to learn more and more”, Nishi nevertheless seemed to observe a process of decolonization. Moreover, while she did not overlook the uniqueness and legitimacy of Indigenous modes of understanding the world vis-à-vis ‘Western’ cosmovisions, she also seemed to suggest that effective inter-cultural communication could eventually be achieved without privileging one perspective over the other.

I take heart in that view because I think that Indigenous and colonising Peoples are necessarily related; indeed, the very words I am using imply that, in the sense that each is defined in relation to the other. In light of that relatedness, engagement is not an option, only a matter of degree. That conviction has informed my own involvement with a largely non-Native group in Winnipeg that formed two-and-a-half years ago with a

view to cultivating relations of solidarity with groups and individuals among the Indigenous Peoples of this part of the world.

Although we have tried as much as possible to lend support to various Indigenous struggles, most of our efforts have focused on building solidarity relations with the Anishinaabe at Asubpeeshoseewagong (Grassy Narrows First Nation in English). Members of the Asubpeeshoseewagong community have been blockading logging roads since December 2002 to protect their Homeland from clear cutting.

With a view to being allies to the Grassy Narrows campaign and other Indigenous struggles, our approach has been to engage in a responsive mode. We have not always shied away from discussing politics with the Indigenous activists with whom we have interacted, but we have most often tried to 'follow the lead.'

From my perspective, this was an appropriate attitude at the beginning. I didn't feel I had any insight to offer Indigenous activists at the time. Accordingly, I took in a lot through listening and reading, hoping to better understand the issues. No doubt, this process continues, and will remain incomplete.

I think that after a certain point, however, to remain in the mode of strictly listening can take on a colonial, extractive dynamic. There comes a time when the exchange between Natives and non-Natives should be more balanced. It is indeed a balancing act, since Euro-Canadians have done virtually all of the talking, historically, when interacting with the Indigenous Peoples. Bearing this in mind, non-Indigenous people have to be conscious about affording space to Indigenous Peoples if we are to learn from them and earn their respect.

However, I have at times been overly reluctant to truly *engage* the Indigenous activists whom I have gotten to know. Yet too much reluctance in this respect reduces my

effectiveness as an ally. If there continues to be little dialogue of substance even once some trust has been established between us and some insights potentially gained on my part, then 'following the lead' becomes a useless form of hand-holding. I need to be willing to share my ideas, rather than suppress expression simply out of shame or fear.

Nevertheless, while it is important not to succumb to the shame or fear that may emerge while attempting to act as an effective anti-racist ally, one must also realise that such feelings may reflect a real need to better articulate what 'common ground' is or can potentially be shared by Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike. I am sure that I would benefit in my own anti-racist work from a more developed expression of this, going beyond simple appeals to 'protect the Earth,' or to 'resist corporate and state domination,' to identify how the realisation of such objectives in practice actually works *in the interests of Natives and non-Natives alike*.

Clearly, a significant factor mitigating against such a dialogue is the fact that Indigenous and non-Indigenous people are largely isolated from one another as respective groups, not only in historical terms but also in the present day. Our separateness in day-to-day living sustains and adds to the sense of 'otherness' that has been created over generations of apartheid, adversely affecting many inter-racial interactions.

Therefore, long-term relationships within which trust, respect, and even friendship can be built are crucial. Once those kinds of relationships are established, it is more reasonable to expect a gradual development of reciprocal understanding, with a view to identifying concretely how oppressed and oppressor *both* lose as long as the hierarchy that separates them remains intact. To build those kinds of relationships may not be easy, but it should be simple in the sense that all it really takes is a commitment to consciously challenge the racial segregation that exists in both our personal and political lives.

However, I would emphasise once again the political dimension. When Indigenous and non-Indigenous come together to fight for something they believe in, and win, it stands to reason that the experience of changing the world in solidarity forms a particularly strong basis for risking the further belief that our interests overlap more than they conflict.

Nor does this imply a denial of difference. When I was in Perú I once told an individual with whom I had been working extensively and with whom I had become a friend that I wished I could better understand what it was like “to be an Indian”. He was somewhat taken aback by the comment and responded, “Indians don’t like to be called ‘Indians’”. I realized that despite the mutual respect and like we shared for one another, I had clearly over-stepped a boundary by treating so lightly that basic difference in our respective identities. It was a reminder that ‘going Native’ was impossible for me; indeed that the very idea of attempting to do so was deeply colonialist in nature.

Fortunately my friend was quick to forgive my presumptuous remark —my engagement with him continued, still imperfectly, but improved because of the lesson he had taught me. Similarly, the recognition that Indigenous and non-Indigenous people experience the world in different ways does not necessarily diminish the possibility of mutually beneficial engagement between us. On the contrary, to the extent that we interact on the basis of solidarity, whether it is as Northerners and Southerners, Euro- and Native North Americans, or what have you—it doesn’t matter—Indigenous and non-Indigenous, respectful of each other’s differences, are stronger together.

GLOSSARY

- Achoq*: (Quechua) Indigenous Andean tuber crop.
- Alpaca*: (Quechua) Andean camelid of the same name in English.
- Altiplano*: (Spanish) High plain.
- Año*: (Quechua) Indigenous Andean tuber crop.
- Apu*: (Quechua) Mountain God.
- Ayllu*: (Quechua) Sociopolitical, landholding, and ritual group, the symbolic basis of which is normally expressed using hydrological concepts.
- Ayni*: (Quechua) Reciprocal work exchange.
- Campesino*: (Spanish) Peasant.
- Ch'arki*: (Quechua) Dried meat.
- Choquecanchinos*: (Spanish) Inhabitants of Choquecancha
- Ch'unio*: (Quechua) Freeze-dried potato.
- Chicha*: (Spanish) Maize-based beer.
- Cholo*: (Quechua, derogatory) Someone who is in transition to becoming a *mestizo*.
- Coca*: (Quechua) 4000-year-old domesticate of a leafy plant indigenous to the Andes.
- Colono*: (Spanish) Coloniser.
- Compadrazco*: (Spanish) System of co-parenting.
- Comunero*: (Spanish) Community member.
- Comunidad indígena*: (Spanish) Peruvian legal term for highland Indigenous communities.
- Comunidad nativa*: (Spanish) Peruvian legal term for Amazonian Indigenous communities.
- Conquistador*: (Spanish) Conqueror.
- Corregidor*: (Spanish) Administrator of a province.
- Criollo*: (Spanish) Person of European ancestry born in the Americas.

Ejido: (Spanish) Communal land.

El Valle: (Spanish) In Lares, the Northern end of the valley that extends into the Upper Amazon.

Entrega: (Spanish) Gift.

Hacendado: (Spanish) Estate owner.

Hacienda: (Spanish) Private landed estate.

Hortalizas: (Spanish) Vegetables.

Indigenismo: (Spanish) Non-Indigenous persons advocating for Indigenous Peoples.

Indigenista: (Spanish) Non-Indigenous person who advocates for Indigenous Peoples.

Indio: (Spanish, derogatory) An Indigenous person.

Inti Raymi: (Quechua) Inca festival that was held annually in praise of the Sun.

Junta: (Spanish) Military government.

La rancha: (Spanish) Potato late blight.

Lareño: (Spanish) An inhabitant of the district capital of Lares or, less commonly, an inhabitant of any community in the Lares valley.

Linaza: (Spanish) Flaxseed.

Llama: (Quechua) Well-known Andean camelid of the same name in English.

Maíz Amarillo: (Spanish) Bright yellow maize variety used to make beer or hominy.

Maíz: (Spanish) Maize.

Maquiladora: (Spanish) Assembly plant in Mexico along the border with the United States to which US materials and parts are shipped and from which the finished product is returned to the US market.

Mestizaje: (Spanish) Condition of being Mestizo.

Mestizo: (Spanish) Person of the dominant, Indigenous-European 'hybrid' society.

Misti: (Quechua) Non-Runa person.

Mita: (Quechua) Labour tax.

Nuña: (Quechua) Indigenous Andean legume.

Oca: (Quechua) Indigenous Andean tuber crop.

Olluco: (Quechua) Indigenous Andean tuber crop.

Pachamama: (Quechua) Earth Mother.

Papa maway: (Quechua) Early-emerging potato crop.

Papa wathiya: (Quechua) Potato cooked buried in the earth with hot coals.

Papa: (Quechua) Potato.

Puna: (Quechua) Uppermost part of an Andean inter-montane valley, including the mountain ridge joining adjacent valleys.

Quinoa: (Quechua) Indigenous Andean grain crop.

Runa: (Quechua) Person, or people who belong to an *ayllu*.

Siembra grande: (Spanish) Literally, 'big planting', this term refers most often to the principal potato crop.

Tarwi: (Quechua) Indigenous Andean legume.

Trueque: (Quechua) Barter.

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