

PEASANT POLITICS AND  
ANDEAN HACIENDAS IN THE  
TRANSITION TO CAPITALISM:  
An Ethnographic History\*

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In the Andean field, social scientists and historians have only recently begun to ask “how peasants make politics” (Montoya 1986) or how they have “engaged their political worlds” (Stern 1987, 9).<sup>1</sup> In the past, Andean peasants were frequently viewed as living outside politics or as being sporadic players at best on the stage of politics—albeit as reactive or perhaps millenarian rebels aligned against the state.<sup>2</sup> When peasants did make a political showing, they were inevitably represented by the tactically mobile “middle peasantry” or independent smallholders (see Wolf 1969). In contrast, “traditional” estate peasants (service tenantry) were characterized as relatively passive, “prepolitical” victims.<sup>3</sup> Further along the path of historical development and social differentiation, it was generally held, these same “prepolitical” peasants were brought into the post-feudal world of “modern political movements,” where they were soon endowed with “political consciousness” (see Hobsbawm 1959).<sup>4</sup> In probing the ambiguous but historically significant “middle ground” between

\*An earlier version was presented at the Economic History Symposium on the Nineteenth-Century Andean Peasant Community, sponsored by the Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales (CLACSO), Quito, 26–30 March 1989. At that meeting, the enthusiastic comments and criticisms of Heraclio Bonilla, Tom Davies, Andrés Guerrero, and Brooke Larson were especially stimulating. Field and archival research in Ecuador during 1986–87 was supported by the Inter-American Foundation, the Land Tenure Center and the Ibero-American Studies Program of the University of Wisconsin. I would also like to thank the anonymous LARR reviewers for their critical comments on earlier drafts.

1. For a more probing treatment of this question, see William Roseberry, “Beyond the Agrarian Question in Latin America,” in *Confronting Historical Paradigms: Peasants, Labor, and the Capitalist World System in Africa and Latin America*, by Frederick Cooper, Steve J. Stern et al. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993), 318–68. Roseberry also objects to the idea that the concern with peasants as political actors in Latin America is a recent development.

2. Influential examples of the tendency to read Andean cultural history as the consequence of timeless “mental structures” in the messianic and millenarian mold are found in Ossio (1973). A critical set of essays on Andean peasant historical agency is found in Stern (1987).

3. For a critique of Wolf’s position based on the Chuquisaca exception to the general rule, see Langer (1989, 195).

4. For an Andean example, see Kapsoli (1977).

these extreme and rather static images of “politically modern” peasants and “prepolitical victims,” this article will raise a different set of questions. The middle ground can be found at the intersection of *Herrschaft* (domination) and *Gemeinschaft* (community) on the Andean hacienda in capitalist transition. Analysis of this middle ground reveals a highly contested terrain where the idioms of peasants’ everyday political agency resound. This resonance from below, however, presents interpretive as well as political ambiguities.

Extrapolating from an ethnographic case in Ecuador’s central highlands and engaging in critical dialogue with recent literature, this article will argue that on and around the landed estates, Andean peasants made politics in the local, frequently “ritualized” contests that mediated the interests of groups. These contests of material and symbolic reciprocity among unequals—involving crop and livestock theft, gift-giving, surreptitious occupations of the demesne (that part of the estate under landowner dominion), paternalist posturing, and (when legal avenues failed) local land invasions and tactical revolts—reveal a rich micropolitics or “infrapolitics” (Scott 1990). These politics were encoded in a shifting cultural practice of subordination and domination, and they played a significant role in bringing about the historical demise of the Andean hacienda. The ethnographic history of micropolitical practice suggested here builds on earlier debates and synthesizes some of the recent revisions in the literature that have contributed to a significant shift in our understanding of the Andean past.

At this point, two caveats seem necessary. First, it is not my intention to provide an exhaustive review of the literature on hacienda social relations in the Andes. Second, this article does not pretend to offer a systematic explanatory model or a periodization scheme for the exceedingly complex and uneven transitions to capitalism undergone by Andean haciendas in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Rather, the article seeks to reconceptualize the recent history of peasant politics along ethnographic lines. Hence the primary analytical concern here is twofold: how the terms of capitalist transition on the haciendas were negotiated in what might be seen as a historical struggle of “cultural micropolitics”; and how recent attempts to theorize or define the historical significance of those micropolitics might be drawn on to construct the outlines of a new approach.

#### CULTURE AND POWER ON THE ANDEAN HACIENDA

Erwin Grieshaber (1979) made an important contribution in challenging the traditional view that the Latin American hacienda had functioned as a rural channel for acculturation. Depending on the demographic and ethnic composition of particular regions, he argued, haciendas could

serve as reservoirs for ethnic reproduction.<sup>5</sup> Grieshaber saw that the modernizing landlord's need to eliminate a commercial competitor or create a reserve of cheap labor often guaranteed the conditions for the reproduction of Indian community culture within the territorial limits of the hacienda. Thus despite George Kubler's oft-cited claim that the corporate Andean peasant community was the conduit of Quechua-Aymara culture in modern times (1946, 353–54), it was clear that in highland Indian core areas, the hacienda facilitated the reproduction of cultural practices that, at least in some cases, appeared more "traditional" than those found in neighboring "free" peasant communities.

Recognizing the "sets of conditions that made the survival of Indian communities possible" in hacienda-dominated regions of the Andes was a significant advance (Grieshaber 1979, 113). To merely outline structural conditions is, however, insufficient. Scholars must ask what human beings did with those conditions, that is, how the social relations of hacienda and community were historically practiced.<sup>6</sup> This analytical task must also include critical engagement of the more influential attempts to theorize that historical practice.

French sociologist Henri Favre observed about Peru in the 1970s that "it is not without reason that one finds in the Huancavelica region, at the same time, Indianist landlords, a traditional culture very much alive on the haciendas and only on the haciendas, and units of agricultural production of the feudal or semi-feudal type" (1976, 130).<sup>7</sup> But what was the reason? Why was "traditional" Quechua culture reproduced on the "feudal" or "semi-feudal" Andean hacienda? Such an apparently simple question could pose both theoretical and political difficulties. Favre's answer was both straightforward and, it would seem, functionalist:

The reconstruction and exaltation of Precolumbian culture, in an age when it only survives as folklore, permits landowning groups to maintain peasant labor in an artificial universe, ever more disjointed from the rest of the country, and at the same time present themselves before this labor force as the indispensable intermediary between it and national society. Cultural traditionalism is not a right but a burdensome obligation for "hacienda people"; it is a necessity for the *hacendado* in order that, as in the past, the system of exploitation may function. Thus, ingenuously maintained in ignorance, and solidly protected from outside contacts, Indian labor on the haciendas continues to accept and even demand the tutelage whose very object it is. (Favre 1976, 130)

5. The term *reproduction* is used throughout this article to imply dynamism within continuity. Such usage draws on the theoretical work of Anthony Giddens, in which *reproduction* implies social effort and negotiation rather than mere repetition.

6. Grieshaber's analysis appears to assume the static and exclusive institutional categories of "comunidad" and "hacienda" without exploring the cultural intersection of community and hacienda practices that were significant in shaping peasant politics. As Larson has commented, in Grieshaber "there is no attempt to analyze peasants as historical actors who struggle for survival and ideals" (Larson 1979, 167–68).

7. My translation, as are the subsequent citations from publications in Spanish.

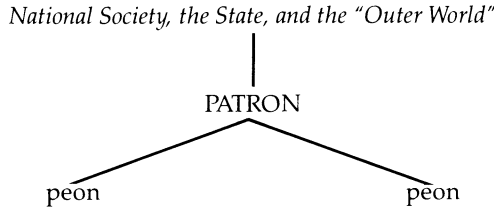


FIGURE 1 *The "Triangle without a Base," a model of hacienda power relations*

Favre's view of hacienda social relations in the Andes was widely shared by social scientists who explicitly or implicitly accepted a model of patron-client relations known as "a triangle without a base" or an "open triangle" (e.g., Cotler 1969, 1970; Tullis 1970; Whyte 1970; Bourque 1971; Dandler 1969; Stein 1961, 41; 1985, 328). In brief, the triangle of this model was a blueprint for the vertical social relations between landlords and peasants or peons, manipulated by landlords in their own interest. The "open" nature of the triangle "without a base" referred to the atomized nature of the peasant laborers: no significant horizontal linkages united them in their relations with the patron, who mediated and monopolized all relations with "the outer world" (see figure 1).

The model implied and those who applied it often argued that when landlords were removed from the apex of this triangle without a base via agrarian reform, hacienda peasants would suddenly find themselves in a situation where the base could be constructed or the open triangle be closed—usually with the assistance of state agencies or political parties. This structural model of rural social relations relied on the nearly "commonsense" notion of politically dependent peasants under omnipotent landlords, and the model also assumed a state-centric or elite-centric definition of politics.<sup>8</sup>

8. For Favre and others of the school subscribing to the concept of the triangle without a base, the hacienda represented a system of total domination that inhibited Indian peasants' movement and "artificially" segregated them from national culture. When this system of rural domination was destroyed by agrarian reform, Andean peasants were liberated to become members of national society (González and Degregori 1988, 51–52). Martínez Alier's reply to this argument was unequivocal: "A common urban ideology in Peru sees the Indians as absolutely crushed under the weight of landowners' domination, at the same time proclaiming the Indian as the bearer of national redemption along the lines popularized in Mexico. The inheritor of Inca greatness was expected to eventually step forth into the stage of history, hopefully draped in a Peruvian flag. Such millenarian hopes on the part of the ideologues conveniently postponed the precise hour at which the Indian was expected to step forth, and simultaneously raised the Indian above the sordid materialistic considerations of the class struggle. By blaming landowners for deliberately preventing Indian 'integration,' this ideology also had the virtue of eschewing the painful question of whether Peru is or is not, and should or should not be, a nation" (Martínez Alier 1977, 161). For an earlier lukewarm critique that falls short of taking issue with the fundamental assumptions of the open-triangle model, see Singelmann (1975). For a recent Peruvian critique of this model grounded

Yet social scientists held no monopoly on these commonsense notions of peasant atomization and dependency under the hacienda regime. In the central highlands of Ecuador, I gathered similar accounts of hacienda social relations from bilingual (Quechua- and Spanish-speaking) former hacienda peasants, the offspring of *huasipungueros* (service tenants). For example, one articulate and respected community leader of recent Protestant conversion drew a picture of cultural practice on the haciendas in his native Colta that in many ways was strikingly similar to that of Favre.

This informant's account was not entirely convincing, however, nor did it lack ambiguity. After a series of probing interviews with hacienda peasants, field foremen (*mayorales* and *mayordomos*), and landlords as well as extended conversations with Ecuadorian researchers,<sup>9</sup> it became clear to me that this informant's account was something akin to an "official version"<sup>10</sup> of the hacienda-dominated past. This era is locally known among post-reform Quechua peasants as *jazinda timpu* ("hacienda days"). In this quasi-official version of history, the hacienda era is represented as a dark world where victimized Indians, shrouded in illiteracy and ignorance, were driven by their masters to shoulder excessive fiesta *cargos*, the unending ritual obligations that condemned them to a life of brutish drunkenness, servility, and poverty. My informant admitted with a smile, however, that the hacienda's calendric fiestas were also grotesquely comic and even revelrous. Still, the bountiful fiestas of the hacienda were mostly remembered as instruments of exploitation and as ignorant and shameful displays of Indian idolatry. In the Colta region at least, Protestant Indian peasants seem to have accommodated this version of their past to their present struggles, both personal and collective.<sup>11</sup> As fieldwork and archival research in Colta progressed, it became evident that among peasants and landlords alike, contradictory versions of hacienda history coexisted. My analysis will return to this point and to the question raised by polyphonic and selective historical memory in the subsequent discussion.

In sharp contrast to Favre and other proponents of what might in

in historical evidence, see Manrique (1988, 158–59). For a broad, theoretical critique of the open-triangle concept as the ideological product of an "official transcript," see Scott (1990, 61–62). In short, the open-triangle model preempts historical agency and local political culture, ignores social phenomena like banditry and intercommunity relations, and does not take into account the temporal contingencies of patron-client relations.

9. In this regard, I am deeply indebted to Andrés Guerrero. Also, many of the ideas presented here were debated in a workshop organized by the Centro Andino de Acción Popular (CAAP), "El mundo andino: pasado y presente," held in Quito 29–30 June 1987. I am grateful to all the workshop participants for two stimulating days of unstructured debate.

10. For a theoretical critique of the "official transcript" of social relations and subordinate politics, see Scott (1990).

11. On Protestantism, capitalism, and ethnic solidarity in the Colta region of modern Ecuador, see the fine work of Blanca Muratorio (1980, 1981).

hindsight be called the acculturation school,<sup>12</sup> Catalonian economist Juan Martínez Alier has argued that “the remarkable resilience of Indian cultural life comes partly from the fact that their culture has been an instrument [of struggle wielded] against landowners who wanted to rationalize labour systems. . . .” He challenged the basic assertions of those who saw haciendas and hacendados as absolutely dominant in Andean history.<sup>13</sup> Martínez Alier argued, for example, that debt peonage was actually a rather weak institution that did not prevent hacienda workers from leaving the estate;<sup>14</sup> that income to hacienda peasant workers was often higher than that attained by landless laborers; and that the paternalist lines of “vertical communication” pulled (according to the model of the triangle without a base) like puppet strings from above, were apparently eluded regularly by peasant resistance and evasion; and finally, that “what from the landowner’s point of view might look like effective occupation of his own hacienda lands, from the Indian’s point of view might look like encroachment.” All of these interpretations pointed to a singular conclusion: “The history of haciendas is therefore the history of how landlords attempted to get something out of the Indians who were occupying hacienda lands” (Martínez Alier 1977, 142–61; 1973 *passim*).

As Martínez Alier commented, he was turning “prevailing interpretations [of the Andean hacienda] upside down, or perhaps inside out” (1977, 160).<sup>15</sup> Yet it is instructive to note that he did so by drawing on the insights and research of Rafael Baraona and the coauthors of the 1966 report made by the Comité Interamericano de Desarrollo Agrícola (CIDA) on agrarian structure in Ecuador.

12. The well-known Cornell-Peru “Vicos Project” was a good example of the practical consequences of this “school of thought.”

13. Taking a rather different approach that emphasized regional and national political alliances, Karen Spalding (1980) also challenged this assertion.

14. Bauer (1979) also challenged the notion that debt peonage in Latin America was a terribly servile institution from which peasants had no hopes of escaping. For a more recent review of the debt-peonage problem, see Langer (1986).

15. Many of Martínez Alier’s general assertions have since been confirmed for various Andean regions and periods. Although he was primarily concerned with extensive sheep-raising haciendas at high elevations (*puna*) that were oriented toward wool markets, it has since become clear that Andean peasants developed effective forms of resistance and accommodation on both valley agricultural and mixed agricultural-livestock haciendas as well (see Larson 1988). Other scholars have rejected Martínez Alier’s approach, either sticking to their acculturation guns (see González and Degregori 1988, 50–52) or arguing that his hypotheses apply only to the central Peruvian highlands during the 1940s and 1950s and remain largely unsubstantiated (Mörner 1977, 475). Even skeptics like Mörner, however, admit that “efforts at modernization of the traditional haciendas have become a rather frequent feature since the middle of the twentieth century [and that] because of the abundance of labour, such efforts have tended to have disruptive social effects” (1977, 475). Mörner’s understatement has been frequently substantiated in Guerrero’s work on twentieth-century Ecuadorian haciendas (Guerrero 1978, 1983). Nevertheless, Mörner was wrong to assume that such “efforts at modernization” were restricted to the second half of the twentieth century.

ANDEAN HACIENDAS AND CAPITALIST TRANSITION IN ECUADOR<sup>16</sup>

Some of Baraona's most salient insights concerned the concepts of "internal and external siege" of the Ecuadorian hacienda by resident and nonresident peasants. Peasant siege (*asedio*) of the hacienda was, according to the CIDA report on Ecuador, often most acute on the "emerging modern haciendas."

In the emerging situations presenting themselves in the Highlands, it is quite possible to polarize on the one hand an administrator frustrated by an archaic institution that links his [production] nucleus to the workers known as huasipungueros and, on the other hand, a frustrated small producer who confronts a new landlord redefined by [capitalist] characteristics that he does not quite grasp. The new personage is not the same as before because the present landowner, unlike his predecessors, is interested in cutting his ties with the huasipunguero. (CIDA 1965, 427-28)

In a notable attempt to explain the wide variation in the "states of siege" or development of productive forces on Ecuadorian haciendas in the 1950s and 1960s, Baraona developed a typology or continuum of four types of hacienda tenure: modern, standard-traditional, traditional in disintegration, and infra-traditional (Baraona 1965; CIDA 1965).

Ecuadorian sociologist Andrés Guerrero sharpened Baraona's pioneering insights. Building on the CIDA continuum model of tenure types, Guerrero (1978) plotted a Marxist-inspired processual model of hacienda transformation or dissolution. Guerrero's heuristic model started with an ideal "precapitalist mother hacienda" somewhere in the past and then placed Baraona's modern and standard-traditional types along a "Junker road" of capitalist transformation in which the estate production unit was maintained or expanded under capitalist relations of production. The modern type identified by Baraona for the 1950s and 1960s became in Guerrero's model the capitalist hacienda of the 1970s engaged, via the classical "Junker" route, in mechanized dairy production for urban markets. The standard traditional type became a capitalist hacienda with "underdeveloped forces of production" or diversified, capital-scarce technology. In contrast, Baraona's traditional in disintegration and infra-traditional types went the way of the "peasant road" to hacienda dissolution in Guerrero's model, becoming cooperatives or minifundio production units (*producción parcelaria*) by the 1970s (see figure 2).

Guerrero's typology was more processual than Baraona's but was weakened by its reliance on an ideal precapitalist mother hacienda existing sometime before 1950.<sup>17</sup> Guerrero's subsequent research, however, un-

16. For a summary of debates on "the agrarian question" in Ecuador, see Chiriboga (1988).

17. It was not Guerrero's intention at the time to provide a historical model of hacienda transformation that would include the period prior to the middle decades of the twentieth century. His subsequent work, which will be discussed, is much more historical.

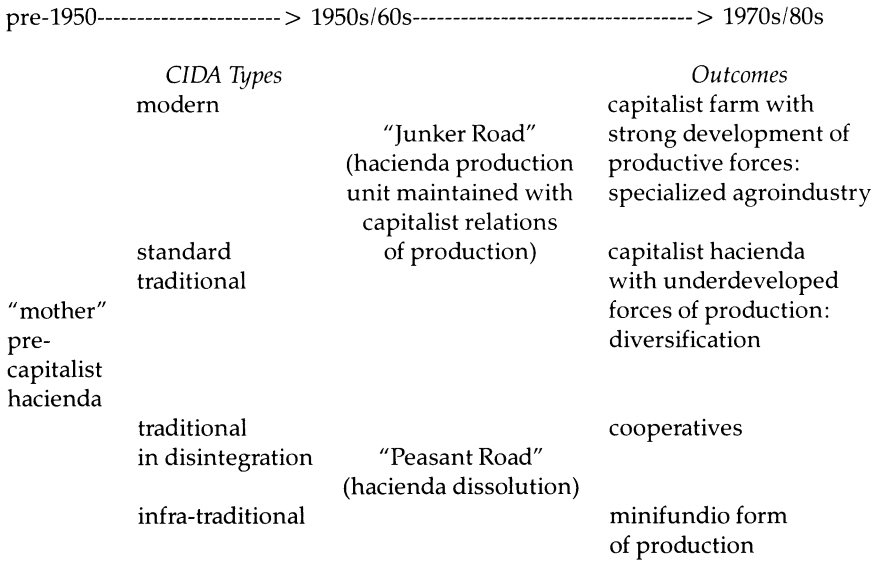


FIGURE 2 *Hacienda paths of historical development, based on Andrés Guerrero's typology of hacienda roads of transformation or dissolution (1978, 56)*

earthed considerable diversity among early-twentieth-century haciendas. As a result, it now appears that diverse roads of hacienda development evolved from an indeterminate diversity at an earlier date. What is significant about both models, however, is not the typological approach but the implication that the types or roads were at least partially determined by the degree of external and internal peasant siege faced by the array of haciendas found in the Ecuadorian highlands. Some recent research on the central highlands of Ecuador suggests, however, that the paths taken by Andean haciendas were not as discreet or linear as a typological or processual model might predict (for examples, see Sylva Charvet 1986; Thurner 1989; Waters 1985). Some haciendas made what looked like a Junker transition, only to be set back by peasant resistance and political mobilization and forced onto a "peasant road" toward dissolution. Such was the case at least with one set of haciendas (*juego de haciendas*) held by the Zambrano family in the Colta region of the province of Chimborazo, Ecuador, since the 1880s.

The Zambrano haciendas, which were not especially large or well endowed,<sup>18</sup> are nevertheless of special interest for the local diversity or variations in the "roads" of transition to capitalism that they may be seen

18. These haciendas and their peasant communities were the focus of my ethnographic and archival research in 1986-87. Specific data on the size, location, and relative value of the haciendas can be found in Thurner (1989).



to represent as well as for the diversity of forms of peasant resistance encountered there. Two haciendas, Gatazo and Culluctus, chosen from a wider "set" of five or six haciendas formerly owned by the Zambranos will be briefly discussed here. Hacienda Culluctus can be viewed as falling somewhere between Baraona's infra-traditional and standard traditional types in the 1950s and 1960s. After 1972, however, the landlord of Culluctus attempted to rationalize labor relations and modernize production in a belated Junker-style transition toward what Guerrero has described as a "capitalist hacienda with underdeveloped forces of production." This transition was ultimately blocked by "internal" and "external" herders who "invaded" the hacienda's pastures and won a court battle under the agrarian reform law, taking possession of about half of the hacienda's upland pastures in the 1980s.<sup>19</sup>

The Hacienda Gatazo in the 1960s would most likely have been classified by the CIDA study as an example of the traditional in disintegration type. By 1973, however, Gatazo had made a partial (although ultimately futile) attempt to take the "Junker road" to mechanized dairy production.<sup>20</sup> The belated and ill-fated modernization process in Gatazo led instead to the dissolution and parcellation of the "peasant road" toward minifundio-based simple commodity production. In Gatazo the "internal" huasipunguero peasant community staged an extended campaign to pressure, invade, resist, and buy up the shrinking demesne piece by piece. In Gatazo this campaign began in the 1920s and culminated in the late 1980s.<sup>21</sup> In these cases and many others, the belated "neo-Junker" push of the 1970s on traditional Ecuadorian haciendas partly resulted from the "productionist" Agrarian Reform Law of 1973, which threatened to expropriate haciendas that did not modernize.

The set of haciendas assembled by the Zambranos between 1868 and 1880 was from the beginning a mercantile operation whose capital outlays were financed by commercial activities in Guayaquil and by money-lending in the sierra.<sup>22</sup> The multi-hacienda estate compiled by the Zambranos was a notable, but not unusual, attempt to piece together a vertical gradient of crop and livestock production zones of diverse elevations (and therefore microclimates) that would complement one another in an overall

19. Archivo Central del IERAC, Quito, Expediente no. 554 RA, Predio Culluctus, 1964; Archivo del Instituto Ecuatoriano de Reforma Agraria y Colonización (IERAC), Sucursal Riobamba, Trámite de Afectación no. 2733, Predio Culluctus, 1983.

20. Archivo Central del IERAC, Quito, Expediente no. 468, Predio Gatazo Lote No. 1, 1964; and Archivo del Instituto Ecuatoriano de Reforma Agraria y Colonización (IERAC), Sucursal Riobamba, Trámite de Afectación no. 2748, Predio Gatazo Zambrano, 1983.

21. Registro de Propiedad, Canton Colta, 1885–1985, Registros de Propiedad, Sentencias, Hipotecas y Gravámenes.

22. Archivo Nacional de Historia, Casa de la Cultura, Núcleo Chimborazo, Riobamba, Protocolos ante Escribano Público M. Acevedo, 14 Apr. 1880, foja 141; and Protocolos ante M. Acevedo, 1 May 1880, foja 146.

production scheme.<sup>23</sup> Sheep and heifers could be raised at higher elevation haciendas like Culluctus, where tubers were also cultivated. Meanwhile, barley, alfalfa, and dairy cows flourished on haciendas at lower elevations like Gatazo. The heifers at Culluctus later became the dairy cows of Gatazo; and the tubers fed Gatazo peasant-workers while Gatazo's barley, ground on the hacienda's water mill, provided meal for Culluctus. Labor might also be moved from one hacienda to another, although this practice was less common. Beyond subsistence complementarity, product diversity also provided a measure of security when commodity prices fluctuated in sierra or coastal markets.

Several developments contributed to the market orientation of the Zambrano haciendas. Construction of the segment of the Pan American Highway linking Quito and Guayaquil through the Hacienda Gatazo in the 1870s elevated the commercial value of Gatazo as well as the other haciendas in the set. Commercial linkages and values increased again when the Southern Railroad followed the path of the Pan American Highway in 1904 (Marchan et al. 1984, 165). In the following decades, cane plantations on the coast attracted highland labor from Chimborazo. Younger, dependent members of huasipunguero households (*arrimados*) and other peasants from Gatazo and environs migrated seasonally for the cane-cutting and returned to the sierra to invest their savings from meager but higher wages to purchase small plots around the edges of the haciendas. Seasonal migration became a key strategy in the "revindication" campaign to carve out a semi-independent peasant community from the fragments of the Hacienda Gatazo.<sup>24</sup>

In Culluctus, a more isolated livestock latifundium, herders on and around the hacienda became increasingly involved in markets for meat and wool. With the increased linkage came greater pressure to extend community pastures at the expense of the hacienda. This pressure took the form of heightened dependence on access to hacienda pastures via *michipaj* and *waqcha* arrangements that allowed herders to pasture their herds on the unfenced upland meadows (the *páramo*) of the hacienda in exchange for field labor. In the struggle to maintain and expand their livelihoods as they became increasingly engulfed in market relations, peasants and herders in Gatazo and Culluctus channeled social relations through a myriad of cultural forms. I now turn to a brief but necessarily ethno-

23. *Juegos de haciendas* (multi-hacienda estates) were not uncommon in Chimborazo or elsewhere in the Ecuadorian sierra. For examples, see Costales Samaniego (1953, 64); Gangotena (1981, 56); Marchan et al. (1984); and Guerrero (1983).

24. On the critical role of labor migration from the Ecuadorian highlands to the coast and back again, see Lentz (1988); for a Peruvian example, see Smith (1989). For a wider set of discussions on the significance of markets for Andean ethnic reproduction, see Harris, Larson, and Tandeter (1987).

graphic discussion of this cultural practice, followed by a broader engagement of the historiography.

#### THE POLITICS OF CULTURAL PRACTICE ON CHIMBORAZO HACIENDAS

The web of social relations woven together by cultural practice on the haciendas of Gatazo and Culluctus tends to confirm the idea that the *Gemeinschaft* of community relations was historically linked to the *Herrschaft* of hacienda domination. In this densely indigenous, hacienda-dominated region of the central highlands of Ecuador, peasant households residing in external communities were tied into internal hacienda peasant economies by means of a series of kin- and locality-based social relations. This web of horizontal social relations—the base of the allegedly baseless triangle—shaped the destinies of haciendas in the Colta region. The interhousehold and intercommunity relations that operated under the hacienda regime had been significantly transformed but never completely destroyed by the proliferation of simple commodity production emerging in the early decades of the twentieth century.<sup>25</sup> These relations were still detectable in the late 1980s. Their complexity has sometimes confounded landlords and social scientists, the state's agrarian reform and rural development agencies, and Ecuadorian political parties as well.

Among Guerrero's more important insights was the notion that Ecuadorian haciendas generated (or centralized) broad webs of peasant interaction beyond the legal boundaries of the hacienda, thereby incorporating nearby "free" communities. These relations were not channeled primarily through the patron, although temporary labor relations were important, but rather through hacienda peasants as they engaged free community peasants in reciprocal relations that ultimately relied on the hacienda peasant household's access to what Guerrero (1991) has called the hacienda's *fondo de reproducción* (capital reserve).<sup>26</sup>

Guerrero (1991) suggests that these peasant relations between ha-

25. In a similar context, Gavin Smith has noted that "simple commodity production never thoroughly shatters pre-existing relations of production" (1989, 161).

26. Mallon uncovered evidence of similar relations between hacienda peasants and community peasants in the Peruvian central highlands during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. She noted that "hacendados were also forced to confront what to them must have seemed an unholy alliance: that between their colonos or peons and peasants living in communities. Not only were many resident peons on haciendas originally members of neighboring communities, but relations with the villages also remained close and were sometimes strengthened by marriage. . . . [T]he most common favor that an hacienda peon performed for his or her village relations, for example, was to pasture their sheep on the hacienda, passing them off as part of his or her flock and thus entitled to free grazing in exchange for fertilizing hacienda lands with their manure. While most hacendados were perfectly aware of what was going on, they had no easy way to prevent this use of hacienda lands to expand community resources" (Mallon 1983, 77–78).

cienda and community favored ethnic reproduction in the free communities surrounding the hacienda.<sup>27</sup> In effect, such relations often extended peasant access to the multiple agro-ecological zones monopolized by the expanding nineteenth-century hacienda. Such access was another reason why hacienda peasants were sometimes better off than landless laborers (CIDA 1965, 151; Martínez Alier 1977, 146). They may also have been better off than free community peasants whose lands were being encroached on by the hacienda and who were therefore forced into working for the hacienda or selling their labor elsewhere.

But relations between “captured” peasant communities (of the haciendas) and free peasant communities in Chimborazo were also characterized by rivalry and conflict. Indeed, a recognizably Andean cultural practice of ritualized intra- and inter-community rivalry appears to have conditioned labor relations, work discipline, and resistance on a number of Chimborazo haciendas. These rivalries sometimes pitted “upper” settlement clusters (*hanan*) against “lower” clusters (*huray* or *lurin*),<sup>28</sup> within free as well as hacienda communities. Such rivalries were extended to relations between neighboring hacienda communities with results similar to those recorded by anthropologist Steven Webster (1981) for a hacienda near Cuzco. Rivals for access to hacienda resources and opposing parties in territorial disputes, local peasant communities were also ritual rivals on at least three annual festive occasions. These fiestas included the celebration of the Indian community’s or hacienda’s patron saint, carnival, and Runa Punlla, an Indian fiesta that preceded the festival honoring the parish town’s patron saint.

Before describing these fiestas, I will outline the local power structure of the hacienda and the communities. Much of what follows has also been reported by anthropologist Carola Lentz (1986) for a nearby hacienda.<sup>29</sup> In the central Ecuadorian highlands, from at least the late nineteenth century into the middle twentieth, the main figures in the economic hierarchy of the hacienda were the patron (sometimes referred to in

27. Wolf and Mintz recognized that “haciendas supply such [marginal Indian communities] with some opportunity, however small, to maintain those aspects of their culture patterns which require some small outlay of surplus cash and goods, and thus tends to preserve traditional norms which might otherwise fall into disuse” (1977, 40). Wasserstrom and Rus (1980) later made the same argument for Chiapas.

28. I hesitate to call “moiety” what are sometimes referred to as the *urayparte* and *hanankiri* of a Gatazo peasant community. Today these settlement clusters have saints’ or civil names such as Santa Bárbara, Barrio Emanuel, Comuna Zambrano, or Cooperativa such-and-such. Further research on historical shifts in social organization and kinship is required before it can be established that *moiety* is or ever was the correct term to describe these oppositional clusters.

29. On reading Lentz’s (1986) account after leaving the field, what struck me most was how remarkably alike her case was when compared to those I had researched. Yet perhaps this likeness was not so remarkable on considering that the Hacienda Shamanga, where Lentz carried out her research, was also owned by an affinal relative of the Zambrano family.

local Quechua as *apu* or *tayta*), the *administrador* (overseer), the *mayordomos* (field foremen), and the *kipus* or *mayorales* (Indian “lead men” working directly under the foreman). A series of lesser rotating functions held by *huasipungueros* (male heads of service tenant households) were also significant. These rotating functions included *jazinda kwintayuj* (a kind of crop night watchmen on the estate), *hortalanas* (irrigation controllers), and *michijkuna* (herders charged with guarding the hacienda’s flocks). On the haciendas studied, religious functions were historically practiced primarily by the *patrona* (wife of the patron and the matriarch) and by the *fundador* (founder) of the local patron saint’s *cofradía* (informal religious brotherhood of followers). The civil authority of the Indian community was invested in the *regidor* (leader, sometimes also referred to as *apu*), who “passed the staff” to the *alcalde vara* (staff holders), a group of rotating Indian male heads of households charged with specific obligations to sponsor the annual *fiesta de alcaldes* of carnival. The *regidor* had been chosen by a parish priest sometime in the distant past (beyond memory), and the position was passed down to the eldest son. The parish priest attended and legitimated the ceremony of generational succession to *regidor* status. The *fundador* office dealing with the shrine to the patron saint was also an inherited position. He or she selected the *priostes* (pages) who would bear the *priostazgos* (page obligations) or *cargos* of the annual patron saint festival. The *fundador* also answered to the parish priest, commissioning his presence for a mass, procession, and other vigil services for the shrine.

In the cases studied ethnographically and via oral history, the *regidor* and the *fundador* were either the same person or members of the same extended Indian family. This convergence reflected the blurring of civil and religious authority on the haciendas and in the free Indian communities. Within the confines of the Hacienda Gatazo, the *fundador-regidor* household owned at least three plots of land, one of them probably devoted to supporting the cult of the patron saint.<sup>30</sup> *Priostes* worked this land for the *fundador*. This plot, the *fundador-regidor*’s home, and the shrine were all strategically located midway between the upper and lower peasant settlement clusters of the hacienda, near the *mayordomo*’s residence and the patron’s *casa de hacienda* (rural manor with livestock corrals).

The critical point of political and economic intersection between the patron and the hacienda work force was the connection between the *mayordomo* and the *kipu* (many haciendas had several *mayordomos* and *kipus* or *mayorales*). The *mayordomo* or foreman was inevitably a bilingual *mestizo*. He was also the patron’s or overseer’s strong arm of labor coercion. The *kipu* was selected by the patron from among the internal service tenants or *huasipunguero* community. The *kipu* was responsible

30. Registro de Propiedad, Canton Colta, 1886, “Sr. Ramón Zambrano . . . presentó . . . la escritura de empeño o anticresis de tres retazos de tierra,” Índice de Hipotecas, no. 7.

for keeping accounts of each worker's *rayas*, or workdays owed to the hacienda estate (hence the Quechua term *k'ipu* or *quipo*, referring to an Inca calculating device made of knotted cords). The kipu was responsible for ensuring that Indian hacienda peasants worked their *rayas*. He monitored work discipline and answered to the mayordomo. Lentz described the kipu's social position as "the mediator between seigneurial power and the dependent peasant households, not only as enforcer from above, but also as intercessor from below. He may or may not have covered up minor trespasses (petty theft, illegitimate use of hacienda resources, etc.), and he may or may not have imposed a strict regime of work discipline" (Lentz 1986, 194). Lentz noted one occasion when the kipu acted as the voice of the hacienda's peasants when they appealed to the patron for *socorros* (subsistence doles) during a lean year. According to the oral testimony I recorded, kipus on at least two occasions were accomplices to or militant participants in local peasant revolts against landlords in the Colta region.<sup>31</sup> Yet the most popular current image of the kipu among former hacienda peasants is that of a ruthless horseman who inflicted *fuetazos* (whippings) on oppressed Indian laborers. In short, the kipu or mayoral appears to have been a mediator of landlord-peasant relations in the central highlands of Ecuador, and perhaps throughout the Andean region.<sup>32</sup>

On the Hacienda Gatazo from about 1880 to 1930, the ritual positions of kipu, regidor, and fundador were evidently held by one powerful Indian man. Subsequently, descendants of the same individual occupied the hereditary positions of regidor and fundador. Kipus multiplied after 1930 as the hacienda was fragmented by inheritance and partitioned into four production units. Lentz reports an instance of one individual serving as both mayoral and regidor and another of a single Indian family possessing these titles between 1920 and 1960 (1986, 194). The convergence of hacienda economic power and community civil authority in the kipu-regidor clearly enhanced the patron's hegemony, although it also entailed contradictions. Lentz observed that "his position realized in the prestige system not only conferred power but also limited it, in both his role as community authority and as [the patron's] mayoral. He was integrated (and also controlled by) a dense web of reciprocal and redistributive mechanisms, whose obligations served to brake his upward economic mobility and abuse of hacienda authority" (Lentz 1986, 195). The co-identity of regidor-fundador in Gatazo, combined with the kipu position, cemented hacienda-community articulation with the religious dimension and the

31. Interview with E. C., Riobamba, 20 July 1987; interview with P. C., Guamote, 16 July 1987.

32. William Stein noted that the mayorales of the late 1950s in Hualcán, Peru, were "criticized and frequently hated" by peasants. But Stein added that a mayoral "must also have some power in the community, which would come from having held politico-religious office and from possessing a large number of relations . . . in the community" (Stein 1961, 194–95).

priostazgo institution of the patron saint festival. Thus the hacienda-community interrelation via the kipu-regidor-fundador was a “double articulation” (Abercrombie 1991) of the community civil and religious hierarchy with the hacienda. Access to land—mitigated by the hacienda—underlay the entire system.

According to the now aging and impoverished Andean peasant fundadora of Gatazo, “We ruled everyone in those days . . . on the hacienda . . . [and] in the fiestas . . . , just like the presidents of the community do now. . . . But now that’s over, . . . they are no longer believers . . . after all, they [the community peasants] are Protestants. . . .”<sup>33</sup> The symbolic roles of her grandfather—who was simultaneously kipu, regidor, and fundador—included leading workers in singing and processions and in reciting Quechua prayers. In the 1920s, he led Gatazo’s Indian peasant laborers in daily pre-dawn prayer services presided over by the patrona.<sup>34</sup>

The prayer initiating the day’s labor took place under the hacienda’s imposing archway, next to the gardens and orchards of the manor. The archway, highlighted with colonial stonework, was topped by a sculpted image of an anthropomorphic sun of the kind commonly seen on the façades of colonial churches. An almost universal architectural feature of Ecuadorian haciendas, the archway symbolized the threshold to the core of the hacienda and the end of the more communal domain. Indian peasants entered this residential and symbolic nucleus on a regular basis as *huasicamas* and *servicias*. *Huasicamia* was a rotating, usually month-long stint of household labor that huasipunguero households served in the patron’s rural and urban residences. *Servicia* sometimes involved non-hacienda Indian girls who worked as domestic servants and providers of child care for the patron’s family. In the casa de hacienda, the children of huasicamas frequently played together with those of the hacendados under the watchful eye of the Indian *servicia*. The childhood affections initiated in this context sometimes carried over into adult life when the hacendado’s sons and daughters became heirs to the hacienda and favored their former childhood playmates as their new mayordomos, mayorales, or just *peones queridos* (much-loved peons).<sup>35</sup>

Huasicamia service also offered many opportunities for peasants to steal from the manorial household. All parties concerned, however, declared that such theft never occurred.<sup>36</sup> The landowners left money, jewelry, and other valuables lying around, and the pantry was also left unguarded. Huasicamas prepared the patron’s protein-rich breakfast of

33. Interview with M. G., Gatazo, 11 Aug. 1987.

34. Interview with A. Z., Riobamba, 23 July 1987.

35. The confluence of interest and emotion, a striking feature of Andean hacienda social relations, poses an interpretive challenge to both social history and cultural anthropology. See Medick and Sabeán (1984).

36. Interview with G. Z., Riobamba, 31 Aug. 1987.

eggs, meat, and milk but ate the machica (barley meal) brought by their children in a back room alone.<sup>37</sup> Yet according to all parties concerned, they did not steal food. Guerrero has also noted this code of conduct in the hacienda manors of the northern highlands of Ecuador (1983, 126).

On the hacienda demesne, however, the situation differed notably. Hacienda workers routinely filched crop debris to supplement household subsistence and water to irrigate their own plots. It happened under cover of night but also in broad daylight, when the mayordomo was looking the other way. Even in the 1980s, landowners complained about considerable losses to peasant theft and that their Indian night watchmen colluded. Yet the owners could not dismiss their watchmen because an unfamiliar replacement could not be trusted at all. Gatazo's landlord-heir summed up the situation by citing a local proverb: "El indio que no roba, peca." That is to say, the Indian who does not steal sins against his own household's subsistence interest and thus against his ethnic and class interests as well. In sum, pilfering on the demesne could be counted upon. Indian theft of hacienda resources became so common that it constituted a cultural pattern of resistance on the hacienda. As such, it became an attribute of "Indianness" in the eyes of the landowning class. Indeed, the stereotype of the Indian as thief was the flip side of the racist notions of "the lazy Indian" and "the drunk Indian." Not that landowners did not take pains to curb and punish crop and livestock theft through their mayordomos. If they had not, work discipline and the predominance of estate production over the peasant economy might have wasted away altogether, as in fact it has in the second half of the twentieth century.<sup>38</sup> Such petty theft on the hacienda was part of the battlefield in the contested terrain of community-based class struggle (Guerrero 1983).<sup>39</sup>

On the hacienda, guards were posted over ripening crops and herds, and in the mid-1980s the administrador himself slept in his pickup truck, parked in the fields, with a shotgun at his side. All of these precautions, however, were to little or temporary avail. If the frequency of criminal charges is any measure, then *abigeato* (cattle rustling) on the haciendas in the region appears to have flourished throughout the nineteenth century. And "subhistorical" or undocumented petty theft of crops has occurred

37. Interview with L. R. L., Gatazo, 13 July 1987.

38. For a more detailed discussion of the Hacienda Gatazo's dissolution in the twentieth century, see Thurner (1989).

39. In contrast, Stein viewed this kind of "criminal" behavior as deviant, "regressive," or even pathological. In Hualcán, Stein explained peasant theft of crops as "childlike frustration" and an "undercover method of aggression," although he granted that most crop theft was for subsistence purposes (Stein 1961, 42, 55). Stein also recognized, however, that "Indians enjoy cheating their patronos and steal from them whenever they get a chance. This is not only an economic advantage but also a means of expressing covert aggression against mestizos. . . . Mestizos recognize this institutionalized stealing, especially in hacienda harvests, and ignore most of it" (1961, 229).



routinely for as long as anyone can remember. The undocumented ethnographic color of peasant pilfering on the hacienda domain reveals considerable ingenuity and political awareness of “the dialectic of disguise and surveillance that pervades relations between the weak and the strong” (Scott 1990, 4). The bounds of “how far to go” are skillfully calculated, yet they are also the subject of knowing jokes and asides in Quechua (not well understood by urban-based hacienda heirs), some subtle pantomime in the fields, and open laughter in the safety of one’s *huasi* (cottage or peasant home).

It was against this backdrop of everyday resistance that the hacienda’s festive rituals of reciprocity took place. Carnival was the climax of the ritual (and subsistence) cycle subsidized by the rotating *alcaldes vara* (staff holders) and their handpicked deputies, the *tenentillos*. Carnival was packed with rich symbolic expressions of conflict, sacrifice, reciprocity, and the renewal—and momentary inversion—of the social order that revolved around the hacienda’s ceremonial fund or capital reserve.<sup>40</sup> On the hacienda, however, the symbolic content of carnival “made sense only in the context of power relations the rest of the year” (Scott 1990, 176). Because a detailed, ethnographic account is not possible here, I will merely sketch the sequence of ritual events.<sup>41</sup>

The events of carnival resembled a five-act play performed on at least three stages. The hacienda manor, the parish town, the Indian community, the hacienda, and finally the Indian communities were the sequential locations of ritualized social relations spanning more than a week (although the celebrations in some households might go on for a month). Ritual events began with peasant *entrega* (submission) of their annual *camari* (“gift”) to the patron.<sup>42</sup> The *kipu* made a list of what was being given, and the quantity was read aloud so that all might hear. The *camari* was then handed from the *kipu* to the *mayordomo* and finally to the patron and his family. *Camari* took the form of an anticipated number of eggs, hens, or guinea pigs, the quantity being determined apparently by rank, which was based in turn on differing degrees of access to hacienda resources. In the 1960s, members of *huasipunguero* households supposedly gave a dozen eggs, while *yanaperos* or *ayudas* (seasonal fieldhands) gave two or three each.<sup>43</sup> The prescribed quantity of *camari* may have been subject to negotiation and competition, however. It appears that a

40. For an insightful analysis of social reproduction and ritual action at carnival in a nonhacienda setting in Bolivia, see Rasnake (1986).

41. A fuller description can be found in Lentz (1986, 196–200). My description here is based primarily on oral history as well as participant observation (when sober) of carnival festivities in 1983.

42. *Camari* is translated as *regalo* in a recent Ecuadorian Quechua-Spanish Dictionary (MEC/PUCE 1982). Holguín provides a series of conjugations and derivations of *camay-* and *camari-* that insinuate obligation and something matched or paired (Holguín 1989, 48).

43. Interview with E. C., Riobamba, 20 July 1987.

kind of "potlatch" competition prevailed between peasant groups: those who gave the most to the patron carried the day. The patron later reciprocated with *chicha* or *aswa* (corn beer), *trago* (cane liquor), festive foods, and a band of local musicians.

External peasant communities who supplied the hacienda with needed seasonal planting and harvest labor (*yanapa* or *ayuda*) as well as the internal peasant community of huasipungueros and their dependent kin (*arrimados*) all rendered *camari*. One hacienda heir recalls seeing an entire room filled with thousands of eggs.<sup>44</sup> Constituting a form of protein transfer (that continues today when state or development officials visit the reformed communities that were formerly haciendas), the gift of eggs, chickens, and guinea pigs also represents the symbolic core of the Andean peasant household. Peasants apparently viewed this exchange as a kind of ritual "pact" between patron and peon that might partially guarantee limited access to pasture, fuel, and water as well as the "right" to cross hacienda lands.

Asymmetrical *camari* exchanges also occurred in nearby parish towns where mestizo *compadres* (fictive kin) received gifts from their Indian clients. In the Indian communities, *jochas* and *karanakuy* (symmetrical reciprocal exchanges and obligations) were made or contracted among peasant households in anticipation of weddings, funerals, and other ritual occasions.

Ritual conflict occurred as well during carnival. Carnival *makanakuy* ("village war") was a kind of ritual fighting between upper and lower barrios and dancing parties of *alcaldes*, *yumbos* ("wild men"), and other costumed ritual players. It is still unclear to me from oral historical accounts whether in historical times these ritual confrontations took place at the close of carnival, in the middle, or more than once. In the peasant communities of Gatazo Grande and Gatazo Chico bordering the hacienda, *makanakuy* took the form of rock-throwing in the hills and along the road dividing the opposing upper and lower barrios of each community. Within the Hacienda Gatazo, the upper and lower peasant clusters also competed in the playful yet tenacious carnival war.<sup>45</sup> On Runa Punlla (21 January) and possibly during carnival, the peasants of the Hacienda Gatazo squared off against the peasants of the adjacent Hacienda Hospital Gatazo in a species of human "bullfighting" between selected *peones vivos* (rough-and-tough fieldhands) representing each hacienda. During this ritual duel to see who was tougher, hacienda peasants reportedly engaged in "simulated warfare."<sup>46</sup>

In the late nineteenth century, apparently only one Gatazo com-

44. Interview with E. C. Z. and E. C., Riobamba, 20 July 1987. The number of eggs for *camari* at Hacienda Gatazo was estimated at five thousand.

45. Interview with I. C., Gatazo, 16 Aug. 1987.

46. Interview, G. Z., Riobamba, 31 Aug. 1987.

munity existed outside the hacienda's legal boundaries. It is known that a Gatazo Ayllu was granted in *encomienda* to a Spaniard in the early seventeenth century.<sup>47</sup> Oral historical reports suggest that Chico segmented from Grande in the early twentieth century, according to one informant because a ritual battle to "take the plaza" and the image of its patron saint ended with a victorious Grande. After the ritual defeat, Chico established itself with its own patron saint. Based on this and other accounts, the social dynamics behind ritual fighting between barrios seem to have been related in the longer term to ayllu segmentation, the proliferation or dispersion of Indian hamlets, and even to the eventual reconstitution of contemporary peasant communities. The ritual confrontation itself may have been the institutionalized "political event" that finally decided the issue, something like the role played by an election. Future research may establish that internally generated segmentation processes may be related to the populating and "external siege" of haciendas by neighboring peasant communities. Although fierce rivals, hacienda peasants in Gatazo belong to the same families and ethnic groups as the peasants in adjacent communities and maintain limited marriage, reciprocal labor, and ritual ties with them. Thus as Martínez Alier recognized, "internal siege" of the hacienda could be linked in a complementary fashion to "external siege."

Andean ritual fighting on and around the haciendas may have been a kind of political performance in which the precarious balance of *Gemeinschaft* was renewed or undone in centrifugal schism along kin or locality lines.<sup>48</sup> Andean ritual conflict had other social implications as well. At particular historical moments, such rivalry shaped ethnic and class relations. Although one goal of carnival *makanakuy* may have been to propitiate the Pachamama, the Andean earth mother (see Hartmann 1971–72), the ritual and its organization constituted social action.<sup>49</sup> For example, rivalry among peasant communities has been manipulated by landlords as a means of labor control. Yet drinking, dancing, and simulated conflict in the communities and on the haciendas have sometimes turned into combat directed at ethnic and class enemies and representatives of the state on haciendas and in nearby towns. These regular semi-violent practices also helped establish an image of Indian fierceness in the minds of landlords and town inhabitants. But that is another story.<sup>50</sup>

47. Descripción 1606; Archivo Nacional de Historia/Casa de la Cultura, Núcleo Chimborazo, Riobamba, Testamento de Gerónima de Guevara, unclassified ms., 1631.

48. The literature on Andean "ritual fighting" and complementary opposition is significant but uneven in its historical and theoretical implications. For a sampling, see Hartmann (1971–72), Hopkins (1982), Platt (1987), and Langer (1990). Historical accounts of Andean ritual fighting in Ecuador include Hassaurek, who provided a brief description of ritual fighting as he observed it in Cayambe in 1863 (1967, 159–60).

49. For an insightful discussion of the social and political action embodied by Andean carnival rituals in Bolivia, see Rasnake (1986); see also Langer (1985).

50. Guamote and Cajabamba, the principal mestizo towns and parishes of Canton Colta,

Returning to the hacienda stage on Ash Wednesday, carnival became a sacrificial act and then a general drinking party that culminated in the momentary inversion of the social order's ritual obligations. The sacrifice of the *rama de gallos* (cock pole) with the playful beating of priestes and others with the bloodied corpse of the beheaded cock took place within the manor courtyard. This revelrous ritual of sacrifice has been described in some detail by Guerrero (1991) and Crespi (1981) for the northern Ecuadorian highlands, where it takes place on the feast days of San Juan and San Pedro. Its symbolic content will not be analyzed here. In the central highlands, this ritual seems to differ only slightly, although in the Colta region it was not practiced uniformly from hacienda to hacienda nor from village to village. After the cock games and bullfighting, heavy drinking broke out at the behest of the patron. Typically the patron would get drunk, dance, and put on a poncho with the kipu and regidor, who "passed the staff" to the patron and thus made him a symbolic alcalde with a cargo—an "ersatz member of the community" (Smith 1989, 81). The patron thus shared the cargo by sponsoring part of the festivities. Carola Lentz has noted: "By way of costume and active participation, the patron was incorporated in the community universe as one of its own authorities, leveling the habitual social distance and domination. Acting as a staff holder, the landlord fell below the authority of the Indian regidor, and accepting the gifts/offerings of the staff holders, assumed obligations, within the norms of symmetrical reciprocity, to assume his sponsorship of the feast" (Lentz 1986, 200). Indeed, the fiesta's emotional intensity produced a paradoxical fondness for Quechua drinking songs in more rustic patrones.<sup>51</sup>

These theaters of emotion and social exchange were thus important elements of patron-client relations in the Andes. Beyond the superficially unchanging "structure" in the momentary symbolic inversion and more than a "safety valve" or routine dole calculated "to keep the natives happy," the theater of carnival on the Andean hacienda was emotionally charged, violent, and regularly subject to the rehearsing and testing of contingent social conflict and obligation.<sup>52</sup> In ritual theaters like those provided by carnival, social scores could be expressed without fear of reprisal or loss of patronage.<sup>53</sup>

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respectively, have each been besieged by hacienda and community Indian peasants after ritual drinking and probable *makanakuy* in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. See the interviews listed in n. 31; see also Archivo Nacional de Historia, Casa de la Cultura, Núcleo Chimborazo, Riobamba, Juicios Criminales Varios, 1871-72. The timing of several Indian peasant uprisings in the region appears to have coincided with fiestas.

51. Personal communication with Rodrigo Montoya, Lima, Oct. 1987.

52. The literature on "rites of reversal" is vast, and space limitations do not permit a serious discussion of the debates. Two recent summaries that take positions similar to mine are found in Kertzer (1988, 144-91) and Scott (1990, 176-87).

53. Everyday resistance must be silent or veiled to be effective. As Feierman observed, "The poor person who openly dissents from the discourse of the rich loses the possibility of

The system of ritual reciprocity on the Hacienda Gatazo apparently “broke down” in the 1960s when the remaining third-generation heirs to the estate politely declined to accept *camari*. Much to their embarrassment, most peasants continued to deliver such gifts. Rather than leading to intensified class conflict such as strikes, violent land invasions, or evictions, the *camari* ritual slowly disintegrated as a wave of Protestant conversion swept through the hacienda community, undermining the ideological basis of ritual drinking, patron saints, and landlord legitimacy.<sup>54</sup> The contradictions of the Andean hacienda ritual system were thus resolved into new contradictions. How did this happen?

First, the peasant economy had expanded steadily and at the expense of the estate since its fragmentation by inheritance in 1930. In effect, service tenants succeeded in converting their usufruct plots into private property by arranging sales with their indebted landlords and by effectively resisting a Junker-style transition to dairy production through the everyday methods of crop theft, foot-dragging, and an orchestrated, gradualistic invasion of the *demesne* (see Thurner 1989).<sup>55</sup> Peasants raised the cash for land purchase by working as seasonal migrant workers on coastal sugar plantations and via petty commercial activities, as well as by selling simple commodities produced on their plots.

Petty-commodity production on individual parcels within the hacienda was well underway when Southern Baptist missionaries from Oklahoma arrived on the scene in the early 1960s. A new leadership of petty-commodity producers and seasonal migrant worker-peasants emerged. Yet a lingering system of hacienda symbolic hegemony continued in weakened form in many places until the agrarian reforms of the 1960s, and on some of the more isolated haciendas into the early 1980s. In the case of Gatazo, the disintegration of landlord-peasant reciprocity led to a “subsistence crisis” for the poorest peasants (*waqcha*), but by no means for all. Internal siege of the estate was nearly complete: the material basis of landlord *Herrschaft* was irreversibly undermined, and a peasant road was emerging under the political aegis of an assertive, peasant *Gemeinschaft*. Nevertheless, as Lentz has observed, semi-proletarianizing and independent peasants “enjoyed prestige only to the extent that they incorporated themselves in a social configuration that privileged land and the relation to the hacienda as key elements of differentiation. It is thus that although on a strictly economic level, the hacienda as a system lost

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relying on their help” (1990, 41–42). Resistance is more readily expressed—and observed—in rituals where openness is socially acceptable and the poor do not risk losing the patronage of their landlords.

54. See Langer (1985) for an instance in which the breakdown of reciprocity led to labor strikes.

55. For another Ecuadorian example of this historical trend in Andean peasant acquisition of dissolving estates, see Calomón (1973).

relatively early on its condition as 'radiant nucleus,' it continued to play a decisive role on the level of power and ideology until recent years . . ." (Lentz 1986, 195).

By the late 1960s, new peasant leaders had emerged to eclipse, but not eliminate, the regidor-kipu power alliance based on the alcalde vara system.<sup>56</sup> These new leaders organized a *comuna* (officially recognized peasant community) to defend and expand their land base at the expense of the hacienda. The movement to organize was fomented by the state's land reform agency, the Instituto Ecuatoriano de Reforma Agraria y Colonización (IERAC), which was empowered to grant certain legal privileges to recognized peasant organizations. Furthermore, a hegemonic national *desarrollista* discourse of progress had become a guiding principle of the new *comuna* politics as *cabildos* (elected village councils) sought alliances with the state in their struggles against landlords and in the drive to solicit infrastructure development projects. In the midst of this movement toward formal organization, the Protestants quickly established themselves as the Quechua Church. They trained a corpus of young and dynamic Indian peasant leaders and established an influential Quechua-language radio station in the area. Young Protestant Indian leaders, however, lacked moral authority among older peasants because their new power as *cabildos* and *comuneros* was countered by the religious authority of the old fiesta cargo system that regulated male rites of passage and the everyday practice of prestige politics in the community. As has been discussed, this system was ordained by the *kipus*, *regidores*, and *fundadores* in alliance with the patron and the Catholic parish priest. Evangelism proved to be the solution to this impasse of authority in the shifting set of power relations. It offered the emergent *comuna* leaders moral as well as political authority while undermining the fiesta cargo system and the authority of *kipus*, *regidores*, and *fundadores* by preaching abstinence from drink and dance. Moreover, the new Indian evangelist preachers spoke out in favor of agrarian reform. They inveighed against the evils of drink and by extension against Roman Catholic landowners, mestizo *chulqueros* (usurers), and parish priests, all of whom were said to have "kept the Indians down" in a drunken stupor. At this moment of transition, Protestant Indians embarked on their own highly successful campaign to "extirpate idolatries," which in retrospect makes the colonial Catholic Church's campaigns pale by comparison.

In short, gradual hacienda decline and the rise of a rival peasant or petty-commodity economy provided a fertile base for Protestant conversion and a profound transformation in the cultural practice of community-based agrarian class relations in Colta. In many communities and hacien-

56. See Lentz (1986) for an excellent discussion of this political transition.

das in the region (including Gatazo), the emotional capital of fiestas was drawn into Protestant revivalism, and the "traditional" festival faded as a dialectical focus of agrarian class struggle. In essence, Protestant ideology addressed only the domination and not the resistance side of Catholic Andean festivals. It thus recognized the fiesta complex as a form of exploitation rather than a medium for struggle.

This was not the situation on neighboring Hacienda Culluctus. No smallholding petty-commodity regime developed there, partly for ecological reasons and partly for social and historical reasons. As noted, Culluctus was a high-altitude latifundium devoted to producing livestock and was not partitioned until 1965. In that year Culluctus was sliced into equal halves, and in 1972 each half was sold separately. One-half went to the former mayoral and mayordomo, the other half to a mestizo compadre from a nearby village. To condense a complex social history, the former kipu and mayordomo, now patron of half of the old Hacienda Culluctus, retained and sponsored the patron saint fiesta of Culluctus (San Jacinto) and also accepted camari in Culluctus into the mid-1980s. Due to a hereditary link between a partitioned section of Gatazo and Culluctus, he also became the owner of probably the best quarter of the nearly defunct Hacienda Gatazo. There he sponsored the festivities of Hacienda Gatazo's patron saint, Santa Rosa de Lima. He generally maintained patron-client relations without recourse to open coercion, and his landowner status was not challenged seriously in any overt way.

The mestizo compadre who purchased the other half of Hacienda Culluctus initially maintained noncapitalist relations with the resident pastoralist community. He subsequently attempted to put labor relations on a cash basis, however, and effectively to "evict" the pastoralists by selling the pasture on which they had grazed their sheep to a third party. Proceeds from the land sale would have contributed toward modernizing production on the remaining more fertile section of the hacienda. In addition, the mestizo owner refused to take an integral part in fiestas, maintaining a bourgeois social distance that displeased the pastoralists of Culluctus (Chiriboga and Tobar 1985). When in the 1980s, he arranged the sale of the community's "traditional grazing lands," the herders of Culluctus invaded the hacienda with animals and makeshift building materials and were joined there by neighboring communities. They successfully blocked the sale, and the land was subsequently expropriated, but not before a violent confrontation with the patron's hired guns left two community members dead. Meanwhile, the patron of the other half of the Hacienda Culluctus (called "Don Lucas" here) danced and drank regularly with his workers at the Fiesta Patronal de San Jacinto and seemed to enjoy it thoroughly (Thurner 1989). The "invasion" did not enter his half of the Hacienda Culluctus.

WIDENING THE FIELD OF VISION

The ethnographic vignettes of social relations on Chimborazo haciendas reveal wider panoramas when viewed in the context of the literature. According to Andrés Guerrero, proto-capitalist Ecuadorian haciendas, maintained by redistribution and hierarchical reciprocity, came into growing contradiction with a rival peasant economy increasingly engaged in petty-commodity production. The Ecuadorian haciendas were governed by patron-client politics that were culturally encoded in religious fiesta cycles, ritual sacrifice, feigned ignorance and deference, and nuanced peasant resistance. Guerrero's depiction of the internal hacienda economy with the patron at the pinnacle of redistribution recalls Eric Wolf's and Sidney Mintz's influential discussion of "aid relationships" (Guerrero 1991, 267–323). In important ways, Wolf and Mintz's model anticipated the moral economy approach, but within the framework of "paternalism"—in what today might be considered a variation on patriarchy.

By rendering aid, the hacienda often takes over functions which the indigenous social group once rendered for its members within the antecedent social structure. It may thus act to stabilize traditional ideal norms and behaviour patterns, often reinforcing the "tradition-oriented" character of the labor force. . . . [T]hese aid relationships are ties between social and economic unequals, and are hierarchical in character. They are reinforced by the development of appropriate symbols of dominance and submission. . . . They are reinforced by the fact that they are characterized by the rendering of services which are usually tied to basic needs, such as health and subsistence. . . . If the owner renders such a service, the worker will be expected to respond likewise. . . . In the minds of the labor force, the person of the hacienda owner . . . may also come to represent the hacienda itself; his well-being may seem a validation of their collective effort. At the same time, he will act as the funnel through which the yield of some part of their work effort is returned to them. This redistribution, narrow though it is, partakes of the centralized redistributive economies characteristic of primitive societies. Once such a system becomes established, its functioning may become essential to the feeling of security of those who must live in terms of it. (Wolf and Mintz 1977, 43–44)

Robert Keith also found the paternalist analogy useful. In his view, Latin American haciendas were not feudal but paternalistic extensions of the manorial household. He noted that "moral authority was cheaper" than coercion. Moral economy or perhaps the economy of moralism was implicit in paternalism: "From an economic point of view, paternalism might be described as a pattern in which the principal responsibility of the landowner to his employees was to insure their welfare rather than to pay a fixed wage" (Keith 1977, 30–31).

Perhaps both Wolf and Mintz's and Keith's views of paternalism overstressed seigneurial hegemony on the hacienda. Indeed, more recent "moral economy approaches" can be interpreted as attempts to adjust for this imbalance by emphasizing the historical role of peasants in defining



the limits of patron-client relations (see Roseberry 1986, 149). To a large extent, as Guerrero has argued, a would-be patron had to *hacerse patrón* via certain ceremonial and individual performances. What “makes him a [good] patron” in the eyes of the peasantry may vary considerably by gender, age, and the peasant household’s particular relationship with the patron. But collective symbols that transcend these individualizing differences are usually present, although they are interpreted differently. Moreover, these symbols are often shaped and employed in the interests of the powerful. Nevertheless, an ethnological reading of hacienda social relations might suggest that among many Andean peasantries, a political culture shaped by civil-religious hierarchies and “generous” *kuraka*-like redistributive politics (see Stern 1982, 10) was reinvented in ways that have frequently shaped the social performance of the patron (see Smith 1989, 57, 81).

It is undoubtedly true that what Keith has said of Latin America as a whole applies especially to the Andes: “the estates of the region have always been noted for their diversity” (Keith 1977, 36). This diversity, however, was not derived solely from the contrast between ideal types along a continuum of the kind outlined by Baraona and rendered processual by Guerrero, or by the contrast between the tenancy regimes of *Gutsherrschaft* (demesne production with servile peasant labor) and *Grundherrschaft* (leased smallholder production), although these were important distinctions.<sup>57</sup> Rather, the diverse ethnic social formations, the ecological and demographic conditions, the effectiveness of peasant siege strategies, competing state demands on Indian labor, market cycles, and state intervention in the agrarian sector were the factors that obliged landlords in the Andes to accommodate their enterprises in diverse ways. This general assertion probably holds for both the colonial and national periods, although with major regional variations over time.<sup>58</sup>

In recent work on landowners and peasant communities in the central and southern highland regions of Peru around the turn of the century, Nelson Manrique (1988) has argued that only after the War of the Pacific (1879–1884) did the landed class consolidate itself throughout the Peruvian Andes, albeit with contrasting regional strategies of domination.

57. Types of hacienda tenancy varied in the Andes, and this variation was significant for the local constellation of power relations. Most of the discussion here is concerned with the *Gutsherrschaft* type, or with a hybrid *Gutsherrschaft*-*Grundherrschaft* practice. For a detailed discussion of *Gutsherrschaft* (demesne production with servile peasantry) and *Grundherrschaft* (rent from peasant smallholder production) tenancy types in the Cochabamba region of Bolivia, see Larson (1988, 188–91). She found that many haciendas in Cochabamba combined some form of estate with peasant smallholding. For an earlier discussion, based on secondary sources, of the distinction between *Grundherrschaft* and *Gutsherrschaft* as applied to Latin America, see Kay (1974).

58. For some revisionist views of colonial hacienda social relations in the Andes and Mexico, see Spalding (1975), Larson (1988, 6–7, *passim*), and Taylor (1985, 145).

Manrique posits that in the central highlands, landlords and municipal government attempted to repress popular Indian festivals. Meanwhile, in the southern highlands, landlords were feudal *taytas idolatrados* (worshipped lords) in the eyes of their Indian peons. There, landlords went so far as to act as “ritual sponsors of indigenous religious festivals” (Manrique 1988, 49). In short, ethnic barriers and class conflict were fueled by a “conflict between cultures” generated by a regional elite bent on “progress” and “civilization” in the modernizing central highlands of Peru. In the “feudal” southern highlands of Peru, according to Manrique, “traditional” landlords employed Andean cultural practices to increase the dependency of the Indian labor force. Although Manrique’s analysis of fiestas and their relationship to hegemony on the hacienda is highly schematic, he succeeds in establishing that fiestas were essential mechanisms of Andean cultural reproduction and community solidarity. Indeed, Manrique has demonstrated that despite elite efforts to ban such peasant revelry in the central highlands, all such efforts ultimately failed as peasant society confronted capitalist development.

Manrique goes on to argue that hacienda peasant communities in both the central and southern highland regions of Peru were much like the free peasant communities, with their social constitution of kin-based reciprocities and civil-religious hierarchies. This being the case, hacienda peasants could hardly be called “baseless” and atomized in the “way they faced the world,” that is, solely via the mediating patriarch in the big house. Manrique therefore concluded that it was time to retire the notion of hacienda power relations as a triangle without a base (1988, 157–62). All the evidence indicated that the triangle was closed at the base. The grave doubts cast over this model by Martínez Alier (1977, 159) were fully substantiated by Manrique’s deeper archival research in the records of rural notaries. But what was the nature of the base, and how did it influence the historical transformation or dissolution of the Andean hacienda?

Erick Langer has also argued that “the ‘open triangle’ model in which peons depended almost exclusively on landlords for goods and favors, to the exclusion of ties between hacienda laborers, does not work for highland Chuquisaca estates. . . . [T]here was a continuity between communal and hacienda structures and modes of authority . . .” (1989, 196). Langer found that Andean culture shaped labor relations as peasant workers resisted the rationalizing of production on the haciendas in the early decades of the twentieth century. Employing the moral economy interpretive framework developed by Scott (1976) for analyzing peasant politics,<sup>59</sup> Langer argued that “a rich cultural heritage of resistance, based

59. William Roseberry has succinctly encapsulated Scott’s moral economy thesis: “In an influential and controversial book, James Scott has suggested that peasants have a ‘moral economy’ by which they evaluate the destructive effects of capitalist expansion and the in-

on Andean traits found in many regions of the world" provided hacienda peasants with the tools "to determine the limits of change on the great estates" (1985, 257). Langer cited relations of reciprocity and redistribution on the hacienda familiar to Andean ethnohistorians, noting that such obligations cut both ways, obligating patron as well as peon. In Chuquisaca, hacienda fiestas associated with carnival included gifts of peasant goods in exchange for paternal largesse. To an absentee landowner, such ritual acts were "quaint but effective paternalistic measure[s] to assure that the workers did his bidding." The workers, however, "saw this ceremonial exchange of goods as an affirmation of an unwritten pact that assured their livelihood in exchange for their labor and other goods" (Langer 1985, 264). "The breakdown" of such reciprocal obligations led to "a subsistence crisis in the middle 1920s." Labor strikes represented "an attempt to reestablish traditional relations between hacendado and peon" as unwilling Chuquisaca landowners strove to make a Junker-style transition to upscale capitalist production. Langer concluded that "culture played an essential role in the hacienda peons' resistance to changes in labor conditions on Andean haciendas" (1985, 276–77).

Brooke Larson, however, has implied that Langer's sensitive interpretation of the Junker transition in Chuquisaca nearly "fall[s] into the trap set by some moral economists who assume the 'smooth' functioning of patron-client relations on most haciendas until sometime in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century when enterprising landlords decided to take the 'Junker route' to agrarian modernization and thereby altered the traditional balance of exchange governing landlord-tenant relations. However, colonial documents are full of examples of peasants impinging on the power of landlords who violated customs to enhance their own wealth" (Larson 1991, 477–78).

Larson developed a historical critique of Scott's moral economy framework, arguing that it was somewhat rigid and historically shallow for uncritical application in the Andean context (1991). She conceded nevertheless that the moral economy approach represented a useful methodological breakthrough for students of Andean history. But in the long, contradictory history of colonialism and agrarian transformation in the Andes, she warned, "moral economy was never very brittle" (Larson 1991, 479). That is, moral economy in the Andes was never rigidly maintained in

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creasing exactions of the state. Based on a subsistence ethic, the moral economy demands that those who appropriate peasant surpluses offer guarantees for the continued survival of the peasant household. Although precapitalist orders may be seen as exploitative in a Marxist sense, they may be based on patron-client relations that offer survival guarantees and may not be perceived as exploitative by the peasants who enjoy the guarantees. The intrusion of capitalism or the formation of a colonial state may break the social ties of the old moral economy, erode survival guarantees, appear exploitative to the peasantry, and provoke rebellion" (Roseberry 1986, 149).

an idealized precapitalist colonial past, and therefore it was not so brittle as to be suddenly dashed on the rocks of modern capitalist transition via the Junker road.

Notwithstanding Larson's reasoned objections and in defense of a closer reading of Scott and Thompson, the explanatory value of the analytical framework of moral economy does not rest on smooth precapitalist patron-client relations. Scott's more recent work amply demonstrates that conflict and negotiation may be the norm (1984, 1986, 1990).<sup>60</sup> In his more recent work, Scott argues that peasants are constantly engaged in everyday forms of resistance that test, bend, and otherwise "work the system to their minimum disadvantage" (Hobsbawm 1973, 13; Scott 1986); that landlords extract what they can within the limits of the politically possible; and that the local sphere of landlord-tenant relations consists of a negotiated political space whose semantic domain may inform wider class struggles (see Scott 1984, 1990).

The Andean hacienda's culturally encoded patron-client relations were rarely "smooth" and far from ideal. To ensure their own reproduction, peasants have found many weapons and strategies of resistance at their disposal to deploy against reluctant landlords. In my ethnographic experience, the most common have been pilfering of crops, livestock, or irrigation water as well as nearly imperceptible encroachment on or concerted invasion of hacienda lands and pastures (see Thurner 1989). The patron too has had many coercive and persuasive options at his disposal. He could hire local thugs or bandits (who might just as easily turn against him) or merely instruct his mayordomo to rob and beat recalcitrant peasants—and without compromising his paternalist image. He could call in the police or the military, depending on his relationship with state officials, or hire off-duty policemen, the more likely course. But well before any "breakdown in reciprocity" occurs on the "public" level of ritual exchanges and subsistence guarantees, various forms of everyday peasant resistance will have been tried and pushed to their limit. These forms of resistance and accommodation shift as historical conditions and the balance of forces in local struggles demand new "resistant adaptations" (Stern 1987; see also Alavi 1973, 36–37). Thus when a patron granted subsistence doles and *suplidos* (handouts given in response to begging) in exchange for workdays on the hacienda, he often did so only after having first made a rough calculation of the "opportunity costs" estimated in pilfered crops (Guerrero 1991). What a rich Asian rice farmer told Scott appears to apply here as well: "If we don't give [the workers] alms because they steal, then maybe they have to keep stealing" (Scott 1984, 11). Perhaps more poignantly, the peasants must also beg the patron—an act that

60. Taylor's (1979) work on social conflict in colonial Mexico also supports Georg Simmel's notion that societies are normally conflictual.

reaffirms his domination. This begging, however, is a highly emotional performance colored by grieving, crying, shouting, and cadenced insistence. It is thus intended to be more than ritualized submission. Guerrero reports instances where patrons simply gave in to this begging just to get the recalcitrant peasant off the doorstep and back into the fields.<sup>61</sup> Moreover, Guerrero (1991) has demonstrated that the *socorros* and *suplidos* granted to hacienda peasants did not correspond to the degree of indebtedness or debt peonage. Peasants apparently employed these subsistence doles to pay for ritual obligations to the internal hacienda community, life-cycle rituals of household members, and purchases—in short, for cultural and social reproduction.

William Roseberry recognized that despite its tendency to idealize precapitalist life, the moral economy literature “has renewed the notion of tradition not as the dead weight of the past, but as the active, shaping force of the past in the present” (1986, 149–50). Yet as Larson points out, Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) have argued that tradition is often invented (or reinvented) at particular historical conjunctures and to specific political ends.<sup>62</sup> For the historical ethnography of the Andean hacienda, it is precisely the shifting politics of culture—the contested making and re-making of “traditions”—that beg to be understood on their own terms. In a “real historical” sense, the hacienda was a micropolitical “field of force,” an overlapping of *Gemeinschaft* and *Herrschaft* political culture. As such, its study offers insights into historical struggles to establish and contest rural hegemony. Nevertheless, the contradictory nature of historical struggles on and around the haciendas defies the either-or positions of Favre and Martínez Alier: obligation (along with its flip side of acculturation) and resistance were two sides of the same dialectic.

Research by anthropologist Steven Webster illustrates some of the ambiguities of historical struggle and local political culture on the Andean hacienda. In conducting fieldwork on a hacienda near Cuzco in 1969–70, Webster was somewhat confused to find a vigorous Andean peasant culture within the territorial confines of a vast *latifundio*. What he found in the way of historical accounts of hacienda life was scant but quite remarkable (Webster 1981, 626). Ch’eqec Ayllu (a pseudonym bestowed by Webster) within the hacienda had marketed its own alpaca wool even during the wool export booms of the early twentieth century.<sup>63</sup> For the landowner, alpaca wool “was not worth the trouble the Ch’eqec would make if it were demanded of them.” Indeed, the Ch’eqec recalled those years as “a golden age.” The Ch’eqec maintained a political hierarchy

61. Guerrero, personal communication, Quito, 1987.

62. For a fascinating study of historical memory and the “reinvention” of political tradition in the northern Andes, see Rappaport (1990).

63. For another view of the regional impact of the wool export booms on southern Peruvian highland peasant economies, see Orlove (1977).

based on the hereditary *kuraka* and the rotating *varayoc* (alcalde vara) system, using the hacienda's courtyard and patron to lend legitimacy to their political culture. Meanwhile, they were "reassuring the landowner that he was in control," despite Ch'eqec Ayllu's manipulation of his services as paternal client, which were exploited by the community in its dealings with the Peruvian state.

Festivity also marked the occasions of harvest and entrega, the rendering of annual "tributary payments" of tubers and grains to the patron at his urban residence in Cuzco. According to Webster, "This was apparently carried out in a festival air of grandeur and bounty, in competition with other haciendas of the ethnic region to see who could produce the most for the hacendados. The competitive and jealous attitude between different communities was also exploited by these hacendados to gain compromising information about their workers" (Webster 1981, 623).

Webster's article included the translated text of a striking excerpt from a diary entry written in 1920 to illustrate this third-generation landlord's melancholic view of "his" Andean peasant work force.<sup>64</sup> The text betrays the hacendado's utter "lack of power" (to cite Martínez Alier) when it came to controlling the lives of "his" Indians. It also bears witness to the tenacity of Andean kin-based ritual reciprocity. In this case, the "captured" ayllu or peasant community continued to exploit the puna (alpine grasslands) for alpaca production while maintaining maize lands at lower elevations beyond the reach of the hacienda. Clearly, the vastness of the *montaña* (subtropical montane wet forest) of the eastern slopes bordering on the hacienda and the unfenced puna within the legal boundaries of the estate favored the Ch'eqec's efforts to reproduce a vertical "ethnic economy" of their own (see Harris 1982) while severely constraining the landlord's options. Moreover, Webster's Cuzqueño landlord appears to have been far less interested in maximizing profits from the hacienda than many of his counterparts in the central highlands, as described by Martínez Alier. Webster concluded his essay with an intriguing comment: "the apprehension that a specific social situation and its negation might coexist, and that history is the process whereby some contradictions are quite unpredictably resolved into others . . . is suggested by the dialectic of ambiguities and contradictions . . ." (Webster 1981, 632).

#### CULTURE AS HISTORICAL PRACTICE

An episodic look at the Fiesta Patronal de Santa Rosa on the Hacienda Gatazo and its memory among post-reform peasants will bring this article to an ethnographic and theoretical conclusion. Santa Rosa in

64. The diary entry of the third-generation landlord, dated 20 July 1920, is highly recommended (see Webster 1981, 630–31).

the 1980s was a thoroughly Catholic affair involving heavy drinking and dancing, with liberal doles of paternal largesse uniting Indian peons and mestizo commercial allies with the festival's sponsor, Don Lucas. It was at once the festival of the upper Gatazo community and its Catholic chapel along with a celebration and reaffirmation of Don Lucas's relationship with community laborers and sharecroppers. No cargos were assigned in the old sense of the defunct *alcalde vara* system. The *varas* (staves) rested quietly next to Santa Rosa's shrine. Rather, Don Lucas took the cargo on himself without recourse to a ritual "passing of the staff." Straightforward sponsorship (which was even broadcast over the local Catholic radio station) was a small price to pay for reaffirming patron-client ties in a thoroughly capitalist day.

The festival of Santa Rosa contrasted markedly with a "counter-festival" that took place in lower Gatazo the week before. In place of the Catholic Santa Rosa, the lower community sponsored a pan-communal "Campamento Juvenil" in 1987. Gatazo's Protestant peasant leaders explained that this reunion provided a positive alternative to the drinking and debauchery of the Santa Rosa fiesta. In their festival, children would learn, pray, and sing together without reference to the patron and the participation of non-Indians (as in Don Lucas's fiesta). The circus-tent revival included Bible-reading contests in Quechua and musical talent shows dominated by fundamentalist hymns rendered in Quechua, most of them recorded and rebroadcast later on the local Protestant mission's Quechua-language radio station. Ample food was provided by the community, but no drink and no music for dancing. The ambiance was completely unlike that of Santa Rosa in the upper community. The nonconforming Catholics from lower Gatazo inevitably found their way to the revelry of Santa Rosa in the upper community, and a few Protestant converts from the upper community attended the lower community's fair. In 1987 the Protestant fair was immensely popular, while the Santa Rosa festival was clearly diminished and poorly attended.

A telling ethnographic episode two days after the Santa Rosa festival in 1987 highlighted the Andean rivalry and competition that shaped work discipline on the hacienda, now recast in terms of Protestant versus Catholic contradictions. The episode involved the hacienda barley harvest (*sibada kuzicha minga*). Barley had been the staple crop of the region prior to 1964. Significantly, it was grown for peasant household consumption and for sale to breweries. The barley harvest was so important socially that it became culturally endowed with Quechua songs and legends. Barley and most of the cultural practices associated with it have all but disappeared in Chimborazo as economic transformations and soil erosion have erased its former viability. For example, singing of the *jahuay* was indispensable to the harvest in *jazinda timpu* but is heard only rarely today. Indeed, observers recall that in the past the hills cried out with the bittersweet pangs

of Quechua peasant voices joined together in *jahuay* while their sickles slashed through the barley staff. Today little barley is sown, most of it by peasants for their own consumption. A few minor haciendas—those unable to make a Junker transition to capital intensive dairy production—occasionally plant a field of barley, and since the 1960s they often harvest the barley with a combine rented from the agriculture ministry. The combine makes the rounds of the province, however, and is not always available when the crop is ready to be cut and stacked.

To avoid losses to rot and peasant theft in 1987, Don Eduardo, patron of a subdivision of the Hacienda Gatazo, called on the upper and lower communities of Gatazo to harvest his hacienda barley crop collectively, in *minga* style (a communal working bee). About thirty men, women, boys, and girls from each community—some sixty in all—and another group from an adjoining hamlet with kin ties to hacienda peasants, showed up early to begin the day's reaping under the oversight of Don Eduardo's mayordomo. Wage labor was not employed for this task. Wage workers were employed later, but only to stack the cut barley in tall *parbas* (haystacks). *Minga* workers from the upper community were Catholics and were led in *jahuay* singing by a self-appointed "kipu." *Minga* workers from the lower community were Protestants, and they worked silently and swiftly without a leader. The *jahuay* lyrics, among other poetic gestures, implore the patron to be generous with his *aswa* (corn beer) so that the workers may drown their sorrows and thus work harder. But in 1987, the patron was no longer serving *aswa*—he gave them all Cokes instead. The Catholic peasants (some still hungover from the Santa Rosa festival) complained, but the Protestants did not seem to mind. When I asked Don Eduardo, who arrived on the scene later, why the Catholics continued to sing the *jahuay* to no avail, he responded that he had always ordered his kipu to lead the *jahuay* so that the workers would not converse with one another on the job. It was a kind of discipline, he pointed out. Clearly, the Protestant *minga*-goers no longer required this form of work discipline.

Another Andean form of competitive work discipline came into play at this hacienda barley harvest. Throughout the entire harvest, the two groups—one singing the *jahuay* boisterously, the other slicing through the staff in silence—competed playfully with one another to see which group, moving together in a wave through the barley, could arrive at the other end of the field first. In Gatazo this kind of gamelike competition is called *mishanakuy*. That day the Protestants won every sweep. The Catholics, meanwhile, did not seem to care much about the outcome: it was the well-enjoyed competition itself, and not the end, that mattered. By winning, the Protestants gained the time to rest a few minutes before commencing again on a return sweep. The Protestant group was proud of its speed and wanted to demonstrate in a quiet way the superiority of its approach. The Catholics, however, were not really impressed.



Finally, I wish to consider three views of the hacienda past gathered over the course of fieldwork that seem to me representative. Don Lucas recalled "the beautiful fiestas of carnival here in [Gatazo]." With a (hung-over) nostalgia, he talked about the "cock pole" where "everybody grabbed off a chunk of the cock." In those days, "this hacienda produced very well." But today "those evangelists . . . , the comuneros . . . , they don't know how to work the land . . . , they don't know the crops. [T]hey loaf around in town too much. . . , they don't work as well as the land deserves . . . ." Don Lucas and his Indian wife still received "a little bit" of *camari* in 1986 in Culluctus.<sup>65</sup> Having been first a *huasipunguero* then the *kipu*, *mayordomo*, partner, administrator, and finally patron of one-quarter of the Hacienda Gatazo and one-half of Hacienda Culluctus, Don Lucas was truly a versatile social climber.

Or consider the possibly nostalgic view expressed by a small group of aging Catholic former *huasipungueros* of the *Cooperativa Agrícola de Producción Hospital Gatazo*.<sup>66</sup> In many ways disgruntled about the cooperative and the unceasing labor demands of the state's "community development" projects, they agreed that things were better "in the days of the patrons." There were regular work and pay then, and time to tend to one's own affairs. Now they slaved full-time on the cooperative and had nothing to show for it. No wages, nothing decent to eat.

The composite views of the informant whose perspective appears similar to Favre's are fairly typical of evangelist *comuneros* in Colta. The informant in question was a former *arrimado* (son of a *huasipunguero*) who later became *mayordomo* on a subdivision of the Hacienda Gatazo and is now a successful commercial onion producer and president of the peasant *comuna*. In his eyes, drinkers (Catholics) were not entirely civilized (he himself had been a heavy drinker before conversion). Indeed, *los indios* or *runajintikuna* themselves were not civilized "before." He noted that some Indians still lived like savages in the Amazon territory to the east (a reference to *Sacha runa*) and also to the south beyond the highland town of Alausi (a reference to *Cañari Quechua* peasants). He continued:

But the Indians around Colta were more civilized now, they were more aware of things now. . . . On the hacienda, they had lived like slaves, unable to go anywhere. I myself was beaten. Everybody was beaten. I decided to run away to the coast after the *kipu* beat me. . . . The *fiesta cargos* had been a great burden. . . . I worked a full year on a coastal sugar plantation just to pay for my *priostazgo* at the *Fiesta de Los Reyes*. . . . Then I had to go door to door and offer the *mestizo* townfolk a drink at every door, and I got very drunk and passed out. And then I would come home to beat my wife . . . . The priests and the patrons kept us on the

65. Interview with L. Y., Gatazo, 17 Aug. 1987.

66. Field notes. This cooperative was formed on the state-owned Hacienda El Hospital Gatazo, adjacent to Hacienda Gatazo. The peasants of the two haciendas appear to have engaged in ritual *туру* fighting on Runa Punlla.

hacienda, in ignorance. We couldn't go to school. They kept us going from fiesta to fiesta, spending all our money, drunk all the time. All in all, it was a sad life . . . , everything was destined for the fiestas. . . . [P]oor Ecuador . . . , they spent everything on beer and cane liquor, that's all . . . <sup>67</sup>

Lentz collected similar recollections of the hacienda past among the comuneros of a neighboring former hacienda peasant community: "We lived in a kind of slavery, suffering on the hacienda. All the land belonged to the landlords. Our thoughts were confined to the hacienda, everyday, all day, from dawn to dusk. . . ." The past is presented as a topic of "obscurity" and of "living like animals," while the vision of the present is of "opening one's eyes" and "organization." Nevertheless, this vision was "occasionally interrupted by nostalgic remembrances of well-pastured herds, good grain production, and the splendor of fiestas on the haciendas" (Lentz 1986, 190).

In attempting to reconstruct life on the hacienda by means of oral sources, scholars collect a mixed bag of recollections that reflect the individual's particular social positions then and now and the particular argument that individual wishes to make about a specific series of events. As Raymond Williams observed about England's rural past, "the perceptions of the past will depend upon the relative positions of the perceivers" (cited in Roseberry 1986, 151).<sup>68</sup> This spate of historical reflection recorded in the late 1980s by a gringo anthropologist on a dissolving hacienda in central Ecuador by no means constitutes a thorough sample of the local universe of opinion. Worse, lack of space prevents fully describing the context in which those views were expressed. I suspect nevertheless that they represent patterns in the political use of the past (and the interview opportunity) in the present.<sup>69</sup> The views relayed here reflect incipient differences and perhaps passing ones. Yet they point to a process of social differentiation that is not fully class conscious in the classical sense. These views also suggest a general cultural process: capitalism's reordering of historical memory. A process of "selective amnesia" is made more acute by evangelical Protestant conversion, which tries (with considerable success) to bring about a "clean sweep" of history, especially that involving the convert's sinful individual past. In the local Gatazo discourse of the 1980s, to be Catholic was synonymous with being *ufyaj* (drinkers) and *payankuna* (old or old-fashioned people). Protestants identified themselves instead as *mishujintikuna* or *jóvenes* (young people). They were the future, Catholics were the past. Even so, it was recognized that Catholics cur-

67. Interview with L. R. L. and M. C. V., Cajabamba, 24 July 1987; field notes.

68. Following Roseberry, Gould (1990) is at least initially critical of the oral historical sources on which he has based much of his finely textured study of the political struggles of Nicaraguan peasants.

69. Two pathbreaking works on the political workings of memory in the Andes are Rivera (1986) and Rappaport (1990).

rently were not the same as Catholics previously, a hardly avoidable conclusion given the fact that nearly half of all Gatazeños were still Catholic. The Protestant reading of the hacienda- and church-dominated past as subjugation of the Indians to “Romanism” and unextirpated idolatry parallels the analysis of the acculturation school. This interpretation has had the virtue of being a liberating ideology for some peasants and liberal ideologues at a particular historical conjuncture and thus has become “truth” in the historical consciousness of some. Nevertheless, the documentary record and the presence of conflicting views challenge this “official” interpretation.

These conflicting views, when combined with an appreciation of the contradictory social struggles embodied in the hacienda’s cultural practices, suggest a dialectical approach to moral economy. Certainly the remembered moral economy of the Andean hacienda is seldom, if ever, idealized by former peasant workers on Andean haciendas. The hacienda is remembered in bitter terms, if at all. The past is ambiguous, differentiated, and often fragmented from the present. As Roseberry has noted, “too often moral economy theorists, while pointing out the importance of the past in the present, analyze a relatively unambiguous transition from an ordered past to a disordered present. We instead need to view a movement from a disordered past to a disordered present. With such a starting point we can assess the contradictions inherent in the development of working-class consciousness and appreciate that the past provides both experiences that may make the transition seem positive and experiences that may make it seem negative” (Roseberry 1986, 151).

The dialectical approach to the moral economy or exploitation problem of the Andean hacienda outlined here follows Anthony Giddens’s critique of the Parsonian theory of the “double contingency” of social interaction (see Giddens 1979, 85–86). Talcott Parsons’s double contingency predicted “the normative character of social practices.” The problem was that actors merely mirrored each other’s expectations because they were more or less “institutionally programmed.” What was missing in this approach was a theory of power and a critical view of reproduction, rather than a taken-for-granted notion of tradition or continuity. As Giddens pointed out, “the normative character of social practice lends itself to the actualization of power . . . as a resource drawn upon in power relations.” But “the norms implicated in systems of social interaction have at every moment to be sustained and reproduced in the flow of social encounters” (Giddens 1979, 86). Thus confirmations or transgressions of normative prescriptions are negotiated, potentially political acts that are historically contingent. Even the timing of reciprocity—as in when to return the favor of a gift—may be a political or strategic act (Bourdieu 1977; Thompson 1978). Indeed “what conformity or transgression may mean is itself a product of conduct, and is negotiated” per context (Giddens 1979, 85). After all,

the fiesta calendar itself (not to mention the cargo system) was a hegemonic ordering of ritualized gift politics.

It may therefore be somewhat misleading to speak of a culture of reciprocity based on “traditional Andean concepts” (Langer 1985, 276) or of “traits” at work on the proto-capitalist hacienda. Reciprocity may be traditional in Andean societies, and that reciprocity may indeed manifest itself in identifiable cultural forms, but traditional status does not exempt exchange practices from what Giddens called “the dialectic of control” (1979).<sup>70</sup> The struggle for control itself seems necessarily to recast the cultural form. Historical contests for control characterize both peasant reciprocity and paternalist attempts to convert surplus into symbolic capital,<sup>71</sup> and they provide ample political *raison d’être* for the cultural reproduction of ritual exchanges based in part on the hacienda’s ceremonial or reproduction fund.

Such a dialectical view of the social relations revolving around the Andean hacienda suggests an approach to culture that focuses on praxis. Culture conceived as structure or as a set of principles or traits does not readily lend itself to the analysis of day-to-day political agency. A more kinetic, everyday notion is required. Culture is not a set of integrated ideas or axiomatic substrata, but what David Sabean has defined as

a series of arguments among people about the common things of their everyday lives. . . . If we consider culture as the “medium” as it were, in which conflicts are worked out, faulty and partial visions are adjusted, domination is attempted and resistance set into play, then we can use the concept as an instrument for investigating the dynamics of power, the distribution of resources, and the nature of hierarchy. In this very essential way, culture is part of a struggle over things, meanings, and positions. It is precisely because it is an argument, or a set of exchanges, or an attempt to wield or resist power, that we learn more about it by starting with the relations of the people who share a culture, than we do by assuming that culture is about a set of tools or ideas, a unified set of notions which a people share. (Sabeian 1984, 95)

Armed with a historicized notion of culture as a medium of struggle over things and meanings, researchers are finding that a kind of methodological and conceptual retooling seems in order. Methodologically, the task appears to lie in finding better ways to recover the unwritten history of everyday agrarian politics. Scholars need to know more about how and when micropolitics shifted over time. In responding to market downturns, did landlords retreat from demesne production (*Gutsherrschaft*) toward a reliance on rents (*Grundherrschaft*), and did such cyclical retractions invite peasant siege? Conversely, did market incentives for demesne

70. Langer (1985) well understood that reciprocity was subject to and indeed a powerful arm of social control. My point is to move away from a purely instrumentalist view that tends to isolate the form from history.

71. The conversion of capital into symbolic domination is a central theme in Bourdieu (1977).

production favor a pattern pattern of “normal resistance”? Were the social tensions created by market cycles expressed in the ritualized exchanges of festivals? When was the fiesta cargo system within the hacienda community a tool of domination, and when was it a theater of negotiation or a weapon of resistance? What historical contradictions struck a balance? When rituals of vertical reciprocity “broke down” or wavered and declined, did petty theft or peasant “siege” of hacienda resources intensify?<sup>72</sup> These questions can only be satisfactorily addressed with detailed “ethnographic histories” of particular transitions.

Thompson noted the “enormous emotional capital” that peasants in preindustrial England invested in local festivals—they were “what men and women lived for” (1974, 390–92). Yet English landlords could keep up their end of the “subsistence bargain” with the occasional ceremonial performance of paternal largesse, “as if the illusion of paternalism was too fragile to be risked to more sustained exposure.” This veiled paternalism fits the image of the urban-based absentee landlord in late-nineteenth-century Chuquisaca, Cuzco, or Riobamba. And yet, as in rural eighteenth-century England, it is in just such a situation that “simulated deference” and an “anonymous tradition” of resistance may thrive (Thompson 1974, 399). As it turns out, peasants could also wear masks.

Conceptually, scholars should assume a critical stance toward Eric Hobsbawm’s (1959) unilinear notion (and language) of the “prepolitical/primitive” leading inexorably to the “political/modern” sometime around 1930 or possibly later, depending on the moment when partisan politics burst upon the scene (see Burga 1976, 279). Such an evolutionary assumption makes all nineteenth- and much twentieth-century peasant struggle something less than real politics. For anthropologists, this idea is a curious one; its equivalent would be “precultural” peoples or classes, a notion dispensed with long ago. All social struggles must be considered potentially political and definitely cultural. The analytical reach of “the political” and of what constitutes resistance or negotiated accommodation must also extend well beyond the narrow confines of organized collective action emanating from elites, parties, or the state. Culture itself is a vast field of relational practices spiced with the political stuff of social history. Interpreting this wider field of agrarian politics requires serious symbolic analysis of the historical construction and conditions of power and authority as well as an ethnographic sense of the material and emotional “duress of the quotidian” that constitutes social relations in the Andes.<sup>73</sup>

72. Hobsbawm’s (1974) discussion of peasant land invasions in the 1960s is suggestive in this vein, as is that of Smith (1989).

73. Here I am using Scott’s phrase (1986, 14).

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