MAKING DEVELOPMENT MEANINGFUL: UNDERSTANDING STAKEHOLDER

INTERPRETATIONS OF ETHNODEVELOPMENT IN HIGHLAND ECUADOR

by

KRISTIN ANNE VANDERMOLEN

(Under the Direction of Donald R. Nelson)

ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the persistence of the ethnodevelopment framework in highland Ecuador in light of scholarly critiques related to the livelihood outcomes and representations of indigenous culture produced. The research contributes to a new paradigm in anthropology that seeks to identify the moral and social worlds in which development becomes meaningful to stakeholders through ethnographic examination of the specific contexts in which those meanings emerge. In utilizing exploration of those worlds as a tool for understanding why ethnodevelopment has endured, the dissertation offers new insights into the importance of balancing structural and local interpretations of cultural representations and development processes.

Drawing on ten months of field work from February to December 2103, this research examines where local interests interlock to produce support for ethnodevelopment among (1) the Union of Peasant and Indigenous Organizations of Cotacachi (UNORCAC), an indigenous development organization in Cotacachi, Ecuador; and (2) the local population that the organization serves. Extensive participant observation combined with focus groups, interviews, and household surveys with leaders and beneficiaries of UNORCAC reveal that

ethnodevelopment dovetails with local processes of cultural valorization that have been in progress since the organization's founding. Such findings imply that local communities show a desire for reproducing indigenous culture that cannot be explained solely in terms of adherence to externally imposed development. However, the research also suggests that the small-scale socio-cultural nature of ethnodevelopment projects may do more to valorize indigenous culture than to aid household and community wellbeing, and further, that ethnodevelopment has contributed to the depoliticization of indigenous organizations over the last decades.

The dissertation contributes to a growing body of literature that places examination of stakeholder interests at the forefront of development research, while also reorienting discussions of cultural representation in ethnodevelopment towards broader anthropological debates on the opportunities and constraints of self-essentialism for indigenous populations. The research is also relevant to broader discussions on the role of development NGOs in the provision of social services under neoliberal states, where there is concern among scholars for understanding how donor relations affect the autonomy of these organizations, and ultimately, their abilities to provide for local populations.

INDEX WORDS: Anthropology and development, ethnodevelopment, development, Andes, indigenous movements, NGOs, cultural valorization and revitalization, essentialism, ethnography

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A DISSERTATION Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of The University of Georgia in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2015

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May 2015

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

An immense debt of gratitude is also due to the *Unión de Organizaciones Campesinas e Indígenas de Cotacachi* (UNORCAC) and the *Comité Central de Mujeres de la UNORCAC* (CCMU), not only for welcoming me to conduct this research, but for providing ample help in its facilitation. I am equally grateful to UNORCAC's beneficiaries for their willingness to participate, and for giving so freely of their time and knowledge. I also give my sincere thanks to Rosa Ramos for her friendship and invaluable research assistance in Cotacachi, and to Patricia Morales and family for their hospitality, kindness, and care.

Finally, I would like to thank my family and friends for their tireless support, patience, and above all, kindness, not only during the last six years, but always.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This dissertation examines the persistence of the ethnodevelopment framework in highland Ecuador in light of scholarly critiques related to the livelihood outcomes and representations of indigenous culture produced. The research contributes to a new paradigm in anthropology that seeks to identify the "moral and social worlds" in which development becomes meaningful to stakeholders through ethnographic examination of the specific contexts in which those meanings emerge (Yarrow and Venkatesan 2012:8). In utilizing exploration of those "worlds" as a tool for understanding why ethnodevelopment has endured, the research offers new insights into the importance of complementing post-structuralist interpretations of cultural representations and development processes with local explanations of the same.

Ethnodevelopment emerged in the mid-1990s in response to the growing demands of indigenous movements in Latin America for greater cultural autonomy in state and transnational development projects (Andolina et al. 2009; Engle 2010). It differs from other frameworks by putting cultural capital, like native crops and traditional knowledge, to use in the social and economic development of indigenous populations in the idea that doing so will help strengthen local cultures and identities (Van Nieuwkoop and Uquillas 2000). However, critics have argued that ethnodevelopment has been largely ineffective, not only in achieving its cultural aims, but in producing impactful development outcomes (Andolina et al. 2009; Bretón 2008; Radcliffe and

1

Laurie 2006a, 2006b). The criticisms are, first, that policymakers have tended to frame solutions to development needs within antiquated notions of indigenous culture that do not accurately reflect contemporary life in local communities (Andolina et al. 2009; Radcliffe and Laurie 2006a, 2006b). Second, they have overemphasized the incorporation of cultural capital to the point of limiting projects to small-scale socio-cultural and economic activities that do not significantly aid local wellbeing (Andolina et al. 2009; Davis 2002; Radcliffe and Laurie 2006a). As such, critics have argued that ethnodevelopment has been more successful as a project of rule than as a means of development (Andolina et al. 2009; Bretón 2008; Radcliffe and Laurie 2006a, 2006b). The argument, rooted in post-structuralist interpretations of development and Foucauldian notions of governmentality, interprets ethnodevelopment as a form of transnational governance whereby funding institutions play a role in shaping not only local development needs, but also notions of indigenous culture and identity. From this perspective, funders create indigenous subjects through the offer of projects that reflect external interpretations of local needs and cultures, and relatedly, through the awarding of funds to the populations that best emulate them (Andolina et al. 2009; Bretón 2008; Radcliffe and Laurie 2006a, 2006b).

Yet, criticism and critique aside, for nearly two decades, ethnodevelopment has remained a predominant model for the development of rural indigenous populations throughout much of the Andean highlands, where it has been supported by indigenous grassroots development organizations and beneficiary populations alike (Bretón 2008; Martínez 2006; Rhoades 2006). My research explores this apparent contradiction through ethnographic study of ethnodevelopment in highland Ecuador. Specifically, I examine where local interests interlock to produce support for ethnodevelopment among: (1) The *Unión de Organizaciones Campesinas e Indígenas de Cotacachi* (Union of Peasant and Indigenous Organizations of Cotacachi,

UNORCAC), a second-tier organization (*organización de segundo grado*, OSG)[1] in Cotacachi, Ecuador; and (2) the local indigenous population that the organization serves. The following questions guide the research:

>   (Q1) In what ways does UNORCAC conceptualize and operationalize cultural capital in seeking to achieve local development and broader organizational goals?

>   (Q2) How do interpretations of ethnodevelopment by local stakeholders contribute to sustained participation and support?

The dissertation employs the above approach as a means for explaining the continued predominance of the ethnodevelopment framework in contexts where post-structuralist interpretations have highlighted only the shortcomings (see Andolina et al. 2009; Bretón 2008; Radcliffe and Laurie 2006a, 2006b). Different from these studies, the intention of this research is neither to critique the validity of the cultural representations utilized in ethnodevelopment nor to call into question the efficacy of its programs from scholarly interpretation of related policies. Instead, the intention is to contribute anthropological understanding of some of the ways of seeing and understanding the world that make ethnodevelopment meaningful. In so doing, the project aims to help build a pathway for future development research that acknowledges and seeks to understand the heterogeneity of thought, meaning, and practice surrounding any one development framework in any single location, while also helping to make anthropology more

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[1] OSGs are grassroots assemblages of rural communities that form the "second tier" within the hierarchy of social and political representation of peasant and indigenous populations in Ecuador. Within this hierarchy, communities form the first tier; these are grouped into *cantón*-level (a county-like jurisdiction) second-tier organizations, which are themselves grouped into provincial-level third-tier organizations. Together, third-tier organizations comprise the fourth-tier federations and confederations responsible for organizing contemporary peasant and indigenous movements in Ecuador (Carroll 2002; Martínez 2006).

critically aware of some of the analytical and theoretical limitations of past approaches (see also Friedman 2006; Mosse 2005; Mosse and Lewis 2006; Yarrow and Venkatesan 2012).

Cotacachi is a fitting site for this research. UNORCAC has practiced ethnodevelopment for nearly two decades and is recognized internationally as a model for the framework (Carroll 2002; Rhoades 2006). Further, during the last decades, Cotacachi has experienced rapid livelihoods diversification and associated social, political, and cultural transformations (Flora 2006; Ospina 2006), implying that support for ethnodevelopment has endured through a period of significant change. Finally, ethnodevelopment was first implemented in the Andes, and scholarly debates about its cultural representativeness and overall efficacy are centered there (Andolina et al. 2009; Lucero 2008).

Theoretical Context

A New Paradigm in Anthropological Contributions to Development Research

Anthropologists have a long history with notions of development entwined in theories of social and cultural evolution, and ultimately projects of colonization and imperial power (Ferguson 2005; Lewis 2005; Mosse 2013). Yet development in its modern sense came to official prominence only when the United States government used it as the rationale for the reconstruction of "underdeveloped" countries after World War II (Ferguson 2005; Lewis 2005). Since then, anthropologists have engaged development in different ways; for example, as researchers, participants, and activists, contributing through each of these roles to what we know about development theory and practice today (Lewis 2005; Mosse 2013).

Contemporary trends in development theory have tended to parallel shifts in thinking across the social sciences, primarily in the order of structuralist perspectives, including classical

and neoclassical economic, modernization, Marxist, and critical theories, post-structuralist critiques, and actor-oriented approaches (Edelman and Haugerud 2005; Neverdeen Pieterse 2010; Peet and Hartwick 2009). Anthropologists in particular have been influential in the development of the latter two, and perhaps most notably in that of post-structuralist critiques (see Escobar 1995; Ferguson 1994; Hobart 1993; Sachs 1992).

Largely pioneered by Arturo Escobar (1991, 1995) and influenced by the work of Michel Foucault (1991a, 1991b), post-structuralist critiques interpret development as a "system of knowledge, practices, technologies, and power relationships that orders and limits description and action within its field" (Friedman 2006, 2012; Mosse and Lewis 2006:4; Mosse 2013). From this perspective, the (predominantly Western) states and economic institutions that dominate global power relationships embed said knowledge, practices, and technologies in particular discourses that shape and manipulate the subjects and nature of development (see Apthorpe 1997; Escobar 1991, 1995; Sachs 1992). Post-structuralist critiques therefore comprise two main elements, one theoretical and the other methodological (Friedman 2006, 2012). The theoretical element lies in the assertion that development discourse defines and creates non-Western peoples as "underdeveloped." The methodological element lies in the deconstruction of development discourse as the means for understanding how exactly that discourse is used to exert power over those peoples (Friedman 2006). For example, in *The Anti-Politics Machine*, James Ferguson (1990) demonstrated that World Bank rural agricultural programs depicted Lesotho as an economically isolated country of farmers when in reality 70 percent of rural household income was derived from wage labor, primarily in South African mines (Ferguson 1994). The misguided programs thus failed to eliminate poverty through agricultural improvements, but were successful in further retrenching the state in rural areas, deepening Western modernizing

5

influences, and depoliticizing problems of "structural unemployment, influx control, low wages, and political subjugation by South Africa" (177). Drawing on such examples, post-structuralists thus have argued that development is not meant to aid "less developed" nations so much as it is to provide dominant states and economic institutions a means for controlling processes of change within them (see Friedman 2006; Mosse and Lewis 2006; Mosse 2013; Yarrow and Venkatesan 2012). Hence Ferguson (1994) concluded in his work that the guiding question in development research should not be "Can aid programmes ever be made really to help poor people?," but rather, "What do aid programmes do *besides* fail to help poor people?" (180).

More recently, anthropologists have proposed a new paradigm for understanding development that considers the various "moral and social worlds" in which projects become meaningful to stakeholders (Yarrow and Venkatesan 2012:8). The paradigm is at once part of a larger (re)turn to ethnographic engagement with development (see Friedman 2006; Gow 2008; Li 2007; Moore 2005; Mosse 2005; Yarrow 2011) and a response to the prevailing influence of post-structuralist critiques in guiding anthropological contributions to development research today (see Escobar 1995; Ferguson 1994; Hobart 1993; Sachs 1992).

Post-structuralist critiques have generated important awareness of the ways that development discourse is used to construct notions of global poverty and the poor (see also Eyben 2000; Friedman 2012; Neverdeen Pieterse 2001; Nustad 2001). However, their overreliance on discourse analysis has resulted in an ethnographic reductionism that dissolves the heterogeneity of ideas, beliefs, and experiences of different actors within their presumed role in reproducing policy discourse (see Curry 2003; Everett 1997; Friedman 2006). Yarrow and Venkatesan (2012) have argued that such reductionism "dispossesses" local actors as the primary instrumentalists of development practice (see Abdelrahman and Apthorpe 2002), resulting in

ideologically generalized critique and inhibiting theoretical innovation. The authors thus propose that anthropologists first examine the concrete practice of development in which ideas about it are formed and made meaningful, allowing new insights to emerge from deeper understandings of those particular contexts. This means moving away from the critical deconstruction of development policy and towards what Mosse and Lewis (2006) term a "methodological deconstructionism" that draws on the capacity of ethnography to shed light on the complex contexts within which development is enacted (Yarrow and Venkatesan 2012).

Methodological deconstructionism draws on the works of actor-oriented theorists who have demonstrated that development practice is never a strict product of policy discourse, but is grounded in the everyday encounters between project managers, consultants, fieldworkers, and beneficiaries (see Arce and Long 1992, 2000; Arce et al. 1994; Lewis et al. 2003; Long 1992, 2001). For example, in one such work, Arce and Long (1992) related the experiences of a technician to a state agricultural program in northwest Guadalajara, Mexico designed to increase maize production to be sold through state-controlled channels. Given the interest of beneficiaries in maize production for cattle fodder rather than sale, the technician devised his own strategies to balance the disparate interests of beneficiary and government stakeholders lest the program go unimplemented and he be penalized. Such examples demonstrate that the success of policies and projects is not inherent. Rather, these require interpretive communities of everyday actors who find reason to participate in the established frameworks, lending credibility to their representations of reality when in fact these may be false (Li 1999; Mosse 2005; Mosse and Lewis 2006; Olivier de Sardan 2005). From this perspective, the objective of development research becomes to determine not whether, but how projects work; that is, how they remain sustained socially despite the diversity of interests that constantly threaten their coherence and

continuity. For Mosse and Lewis (2006), this involves identifying the local-level goals of development that co-exist with official goals and that lend the latter the appearance of consensus when in fact local and official goals may vary (see also Mosse 2005). Such a task brings the focus of development research to the "brokers" and "translators" who operate as intermediaries and who "read the meaning of a project into the different institutional languages of its stakeholder supporters, constantly creating interest and making real" (Mosse 2005:9).

Scholars have made recent efforts to examine the heterogeneity of thought, meaning, and practice surrounding development and conservation efforts as different actors negotiate their involvement within externally generated policies to achieve locally and personally relevant ends (Baviskar 2004; Doolittle 2006; Gow 2008; Luetchford 2006; Li 2007; Nauta 2006; Velásquez Runk 2009; West 2006). For example, Doolittle (2006) exposed the fragility of a national development intervention in Sabah, Malaysia meant to increase federal power as villagers literally performed their support as well as the required social transformations ("Malayization" and "Islamization") for government officials in order to qualify as beneficiaries (51). In a related vein, Nauta (2006) recounted a case from South Africa in which NGO workers strategically translated research, participatory workshop data, and project reports in a way that portrayed former farm workers as agriculturalists. The motivation for such portrayal was to secure land for the local population as well as the legitimacy of the NGO with donors. Finally, Rhoades (2008) has noted that at times UNORCAC has repackaged repatriated research findings as well as development indicators and outputs to appeal to new donors for support, all in an effort "to further their [UNORCAC's] own goals of ethnic revitalization, re-territorialization, and 'development-with-identity'" (2008:10). For example, Rhoades (2008) observed that new donors were given access to previously published collections of traditional food recipes and folktales for

repackaging and reprinting. In the case of the former, the goal was to gain support for the promotion of local agrobiodiversity conservation, and in the latter, for bilingual education in community schools. Such works highlight the potential diversity of stakeholder interests surrounding any one development project or program, as well as the need for these to be made congruent in order for that project or program to be implemented.

Building on these works, the new paradigm shifts the focus of development research from analyzing acts of brokerage to identifying the moral and social concerns of stakeholders that give meaning to their involvement in development (Yarrow and Venkatesan 2012:8). In doing so, the paradigm aims not only to aid in moving anthropological contributions to development research beyond the "post-structural impasse" (Friedman 2006:203), but also to leave open the possibility to "re-perceive and hence re-orient development practice as a potentially positive force for good" (Yarrow and Venkatesan 2012:2). In order to understand the applicability of the new paradigm to examining the persistence of the ethnodevelopment framework in highland Ecuador, it is necessary to become familiar both with the origins and the predominant critiques of the latter.

Ethnodevelopment

According to Chernela (2012), the term "ethnodevelopment" first appeared in Rohini Talalla's 1980 monograph, *Ethno-development and the Orang Asli of Malaysia*, in which the author proposed the need for alternatives to state and other large-scale development projects, arguing that these create "vulnerable societies" by excluding and further marginalizing indigenous minorities, sometimes to the extreme of ethnocide (27). Talalla (1980) proposed ethnodevelopment as one such alternative, envisaging it as a means for "making indigenous minorities less vulnerable to surrounding dominant societies through programs that are culture-

9

sensitive and produce a degree of economic, social, and political autonomy; allowing these groups to work out their own adaptations, their own forms of social, cultural, and economic synthesis" (27). Two years later, the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) incorporated the term into its discourse to refer to remediation for government policies and development strategies that threatened ethnic identity and self-determination (UNESCO 1982). Subsequently, ethnodevelopment, "self-development," or "development with identity," came to refer loosely to development policies, projects, and programs, which, in addition to being sensitive to the needs of ethnic minorities, sought to involve them as both practitioners and beneficiaries (see Bonfil Batalla 1982; Hettne 1997; Stavenhagen 1986, 2013). However, it was not until the World Bank institutionalized ethnodevelopment in the late 1990s that the concept became a fully enacted framework (see Van Nieuwkoop and Uquillas 2000), as explained below.

Beginning in the 1970s, indigenous movements throughout the Americas initiated the collective contestation of discriminatory and assimilationist international policies, in large part targeting the International Labor Organization's (ILO) Convention 107 (Brysk 2000; Engle 2010). Formulated in 1957, Convention 107 declared respect for indigenous people's cultural differences while at the same time encouraging their integration into "modern" society by advocating for their participation in market economies. Emergent indigenous movements protested the convention as assimilationist, eventually prompting the ILO to replace it in 1989 (Brysk 2000; Engle 2010). Now signed by 22 countries, nine of which are in Latin America,[2] the

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[2] In Latin America, signatory states include Argentina (2000), Bolivia (1991), Brazil (2002), Chile (2008), Colombia (1991), Costa Rica (1993), Dominica (2002), Ecuador (1998), Guatemala (1996), Honduras (1995), Mexico (1990), Nicaragua (2010), Paraguay (1993), Peru (1994), and Venezuela (2002) (ILO N.d.). Signatories outside of Latin America include Central African Republic (2010), Denmark (1996), Fiji (1998), Nepal (2007), Netherlands (1998), Norway (1990), and Spain (2007) (ILO N.d.).

new convention, ILO 169, requires signatory states to respect the collective cultural rights of

indigenous people (Engle 2010; ILO N.d.). It also mandates their right to determine the priorities

and nature of their own development in accordance with their own cultural ideas, beliefs, and

values (Brysk 2000; Engle 2010; ILO N.d.). In the 1990s, as indigenous movements increasingly

called upon the convention as legal foundation for their growing demands for cultural autonomy

and collective citizenship rights (see Becker 2011; Lucero 2008; Pallares 2007; Yashar 2005),

major multilateral development institutions responded with the incorporation of indigenous

development into their policies (Brysk 2000; Engle 2010; Yashar 2005). As a result, the

inclusion of indigenous people within the planning, design, and implementation of development

projects soon gained increasing attention within the World Bank (see Davis 1993; Davis and

Ebbe 1993; Davis and Partridge 1994; Partridge et al. 1996). Shortly thereafter, in 1998, the

Bank launched the first ethnodevelopment project: the *Proyecto de Desarrollo de los Pueblos*

Indígenas y Afro-Ecuatorianos del Ecuador (Development Project for Indigenous and Afro-

Ecuadorian People of Ecuador, PRODEPINE) in Ecuador (Davis 2002).

     For the Bank, PRODEPINE, and ethnodevelopment more broadly, aimed to build "on the

positive qualities of indigenous cultures and societies to promote local employment and growth.

Such qualities include these peoples' strong sense of ethnic identity, close attachments to

ancestral land, and capacity to mobilize labor, capital, and other resources to achieve shared

goals" (Van Nieuwkoop and Uquillas 2000:1). From an operational standpoint, the Bank

outlined three criteria for implementing ethnodevelopment. One, defining "indigenous" in order

to identify beneficiary populations; two, putting social capital to work in the self-management of

ethnodevelopment projects and programs; and three, including concrete cultural dimensions

within those projects and programs (Van Nieuwkoop and Uquillas 2000). In order to fulfill the

second of these objectives – self-management – the Bank targeted second-tier organizations like UNORCAC as partners in the ethnodevelopment of local communities (Van Nieuwkoop and Uquillas 2000).

PRODEPINE lasted for seven years (Lucero 2008), and in that time, ethnodevelopment became sufficiently popular among other funders and beneficiary populations to remain in practice in the Andes today (Andolina et al. 2009; see UNORCAC 2008). Types of projects have included ethnotourism, agrobiodiversity conservation, native crop export, the production and sale of artisanal goods, and the practice of traditional medicine, among others (Healy 1996, 2001; Radcliffe and Laurie 2006a; Van Nieuwkoop and Uquillas 2000). Yet in spite of the spread and diversification of the framework, PRODEPINE has received the greatest attention from scholars seeking to understand ethnodevelopment, and consequently has been the focus of much critique.

The main argument against ethnodevelopment is that it represents a form of transnational governance whereby international funders play a role in shaping both local development needs and notions of indigenous culture and identity (see Andolina et al. 2009; Bretón 2005, 2008; Lucero 2008; Radcliffe and Laurie 2006a, 2006b; Radcliffe et al. 2003). The argument is built on a combination of Foucauldian theory of governmentality and a Gramscian concern for hegemony and subaltern struggles (Andolina et al. 2009). Under this framework, scholars have argued that the same political struggles of indigenous movements for greater cultural autonomy in state and transnational development projects that led to the creation of ethnodevelopment eventually came to be governed by it (Andolina et al. 2009; Radcliffe and Laurie 2006a, 2006b; Laurie et al. 2003). The argument echoes Anna Tsing's work on "friction," or the idea that transnationalism can either block or channel subaltern networks, leading to "new arrangements of culture and power" (2005:5).

12

Andolina et al. (2009) illustrate this point through a reformulation of Keck and Sikkink's (1988) "boomerang pattern" of transnational advocacy networks, which models the triangulation of actors that results when local populations solicit the help of international advocacy organizations to pressure state and international agencies to create local-level change. As explained above, during the final decades of the 20th century, such networks played a major role in bringing the demands of indigenous movements into public view, and ultimately, ethnodevelopment into being. That is, as organizations like the ILO took notice of the growing demands of indigenous movements for greater cultural autonomy, the resulting conventions put pressure on states to comply, and prompted major multi-lateral development institutions to follow suit (Brysk 2000; Engle 2010; Yashar 2005). In reformulating the model, scholars argue that compliant agencies and institutions can, in turn, impose financial and normative restrictions on the local populations that they are pressured to help, and in so doing, exercise governance over the spaces and subjects of development (Andolina et al. 2009; Radcliffe and Laurie 2006a, 2006b). Critics therefore view the turn towards culture in the creation of ethnodevelopment as both a response to the demands of indigenous movements and a strategy for governing them, demonstrating how neoliberal paradigms both "imbricate *and* contradict indigenous-movement agendas" (Andolina et al. 2009:229).

Laurie et al. (2003) provide an example of one of the ways in which donors have governed through ethnodevelopment in their study of ethnodevelopment professionalization programs in Ecuador. The authors find that programs designed to train indigenous leaders to become expert ethnodevelopment practitioners reflect donor interests of enhancing human and social capital to achieve good governance, but leave aside the issues of discrimination, exclusion, and indigenous knowledge that indigenous movements consider to be important parts of the

curriculum. The authors thus argue that ethnodevelopment is meant to institutionalize and depoliticize indigenous agendas within official development policy, producing the dual effects of empowerment and constraint by allowing indigenous movements to realize some of the points of their social and cultural agendas, but hindering their pursuit of more radical political and economic change (see also Andolina et al. 2009; Bretón 2005, 2008; Lucero 2008; Radcliffe and Laurie 2006a, 2006b; Radcliffe et al. 2003). The argument situates ethnodevelopment within broader discussions of "social neoliberalism" (see Andolina et al. 2009) or "neoliberal multiculturalism" (see Hale 2002; Lucero 2008; Velásquez Runk 2012) in Latin America, in which state and transnational actors incorporate limited versions of indigenous cultural rights into their rhetoric and policies while sidestepping the more substantive demands of indigenous movements for social and economic change.

Related to these arguments is a broader body of literature on "NGOization," defined as the global "institutionalization, professionalization, depoliticization and demobilization" of social movements related to the widespread adoption of neoliberalism in the 1970s and 80s (Choudry and Kapoor 2013:1). Much of this literature examines the depoliticization of social movements, and in some instances their transition to, or supplanting by, NGOs, in response to the increase in aid from foreign and transnational donors at the time (Bebbington et al. 2008; Choudry 2010; see Fisher 1997; Kamat 2004). Specifically, as governments around the globe retracted state services under neoliberal reform, foreign and transnational donors began to target civil society, mostly in the form of social movements, as new provisioners of aid to rural and marginalized populations. The growing dependence on foreign capital depoliticized many of these movements, prompting their transition to NGOs (Choudry and Kapoor 2013).

14

Many such cases can be found of social movements in Latin America (Alvarez 1999; Biekart 2008; Dagnino 2008; Deere and Royce 2009; see Gurza and Bueno 2011; Petras 1997); a region that experienced considerable mobilization during the latter part of the twentieth century, especially among women (Icken Safa 1990; Schild 1998) and ethnic minorities (Becker 2011; Escobar 2009; Grueso 1998; Gustafson 2009; Warren 1998b; Yashar 2005) in response to the very neoliberal policies adopted at the time (Alvarez et al. 1998b; Escobar and Alvarez 1992). For example, in tracing the history of Latin American feminist movements, Alvarez (1998) has noted that the NGOization of these in the 1990s resulted in increasing numbers of feminists shifting from efforts to transform consciousness and gender stereotypes through grassroots organizing to policy assessment and project management in conjunction with state and transnational governments (315) (see also Lind 2002).

Such perspectives resonate in the case of OSGs in Ecuador, which have followed a trajectory of NGOization similar to that of other advocacy organizations in Latin America. The history of OSGs themselves differ, but the first of these emerged in the late 1970s, taking advantage of the social and political spaces opened by agrarian reform (1964-1973) to advocate for the rights of local indigenous populations. As such, historically OSGs have played a central role in the organization, representation, and mobilization of local peasant and indigenous populations in response to local-level issues of discrimination and abuse, as well as in response to the calls of their parent third- and fourth-tier organizations to join in nationwide protest of government policies, and to show support for the transnational movements of which the latter form part. Since they emerged, however, many OSGs have undergone a gradual transition from peasant and indigenous rights advocates to local development practitioners as state, foreign, and transnational funders have partnered with them in the development of local communities (Bretón

2008; Martínez 2006). To date, only a few scholars (Bretón 2008; Martínez 2006) have addressed the depoliticization or so-called NGOization of OSGs, highlighting that such processes became accelerated through the increase in the availability of funds via the introduction of ethnodevelopment into Ecuador in the late 1990s. Yet given the key role that OSGs play in linking local populations and social movements (Martínez 2006), it follows that in order to understand the effects of depoliticization on rural organizing, the changes that have taken place within these organizations must be better understood (see Martínez 2003).

Outside of PRODEPINE, research into ethnodevelopment has been somewhat limited, but in Latin America includes examination of the enabling and constraining effects of ethnodevelopment on the ability of the Bolivian ayllu movement to establish a representational indigenous identity (Andolina et al. 2005); the emergence of endogenous forms of ethnodevelopment among local communities in contrast and resistance to the commodification of land and water resources in Peru (Hogue and Rau 2008); the successes of women's grassroots ethnodevelopment activities as alternatives to exploitative domestic labor in Brazil (Chernela 2012); the varying degrees to which ethnodevelopment has been accepted in the Andes (Chartock 2011); and the relationship between ethnodevelopment and corporatism in Latin America (Chartock 2013).

Research into ethnodevelopment outside of Latin America has taken place primarily in Southeast Asia, and relates more to the original conceptualization of the term as set forth by Talalla (1980), that is, as a response to the "ethnocide" of minority indigenous populations through national and similarly large-scale development interventions. Much of this scholarship advocates for ethnodevelopment as an alternative to national development given the ethnic conflicts that have resulted from uneven trends of modernization, inequalities in control of scarce

16

natural resources, and unequal distribution of goods among cultural groups throughout the region (Dwyer 1996; Hettne 1996). For example, Fong (2008) has examined the Karen struggle for self-determination against the Burmese government as a form of "liberation ethnodevelopment," named so for the group's aim to become autonomous and develop by its own political and social institutions in a context of ethnic cleansing. Finally, Clarke (2001) has examined the extent to which ethnodevelopment has become pervasive within the region, concluding that it has been confined to a limited number of initiatives in the context of a broader pattern of disadvantage and domination.

Building on the new paradigm in development research described in the previous section, this dissertation takes an ethnographic approach to understanding ethnodevelopment in Cotacachi, Ecuador. The dominant critique of ethnodevelopment, that it represents a form of transnational governance (see Andolina et al. 2009; Radcliffe and Laurie 2006a, 2006b), is helpful for understanding some of the ways in which state, foreign, and transnational discourses shape notions of indigenous culture and development needs. However, like post-structuralist critiques in general, it tends to reduce the involvement of local stakeholders in ethnodevelopment to cooptation (see Gow 2008). The extension of such critiques to OSGs risks undermining not only the heterogeneity in individual stakeholder experiences in ethnodevelopment, but also that of the organizations themselves. The latter is perhaps surprising for two reasons. One, whereas some OSGs formed in the 1970s after agrarian reform (1964-1973) had altered dominant power structures, allowing indigenous populations to mobilize, others formed in the 1980s and 90s in direct response to the offer of funds for ethnodevelopment (Bretón 2008; Martínez 2006). The interests and involvement of OSGs and their beneficiaries therefore likely vary not only by social, economic, and cultural contexts, but by historical context as well (see also Carroll 2002).

17

Two, the fact that OSGs have played a central role in instrumentalizing the ethnodevelopment of local communities implies that they constitute important sites for the construction of indigenous development, culture, and identities. Analyzing ethnodevelopment from a strictly post-structuralist perspective therefore risks dispossessing OSGs not only of their development practice, but also of their complex and multifaceted relationships to local communities (see Martínez 2006). Finally, in order to move beyond a post-structuralist approach, not only is ethnographic research helpful, but so is understanding ethnodevelopment within the history of indigenous movements in the Andes.

Indigenous movements and cultural revitalization in the Andes

Social movements in Latin America gained force during the 1970s when widespread democratization enabled many historically marginalized groups to contest their social, political, and economic exclusion. In the following decades, social mobilization continued to increase in response to the effects of foreign debt accumulation and the subsequent adoption of structural adjustment policies (Alvarez et al. 1998a; Deere and Royce 2009). During that time, indigenous movements emerged throughout much of the Andes to demand collective cultural and citizenship rights (Brysk 2000; Selverston-Scher 2001; Yashar 1999, 2005), often in the form of territorial autonomy (Laurie et al. 2002; Palacin 2009; Sawyer 2004), access to bilingual education (Gustafson 2009), and formal recognition of the plurinational nature of their states (Becker 2011; Pallares 2007; Yashar 2005). As indigenous movements justified these demands based on the grounds of their ethnic and cultural difference, they incited processes of cultural rediscovery and revitalization through which the meanings of indigeneity have become transformed (Jackson and Warren 2005). Contrary to the enduring historical and exclusionary stereotypes of indigenous

populations as "dirty, lazy, irrational and backward" (see Colloredo-Mansfeld 1998; Orlove 1998; Weismantel and Eisenman 1998), indigenous leaders have exalted different markers of indigeneity, such as language and dress, in local, national, and transnational discourses and spaces (Becker 2011; Yashar 2005). Such actions have aided in redefining the terms of recognition in a way that positively reframes indigeneity, effectively constructing and authenticating certain notions of indigenous culture and identity in the process (see Alvarez and Escobar 1992; Alvarez et al. 1998b; Jackson 1991; Postero 2007).

Anthropologists have made important contributions to understanding the nuance in the treatment of cultural forms by indigenous movements (Jackson and Warren 2005), not only in the Andes (see Postero 2007; Sawyer 2004) but throughout Latin America (see Englund 2003; Speed 2002). In so doing, anthropologists themselves have shifted to culturalist approaches to understanding indigeneity, thus moving from the dichotomous analytical categories of "traditional" and "modern," or "authentic" and "inauthentic," to examination of the "fluidity of ethno-racial meanings and how they are constructed, negotiated, and reconstructed" (Jackson and Warren 2005:556). For example, several scholars have dispelled notions of traditional and modern through their study of urban, cosmopolitan, and professional Mayas (Fischer and Brown 1996; Warren 1998b; Watanabe and Fischer 2004), as have others who have explored the lives of urban, transnationalized, and multilingual indigenous populations throughout Latin America (Kearney 1996; Warren 1998a; Wibbelsman 2005, 2009). Many of these works are less concerned with the "authenticity" of the forms of culture utilized and are more concerned with the "authenticators" and their intentionality (Jackson and Warren 2005). In exploring intentionality in particular, scholars have uncovered both symbolic and instrumental value in the reframing of notions of indigenous culture and identity.

Research into the symbolic has examined the reframing of notions of indigeneity as part of local strategies to engage with modernity in contexts of fast-paced social, culture, and economic change. For example, Van Vleet (2005) has explored the settings in which Bolivian youth choose to dress in traditional clothing, drawing on different aspects of their identities in order to find belonging in local and national contexts. Others have explored the revalorization of native foods and food crops, finding that such celebrations of the local have elevated traditional preparations in the eyes of both indigenous and mestizo populations (Corr 2002; Paulson 2003, 2006; Skarbø 2012). Scholars also have examined the revitalization of different performance activities, such as dance (Mendoza 1998), festivals (Corr 2003; Wibbelsman 2005, 2009), and beauty pageants (Rogers 1999; Wroblewski 2014) in which indigenous identities are re-worked and asserted into multiethnic spaces. For example, Wroblewski (2004) revealed that young women participating in beauty pageants in the Napo province of Ecuador choose to perform intercultural identities before their multiethnic audiences; an act that "challenges old dichotomies of public versus private, power versus purity, dominant versus indigenous, and even Spanish versus Kichwa" (65). In a different vein, Wibbelsman (2005, 2009) has demonstrated that public ritual in Otavalo Ecuador generates a collective indigenous identity among border-crossing professionals and locally-based agriculturalists that simultaneously unites these groups and repositions the former socially and politically in relation to urban mestizos. Such works demonstrate the symbolic use of cultural forms and expressions to contest ethnic marginalization and to unify communities through the creation or revitalization of tradition and notions of a collective past.

Research into the instrumental has revealed the use of essentialized notions of indigeneity to garner political support for indigenous movements (Becker 2011; Viatori 2007), financial

20

support for indigenous development organizations (Bretón 2008; Martínez 2006), and to increase

the value and appeal of locally produced goods (see Colloredo-Mansfeld 1999; Greene 2004;

Korovkin 1998). For example, Viatori (2007) has documented the resurgence of native language

use among the Zápara of lowland Ecuador to convey authenticity in making political and

territorial demands before the state. Similarly, Bretón (2008) demonstrated an acceleration in the

emergence of OSGs in highland Ecuador when the World Bank began to privilege them through

the awarding of funds for local development projects. There are also examples in which cultural

forms have been found to be both symbolic and instrumental. For example, Meisch (2002) has

explored how Otavaleños in northern Ecuador shape and manipulate signifiers of indigenous

identity into artisanal and other products to attract buyers, namely tourists, while also utilizing

those same meanings to maintain a strong sense of identity that unites them in spite of their

transnational residency.

Many scholars therefore have argued that the self-essentialization of indigenous

populations has contributed to cultural rediscovery, the strengthening of local indigenous

organizations, and more open discussion of indigenous rights in national political agendas. Yet

others have argued that the self-essentialization of indigenous populations has led to socio-

cultural approaches to rights and development that abstract from reality (De Vries and Nuitjen

2003; Van Niekerk 2003; Zoomers 2006). For example, the latter has been the critique of the

Proyecto Andino de Tecnologías Campesinas (Andean Project of Peasant Technologies,

PRATEC), an NGO dedicated to the revalorization of indigenous culture and technical

knowledge founded in 1986 in Peru. PRATEC draws on Andean cosmological principles to

depict indigenous people as nurturing and respectful of the environment and the *ayllu*, or

community, and as undesirous of the tools and technologies of the West (Appfel-Marglin and

PRATEC 1998). Scholars have been critical of PRATEC and similar organizations for such

depictions of indigenous culture, arguing that these negate the heterogeneity within groups and

the multiple dimensions of contemporary life in local communities (see Zoomers 2006; Zoomers

and Salman 2003). Others have posed the same critique against ethnodevelopment (Andolina et

al. 2009; Radcliffe and Laurie 2006a, 2006b, Bretón 2008), as explained in previous sections.

Yet the potential contributions of ethnographic nuance in understanding the intentionality of

local leaders and beneficiaries in "authenticating" the cultural forms utilized in

ethnodevelopment have yet to be made.

Study Area: Cotacachi

The *cantón* Cotacachi (a county-like jurisdiction) (Figure 1.1) is located in northern

highland Ecuador, approximately 80 kilometers north of the capital, Quito (PUCE 2005).

Cotacachi is also the name of the largest town within the cantón, which houses both UNORCAC

and the local municipality. Rising west of the town is Mt. Cotacachi (Figure 1.2), the eastern

slopes (or "Andean" side) of which are home to 43 indigenous and mestizo communities, divided

within four *parroquias* (parishes): Imantag, San Francisco, El Sagrario and Quiroga (Figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1: Map of the four parishes of the study area in the cantón Cotacachi (elaborated by Kristine Skarbø).

Figure 1.2: Mt. Cotacachi, with view of part of the study area.

UNORCAC's 2005 census of the communities reports there to be a total of 15,878 residents, 78% of whom identify as Kichwa. In addition to these 43 communities, UNORCAC's affiliates

23

include two mixed (Afro-Ecuadorian and mestizo) communities located on the opposite side of Mt. Cotacachi, where the cantón stretches west of the study area and down towards the coast (UNORCAC 2008).

Historically, *hacendados* (large land owners, first of Spanish and later of mestizo descent) and the Catholic Church controlled the majority of arable land in Andean Cotacachi, forcing the local indigenous population into a system of debt peonage termed *huasipungo* (Moates and Campbell 2006). Under the huasipungo, indigenous people labored on *haciendas* (the landholdings of hacendados) in exchange for small subsistence plots, access to pasture, and sometimes a small wage (Becker 2008; Newson 1995). It was not until the agrarian reforms of the 1960s and 70s that the huasigpungo was abolished, haciendas were divided, and indigenous populations received portions of these for their own cultivation. Yet the lands granted were often small in size and lacked access to other productive resources, like fuelwood and water (Moates and Campbell 2006). As the population grew over the following decades, lands were further subdivided through inheritance. Today 84.1% of households own land, but most parcels are relatively small in size at less than one hectare, allowing primarily for the cultivation of subsistence crops. Furthermore, reduced soil fertility (Campbell 2006; Zehetner and Miller 2006), lack of access to irrigation water and infrastructure (Skarbø et al. 2014), and the varied effects of climate change (Rhoades et al. 2006; Skarbø et al 2013) all complicate cultivation. The small size of landholdings combined with the above challenges leave little opportunity for pursuit of agricultural livelihoods, and today more than 70% of heads of households commute daily or weekly to the neighboring urban areas of Cotacachi, Otavalo, Ibarra, and Quito (UNORCAC 2005). Most men find employment in non-skilled jobs, like construction and textile manufacture, while women tend to work in domestic services (Flora 2006). Not surprisingly,

24

many changes have accompanied the transition in livelihoods, including modifications in family and community structures (Ortiz 2004; Ospina 2006) and cultural beliefs and values (Nazarea et al. 2006; Skarbø et al. 2013). Support for both ethnodevelopment and UNORCAC therefore has endured through a period of significant change.

Today UNORCAC may be recognized internationally as an indigenous development organization (see Rhoades 2006), but is legally a second-tier organization. As one of Ecuador's first OSGs, UNORCAC emerged in the late 1970s, taking advantage of the social and political spaces opened by agrarian reform to advocate for the rights of the local indigenous population (Rhoades 2006; UNORCAC 2008). Since then, however, UNORCAC has undergone a gradual transition from indigenous rights advocate to local development practitioner as state, foreign, and transnational funders have targeted it as partner in the development of local communities. Today UNORCAC operates almost exclusively as an indigenous development NGO, gradually having reduced its advocacy role in conjunction with the growing offer of projects and funds (UNORCAC 2008).

UNORCAC is headed by a president, four vice-presidents (one from each of the four Andean parishes), and eight heads of commission (women; youth, children and adolescents; health and nutrition; credit, production and commercialization; natural patrimony; cultural and intellectual patrimony; and sports and recreation), which together compose the *Cabildo Central* (Central Council) that governs the organization (UNORCAC 2008). The president and heads of commission may be from any of UNORCAC's affiliate communities; however, each of the four vice-presidents must be from one of the four Andean parishes that the organization represents. The role of the president is to oversee the use of funds and to coordinate activities between the directive and operative levels of the organization. The heads of commission oversee projects in

their assigned areas, and each of these fits within one of UNORCAC's broader categories of work: organizational strengthening, social development, economic development, and natural resources. Each of the four vice-presidents, in turn, oversees one of those categories, and in addition, represents their respective parish within the organization. The entire Cabildo is replaced every three years through democratic election by the communities. Only the president is remunerated and works in UNORCAC fulltime. The vice-presidents and heads of commission work voluntarily and are either employed elsewhere or work at home.

In addition to the above leadership roles, there are a number of staff positions within UNORCAC, including *ingenieros* (technical staff) and *técnicos* or *promotores* (auxiliary staff). The job of technical staff is to solicit state and foreign governments, and foreign and transnational institutions, for projects related to UNORCAC's four categories of work, and to implement and manage those projects once they have been obtained. Auxiliary staff aid in the operational aspects of projects, and help in administrative and office duties as well. The projects implemented are typically open to the participation of any resident of UNORCAC's affiliate communities, and range from agroecology to leadership training, microcredit, and midwifery, among others (UNORCAC 2008). Whereas leaders must be residents of UNORCAC's affiliate communities, technical and auxiliary staff may be from the communities or surrounding urban areas, and sometimes come from as far away as Ibarra. There are no rules as to the ethnicity of the individuals occupying any of these roles; however, leaders and auxiliary staff are mostly indigenous while technical staff tend to be mestizo. All technical and auxiliary staff are paid from projects, meaning that their employment is unstable.

Methods

  I spent 10 months in Cotacachi conducting ethnographic research from February to December 2013. During Part 1 of the research, I conducted a) content analyses of UNORCAC's strategic development plan and additional grey literature, such as project reports and promotional materials, to identify its mission and goals in relation to ethnodevelopment; and b) participant observation within UNORCAC and semi-structured interviews with exhaustive samples of the organization's leaders (n=18) and technical staff (n=5) to further elucidate how ethnodevelopment is conceptualized and employed to achieve local development and broader organizational goals. My participation within UNORCAC included attendance at organizational meetings and workshops, as well as direct involvement in the management and evaluation of the organization's scholarship program. The interviews with leaders and technical staff inquired into such topics as the history of UNORCAC and its relationship to local communities, as well as into interviewees' personal histories and experiences within the organization, their interpretations of ethnodevelopment and their perspectives on its significance and outcomes for the organization and local communities. I conducted all interviews with UNORCAC's current and past leaders and technical staff alone in Spanish, either in the organization's main offices or in the homes or other workplaces of the interviewees.

  During Part 2, I conducted participant observation within two of UNORCAC's development projects as well as semi-structured interviews and household surveys with a sample of beneficiaries to determine what interests motivate participation and under what social, economic, and other conditions. The projects were: a) a microcredit program designed to make loans available to women, encourage savings and investment, and generate a source of revenue to be put towards shared and individual economically productive activities; and b) a beekeeping

association designed to produce additional income for households via the sale of honey, pollen, and propolis products, and also beekeeping supplies. Participants from both projects were selected randomly for interviews and surveys, and sample sizes were determined by saturation (microcredit program, n=35; beekeeping association, n=16).

During my participation in the microcredit program, I accompanied technical staff on visits to community women's groups to aid in such tasks as the review of accounting books and the election of new leaders. I also aided technical staff in a series of accounting workshops and related activities, such as a competition to reward the most economically productive group. When not accompanying technical staff in these activities I spent my time in UNORCAC's main offices in urban Cotacachi, where I was delegated additional tasks, like updating accounting records, and where I also observed daily office life. During my participation in the beekeeping association, I accompanied technical staff to check the health and productivity, and sometimes to transport, the hives of different members. When not tending members' hives, I worked in the association's workshop, located at UNORCAC's *granja*, or farm, itself situated between urban Cotacachi and some of the area's lower elevation communities. There I aided auxiliary staff in a number of activities, including the extraction of honey, the cleaning of pollen, the packaging and shipping of products, and the construction of new materials, primarily boxes, frames, and wax foundations. I additionally aided in raising queens and maintaining the association's communal hives, also located at the granja. At the end of each day of participant observation, both within UNORCAC and in each of the projects, I made notes documenting the day's activities and observations.

Participating within each of these projects allowed me to become familiar with the basic operations, technical and auxiliary staff, and participants involved, helping me to better refine

interview questions and build rapport with potential interviewees. Interviews with technical and

auxiliary staff focused on understanding how UNORCAC enacts ethnodevelopment; the types of

projects implemented and how these are obtained. Interviews with project beneficiaries focused

on exploring their relationships to and participation within UNORCAC and related activities, as

well as into the perceived benefits of that participation. Household surveys collected basic

demographic, socio-economic, and livelihood data to generate understanding of the general

context in which ethnodevelopment is enacted. I conducted all interviews and household surveys

with project participants with the help of a bilingual (Spanish-Kichwa) research assistant. Most

of these interviews and surveys were conducted in Spanish; however, when project participants

preferred to speak in Kichwa, the research assistant used consecutive translation to facilitate the

interviews. Interviews with project participants took place exclusively in their homes.

All interviews with current and past leaders, technical and auxiliary staff, and

beneficiaries were digitally recorded and I directly transcribed those conducted in Spanish.

However, given that my knowledge of Kichwa is basic, the research assistant verbally translated

the interviews conducted in Kichwa into Spanish. Together we digitally recorded her Spanish

translations and I later transcribed them. I later loaded all transcriptions into MAXQDA and

coded them for themes relevant to the research questions. I also organized all data from

household surveys in Excel, and have used them to aid in describing the local demographic and

socio-economic context presented in this and the following chapters.

Lastly, throughout the research, I lived with an indigenous family in the community of

Turucu at the base of Mt. Cotacach in the parish of San Francisco (Figure 1.1). In addition to

partaking in daily life and community events in Turucu, I also participated regularly within the

community women's group. These experiences, along with other time spent in the area's communities and with UNORCAC since 2007 also inform the research.

Structure of the Dissertation

The body of the dissertation is composed of three chapters. The first of these, Chapter 2, explores the NGOization and depoliticization of OSGs from the perspectives and experiences of UNORCAC's leaders and beneficiaries. By grounding scholarly critiques of those processes (see Andolina et al. 2009; Bretón 2008; Radcliffe and Laurie 2006a) in local interpretations of the same (see Martínez 2003), the chapter highlights the role of local actors in sustaining OSGs and the broader peasant and indigenous movements of which these form part. The findings demonstrate that leaders and beneficiaries have become increasingly disillusioned with the results of the transition, leading to a shift in alliances that poses a potential fracture to the solidity of the organizational hierarchy that has bound local populations to greater social and political processes during the last decades. The case of UNORCAC therefore suggests that deeper understanding of the effects of NGOization on social movements may be gained by examining the multiple pressures, both external and local, that act upon such movements-turned-NGOs and that ultimately influence their sustainability.

Chapter 3 draws on Yarrow and Venkatesan's (2012) call for examination of the specific contexts in which development becomes meaningful to stakeholders to explain the longevity of two of UNORCAC's development projects, a microcredit program and a beekeeping association. The projects have lasted for ten and twelve years, respectively, in spite of continual shortcomings in the outcomes produced. Aware of the shortcomings, beneficiaries explain that they remain motivated to participate given their interests in the unintended outcomes. The findings

30

demonstrate that more nuanced understanding of stakeholder interests can help to explain the persistence of certain development frameworks and also serve as an important heuristic, revealing additional development needs and potential new paths of action for policymakers. In doing so, the findings bolster a literature that places examination of stakeholder interests at the forefront of development research (Mosse 2005; Mosse and Lewis 2006; Yarrow and Venkatesan 2012) and that aims to understand development as produced and reproduced through the composition of those interests (Baviskar 2004; Gow 2008; Rossi 2006; Velásquez Runk 2009).

Chapter 4 explores ethnodevelopment in-depth, grounding scholarly critiques of the framework in UNORCAC's conceptualization and practice of the same. Scholarship has critiqued ethnodevelopment as a form of transnational governance whereby funding institutions determine the needs of local populations and frame solutions to those needs within their own definitions of indigenous culture and identity (Andolina et al. 2009; Bretón 2008; Radcliffe and Laurie 2006a, 2006b). The chapter demonstrates that for UNORCAC, the reproduction of certain cultural forms cannot be explained solely in terms of adherence to externally imposed development projects as many of these are rooted in local traditions and endogenous processes of cultural valorization. The chapter therefore highlights the importance of complementing post-structuralist critiques with local explanations of cultural representations (see Clifford 2000), concluding that the latter are essential to critiquing current approaches to development without undermining the associated cultural projects these may support. In doing so, the chapter reorients discussions of cultural representation in ethnodevelopment towards broader anthropological debates about the opportunities and constraints of self-essentialism for indigenous populations

(Conklin and Graham 1995; Coulthard 2007; Hale 2002; Jackson and Warren 2005; Velásquez Runk 2009).

Finally, I conclude the dissertation in Chapter 5. There I utilize the findings presented in the previous chapters to answer the original research questions and to highlight the significance of the research. Finally, I conclude with recommendations for future research related to OSGs, ethnodevelopment, and the future of peasant and indigenous organizing in Ecuador.

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CHAPTER 2

CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE NGOIZATION OF A SECOND-TIER

ORGANIZATION IN HIGHLAND ECUADOR[3]

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[3] VanderMolen, K. To be submitted to: *Journal of Latin American Studies*.

Abstract

In the 1970s and 80s, many social movements in Latin America transitioned into NGOs as foreign donors targeted them to fulfill the role left open by the state in the provision of social services under neoliberal reform. This paper examines that transition from the experience of one of the many second-tier organizations that represent peasant and indigenous populations in contemporary social movements in Ecuador. The findings demonstrate the need to examine such organizations as sites of convergent pressures, where the challenges associated with remaining accountable to both funders and beneficiaries may put the social sustainability of these organizations at risk.

Introduction

The ability of NGOs to remain downwardly accountable has been a common concern among scholars who argue that the need for funding compromises the autonomy of these organizations to set more locally relevant goals (Alam and Gofran 2009; Brown et al. 2012; Igoe and Kelsall 2005; see Reimann 2005; Townsend and Townsend 2004). As donor priorities move to new areas, the power relations between these and grantee organizations become increasingly asymmetric, further compromising the autonomy, and with it, the legitimacy of the latter (Choudry and Shragge 2011; Parks 2008). Here legitimacy is understood as the degree to which an organization is able to adhere to its mission and provide related representation to its constituencies (Parks 2008). Given that the effectiveness of advocacy NGOs in particular is a product of that legitimacy, many have argued that these organizations are the most negatively affected by such asymmetries in donor-grantee relations (Brown 2008; Parks 2008:217; Prakash and Gugerty 2010). Parks (2008) therefore has suggested that the gradual loss of autonomy within advocacy NGOs "may have serious implications for their effectiveness throughout their existence" (218). This paper asks about the implications of that loss *for* their existence by examining the effects of "NGOization" on the social sustainability of the *Unión de Organizaciones Campesinas e Indígenas de Cotacachi* (Union of Peasant and Indigenous Organizations of Cotacachi, UNORCAC), a second-tier organization[4] in highland Ecuador.

NGOization refers to the global "institutionalization, professionalization, depoliticization and demobilization" of social movements commonly associated with the widespread adoption of

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[4] There is a four-tiered representational hierarchy of indigenous populations in Ecuador. Communities form the first tier and are grouped into cantonal-level (a county-like jurisdiction) second-tier organizations (OSGs). OSGs, in turn, aggregate at the provincial level in the form of third-tier organizations. Finally, third-tier organizations combine to form the national-level fourth-tier federations and confederations responsible for organizing contemporary peasant and indigenous movements in Ecuador (Martínez 2006).

neoliberalism during the latter part of the twentieth century (Choudry and Kapoor 2013:1). Specifically, as governments around the globe retracted social services under the neoliberal reforms of the 1970s and 80s, foreign and transnational donors began to channel greater amounts of aid to social movements with the intention that these fulfill the role left open by the state. As social movements became beholden to funders, in many instances they underwent gradual processes of depoliticization, their activities shifting from protest and politics to the implementation and management of social and economic development projects (Bebbington et al. 2008; Choudry 2010; Kamat 2004). In Latin America in particular, the transference of social responsibilities to civil society incited significant changes in grassroots organizing, where many social movements transitioned into NGOs (Alvarez 1999; Dagnino 2008; Petras 1997).

Scholars have argued that in Ecuador, such processes were accelerated by a marked shift in donor interests that occurred in the late 1990s when the World Bank introduced the concept and practice of ethnodevelopment, or development-with-identity, into the country's rural areas (see Andolina et al. 2009; Bretón 2008; Martínez 2006). Ethnodevelopment is a development framework that aims to be both culturally appropriate and self-managed. Culturally appropriate for its promotion of products and services that incorporate some aspect or aspects of indigenous culture, such as native crop export and ethnotourism, within projects designed to aid the social and economic wellbeing of beneficiary populations. Self-managed for its implementation of such projects in partnership with *organizaciones de segundo grado* (second-tier organizations, OSGs), the peasant and indigenous organizations that represent rural communities within contemporary social movements in Ecuador (Martínez 2006; Van Nieuwkoop and Uquillas 2000). Supporting the above argument is the fact that coincident to the introduction of ethnodevelopment, the agendas of OSGs shifted from more radical issues of land reform, ethnic discrimination, and

citizenship rights, to a preoccupation with organizational and identity-based aspects of indigenous populations (Bretón 2008; Martínez 2006).

Grounding analysis of these processes in the perspectives and experiences of UNORCAC's leaders and beneficiaries reveals that the transition has generated multiple expectations for downward accountability related to different moments in the organization's history. As these expectations have become increasingly difficult for UNORCAC to fulfill, growing disillusionment among both leaders and beneficiaries suggests that the organization may be approaching a crossroads where it will become necessary to renegotiate definitions of local development as well as the very role of the organization in local communities. The paper argues that if such organizations are to help fulfill the role left open by neoliberal states in the provision of social and other services to rural and marginalized populations, then donors must cooperate by enabling rather than disenabling them to do so. Contrarily, the challenges associated with remaining accountable to both funders and beneficiaries may put the social sustainability of these organizations at risk.

In the following pages, this paper contextualizes the period from within which OSGs emerged, through brief review of the history of peasant and indigenous organizing in Ecuador. It then analyzes UNORCAC's organizational history, focusing on its forms of social and political intervention and changing relationship to local communities. In so doing, it suggests that there is a growing need to renegotiate definitions of local development as well as the role of OSGs in rural contexts. The paper argues that renegotiation should take place not only in the interest of directly improving the quality of life for local populations, but also in sustaining the organizations themselves.

Peasant and Indigenous Organizing in Ecuador

In the 1920s and 30s, indigenous resistance and the development of the first rural syndicates set the stage for the creation of the *Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios* (Ecuadorian Federation of Indians, FEI), the first national indigenous federation in Ecuador, and one of the first in South America. Among FEI's goals was to end the *huasipungo*, a form of debt peonage instituted in the eighteenth century in which indigenous populations labored on *haciendas* (large estates) in exchange for small subsistence plots, access to pasture, and sometimes a small wage (Becker 2007, 2008; FEI 1945; Newson 1995). By the late 1950s and early 1960s, *huasipungueros* (indigenous people living under the huasipungo) had increased their protest and denunciation of *hacendados* (large land owners), prompting FEI's leaders to push harder for agrarian reform. The escalation of protests alongside the recent triumph of the Cuban Revolution sparked fear that similar events could take place in Ecuador. Subsequently, in 1963, a military coup ushered in a period of dictatorship and, under the broader reformist agenda of the U.S.-led Alliance for Progress, an accompanying period of agrarian reform (1964-1973). The resulting *Ley de Reforma Agraria y Colonización* (Agrarian Reform and Colonization Law), instituted in 1964, forced hacendados to release huasipungueros and grant them small plots of land in addition to access to water, firewood, and other of the key productive resources that they had monopolized for centuries (Becker 2008; Lucero 2008). Contrary to its stated purpose, however, the reform did little to redistribute lands, and consequently failed to put an end to indigenous revolt[5] (Becker 2008; Waters 2007).

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[5] According to Ecuador's national agrarian censuses, prior to the reforms, in 1954, 75.1 percent of farms measured smaller than five hectares and covered 7.2 percent of total landholdings, while 2.1 percent of farms were larger than 100 hectares and covered 64.4 percent. By 1968, the numbers had changed only slightly. Then, 73 percent of farms measured below five hectares and covered 10.2 percent of total landholdings, while 1.5 percent of farms measured more than 100 hectares and covered 47.3 percent. Such changes suggest that mid-size farms benefitted more than

Protests continued, but support for FEI began to dwindle alongside the emergence of new

organizations within both highland and lowland Ecuador.[6] Among the more prominent of these

were the fourth-tier organizations *Federación Nacional de Organizaciones Campesinas,*

Indígenas y Negras (National Federation of Peasant, Indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian

Organizations, FENOCIN), formed in 1965, and the *Confederación Nacional de Coordinación*

de las Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador (Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of

Ecuador, CONAIE), founded in 1986. At times these organizations, along with the declining FEI

and the religious highland organization *Federación Ecuatoriana de Indígenas Evangélicos*

(Ecuadorian Federation of Evangelical Indians, FEINE), worked together to stage marches to

demand land, rights, and fair wages for peasant and indigenous populations in Ecuador (Becker

2008, 2011). As they do now, these organizations relied primarily on the mobilization of their

bases, comprised in large part of OSGs, to generate the critical mass necessary to call

government and public attention to their demands (see Carroll 2002). Many of the OSGs

participating in these marches had formed during the 1970s within the greater organizational

context of peasant and indigenous populations, but more emerged in the 1980s and 90s due in

part to two related processes. One, the continuation of local-level organization in response to

enduring land and labor conflicts (Bebbington et al. 1992; Korovkin 1997). Two, a new interest

in local-level organization in response to the growing offer of development projects, first from

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smallholders (Blankstein and Zuvekas 1994). The government enacted a second agrarian reform law in 1973 under a
new period of military reign (1972-1979); however, like the first, it did more to modernize medium and large-scale
agriculture than it did to redistribute lands (Waters 2007).

[6] Scholars have made several arguments as to why support for FEI began to decline, including a shift to white urban
leadership and more class-based rhetoric, the spread of new and different ideas emanating from other leftist parties,
like the *Partido Comunista Marxista-Leninista del Ecuador* (Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of Ecuador
PCMLE) and the *Partido Socialista Revolucionario* (Revolutionary Socialist Party, PSR), and outdated tactics
(Becker 2008). Becker (2008) suggests that the decline likely resulted from a combination of these factors.

the state, then NGOs, and later foreign and transnational development institutions (Breton 2008; Martínez 2006).

Specifically, in the 1980s, the state had begun to promote integral rural development (IRD) aimed to upgrade small-scale agriculture through the provision of infrastructure and services as an alternative to agrarian reform (Bretón 2008; Korovkin 1997). However, at the same time that these programs emerged, like many Latin American countries, Ecuador was falling deeply into debt with short-term loans from US commercial banks and other creditors. Unable to repay its loans, Ecuador was forced to adopt the IMF structural adjustment and other neoliberal policies applied throughout the region, eventually leading to the collapse of the public sector (Pineo 2007; Zamosc 1994). With fewer state resources available for the provision of social services, the presence of foreign and transnational NGOs grew quickly, increasing the offer of projects to rural populations (Bretón 2008). Much of the work of these organizations focused on improving agricultural production in rural communities, attempting to make peasant and indigenous populations "viable" competitors within newly created free markets. Like the government IRD programs that preceded them, often these projects were implemented in direct collaboration with OSGs, thus situating these organizations in the new role of partner in local infrastructural and agricultural development (Bebbington 2000; Martínez 2003).

As governments throughout Latin America increasingly embraced neoliberal social and economic policies, indigenous movements in many of these countries staged marches to draw attention to the ethnic inequalities underlying them (Brysk 2000; Van Cott 2000; Yashar 1999). The uprisings may have done more to change state rhetoric than to induce substantive changes to government policies, but they did increase the public profile of peasant and indigenous concerns (Becker 2011; Zamosc 1994). Accordingly, a number of international institutional bodies began

to create legal instruments to concede special rights to indigenous populations based on their ethnic and cultural difference, and soon major multilateral development institutions began to incorporate indigenous development into their policies (Andolina et al. 2009; Engle 2010). Following this trend, in the late 1990s, the World Bank implemented the *Proyecto de Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas y Negros del Ecuador* (Development Project for Indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian Peoples of Ecuador, PRODEPINE), a program designed for the self-managed ethnodevelopment or development-with-identity of indigenous populations in Ecuador (Davis 2002; Radcliffe and Laurie 2006b). Under PRODEPINE, the Bank administered projects through an indigenous-run government agency, the *Consejo de desarrollo de las nacionalidades y pueblos del Ecuador* (Development Council of the Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador, CODENPE) to OSGs (Bretón 2005; Lucero 2008).

The targeting of OSGs as local development partners related to a shift that had occurred in the World Bank at the time. The Bank had identified social capital as the "missing link" in development (Harriss 2002; Watts 2006) and perceived OSGs (Bretón 2005; Martínez 2006), and indigenous populations in general (Andolina et al. 2009), to possess high levels of it. Thus deemed to reflect principles of "organization, solidarity patterns, and shared social and cultural values," under PRODEPINE, OSGs provided input into operational plans and were responsible for implementing projects on the ground (Van Nieuwkoop and Uquillas 2000). Projects were therefore meant to be participatory and demand-driven as well as culturally appropriate for their promotion of products and services that incorporated different aspects of indigenous culture (Andolina et al. 2009; Bretón 2005).

There are cases in which OSGs and similar organizations have managed to negotiate the terms of ethnodevelopment (Andolina et al. 2009; Healy 1996). More commonly, however,

scholars have critiqued it as a form of transnational governance through which funding institutions depoliticize indigenous movements, ceding to their demands for cultural autonomy while conditioning them to become dependent on foreign capital (Andolina et al. 2005; Breton 2005, 2008; see Laurie et al. 2003; Radcliffe and Laurie 2006a). The argument situates ethnodevelopment within broader discussions of "social neoliberalism" (see Andolina et al. 2009) or "neoliberal multiculturalism" (see Hale 2002; Lucero 2008; Velásquez Runk 2012) in Latin America, in which limited versions of indigenous cultural rights are incorporated into state and transnational rhetoric while the more substantive demands of indigenous movements go unaddressed. The case of UNORCAC generally supports these assertions, but it is also true that OSGs do not exist independently of their affiliate communities. The paper suggests that exploring the NGOization and related depoliticization of OSGs from the perspectives and experiences of local actors generates more nuanced understanding of the resulting effects on local populations, in addition to providing important insights into the role of these in sustaining peasant and indigenous movements in Ecuador.

The Case of UNORCAC

Methods

This paper is based on 10 months of fieldwork in Cotacachi, from February to December 2013. The information presented is derived from 20 semi-structured interviews with current and past leaders of UNORCAC and long-time technical and auxiliary staff. Additional information is derived from semi-structured interviews and household surveys with a random sample of 75 beneficiaries from a total of 3 projects involving 26 communities. The paper is also informed by extensive participant observation. During the research period, I worked daily within UNORCAC

in a number of activities that included project management and evaluation, participation

alongside beneficiaries in operational aspects of projects, attendance at workshops and

organizational meetings, and work at *mingas* (work parties usually involving physical labor). I

also resided with an indigenous family in the community of Turucu, where I participated in daily

tasks, weekend mingas, and festival and ritual events.

Study Area

Cotacachi *cantón* (a county-like jurisdiction) is located in northern highland Ecuador,

approximately 80 kilometers north of the capital, Quito (PUCE 2005). Cotacachi is also the name

of the mountain that dominates the western side of this northern intermontane valley, as well as

that of the area's largest town, which houses the municipality and sits at the mountain's base.

The work presented here took place in the four highland *parroquias* (parishes) – Imantag, El

Sagrario, San Francisco, and Quiroga – located along Mt. Cotacachi's eastern slopes. The

parishes are home to 28,534 people, divided largely among 43 rural communities (15,878

inhabitants) and the small towns of Cotacachi, Quiroga, and Imantag (INEC 2011; UNORCAC

2005). The county is ethnically mixed, but the majority (78%) of community residents identify as

indigenous, Kichwa (UNORCAC 2005).

UNORCAC is located in the urban town of Cotacachi. Its affiliates include the 43

indigenous and mestizo communities situated within the four parishes of the study area, as well

as two mixed (mestizo and Afro-Ecuadorian) communities in the county's subtropical zone,

Intag, located on the western side of the mountain (UNORCAC 2008). UNORCAC is governed

by a *Cabildo Central* (Central Council) headed by a president, four vice-presidents, and eight

heads of commission: women; youth; children and adolescents; health and nutrition; credit,

production and commercialization; natural patrimony; cultural and intellectual patrimony; and sports and recreation. The president and heads of commission may be from any of the four highland parishes that UNORCAC represents; however, each of the four vice-presidents must be from a different parish. All members of the Cabildo are elected democratically by the communities every three years. The president acts as legal representative, oversees the use of funds, and coordinates the activities of the directive and operative levels of the organization. The heads of commission oversee projects in their assigned areas, each of which fits within one of UNORCAC's broader categories of work: organizational strengthening, natural resources, social development, and economic development. Each vice-president, in turn, oversees one of those categories, and in addition, represents their respective parish within the organization. Heads of commission and vice-presidents also provide input into the monthly meetings of the Cabildo. With the exception of the president, the work performed by all other leaders (vice presidents and heads of commission) is unremunerated (UNORCAC 2008).

In addition to the Cabildo, there are typically two to four technical personnel on staff whose job it is to obtain and implement projects, as well as five or more auxiliary personnel who work in UNORCAC's main offices or as assistants to technical personnel in project implementation and management. Technical and auxiliary staff are paid through salaries budgeted into projects, meaning that income fluctuates and employment is unstable. Historically, all members of the Cabildo and auxiliary staff have been indigenous or mestizo members of UNORCAC's affiliate communities, whereas technical personnel have been mestizos hired from neighboring urban areas, primarily Ibarra and sometimes Cotacachi.

UNORCAC is a fitting case for examination of the NGOization and related depoliticization of OSGs for two reasons. One, it is among the first OSGs to have emerged,

implying that its organizational history is rooted firmly in the period of social and political

transformation of indigenous populations that occurred immediately following the period of

agrarian reform (Carroll 2002; UNORCAC 2008). Two, renowned as one of the largest and

strongest OSGs, UNORCAC is arguably among those that have received the greatest attention

from foreign and transnational development institutions (see Rhoades 2006; UNORCAC 2008).

Organizational Antecedents: Protest and Politics as Methods of Change

In order to understand the changes that have taken place in UNORCAC's role and

relationship with local communities, it is necessary to examine how the organization has

intervened in local social and political matters over time. The following paragraphs tell the

history of UNORCAC as it relates to the broader organization of peasant and indigenous

populations in Ecuador (Figure 2.1), and the subsequent NGOization and depoliticization of

OSGs related above. Recounting UNORCAC's history brings to light the effects of the transition

for the local population, and provides the context for interpreting current views of the

organization from the perspectives of the same.

The history of social relations and land tenure in Cotacachi largely matches that of

greater highland Ecuador. In the 1530s, the Spanish arrived and implemented the *encomienda*,

whereby the Spanish monarch granted newly settled colonizers groups of indigenous people to

"civilize" and "Christianize" while also exploiting as a direct source of labor and tribute (Alchon

1991; Moates and Campbell 2006; Newson 1995). As the huasipungo emerged to replace the

encomienda in the 1800s, indigenous people received small parcels within the larger

landholdings on which they had labored. When Ecuador gained independence from Spain in

1822, additional forms of tribute, like labor in infrastructural projects, became common as new

government institutions emerged. All the while, the huasipungo and other forms of discrimination endured (Moates and Campbell 2006; UNORCAC 2008).

The agrarian reforms of the 1960s and 70s may have done more to redistribute lands in Cotacachi[7] than elsewhere in highland Ecuador, but the local indigenous population remained subject to discrimination and abuse (Pallares 2002). One elder, who was just a young man at the time, comments: "I remember in that time the authorities did not take us into consideration, even the priests did not help us, rather, they took our hats and made us work for free on weekends when others went to mass […] and they would come to take the best crops, the largest ones that we had planted, and they called it tithes."[8] Similarly, another elder recalls:

> The police would come into our communities and take our husbands, our parents. I remember my father and my mother, they took them and pulled them like dogs, like slaves, they took them and made them clean where people and dogs had dirtied the streets. They made them clean with their hands, they did not even give them shovels, brooms. Today I see   the people that sweep the streets and they are well uniformed, their noses are covered, their mouths, they have brooms and shovels, and they are sweeping with a salary. Not us, they made us collect it with our hands and take it to our communities and they would spit on us along the way.[9]

Tired of such abuses, in 1975, young indigenous leaders from Cotacachi and the neighboring areas of Otavalo and Ibarra united to form the third-tier organization *Federación Indígena y Campesina de Imbabura* (Indigenous and Peasant Federation of Imbabura, FICI). Some of these leaders had spent time in other parts of the country or even abroad, in a few instances having been provided the opportunity for university education, but more commonly to share experiences

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[7] Detailed data on changes in land tenure are unavailable; however, an analysis based on aerial photographs of the four parishes of the study area reports that in 1963, fields measuring below five hectares represented roughly 42 percent of all cropland, with those measuring above five hectares representing 58 percent. By the year 2000, the ratio had changed such that individual landholdings less than five hectares represented 68 percent of cultivated land, whereas those above five hectares represented 32 percent (Zapata Ríos et al. 2006).
[8] Interview with elder indigenous man, community resident and former leader of UNORCAC, 18 July 2013.
[9] Interview with 60 year old indigenous woman, community resident and affiliate of UNORCAC, 20 August 2013.

under broader organizational efforts. The awareness gained through such opportunities to contrast life inside and out of the communities prompted early leaders to organize (see Becker 2011; Lalander 2010). The daughter of one of these leaders recalls accompanying her father in such efforts as a child:

> We would go to Riobamba to participate and exchange the experience of how it was there with the problems that all of the mistreated indigenous people had, just like here in this province. […] Sometimes they made films of all of the problems in each province. We used to hang a white sheet and there we would watch the films and the sadness of how they were mistreated. And this incentivized us to make organizations, to unite all of the people of the communities, mistreated men, women, youth and children.[10]

Yet the union of leaders under FICI did not last long. After only a few years, continued disputes prompted Cotacachi's leaders to separate and form the *Federación de Comunas Cotacachi* (Federation of Cotacachi Communes, FCC) (García 2002; Lalander 2010), which would later become UNORCAC.

Driven by the same ideals that had led the area's leaders to organize under FICI, the difference was that FCC focused exclusively on ending the discrimination of Cotacachi's communities. In Cotacachi, many newly freed huasipungueros struggled to support their households as hacendados continued to monopolize key agricultural resources, in many instances forcing indigenous people into underpaid labor. The predominantly mestizo populations in local towns also continued to discriminate indigenous people, excluding them from markets, the urban economic sector, and public spaces (Moates and Campbell 2006; Pallares 2007). Furthermore, a recent oil boom in lowland Ecuador had generated an increase in state revenue and the government had made improvements to local urban areas, but the communities remained without

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[10] Interview with elder indigenous woman, community resident and former leader of UNORCAC, 7 July 2013.

access to basic services, education, and citizenship rights (Lalander 2010; Pallares 2007). When FCC emerged in April 1977 it had the support of only twelve of the area's communities. It was not until November of the same year when a local police officer killed one of the founders that widespread indignation prompted many more to incorporate. It was also then that FCC affiliated formally with the fourth-tier *Federación Nacional de Organizaciones Campesinas Indígenas y Negras* (National Federation of Peasant, Indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian Organizations, FENOCIN), known then as FENOC, in order to denounce the officer and publicize the case nationally (Lalander 2010; Pallares 2007; UNORCAC 2008).

Just as the gradual dismantling of traditional power structures under agrarian reform helped facilitate the formation of FCC, the end of the military dictatorships that characterized the same period made it possible for the organization to launch some of its leaders into local politics. In 1979, one of UNORCAC's founders and first president, Alberto Anrango, became the first indigenous advisor to the mayor. Anrango explains the motivation for inserting the area's indigenous leaders into county-level governance:

> We [FCC] were asking the municipality for schools, we were asking for roads, we were asking for electricity, we were asking for potable water [and when we arrived] the mayor only said 'I do not want you to enter and dirty my rugs.' So we left and held an assembly to evaluate. We had gone to the municipality to ask for so many things, the vindication of rights […] and the mayor did not even give us an answer but joked, 'You have irrigation canals from where to drink,' and that is when the idea was born. The leaders said, 'No, then. If the mayor has not let the president of the *Federación* speak and is not going to give us public works, then we will have to take the municipality and enter into politics directly.' (Interview with Alberto Anrango, cited in Lalander 2010:151-2)

Anrango's election was historic as indigenous people came to occupy positions of power within institutions that previously had excluded them, initiating a wave of political participation by indigenous people in Cotacachi that continues into the present[11] (Anrango 2004).

Shortly after the election, in 1980, FCC became legally recognized as a second-tier organization through Ecuador's Ministry of Agriculture, under the name UNORCAC (Lalander 2010). Working alone and in collaboration with FENOCIN, UNORCAC made a number of important advances during this time, including the incorporation of local demands for access to land and productive resources into supra-local peasant and indigenous agendas, the aiding of multiple communities in their respective fights for control of neighboring haciendas, and the elimination of tithing in the area's communities by the Catholic Church. In addition, the legal recognition granted to UNORCAC allowed the organization to broaden its activities through partnership with the state and NGOs (García 2002; UNORCAC 2008).

The earliest of these partnerships involved UNORCAC with the *Centro Andino de Acción Popular* (Andean Center for Popular Action, CAAP), a nonprofit organization founded in 1977 dedicated to research and rural development (García 2002; UNORCAC 2008); the state IRD program *Fondo de Desarrollo Rural Marginal* (Marginal Rural Development Fund, FODERUMA), which channeled domestic and foreign financial and technical assistance to rural farming communities in the form of infrastructure, health, education, sanitation, and credit (Korovkin 1997; Pachano 1989; UNORCAC 2008); and the *Programa Nacional de*

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[11] Among the more notable political representational advances are the election of the first indigenous mayor, Auki Tituaña, in 1996, and the election of Magdalena Fueres as the first female indigenous advisor to the mayor in 2000. Between the subsequent reelections of Tituaña and the later election of Alberto Anrango, indigenous men occupied the mayorship of Cotacachi for nearly twenty years, from 1996 to 2014. Indigenous leaders from Cotacachi also have been elected continually to positions within the national government and FENOCIN (Lalander 2010; UNORCAC 2008).

Alfabetización (National Literacy Program) of then newly democratically elected president Jaime

Roldós (Lalander 2010; UNORCAC 2008). Anrango recalls that the latter of these was

particularly significant in the early history of the organization for two reasons. First, the program

taught literacy in Kichwa to the indigenous population of Cotacachi; an act that valorized the

language and imparted the idea within UNORCAC to fight not only for land and citizenship

rights, but also for the respect of indigenous culture and identity. Second, the program trained

and employed community members with higher levels of education to teach literacy, facilitating

both the formation of local leaders and their contact with communities, and in particular,

community *cabildos* (governing councils). The resulting proximity meant that leaders could

work directly with cabildos to develop proposals for services to be brought to the communities,

and then present these within the municipality where newly elected indigenous officials could

advocate for them from within (Lalander 2010). Through these and related efforts, UNORCAC

eventually brought basic services and infrastructure, most notably roads, electricity, water, and

casas comunales (community meeting houses) to Cotacachi's communities[12] (UNORCAC

2008).

     In the late 1980s and early 1990s, as support from NGOs increased alongside the

retraction of state services under neoliberal reform, UNORCAC expanded its work into new

areas, primarily social development. For example, aided by a Spanish NGO, UNORCAC worked

to convince the *Dirección Provincial de Salud de Imbabura* (Health Office of the Province of

Imbabura) to provide accreditation to 23 of the area's midwives (UNORCAC 2008). Prior to

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[12] There are no data on the number of households served through these efforts; however, UNORCAC's most recent census of the communities reports that in 2005, 91 percent of households had electricity and 76.1 percent had water (UNORCAC 2005). Today all communities may be accessed by dirt or cobbled roads, and most communities have casas comunales.

this, indigenous women were not allowed to practice midwifery within their communities. One midwife recalls: "We midwives were mistreated before, we could not attend a birth. If the authorities would know, they would put us in jail. This was also the case for the *yachaks* [healers], herbalists, everyone, they did not allow, they did not permit, because of this the organization [UNORCAC] said we have to find a way for the midwives to become trained."[13] Today, some local western medical institutions continue to discriminate indigenous midwives and healers, but now these individuals are able to practice freely within their communities and without fear of sanction.

Another salient accomplishment of the time was the formation of a distinct women's branch of the organization, the *Comité Central de Mujeres de la UNORCAC* (Central Women's Committee of UNORCAC, CCMU). An international NGO had partnered with UNORCAC to work with women in child and infant health and nutrition, and the frequent visits of women leaders to local communities helped catalyze not only the organization and consolidation of community women's groups, but also of the CCMU as the body to govern them. As one of the Comité's founders explains:

> And so like this it started growing, this Comité, and we started meeting monthly to talk about anything, what we wanted to do as the Comité, all of us without expertise, without a clear role […] but we knew the problems we had, for example, the mistreatment of women by men and the fight for rights within mixed [gendered] spaces. We could not express opinions because it made us embarrassed, or because they [men] did not let us, or because they did not give importance to women. We had been within the organization but not playing an important role. So, I think that from all of these problems the Comité was initiated.[14]

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[13] Interview with elder indigenous woman, community resident and leader of UNORCAC, 16 July 2013.
[14] Interview with elder indigenous woman, community resident and leader of UNORCAC, 26 March 2013.

The formation of the CCMU was significant because it gave women an official voice within UNORCAC and granted them greater autonomy in the operational aspects of women's development projects, including the coordination of midwifery and healing practices described above (CCMU 2012).

UNORCAC therefore was already a partner of the state and domestic, foreign, and transnational NGOs in the development of local communities by the 1990s, as evidenced by its involvement in the aforementioned programs and projects. However, it also remained politically active. For example, UNORCAC participated in the national uprisings called by CONAIE throughout the 1990s[15] by coordinating corresponding marches in Cotacachi; closing highways in collaboration with the third-tier *Federación Indígena y Campesina de la Provincia de Imbabura* (Indigenous and Peasant Federation of Imbabura Province, FICAPI); and contributing in conjunction with FENOCIN to the public presentation of proposals for policy-level change.[16] UNORCAC also remained politically active on a more local level. For example, UNORCAC participated in an occupation of the governor's palace to support the presentation of the *Mandato Provincial por la Vida y el Desarrollo de Imbabura* (Provincial Mandate for Life and the Development of Imbabura Province); a twelve point agenda that demanded better treatment of indigenous councilmen, among other topics relevant to local indigenous populations (Pallares 2002). UNORCAC also participated in an occupation of the municipality of Cotacachi, aiding members of local communities in their demands for resolution of long-pending cases over the future of old haciendas, forestation of certain eroded lands, and the expropriation of others

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[15] Since the 1980s, UNORCAC has been an affiliate of FENOCIN. However, there are numerous moments in UNORCAC's history when it has joined in cause with CONAIE; for example, having participated in the uprisings of the 1990s and having supported the election of Auki Tituaña of the Pachakutik party in 1996 (Pallares 2007).
[16] Interview with adult indigenous man, leader of UNORCAC, 26 February 2013.

(Pallares 2002; UNORCAC 2008). Meanwhile, as the World Bank and other transnational

funders began to target OSGs as local development partners, UNORCAC became a recipient of

PRODEPINE and numerous related projects (Carroll 2002; see Rhoades 2006). It was then that

UNORCAC deepened its transition from an advocacy to development organization, with an

accompanying shift in its scope of activities, and ultimately, its relationship to local

communities.

From Protest to Projects: Local Reflections on UNORCAC's Transition to Development

Today UNORCAC's mission reads "To achieve *Alli Kawsay* [good living] in our peasant

and indigenous communities, we promote development with identity through our political

representation and positioning, and the management and execution of development projects […]"

(UNORCAC 2008:39). However, the latter is perhaps more fully realized than the first. As a

development organization, UNORCAC's work is categorized into four areas: organizational

strengthening, natural resources, social development, and economic development (Table 2.1).

The organization dictates a political stance in regard to each of these, but in most instances the

distinction between politics and projects is vague. Multiple factors may be responsible for this

ambiguity, among them the fact that UNORCAC created its strategic development plan under the

guidance of international funders, and also that to some degree the organization has become

depoliticized. Regardless, and even with a political agenda somewhat tailored to projects, in

recent years UNORCAC has been more ambitious in its pursuit of development activities than

political goals. For example, within the area of natural resources, UNORCAC proposes activities

that range from the agro-ecological design of community fields and homegardens to the

development of public policies to ensure equitable access to land and water. Accordingly, within

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UNORCAC there are plenty of opportunities for community residents to access planting

materials and technical assistance for the further diversification of their fields, but the issue of

unequal access to land and water resources has received less attention. From the perspective of

one technical staff member, this presents a contradiction:

> This area of the communities is rich in agrobiodiversity, there is a lot of agricultural
> diversity and this diversity is in the communities that are generally poorer, where there is
> little land and there is no water. That is where there is agrobiodiversity, and it is at risk
> because for not having water and land, the young people leave and all of that knowledge
> and all of that history about that biodiversity is going to be lost because there is no
> transmission of knowledge to the following generations, and there are not going to be
> agriculturalists there because it is not profitable.[17]

Relatedly, within the area of social development, UNORCAC proposes an array of activities that

include the creation of a scholarship program and the demand for compliance standards to be met

in the area's bilingual community schools. Thanks in large part to the work of international

volunteers, today UNORCAC's scholarship program ranks among its strongest. Yet the

disparities in the quality of rural and urban education mean that even the best students who

pursue secondary education in the area's towns often struggle to catch up to their urban

counterparts.[18]

In addition to partnering with international funders, today UNORCAC periodically

collaborates with local government offices and NGOs operating within the area to provide a

number of other cultural, recreational, and social programs and services to local communities.

Among others, these include soccer tournaments, rituals at the summer and winter solstices and

fall and spring equinoxes, planning and coordination of major festivals (in particular, San Juan or

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[17] Interview with technical staff, 15 October 2013.
[18] Interview with 46 year old male indigenous bilingual community school teacher, 06 March 2013.

Inti Raymi), and a pageant for female youth.[19] Independent of external support, UNORCAC also

provides inter and intra-community conflict mediation and representation in local and national

socio-political processes, the latter primarily via the activities of FENOCIN.[20] Since the early

2000s, UNORCAC also has collaborated with international volunteers in the creation of the

aforementioned scholarship program that aids approximately 80 local families in offsetting the

costs of public high school education and provides an after-school educational and recreational

program for enrolled youth. Finally, and importantly, UNORCAC continues to guide

communities in legal and bureaucratic matters, and provides the structure and opportunity for

participation in community and territorial governance via leadership roles within the

organization itself.

Yet compared to the larger infrastructural projects that UNORCAC obtained in the

1980s, those garnered through partnership with international funders may be characterized by

their relatively small scale and varying degrees of success. The combination of these factors has

meant that the outcomes often have not contributed in great measure to the wellbeing of local

households or to the financial sustainability of the organization itself. This has left beneficiaries

somewhat disillusioned and UNORCAC subject to the cycles of economic crisis and stability

that come with a lack of financial independence. Historically high levels of participation by the

local population within these projects may convey an overall sense of satisfaction, but more

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[19] Every year young women from the area's communities compete in a pageant for the title of "Sumak Warmi" (Beautiful Woman). Participants are evaluated according to how well they represent the pachamama, signifying the supreme female diving being and biophysical world within local Kichwa cosmology (Skarbø et al. 2013). The pageant is similar to others that have emerged in the Andes alongside greater processes of cultural revitalization and valorization during the last decades (Rogers 1999; Wroblewski 2014).

[20] In addition to representing its communities within FENOCIN, UNORCAC represents local communities in other national-level organizations like the *Asamblea Nacional de Mujeres Populares y Diversas del Ecuador* (National Assembly of Popular and Diverse Women of Ecuador). More locally, UNORCAC also advocates for local communities within the *Asamblea de Unidad Cantonal de Cotacachi* (Cotacachi Canton Unity Assembly, AUCC), a process of participatory planning of municipal activities that began in the mid-1990s (Ortiz 2004).

recently, some beneficiaries have become critical of the change. For example, one such

beneficiary comments:

> [UNORCAC] was the biggest weapon where we as indigenous recuperated our respect, equality between indigenous and mestizos. I think the projects are what make it look bad. UNORCAC is a very well-known organization, very respected, very famous, at least among those who know it, it is the space where we learned to make ourselves respected. [But] where we want to go we have confused, the space of respect with the economic space, these spaces we are confusing. I think it is a weakness, projects.[21]

> Not only beneficiaries, but also leaders increasingly assert that UNORCAC's original

purpose and goals may have become lost in the transition. To attribute these changes only to the

transition is to some degree a simplification, but such attitudes and beliefs offer important

insights into the changes that have taken place within the organization, and also into the social

reality of life in local communities. For example, as one leader explains, the focus of the

organization has changed, but local needs have not:

> It pains me to say it, more and more the organization is losing its identity, because the organization had the goal to obtain rights, above all collective rights […] of course times have changed, but the situation in itself, the basic, basic necessities have not changed, so I think that the organization should not lose this identity with which it was created.[22]

Leaders further highlight the related tension involved in attempting to balance responsibilities to

communities and funders when these differ. One leader comments:

> [When] UNORCAC came to be more or less at the level of the development organizations, and it is with pain that I say it, that is where UNORCAC begins to break the closeness that it had with the communities, because on one hand, UNORCAC has the obligation to look out for technical aspects and demonstrate to the financer that in reality the objectives planted, the goals set, the awaited results are all met, but on the other hand it also has to operate according to the dynamics of the communities.[23]

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[21] Interview with 60 year old indigenous woman, community resident and affiliate of UNORCAC, 20 August 2013.
[22] Interview with adult indigenous woman, leader of UNORCAC, 10 October 2013.
[23] Interview with adult indigenous man, leader of UNORCAC, 26 February 2013.

In the early 2000s, some of UNORCAC's partners acknowledged this growing distance between the organization and local communities, and prompted the participatory elaboration of the 2008-2018 strategic development plan. As mentioned, the plan includes political positionings within each of UNORCAC's four areas of work, but notably these are tailored to reflect state and transnational development trends, and ultimately, the types of projects implemented in the recent past. Consequently, and as a technical staff member affirms, an assertive political stance within the organization remains lacking:

> We [technical staff] have always tried to incorporate them, but the leaders, for not having remuneration, do not incorporate adequately […] and so their participation is a bit diminished, but this does not mean that they should not generate a political stance in regard to each topic, but this does not happen. For example, the topic of food security, the topic of water. We [technical staff] do technical work [referring to water infrastructure] but we do not have the political strength necessary to influence the local government, because from here it is a political question [referring to water concessions], a topic for the leadership. It is not our role, the role of political representation.[24]

Reasons for the lack of political action are complex, shared and individual, and include such issues as lack of funding, caution employed for personal political gain, competing demands for time and money, lack of knowledge of critical issues, and general shifts in perspective. Yet perhaps what ultimately enables the transition to political passivity is the fact that leadership roles themselves have changed in accordance with the nature and scope of the organization's activities.

As an advocacy organization, UNORCAC's leaders provided representation and voice for marginalized communities in many of the social, economic, and political spaces from which they historically had been excluded. Now, however, that voice is somewhat limited to questions

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[24] Interview with mestizo male technical staff, 15 October 2013.

of local governance, and despite the gains made in earlier decades, many people feel that their

inclusion remains partial. For example, they note that prevailing structural inequalities like lack

of education and sometimes limited Spanish prevent them from knowing their rights and

demanding these on their own. They also point to issues like the threat of impending mining

projects to land and water resources,[25] unfair wages, unequal access to healthcare, technology

and education, and myriad other issues against which their socially constrained forms of agency

inhibit them from acting. As one former UNORCAC employee commented:

> I do not see development projects as all that good because now people do not need just
> plants […] what UNORCAC teaches us is to plant a lemon, to plant alfalfa, to raise
> guinea pigs, to raise pigs, this, in a way, we already know. People from the countryside,
> we know how to raise pigs, we know how to plant, maybe not technically, but we know.
> So for me personally, and I have talked about this with my wife and neighbors, we do not
> need plants, what we need is to know, intellectually, our rights as *pueblos* and
> *nacionalidades*, to be able to demand our rights from local, cantonal, and national
> authorities.[26]

Not only do underlying structural inequalities perpetuate unmet needs, but in addition,

Cotacachi's communities are not untouched by the fast pace of modernization, meaning that new

needs are constantly emerging. As one of UNORCAC's leaders states: "the vision of the

communities, and I could include myself, is that I have other needs now, the need for technology,

the need for a car, for example, or a house."[27]

　　　All of this is not to suggest that UNORCAC terminate its partnerships or stop practicing

development, or that the projects implemented do not in any way benefit participants. Rather, it

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[25] The subtropical zone of the cantón Cotacachi, Intag, which stretches west of the study area towards coastal
Ecuador, has long fought the threat of mining (Davidov 2013). Recently, the municipal government agreed to grant
multiple companies, including state-owned Enami, permission to perform exploratory activities within certain
concessions (Rosales 2013).
[26] Interview with 36 year old indigenous man, community member and affiliate of UNORCAC, 22 October 2013.
[27] Interview with adult indigenous man, leader of UNORCAC, 26 February 2013.

suggests the need to reconsider the approach of applying transient fixes to what are more realistically chronic problems. As one of UNORCAC's leaders comments: "More and more we view necessities as very precise and only patch them, like treating a sick person by giving an anti-inflammatory, well, it calms them and now they do not complain and now we do not worry, but we cannot call that development."[28]

Multiple expectations for downward accountability

The small-scale socio-cultural projects that have characterized UNORCAC's work in the last decades do contribute in some degree to household and community wellbeing. More recently, however, leaders and beneficiaries have come to scrutinize them. Increasing disillusionment with the results of the transition suggests that UNORCAC may be approaching a crossroads where it will become necessary to redefine definitions of development as well as the very role of the organization in local communities. Some have warned that as off-farm work continues to grow in rural highland areas, OSGs may become decreasingly relevant to laborers whose greatest needs are more likely to be fair wages and a higher standard of living (Martínez 2006). Compounding this threat to organizational sustainability is a lack of collective memory among younger generations, and relatedly, the multiplication of expectations for downward accountability generated by the transition itself. Elder beneficiaries who in decades past witnessed UNORCAC's fight against the discrimination and abuse of the local indigenous population remain hopeful that the organization will re-establish itself in an advocacy role. However, this is not necessarily the case for younger generations who were not alive to witness

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[28] Interview with adult indigenous woman, leader of UNORCAC, 10 October 2013.

the discrimination experienced by elders, nor the organization's historic role in diminishing it.

As some elders have explained:

> For me, UNORCAC is a well-recognized organization above all for those of us that are older. Why? Because we know of the mistreatment that we have seen of our parents and on my part I am very thankful, this organization is well respected by the people my age because thanks to it we have achieved respect. The young do not see it this way, I do not know why, probably because they do not know the mistreatment, maybe for this they do not recognize it, but we do. It is true that now in the projects we have had a bit of failure but that does not mean that our organization should disappear, it means that it should be strengthened.[29]

> Things have changed so much, all from the organization. If the organization had not formed I do not know what would have happened to us. The young do not think of this, because they think that now we have always been this way, that this just happened in the air or for free, but it is not like that, the organization has always come, through the organization we are here or anywhere, before indigenous people were never permitted.[30]

When asked to describe UNORCAC, only a few of the younger beneficiaries interviewed expressed vague notions of the organization's former role in advocating for the rights of the local indigenous population, and most responded that it is simply another development NGO. Lacking a referent to UNORCAC's past advocacy role, younger generations do not exhibit the same loyalty and hope that elders do. When at times UNORCAC has failed to meet their needs, some have turned to OSGs in the neighboring cantón Otavalo. Others have sought to ally themselves with local and provincial development NGOs and government institutions. Until UNORCAC comes to play a role other than development NGO in the lives of younger generations, its relationship to them may become increasingly tenuous. Given that the support of local communities underlies the social sustainability of OSGs and their parent organizations, the budding fractures in these relationships suggest the need for change.

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[29] Interview with 53 year old indigenous woman, community member and affiliate of UNORCAC, 20 August 2013.
[30] Interview with elder indigenous man, former leader of UNORCAC, 16 July 2013.

Bebbington et al. (2008) have described development as a "battlefield of ideas and practices" in which NGOs are not very powerful actors, and in which "the main rules are defined by others," constraining the scope for alternatives (31). Such constraints may include lack of (especially financial) resources, rules of public audit, risk for the actors involved, and internalization of the "dominant rules of the game" to the extent that local actors find it difficult to think beyond them (Bebbington et al. 2008:31; see also Dagnino 2008). The first of these may apply in varying degrees to the case of UNORCAC, but many leaders and beneficiaries demonstrate awareness of such "rules," as well as a willingness to start rethinking the role of the organization in local communities and broader contexts.

Numerous works have demonstrated possible alternatives for NGOs stuck in top-down development (Bolnick 2008; Cabannes 2004; Dersken and Verhallen 2008; Kohl 2003), including instances in which these have been successful in combining development practice with acts of resistance (Chhotray 2008). Others have proposed in more general terms, mechanisms for creating alternatives, such as partnering with social movements, private businesses, and like-minded state agencies to realign "underlying processes of development toward forms of economies, societies and polities capable of realizing fundamental goals of social justice" (Bebbington et al. 2008; Mitlin et al. 2007:1714). None of these authors has failed to acknowledge the challenges implied in attempting to shift power and reformulate relationships among such diverse stakeholders as governments, funders, NGOs, and beneficiaries, nor in overcoming the potential barriers to change internal to each of these groups (see Fowler 2000). Challenges aside, however, all of these works stress that there is no alternative but to change (see Bebbington et al. 2008).

This paper extends the above argument to the case of UNORCAC, with relevance to advocacy NGOs in general (see Brown et al. 2012; Parks 2008; Reimann 2005). Whether through the reformulation of current or the creation of new relationships to donors, balancing asymmetries in power relations between these and grantee organizations will likely restore some degree of autonomy important for reestablishing the legitimacy and effectiveness of the latter (see Parks 2008). At the same time, the case of UNORCAC suggests that any changes should be made with the knowledge and in consideration of the potentially multiple and varied expectations of beneficiaries rooted in generational histories and any other such local contextual specificities that may influence their ideas of an organization's mission. Contrarily, such changes may simply further discontinuity in the missions and activities of these organizations, creating new expectations while leaving others unfulfilled. As in the case of UNORCAC, such discontinuity may further decrease an organization's ability to remain downwardly accountable, posing additional challenges to its legitimacy, and ultimately, its sustainability.

Finally, there is ample debate about whether advocacy and other NGOs should be tasked with filling the role left open by neoliberal states in the provision of social services. For example, scholars have argued that this tends to weaken government accountability and institutions, inhibit development of national economies, and further, that it often delegitimizes beneficiary states in the eyes of donor nations (Biggs and Neame 1996; Bräutigam and Knack 2004; Brass 2012; Hirata 2002; Leonard and Straus 2003; Manji and O'Coill 2002). Such debate is perhaps beyond the scope of this paper, but the findings do suggest that if NGOs are to play a role in the provision of social services to rural and marginalized populations, they must be allowed to do so, meaning that donors must grant these organizations some degree of autonomy. In order for this happen there must be opportunity within donor-grantee relationships for upward change,

implying the need for donors to be open to potential shifts in the nature of their relationships to NGOs and also to renegotiating definitions of local development. This will likely mean moving beyond the application of transient fixes and giving consideration not only to the many forms of poverty experienced locally, like those mediated by social and political norms, but also to the many possible means of addressing them.

Conclusion

During the last decades, OSGs have undergone a gradual process of NGOization as they have transitioned from advocacy to development organizations. Beginning in the late 1970s, the first of these formed in defense of local indigenous populations. Many more emerged in subsequent decades in response to continued conflicts between former huasipungueros and hacendados, and also to the growing offer of development projects, first from the state, then NGOs, and later foreign and transnational development institutions. Ethnodevelopment has characterized the partnerships of OSGs with the latter, prompting a shift in the scale and nature of the actions of these organizations from protest, politics, and the implementation of large-scale infrastructural projects, to the implementation and management of small-scale socio-cultural activities. Scholars have argued that the gradual loss of autonomy that accompanies such transitions can pose serious implications for the effectiveness of advocacy organizations by compromising their legitimacy. This paper adds that such loss of autonomy and related erosion of legitimacy may also pose serious implications for the social sustainability of the same.

The paper has demonstrated how the leaders and beneficiaries of one such organization, UNORCAC, have positioned themselves in relation to the above transition. The findings demonstrate that the transition has generated multiple expectations for downward accountability

that reflect different moments in the organization's history, with some looking to the

organization for continued advocacy and others for the direct fulfillment of basic development

needs. Some remain hopeful that the organization will resume its former role in advocating for

the rights and respect of local communities, but others have begun to turn to support from

neighboring OSGs, NGOs, and government institutions when their expectations have not been

met. The growing disillusionment with the results of the transition and the related shifts in

alliances suggest that the loss of autonomy and related erosion of legitimacy may have

implications for the social sustainability of these organizations. The case of UNORCAC

therefore suggests that if advocacy NGOs are to aid in filling the role left open by neoliberal

states in the provision of social and other services to rural and marginalized populations, then the

autonomy of these organizations must be respected such that their legitimacy, and ultimately

their sustainability, may be maintained.

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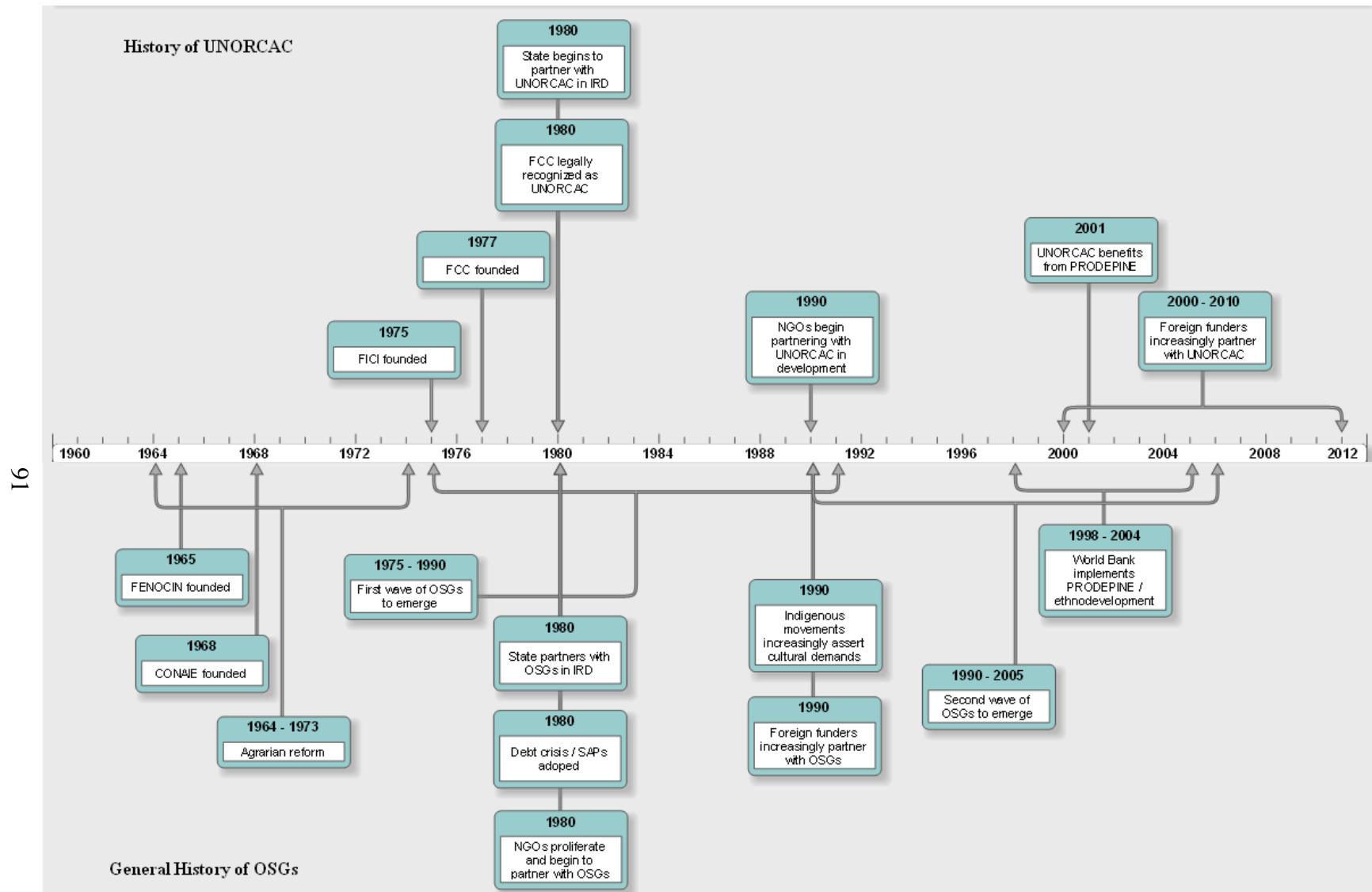
Figure 2.1: Emergence and NGOization of OSGs and UNORCAC

Table 2.1: Political positioning and activities by area of work[31]

ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTHENING		NATURAL RESOURCES	
Political Positioning	**Activities**	**Political Positioning**	**Activities**
Retain territorial autonomy in Cotacachi and respect the mandate of the communities Ensure that any activity that takes place within the territory be supported by the organization, in line with its principles and the real needs of the communities Decide democratically, and with the participation of the communities, on alliances with political parties and the designation of candidates for popular election	• Legalization of lands • Administrative/accounting assistance • Governance training • Workshops (governance, leadership, …)	Legalize lands and water concessions, and foment community management of the same Demand that the local government compensate UNORCAC and the communities for the conservation of the mountain ecosystem Decentralize the Cotacachi-Cayapas Ecological Reserve so that it may be co-managed by the communities, and so that these may be remunerated Promote agro-ecological practices as a healthy and environmentally friendly form of agriculture	• Natural resource conservation and management • Sustainable agriculture • Agro-forestry • Agro-ecology • Reforestation with native plants within the *páramo* and along open waterways • Implementation of community water infrastructure and meters • Agrobiodiversity conservation (ethnobotanical garden, seed fairs, inter-zonal seed exchanges, traditional food fairs, …)

92

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[31] The political positionings were translated, abbreviated, and consolidated by the author from UNORCAC's 2008-2018 Strategic Development Plan. The development activities include those listed in the same document, as well as others observed by the author.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT		ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	
Political Positioning	**Activities**	**Political Positioning**	**Activities**
Achieve access to quality primary education (bilingual community schools or otherwise), secondary education, and technical training for all children and youth The decentralized cantonal health system should prioritize the provision of clean drinking water, health infrastructure, waste management, etc. The traditional healing center – Jambi Mascaric – should receive state resources for its services All of UNORCAC's activities must be based on ancestral principles, institutions and knowledge of the Kichwa of Cotacachi	• Traditional healing • Formation of community women's groups • Support for bilingual education • Support for intercultural education • Campaign to eradicate child labor • Workshops (domestic violence, human abuse, childhood education, …)	Demand that the state, local government and development organizations take responsibility for the economic development of the area to ensure quality of life for local families Agricultural practices must guarantee the food security of local families, implying that there must be access to land, water, and technical assistance, and the opportunity to insert local producers into commodity chains All productive activities undertaken by UNORCAC and its communities must respect nature and the cultural identity of the Kichwa of Cotacachi, and contribute to the strengthening of UNORCAC's historical organizational process	• Microcredit • Micro-businesses (community tourism, processing/export of native crops, production of artisanal goods, …) • Agricultural credit • Apiculture • Farmer's market

93

CHAPTER 3

DEFINING SUCCESS: HOW STAKEHOLDER INTERPRETATIONS OF DEVELOPMENT

OUTCOMES INFLUENCE PROJECT PARTICIPATION AND SUPPORT[1]

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[1] VanderMolen, K. To be submitted to *Development and Change*.

Abstract

This paper explores the role of stakeholder interests in different development outcomes in fostering the continuity of two long-term development projects in highland Ecuador. Continuity can be equated with success, but does not necessarily mean that a project's original goals have been met. Exploring stakeholder interests in different development outcomes can reveal multiple explanations for participation, regardless of whether the original goals have been realized. This paper argues that more nuanced understanding of stakeholder interests can help to explain the persistence of certain development projects and also serve as an important heuristic, revealing additional development needs and potential new paths of action for policymakers.

Introduction

Recent works in translation have argued for development research to understand "not whether but how development projects work; not whether a project succeeds, but how 'success' is produced" (Mosse 2005:8). The assertion is founded on research demonstrating that donor programs, the objectives of NGOs, and the needs of local communities often do not overlap, making it necessary for projects to appeal to distinct stakeholder rationalities in order to enroll their support (see Baviskar 2004; Doolittle 2006; Li 2007; Mosse 2005; Nauta 2006; Rossi 2006). Reorienting development research towards understanding the production of success therefore entails identifying local-level development goals and how these are "translated" or make to interlock with broader project goals, producing the mutual enrollment needed to overcome the disjunctures in stakeholder interests and put policy into practice (Li 1999; Mosse and Lewis 2006; Olivier de Sardan 2005). Such an approach brings the focus of development research to the "brokers" or "managers, consultants, fieldworkers, and community leaders" who act as intermediaries, "read[ing] the meaning of a project into the different institutional languages of its stakeholder supporters, constantly creating interest and making real" (Mosse 2005:9).

Parallel to this argument is a new paradigm in anthropology that shifts the focus slightly from analyzing acts of brokerage to identifying the "moral and social worlds" in which development becomes meaningful to stakeholders (Yarrow and Venkatesan 2012:8). The paradigm is at once part of a larger (re)turn to ethnographic engagement with development (see Friedman 2006; Gow 2008; Li 2007; Moore 2005; Mosse 2005; Yarrow 2011) and a response to the prevailing tendency of post-structuralist or deconstructionist approaches to highlight only the shortcomings of particular frameworks, policies, and projects. Rather than take critique as a

starting point, these scholars advocate for examining the concrete practice of development in which ideas about it are formed and made meaningful, allowing new insights to emerge from deeper understandings of those particular contexts. They further argue that only if we do not critique development a priori can we leave open the possibility to "re-perceive and hence re-orient development practice as a potentially positive force for good" (Yarrow and Venkatesan 2012:2).

This paper aims to build on that paradigm by examining stakeholder interests and the specific contexts from within which these emerge and take on meaning for the beneficiaries of two long-term development projects, a microcredit program and a beekeeping association, in Cotacachi, Ecuador. The findings demonstrate that for some beneficiaries the unintended outcomes of these projects hold more meaning than those intended, ultimately playing an equal or greater role in sustaining participation and support. The paper suggests that more nuanced understanding of the motivations that underlie stakeholder support both can help to explain the persistence of certain development frameworks and also how these might be better adapted to local contexts, and in addition, reveal other needs and potential new paths of action for policymakers.

After a brief literature review, I introduce the study area and methods. Following, I examine each of the projects studied alongside beneficiaries' reasons for sustaining their participation and support in light of continued project shortcomings. Finally, I discuss how uncovering the meaning for beneficiaries in particular projects can be applied to understanding the persistence of certain development frameworks, in addition to revealing other development needs.

A New Paradigm in Anthropological Contributions to Development Research

There is a new paradigm in anthropology for understanding development that seeks to reveal the "moral and social worlds" in which projects becomes meaningful to stakeholders (Yarrow and Ventakesan 2012:8). The paradigm emerges from recent critical reflection on the continued influence of policy-centered deconstructionist approaches to understanding development (see Escobar 1995; Ferguson 1990; Sachs 1992). Deconstructionist critiques have generated important awareness of how development discourse is used to construct notions of global poverty and the poor (Friedman 2006; Nustad 2001), but also have led to an ethnographic reductionism that dissolves the heterogeneity of ideas, beliefs, and experiences of different actors within their presumed role in reproducing policy discourse (Bebbington 2000; Curry 2003; Everett 1997). Yarrow and Venkatesan (2012) have argued that such reductionism leads to ideologically generalized critique and inhibits theoretical innovation as it eliminates the opportunity for gaining new insights from stakeholder experiences in development. The authors therefore have proposed that researchers first examine the concrete practice of development in which ideas about it are formed and made meaningful, allowing useful critiques to emerge from deeper understandings of particular development contexts. Such an approach moves from the critical deconstruction of development policy and practice towards what Mosse and Lewis (2006:15) term a "methodological deconstructionism" that draws on the capacity of ethnography to shed light on the complex contexts within which development is enacted (Yarrow and Venkatesan 2012). This is not to suggest that deconstructionism has displaced ethnographic perspectives on development entirely (see Crewe and Harrison 1998; Lewis 1998; Pigg 1996; Pottier 1997), but rather that, following more recent efforts (Fechter and Hindman 2011; Gow 2008; Mosse 2006; Mosse and Lewis 2005; Shah 2010), such perspectives be renewed.

Methodological deconstructionism draws on the works of actor-oriented theorists who assert that development practice is never a strict product of policy discourse, but is grounded in the everyday encounters between project managers, consultants, fieldworkers, and beneficiaries (Arce and Long 1992; Arce et al. 1994; Long 1992, 2001). The success of policies and projects therefore is not inherent as it requires interpretive communities of everyday actors who find reason to participate in the established framework, lending credibility to its representations of reality when in fact these may be false (Mosse 2005; Mosse and Lewis 2006; Olivier de Sardan 2005). Accordingly, the objective of development research becomes to determine not whether, but how projects work; that is, how they remain sustained socially despite the diversity of interests that constantly threaten their coherence and continuity. This involves identifying the local-level development goals that co-exist with official goals, and which lend the latter the appearance of consensus when in fact local and official goals may vary (Mosse 2005; Mosse and Lewis 2006). Such an approach does not imply ignoring policy and discourse, but rather resonates with Li's (1999) assertion that "a Foucauldian understanding of governmentality is an accurate guide to development as a project of rule, but that the actual accomplishment of rule owes as much to the understandings and practices worked out in the contingent and compromised space of cultural intimacy as it does to the imposition of development schemes and related forms of disciplinary power" (295). In this way, development may be understood as a "dialectical encounter" between multiple actors, hence the call to rebalance overly structural approaches with the thoughts and experiences of local populations (Friedman 2012:38).

More recently, a growing body of research has begun to examine the heterogeneity of thought, meaning, and practice surrounding development as different actors negotiate and give meaning to their involvement within projects and policies in order to achieve locally and

personally relevant ends (Baviskar 2004; Doolittle 2006; Li 2007; Nauta 2006; Velásquez Runk 2009). For example, Gow (2008) has demonstrated that there is no single approach to development as three neighboring Nasa communities creatively enacted a resettlement policy into different visions of indigenous culture and modernity. In a different vein, Li (2007) has shown how the abstract notions of improvement and ideal living imposed on rural villagers in Indonesia have resulted in decades of failed projects. In this case, villagers are not opposed to the idea of development, but resist participation in projects that do not match their own notions of improvement. Each of these cases is unique, but both reinforce the idea that development projects make available a set of opportunities that stakeholders may take advantage of or reject based on their own needs and interests. In its focus on stakeholder interests in the unintended outcomes of development, this paper supports the above argument while adding that more nuanced understanding of these interests may provide important insights into the social reality of targeted populations and some of their more latent needs.

Study Area: Cotacachi

Cotacachi *cantón* (a county-like jurisdiction) is located in the northern Ecuadorian highlands in the province of Imbabura, 80 kilometers north of the capital, Quito (PUCE 2005). Cotacachi is also the name of the largest mountain within the cantón, as well as the urban center that sits at the base of its eastern flanks. The town of Cotacachi is home to the *Unión de Organizaciones Campesinas e Indígenas de Cotacachi* (Union of Peasant and Indigenous Organizations of Cotacachi, UNORCAC), a second-tier organization (o*rganización de segundo grado*, OSG)[2] turned local development practitioner.

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[2] In Ecuador, peasant and indigenous populations are organized within a four-tier hierarchy that emerged in the latter half of the twentieth century, and which facilitates the mobilization of these populations and also serves as a

Founded in 1977, like many OSGs, UNORCAC formed to fight against the discrimination of the local indigenous population, but began practicing community development in the 1980s in response to the growing offer of projects, first from the state and later from foreign and transnational development institutions (Rhoades 2006; UNORCAC 2008). Today UNORCAC is among Ecuador's oldest and most renowned OSGs (García 2002). Having grown considerably since its founding, UNORCAC has implemented dozens of projects and programs within its 43 affiliate communities. These communities, located along the eastern slopes of Mt. Cotacachi, are home to 15,878 people, 78% of whom identify as Kichwa (UNORCAC 2005). UNORCAC's projects and programs fall within four areas of work: organizational strengthening, natural resources, social development, and economic development (UNORCAC 2008). The microcredit program and beekeeping association studied here are two of those projects, selected based on their relative longevity of ten and twelve years, respectively.

Life in the communities of Cotacachi has changed rapidly during the last decades (Moates and Campbell 2006). Once an agrarian population, the communities have become increasingly dependent on temporary migration and urban livelihoods. However, although over 70% of the working population travels daily or weekly to neighboring urban areas for informal labor (Ortiz 2004), the poor remuneration and characteristic seasonality of these jobs means that the majority remains permanently underemployed and that poverty remains high[3] (UNORCAC

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channel for voicing their concerns before state and transnational actors. Under this structure, local communities form the first tier; these are organized into cantonal-level (or second-tier) organizations, which are grouped into provincial-level (or third-tier) organizations. Finally, these are organized into the national-level (or fourth-tier) federations and confederations that represent peasant and indigenous populations before the state and in transnational movements (Martínez 2006).

[3] Ecuador's National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INEC) provides poverty statistics at the level of parish and above, without distinguishing between rural and urban households. According to INEC's 2010 census, the percentages of people living in poverty within the parishes of the study area were as follows: Imantag – 94% (4,928 residents); "Cotacachi" (San Francisco and El Sagrario) – 56.8% (17,015 residents); and Quiroga 66.1% (6,428 residents) (INEC 2010).

2005). Temporary migration in Cotacachi has produced countless changes in local politics, family and community structures (Ospina 2006), and cultural beliefs and values (Nazarea 2006; Skarbø et al. 2012). The increasing diversification of livelihoods, political and social structures, and cultural norms highlights the potential diversity of needs and viewpoints that must be harnessed in order to generate participation in and support for development.

Methods

This paper is based on 10 months of ethnographic research from February to December 2013, using participant observation, focus groups, semi-structured interviews, and household surveys. Specifically, I conducted semi-structured interviews with 20 of UNORCAC's leaders and technical staff, 35 beneficiaries of the microcredit program from five community women's groups, 16 members of the beekeeping association, and the four technical and auxiliary staff that manage these projects (one in microcredit, three in beekeeping). I additionally conducted household surveys with the total beneficiaries interviewed from the two projects. I conducted all interviews with UNORCAC's leaders and technical staff alone in Spanish, whereas I conducted all interviews and household surveys with project participants with the help of a bilingual (Spanish-Kichwa) research assistant. Most of the latter interviews and surveys were conducted in Spanish; however, when project participants preferred to speak in Kichwa, the research assistant used consecutive translation to facilitate the interviews. I digitally recorded all interviews and later transcribed them in MAXQDA, where I coded them for themes relevant to the research questions. The data collected in household surveys were organized in Excel, and have been utilized to aid in describing the local demographic and socio-economic context presented in the paper.

The paper also is informed by extensive participant observation. Throughout the research I worked daily within UNORCAC and participated for three months in each of the projects studied. In working within UNORCAC, I participated in broader organizational activities like project management and evaluation, whereas my tasks within each of the projects were more specific. In the case of the microcredit program, I accompanied UNORCAC's technical staff on visits to different community women's groups to help review accounting records and to assist in workshops and the election of new leaders. I additionally aided technical staff in conducting a series of accounting workshops and participated in numerous special events, such as a contest to reward the most economically productive group. During my participation within the beekeeping association, I accompanied technical staff to check and sometimes transport the hives of different members; helped harvest, package, and ship products; and aided in the construction of new materials, primarily boxes, frames, and wax foundations. Finally, throughout the research I lived with an indigenous family in the community of Turucu, where in addition to partaking in daily life and community events, I participated regularly within the community women's group and other of UNORCAC's development projects implemented there.

Female Solidarity and the Motivations for Participation in the Microcredit Program

The microcredit program for women began in 2006 with a donation from a foreign NGO, and since then has made small, short-term loans available to members of community women's groups. The loans are between 20 and 500 USD, and must be repaid in one to six months. There are no strict measures in place to oversee the expenditure of loans, but the intention is that these be invested in economically productive activities that will generate revenue for repayment,

improve household wellbeing, and increase women's financial independence. As one of

UNORCAC's leaders explains:

> The intention of the credits is that women can begin with what is economic autonomy, because many cases of violence occur because of the economic dependence that they have on their husbands, their partners. So the credits have the function that women can invest in productive activities, in the purchase of small animals, guinea pigs, pigs, chickens, or in embroidery, productive activities, so that they are self-supporting.[4]

In the area's communities, women typically work at home. As a result, they often lack

personal income, making them financially dependent on others, primarily their husbands. Lack

of personal income and personal property precludes women from accessing formal loans. The

same leader adds:

> We work in credit because we have experienced as our reality that women, for many women, it has been very difficult to obtain a credit because many times the banks and cooperatives say 'In what do you work? How much do you earn?' and the women, it is not that we do not work, we do work, but we are not remunerated. And so we have to ask permission from our husband so that he signs, so that he gives us the credit, and today we feel good because this credit is serving women to have their business, for the education of their children, when they are sick, for these things, for planting.[5]

A local credit union managed the initial donation until 2008, when, after receiving a

second donation from another NGO, participating groups decided to manage the funds

themselves to better facilitate loans, avoid service fees, and either re-circulate or redistribute the

money accrued through interest and fines. Since then, the women's branch of UNORCAC, the

Comité Central de Mujeres de la UNORCAC (Central Women's Committee of UNORCAC,

CCMU),[6] has managed the money, granting loans at 1% interest and using the revenue to grow

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[4] Interview with leader of UNORCAC, 22 March 2013.
[5] Interview with leader of UNORCAC, 22 March 2013.
[6] CCMU formed in 1996 to represent community women's groups and to give voice to women leaders within UNORCAC. Today CCMU co-manages the development projects that UNORCAC receives for women via partnership with international funders and local and national governments. In addition to the microcredit program,

the size of loans and also subsidize other of CCMU's activities. At the time of the first donation, only five women's groups were accessing loans. By 2008 there were 12 participating groups of ten to twenty-three participants, and by 2010 the total had grown to 17. Today 14 of these remain active.

The internal workings of each community women's group are different, but all are governed by a president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer who are elected by each group's members every one to two years. Twice a year, each group has the opportunity to solicit from CCMU a lump sum in the amount of the total loans requested by group members and clients.[7] Depending on the group's payment history, CCMU then loans either the solicited or a lesser amount. Internally each group then distributes loans from the sum received to its members at 2% interest. Half of the interest remains within the group and the other half is paid back to CCMU as the 1% interest required on the total loan.[8]

A survey of 52 loans made during the last two years within the five groups studied suggests that to a fair degree women do invest the money as intended by the program, with slightly more than 50% going towards economically productive activities, including the purchase of animals and animal feed, and the start-up or growth of small businesses (Table 3.1). Further, most women demonstrate the knowledge that the program is intended to provide them with a source of potentially productive and also immediate funds to which they otherwise do not have

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projects include a weekly farmers' market, periodic workshops, and a traditional healing center (*Jambi Mascari – Seeking Health*) that offers certified midwifery, healing massage, cleansings, and herbal remedies.
[7] Some groups also make loans to "clients," typically community members that do not have family members participating in the group, or individuals from neighboring communities that do not have groups. Each group may loan money to clients at 3% interest; however, most choose not to after having experienced difficulty recovering such loans.
[8] The idea is for each group to keep the money accrued through the 1% interest and also through fines and late fees to increase the amount of money available for future loans, combining the monies borrowed from CCMU with those saved by the group. However, given that most groups are not yet confident in their accounting, most divide the money accrued at the end of each year.

access. As one participant comments: "In the bank, so many papers and sometimes they are difficult to obtain. They ask for a guarantee, a photo, certification of employment, but here, the women, we already know each other and we help each other, and it is faster. Here it is one day to the next, but in the bank it is after three days, four days, until it is approved."[9]

Table 3.1: Investments made with microcredit

Investment	% of total loans surveyed
Animals (cows, pigs, guinea pigs, chickens)	28.8
Construction/improvements made to homes[10]	25.8
Private business	16.7
Education	12.1
Repayment of another loan	7.6
Animal feed	6.0
Legal transactions	1.5
Matrimonies/festivities	1.5
TOTAL (n=52)	100

Yet when asked why they participate, access to credit was not the reason most frequently given, but rather, the opportunity to meet, relate to, and support one another as women (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2: Reasons for participation in microcredit program

	Primary reason (%)
Social support	32.4
Learning	29.4
Access to Credit	26.5
No perceived benefit[11]	8.8
No response	2.9
TOTAL	100.0 (n=35)

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[9] Interview with 25 year old member of group 2, 8 August 2013.

[10] For many young families it may take years to construct a new home. Improvements to homes therefore typically include such advances as adding a roof, plastering walls, or building a water tank. Loans made for construction therefore represent basic improvements made to modest block homes, in most cases leading gradually to completion.

[11] A few of the women interviewed explained that they did not perceive any benefit to participation in the microcredit program or women's group more broadly. In most instances, the same women reported that they planned to withdraw from their respective groups at year's end.

Together the percentages of women who provided "social support" and "learning" as their primary motivations for participation represent more than have of those surveyed (61.8%). Further inquiry into the reasons provided for participation reveals why these, as opposed to access to credit, are the main motivations.

Access to Credit

As stated, the survey of recent credits from within the five groups suggests that women do tend to use the loans as intended, that is, on economically productive activities and child education. Additionally, for some women, the private nature of accessing these loans means that they are more comfortable doing it: "Sometimes I need [money] urgently and instead of going to other households to ask that they loan me money because I have this problem, even if within the family, soon the whole world knows how much I am needing and in what problem I am. On the other hand, I go to the group and I get the loan quickly and that is it."[12] A further benefit to the private nature of these loans is that women may obtain them without having to inform their husbands: "Women work in the care of animals and it is not a formal business, or making bracelets, so for this it is their husbands who make loans. So if a woman needs money she has to ask her husband. But with us, they come to us and say 'but do not tell my husband, *por Dios*.' Sometimes women do not want their husbands to know because they will get angry."[13] The same woman, who is currently president of her group, further explains that the microcredit program actually works better when women's husbands are unaware of the loans: "I do not know if it is the fear that the women's group will go to the house and in front of the husband say 'pay us,' I

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[12] Interview with 52 year old member of group 4, 20 August 2013.
[13] Interview with 43 year old member of group 5, 10 July 2013.

do not know if it is this fear but [these] women pay punctually."[14] Finally, for many women,

participation within the program creates quick and easy access to emergency funds that may be

paid back more slowly and at lower risk. The same woman explains:

> Many times we see the necessity we have, that sometimes in the community there are people who sell pigs for emergency. They are selling and one wants to buy, but how if one does not have savings? And the fear too of not having a source of income, one cannot go make a loan in a bank. So […] they see us as a lifesaver, we are a buoy that saves them, at least that is how I see it, that is how I see the group. It is a lifesaver because the bank is not going to say 'yes, I will wait,' but we as women, as a community, being together, we [do].[15]

As alluded to in the above quote, access to credit is important, but for some women repayment of

loans can be a problem. Not surprisingly, repayment is often difficult when loans are spent on

emergencies and other non-income generating activities, such as child education and

construction or home improvements. However, repayment can also be difficult when loans are

invested in economically productive activities, namely the purchase of animals given that

typically these do not mature before payments are due:

> It does not make sense. If I buy a pig, I take a loan of 50 dollars, I buy a pig for 60 dollars, and I have to find the 10 dollars. Then the next month I have to pay, so I look wherever I can to find money for the payment. Of course it is not all, maybe it is half or a third of the capital that they loaned me, but I have to find it and go and pay. The only advantage that I see is that I pay little by little and I keep the pig, and if I take good care of the pig I can sell it after about one year.[16]

There is also a certain degree of risk involved in investing loans in animal husbandry. For

example, the husband of another woman used a loan to purchase a baby bull that, once grown,

had to be killed prematurely when it became injured falling from a cliff. Selling the meat, the

family was able to repay the loan but made no profit as they were forced to sell it inexpensively

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[14] Interview with 43 year old member of group 5, 10 July 2013.
[15] Interview with 43 year old member of group 5, 9 July 2013.
[16] Interview with 52 year old member of group 4, 20 August 2013.

lest it go bad. In part, the periodic challenges associated with repayment have meant that many women take loans somewhat infrequently in spite of the near constant availability. In newer groups the average number of loans was 1.4 per member per year, and in older groups the average was 0.6 per member per year.[17] In addition to the challenges associated with repayment, the fact that women do not access loans more frequently in spite of the ongoing need for greater financial resources hints at problems related to type of investment and money management skills, and in so doing, highlights aspects of the program requiring greater oversight and/or intervention. It further hints that women may emphasize other reasons for continuing their participation in the program in light of the failings of the use of microcredit to positively impact their households.

Social support

For many women, participation has less to do with access to credit and more to do with the opportunity it provides for socialization; a point that is true for groups that formed both prior and in response to the offer of microcredit. In the case of newer groups, one member explains that "We benefit by being there conversing or becoming friends, we also benefit by learning to save and these things. Also, I gave birth this year and they came to visit with a present, they supported me, for this I also feel part of this group. They support me in everything. [...] if it were not for this group everyone would be inside the house with nothing to do, here at least we leave to participate in the meetings, even if just to listen."[18] In the case of older groups, the microcredit

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[17] Here "older groups" refers to those that formed as early as the mid-1990s in response to the offer of other projects directed towards women. "Newer groups" refers to those that have formed only in the last eight years in direct response to the offer of microcredit.
[18] Interview with 28 year old member of group 1, 30 July 2013.

program provides the impetus to continue to meet: "For us, the program is the motor or the motive, it is like a magnet, it is an excuse for us to meet as women."[19]

Not only are women typically very busy with household responsibilities, and in some cases paid employment outside of the home, but patriarchy in local communities can make it difficult for women to spend time away from home and even with others. The president of one group explains the lack of socialization as follows: "One reason is because they [men] are afraid that the women will be unfaithful. The other is the fear they have that women will become, what is the word, rebellious, that a woman begins to protest, to demand her rights as she learns more things."[20] Although many have had to work hard to convince their spouses to allow them to participate, not all approve to this day. For example, one woman comments of a fellow group member that "Her husband does not agree. No, she does not have much support, this is why sometimes she has to stay [at home] when she should be going to a meeting and he is there [at home]. He begins to protest, saying 'Why are you going? What are you going for?' and it is there that sometimes she has to stay when it is time for a meeting."[21] Women's groups therefore provide members with an important outlet from both this and other stresses at home:

> For me it was interesting because I never left the house, I was always stuck in the house as though I did not have friends. On the other hand, meeting with the women's group allows one to know more, make friends, and at least when one is there and a little upset, worried, when I go and I meet with the women's group and converse about this and about that, and they make jokes and one de-stresses there in the group. So that is what I like, for that reason in just the last two years I am participating within the women's group.[22]

Additionally for some, women's groups provide a mechanism or strategy for effecting change within these male-dominated relations: "The woman who obeys, her husband simply has

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[19] Interview with 50 year old member of group 4, 20 August 2013.
[20] Interview with 43 year old member of group 5, 9 July 2013.
[21] Interview with 52 year old member of group 3, 14 August 2013.
[22] Interview with 36 year old member of group 3, 14 August 2013.

the control. Of course he is never going to say, 'you should go, you have the doors open [you are

free to leave the house], go' but a woman has to insist, insist, insist and also demonstrate that she

is not doing what he thinks she is doing, but the contrary, showing him that to participate is to

open doors so that people know who she is."[23] In this way, different opportunities presented to

the groups, including the microcredit program, may be utilized to contest local patriarchy,

helping to make men more open to women participating in activities outside of their homes. As

one woman explained:

> From the moment in which I demonstrated to him that to be in a women's organization,
> grouped as women was good, and from the moment in which he saw that I could take a
> terrain from mortgage, since I paid that debt and since I told him that I bought chickens
> and in the sale of those chickens obtained the value to pay that debt, since then he has
> supported me. Now when there is a *minga* [work party] or if we are going to sell food and
> I cannot go, he goes instead of me, to meetings too he goes in place of me, so he supports
> me a lot.[24]

Learning

By participating in community women's groups, members benefit not only from the

microcredit program and accompanying workshops, primarily in accounting, but from the

opportunity to participate in other of CCMU's activities as well. In the past, these have included

workshops on such instructional topics as embroidery of blouses,[25] sewing by machine, and

making cheese and yogurt, and also such informational topics as domestic violence, the history

of female indigenous leadership in Ecuador, and human trafficking, to name a few. Related in

part to the lack of educational opportunities, high domestic workload, and the restraints of

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[23] Interview with 36 year old member of group 3, 14 August 2013.
[24] Interview with 46 year old member of group 4, 20 August 2013.
[25] The tradition is fading somewhat among younger generations, but many indigenous women in Cotacachi and
neighboring highland areas wear intricately embroidered blouses. When embroidered by hand, the blouses can be
sold for upwards of 100 USD, hence CCMU provided workshops to women in the idea that learning to embroider
could represent a potential form of supplementary income.

patriarchy described above, for many women these workshops and related activities provide welcome opportunities for knowledge and growth, as well as another reason to leave the house: "What I like is to get out, to learn, to attend workshops with the group, that is why I joined, to leave and to learn something more, and since I entered the women's group I began to go to workshops. Otherwise, I did not leave at all, just in the house without knowing anything, but when I left I opened my mind and that I like."[26]

Close examination of women's interests in the microcredit program therefore reveals that the majority (61.8%) participate more for the opportunities it provides for socialization and learning than for the access it provides to credit. The emphasis on socialization and learning as the primary and secondary motivations for participation may be explained by two points. The first, the difficulty that many experience in repaying loans, and the second, the simultaneous escape from and challenge to local expressions of patriarchy, namely the pressure placed on women to remain constantly engaged in domestic labor, as well as the general expectation that they will remain at home.

Developing Economies or Hobbies? Participation and Support for Beekeeping

The beekeeping association began as a project in 2004 that aimed to provide households with an additional source of income, and also to educate people in the conservation of natural resources given the placement of most hives along the southeastern border of the Cotacachi-Cayapas Ecological Reserve.[27] In the words of the project's longtime technical supervisor, "the association formed because UNORCAC is always looking for economic alternatives for

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[26] Interview with 26 year old member of group 4, 15 August 2013.
[27] The Cotacachi-Cayapas Ecological Reserve is a protected area that begins at the upper elevations on the Andean (eastern-facing) side of Mt. Cotacachi and stretches westward into the neighboring coastal province of Esmeraldas (PUCE 2005).

generating employment in the communities, and this apiculture project was born just because of it, on the one hand to generate employment and on the other to make people more aware of the management and protection of natural resources."[28] Initiated under the support of two Spanish government institutions (*ayuntamientos*), the association subsequently has received financial and technical support from multiple NGOs and the national government via Ecuador's Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion.

When the project began, *cabildos* (community governance councils) of participating communities received a small number of hives to manage. Under this structure, the individuals maintaining the hives received 40% of the profits, the community received another 40%, and the final 20% was paid to the owner of the lands where the hives were located. The objective was for communities to use their 40% of profits for new infrastructure or other needs, or to help with the costs of festival and ritual activities. In addition, the introduction of hives into the communities was meant to serve as an example for those who might become interested in keeping bees on their own. However, with time, the co-management of hives deteriorated as continued disputes over the division of responsibilities and poor profitability resulting from the small scale of operations rendered the activity somewhat undesirable. In most cases, those who had prior experience in beekeeping purchased the hives from the community and continued to maintain and expand them privately.

In 2007, the remaining project participants, now mostly private individuals, decided to associate, and within the last five years the association has become self-sustaining, no longer requiring external support to employ two full-time and one part-time staff. Still, the association is not completely independent of UNORCAC. For example, UNORCAC periodically obtains funds

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[28] Interview with technical supervisor, 12 December 2013.

for the association, for instance to reward production by sending members who generate the greatest amounts of different products (honey, pollen, propolis, or royal jelly) to specialized courses and workshops on related topics, most often abroad. UNORCAC additionally provides the association with the infrastructure for its activities as well as technical assistance from a staff member employed through other of the organization's projects. The responsibilities of the full and part-time staff are to construct the beekeeping supplies sold through the organization (boxes, frames, pollen traps, wax foundations, etc.); provide technical support to members when needed; extract, process, and store products brought to the association; and maintain the association's approximately 30 hives that serve to generate additional revenue to subsidize the employment of staff and general costs of operation. The primary contributions of the technical staff member provided by UNORCAC are to oversee the operations, facilitate sales, and organize periodic workshops for members; for example, on hive health and royal jelly extraction. The association sells primarily to intermediaries, but is in the process of learning to bottle, label, and package its products on-site in the interest of selling directly to buyers at greater profit.

Today there are approximately 50 association members, 35 of whom are active. On average, members have about 20 hives. The association purchases four products from its members: honey (5 USD/liter), pollen (12 USD/kilo), propolis (30 USD/kilo), and royal jelly (12 USD/15grams), but most members produce only honey. The range and average annual profit derived from each of these products is listed below (Table 3.3).

Table 3.3: Annual profits from beekeeping (USD)

	Range	Average	Median
Honey	100-800	383.33	400.00
Pollen	36-432	141.60	90.00
Propolis	30-150	112.50	150.00
Royal Jelly*	n/a	400	n/a

* n=1

The range in profit from the total of these products is 286 to 1,250 USD per year, or, on average, 543.16 USD per year. The latter figure is only slightly higher than the self-reported average total monthly income (514 USD) for these households. Thus, as elaborated below, for the majority of these members, beekeeping does not represent a significant source of income so much as a potential source of additional or immediate funds that helps cover costs during periods of unemployment, or when irregular or unanticipated needs arise.[29] As one member explains:

> I like to have the hives because suddenly sometimes one finds themselves without money, like just recently for the classes of my children. I told my children just in case we will look at the bees, maybe there is at least enough [money] there for materials, and there we went and it was so pretty the harvest, as if it had fallen from the sky. And there I am not fumigating, I am not working, I am not doing anything and after four, five months I think it was, I harvested, and I think it was a bucket [of honey],[30] and it was enough for the materials.[31]

It is common for community households to keep "savings" in the form of animals, mostly chickens, guinea pigs, pigs, and sometimes cows, yet many association members view bees as an easier form of savings given that less work is required to maintain them. Another member explains: "It is not a lot of work, not like feeding pigs or feeding cows, having to care for them all the time like that, one only needs to dedicate one day in the week and when one has to make

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[29] For 63% of members, profits provide immediate or emergency funds. Another 25% reinvest all profits in beekeeping. Only 12% of members derive sufficient profit (upwards of 300 USD per month) that they deem it a source of supplementary income. For the latter, beekeeping is their full-time job.

[30] A bucket holds 20 liters, which the association purchases for 100 USD or 5USD/liter.

[31] Interview with 45 year old male member, 22 October 2013.

materials then it is three days or a week. But from there it is good, a good animal that defends itself on its own, one does not have to give it much food."[32]

The income generated from beekeeping therefore constitutes an important source of immediate funds, but a significant amount of that money is also re-invested in the hives: "As the saying goes, anything done well costs money, it costs money. For example, right now wax foundations are $1.50, a frame is $1.25, so in each of these boxes there are ten foundations and ten frames, how much does it cost? As it is, right now I think I have 12 hives, so the money goes, yes, it is a lot of money that one must spend."[33] The same is true for members who fabricate their own materials: "I would like to arrive at 100 hives, I am going to see, but the material is always the hard part. The hives grow, yes, they grow, but the material is hard, to build is not so hard, but the purchase of material, for example, the wood, all of that."[34] In addition to the general cost of maintenance, irregular weather resulting in exceptionally dry summers or wet winters can require the purchase of sugar to feed bees in order to keep them alive. Similarly, sick hives can also necessitate the purchase of remedies. As a result, many make such comments as "Yes, it is costly, it is not profitable, no. One only does it because they like it."[35] In fact, when asked why they participate, the primary response of 69% of members was simply because they like it:[36] "It is a hobby, because I like it, yes, more than anything because I like it, and of course they behave well and in the long run give something and that too is a help for the house. If one sells something then there is money available for the kids, for whatever it is that is needed. But I practically do it because I like it."[37]

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[32] Interview with 74 year old male member, 22 October 2013.
[33] Interview with 45 year old male member, 22 October 2013.
[34] Interview with 52 year old male member, 31 October 2013.
[35] Interview with 66 year old male member, 18 November 2013.
[36] Another 19% gave access to emergency funds as their primary response. The final 12% do not enjoy beekeeping, and given the lack of profitability, plan to leave the association.
[37] Interview with 46 year old male member, 22 October 2013.

The frequency of such comments likely relates to the fact that most of the association's members developed a fascination for bees during their childhood, and were actually keeping them prior to the arrival of the initial project in 2004. As one member explains:

> In principle I like them and I have always had the idea of having my own honey for the consumption of my children, so I said one day I am going to have bees and now I have them. Because before, speaking of about 75 years ago, my grandfather, he had a lot of hives, yes, as before they were *huasipungueros*[38] so they had all the space one could want and he managed about 500 hectares, so he had [hives] and I liked it. When he would extract the honey I would go with him, to the ravines, in the holes, in the rocks, there was honey and we would go in the evenings to extract the honey in buckets, in a cauldron, a lot of honey we extracted, and I liked it and now I have my own.[39]

With few exceptions, those who had interest in and/or kept hives informally from the days of their childhood or adolescence are those with the greatest number of hives today, as well as those who constitute the majority of the active members and who contribute the largest quantities and highest diversity of products. They are also those who commented that they would continue to keep bees should the association cease to exist, although they are hopeful that this will not happen given the advantages it provides them:

> It is an advantage, a help. For example, I will harvest two or three buckets [of honey], I cannot go to sell to a market, one cannot sell like that, [but] in the association I go and I leave two buckets, I come back and they pay me. It is good. On the other hand, I would have to sell by liter, for example, individual liters, and there is the question of time, I would end up losing, so it is better, in one hour, two hours I come and turn it in here and I leave with money, so I do not lose.[40]

Aware of the role of long-time beekeepers in sustaining the project, UNORCAC has determined that the association should recruit only new members who already manage a minimum of ten

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[38] The *huasipungo* was a form of debt peonage under which indigenous people worked on the lands of *hacendados* (large landowners) in exchange for a small plot, access to pasture, and sometimes a small wage. The system lasted from the 18th century until the 1960s when the Ecuadorian government enacted an agrarian reform law that abolished it (Moates and Campbell 2006).

[39] Interview with 74 year old male member, 22 October 2013.

[40] Interview with 52 year old male member, 31 October 2013.

hives. As the president of the association explains, "For apiculture, it should really be someone who in reality likes to share with nature, contrarily it is a bit difficult. I would stop eating to keep my bees."[41]

Examination of members' interests therefore reveals that despite the intention of increasing environmental awareness in addition to generating a new form of employment, the beekeeping association serves more to facilitate the hobby of long-time beekeepers. The activities of the association currently do not yield substantial profits for members as the project is small in scale and products are harvested somewhat infrequently. For most members, the association provides an easy, time-saving means for offloading products while also presenting a source of revenue that can be reinvested in the same activity when not used as immediate or urgent funds, and in this way, sustain what for the majority is a life-long hobby and interest.

Discussion and Conclusion

In the absence of routine and effective program evaluation, the projects described here have been left largely to evolve on their own, and neither has been particularly successful in producing the intended outcomes. In some instances, the shortcomings of these projects have discouraged participation and prompted withdrawal, but there remains ample support among beneficiaries to have sustained both for more than a decade. Exploration of the specific contexts in which these projects have become meaningful to stakeholders reveals that the majority of beneficiaries continue to participate given their interests in the unintended outcomes as those intended have proved lacking. Women involved in the microcredit program explain that patriarchy in local communities puts pressure on them to remain at home and to dedicate most of

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[41] Interview with 36 year old male member, 22 October 2013.

their time and energy to the care of their families. For many of these women, participation in the program provides opportunities to leave home and to engage in other activities, like group meetings and educational and skill-building workshops, where they are able to interact more freely with others. The opportunities for interaction enable women to seek support from one another while also learning something new. Members of the beekeeping association view the activity more as a hobby than as a livelihood activity. Membership within the association therefore is not driven by profit so much as it is for the form of savings it provides while also easing the cost of hive maintenance. The findings bolster a literature that places examination of stakeholder interests at the forefront of development research (Mosse 2005; Mosse and Lewis 2006; Yarrow and Venkatesan 2012) and that aims to understand development as produced and reproduced through the composition of those interests (Baviskar 2004; Gould 2005; Gow 2008; Nauta 2006; Rossi 2006; Velásquez Runk 2009).

The findings also demonstrate that in addition to helping to explain the persistence of particular projects, more nuanced understanding of the meaning in these for beneficiaries serves as an important heuristic, revealing additional development needs and potential new paths of action. In the case of the microcredit program, the value placed on the opportunity provided to break from and challenge the constraints of patriarchy generates important insight into the social reality of everyday life for women in local communities; not only the challenges they face but the lengths some will go to overcome them. However, it also suggests that the implementation of the microcredit program could be premature or partial. CCMU implemented the program for the purpose of increasing women's financial independence, in this way addressing an effect of, but not the cause of, their more general lack of autonomy. These findings resonate with broader debates about whether a relationship exists between access to credit and women's

119

"empowerment" through financial independence (Ganle et al. 2015; Kabeer 2001; Mayoux 2001). Many argue that if microcredit programs are to be successful in empowering women then there must be greater emphasis on strategies that transform gender relations (Hunt and Kasynathan 2001; Vonderlack-Navarro 2010; Worthen 2012), and the same could be said here. Given the difficulties that many women experience in leaving their homes and household responsibilities, education on gender perspectives directed at both men and women might bolster women's ability to operate more independently, participating in development and other activities without threat or fear of reprisal (see also Hunt and Kasynathan 2001; Mayoux 2010). Relatedly, further expanding opportunities for women to work and learn together might help normalize women's participation in activities that take place outside of the home, and in so doing, facilitate greater acceptance of the change (see also Amutha 2011; Bali and Yang 2009).

In the case of the beekeeping association, projects of similarly small-scale are not likely to generate new forms of employment, but may represent important sources of immediate funds. Yet the fact that activities like child education often constitute the urgent needs for which funds are used suggests that households do not consistently meet basic needs. The availability of immediate funds is important, but where households are not meeting basic needs, consideration should be given to creating more robust economic interventions or to giving more attention to making activities like beekeeping profitable (see also Illigner et al. 1998; Ubeh et al. 2011; Wolf and Costa 2015). The fact that most remaining association members are life-long beekeepers for whom maintaining hives is more hobby than work suggests that building on well-developed rather than completely new activities may prove more effective in sustaining participation and generating results (see also Brown 2000). In any case, local perspectives should be taken into account in creating and implementing new development activities to ensure that these address

real needs and appeal to real interests. Furthermore, the organizations responsible for implementing projects should take care to see that these are evaluated properly so that benefit may be derived, when possible, from the intended outcomes as well.

This paper has demonstrated that examination of stakeholder interests can provide important insights into the multiple and varied motivations underlying continued participation in and support for particular development projects. In the cases of the microcredit program and the beekeeping association presented here, such examination reveals that the unintended outcomes have motivated beneficiary participation when those meant to materialize proved lacking. The findings suggest that donors and project managers should not be satisfied only with continuity, but should also explore project outcomes, both intended and unintended, and the real effects of these on the lives of beneficiaries. The insights derived may carry important meanings that can be put to use in fine-tuning already operational projects to better fit local needs, or to illuminate additional or latent needs to be addressed through new actions. Such fine-tuning and creating of the new may not offer the significant challenges to development that deconstructionist critiques invite (see Escobar 2012), but uncovering and acting on stakeholder interests may hold potential for playing to their "moral and social worlds" (Yarrow and Venkatesan 2012:8), ultimately making development a more meaningful experience for those involved.

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CHAPTER 4

CONVERGENCE AND DIVERGENCE IN ETHNODEVELOPMENT IDEALS AND

PRACTICE[42]

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[42] VanderMolen, K. To be submitted to *Latin American Research Review*.

Abstract

This paper highlights the importance of complementing structural with local explanations of cultural representations and development processes by grounding scholarly critiques of ethnodevelopment in concrete practice of the same. Ethnodevelopment is a development framework that incorporates indigenous culture into projects designed to aid the wellbeing of beneficiary populations, but is commonly critiqued as a form of governance for its legitimization of certain forms of culture over others. This paper explores that critique in relation to the conceptualization and practice of ethnodevelopment by the Union of Peasant and Indigenous Organizations of Cotacachi (UNORCAC) in highland Ecuador. For UNORCAC, ethnodevelopment relates to the organization's history as an advocate for the rights of the local indigenous population, aligning with and even advancing certain goals. The paper argues that complementing the structural with the local is essential to critiquing and rethinking current approaches to development without undermining the associated cultural projects these may support.

Introduction

The last decade of the 20th century witnessed unparalleled uprisings in Latin America as indigenous populations mobilized to contest government adoption of neoliberal policies, push for formal acknowledgement of the "plurinational" nature of states, and demand ethnic autonomy and direct participation in governance and planning (Brysk 2000; Yashar 2005). In response to the demands of these movements, a number of international institutional bodies, among them major multilateral development institutions, began to create legal instruments and operational directives to grant special rights and consideration to indigenous populations based on their ethnic and cultural difference (Davis 2002; Engle 2010). Following this trend, between 1998 and 2004, the World Bank implemented the *Proyecto de Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas y Negros del Ecuador* (Development Project for Indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian Peoples of Ecuador, PROPEDINE), a program designed for the self-managed ethnodevelopment or development-with-identity of indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian populations (Davis 2002; Radcliffe and Laurie 2006b). Since then, ethnodevelopment has been replicated by other funding institutions and also adopted by collaborating organizations and beneficiary populations, primarily within Ecuador and other parts of the Andes (see Andolina et al. 2005, 2009; Bretón 2008; Rhoades 2006).

Ethnodevelopment differs from other frameworks in its explicit aim to incorporate indigenous culture into self-managed programs and projects designed to aid the social and economic wellbeing of beneficiary populations (Andolina et al. 2009; Van Nieuwkoop and Uquillas 2000).[43] Direct activities may include the preservation of archaeological and ritual sites

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[43] The World Bank outlines three distinguishing and central features of ethnodevelopment. The first is to establish the grounds for identifying and selecting beneficiary populations based on some degree of ethnic or cultural difference and relative poverty. The second is to strengthen and mobilize social capital, understood as strong kinship ties, norms of reciprocity, and consensual governance, within those populations as a platform for self-managed

130

or the promotion of products and services that incorporate some aspect or aspects of indigenous culture (Van Nieuwkoop and Uquillas 2000), such ethnotourism, agrobiodiversity conservation, and native crop export (Healy 2001; Radcliffe and Laurie 2006a). Indirect activities may involve the strengthening of local, regional, or national institutions that support indigenous populations, or aiding in the review and modification of proposed legislation that may impact the same (see Andolina et al. 2009; Van Nieuwkoop and Uquillas 2000). There are examples of cases in which local partner organizations[44] have managed to successfully negotiate the terms of ethnodevelopment with state, foreign, and transnational funders (Healy 1996, 2001; Kleymeyer 1994). More commonly, however, scholars have critiqued ethnodevelopment as a form of transnational governance whereby funding institutions determine the needs of local populations and frame solutions to those needs within their own definitions of indigenous culture and identity. The result, critics argue, are small-scale socio-cultural activities that do little to improve household and community social and economic wellbeing (Andolina et al. 2009; Radcliffe and Laurie 2006a, 2006b).

Such critiques are helpful for understanding the ways in which state, foreign, and transnational discourses shape notions of indigenous culture and development needs. Yet as Clifford (2000) has argued, structural forces do play a role in the composition of local identities, but, "in relation to local agency and prior traditions – structures negotiated in specific contact histories, which retain their own transformative momentum" (102). For Clifford (2000),

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development. Finally, the third is to incorporate, directly and indirectly, activities designed to strengthen and revitalize the cultures and identities of beneficiary populations (Van Nieuwkoop and Uquillas 2000).

[44] In Ecuador, these primarily include *organizaciones de segundo grado* (second-tier organizations, OSGs). OSGs are grassroots assemblages of rural communities that form the "second tier" within the hierarchy of social and political representation of indigenous populations in Ecuador. Under this structure, local communities form the first tier; these are grouped into cantonal-level (a county-like jurisdiction) second-tier organizations, which are aggregated into provincial-level third-tier organizations. Finally, third-tier organizations combine under the national-level fourth-tier federations and confederations that represent their affiliate populations before the state and in transnational movements (Martínez 2006; Van Nieuwkoop and Uquillas 2000).

structural interpretations of culture and identity therefore should not be the only or the end point of analysis, but should be complemented with historically informed ethnographies that illuminate the potentially diverse meanings within particular representations. Accordingly, this paper grounds structural critiques of ethnodevelopment in the conceptualization and practice of the framework by the *Unión de Organizaciones Campesinas e Indígenas de Cotacachi* (Union of Peasant and Indigenous Organizations of Cotacachi, UNORCAC). For UNORCAC, ethnodevelopment dovetails with local processes of cultural valorization that have been in progress since the organization's founding in 1977, suggesting a desire for reproducing indigenous culture that cannot be explained solely in terms of adherence to externally imposed development projects. This paper analyzes those processes along with UNORCAC's conceptualization and practice of ethnodevelopment in order to situate its adoption and continued support of the framework within local historical and cultural contexts. In so doing, the paper argues that applying a complementary approach is important not only for avoiding the reduction of culture and identity to a "derivative of structural power" (see Clifford 2000:102), but also for illuminating the potential contradictions and opportunities that result when local and external projects of indigenous essentialism coincide. The paper concludes that such local understandings are essential to include in critiquing and rethinking current approaches to development to avoid undermining the associated cultural and other potentially significant local projects these may support.

In the ensuing pages, I review the dominant critiques of ethnodevelopment in order to ground these in local conceptualization and practice of the framework. Following, I briefly recount UNORCAC's history and involvement in local processes of cultural valorization. I then provide examples of UNORCAC's involvement in ethnodevelopment, as well as discussion of

the organization's interpretation of the framework and reasons for adopting it. Finally, I highlight some of the overlapping yet conflicting aspects of ethnodevelopment and cultural valorization, and suggest a path for future research to better understand their combined effects on local populations.

Culture, Identity, and Governance in Ethnodevelopment

Ethnodevelopment often is characterized by incorporating culture into projects and programs in the forms of product or service, and institution (Radcliffe and Laurie 2006a). In the case of the former, development projects emphasize a product as distinctively indigenous, often aiming to appeal to foreign niche markets where nontraditional exports, such as Andean grains and clothing products, and services, like ethnotourism and rural farming, are marketed under romanticized linkages between indigeneity and simpler, healthier living. When harnessed as a product or service, culture therefore becomes reduced to a set of material and behavioral traditions that rest upon "a problematic nostalgia for a clearly defined culture" that may be put to use to promote economic growth (Radcliffe and Laurie 2006a:242). As an institution, culture is understood more specifically as the forms of social capital – strong kinship ties and norms of trust, reciprocity, moral economy, and consensual governance – thought to bind communities and undergird the functioning of these and territorial governance structures. In this case, high levels of social capital are considered a unique cultural trait of indigenous populations that can be put to use in co- or self-managed development, granting local populations a certain degree of autonomy while also promoting the participation of civil society as prescribed by neoliberal notions of good governance (Radcliffe and Laurie 2006a).

Scholars have numerous critiques of ethnodevelopment. Among pertinent critiques are that it encloses indigenous populations in specialized economies rather than helping them to participate more fully in the broader, diversified market economies where they now seek livelihoods (Martínez 2006); fails to include indigenous knowledge within project planning and ignores the political obstacles and challenges to self-managed development (Davis 2002); is spatially and culturally fixed, targeting only rural populations and utilizing only certain forms of culture (Radcliffe and Laurie 2006b); and stereotypes indigenous women in traditional gender roles, sometimes limiting their participation and reinforcing local gender inequalities (Radcliffe et al. 2003). The overarching critique, however, is that ethnodevelopment forms indigenous subjects by legitimating certain conceptualizations of culture over others through the crafting of policy, and relatedly, the awarding funds (Andolina et al. 2005).

Such legitimated conceptualizations often essentialize indigenous people through many of the select forms of culture described above, and more broadly, as impoverished, segregated in labor markets, and isolated in rural areas (Andolina et al. 2009). According to Andolina et al. (2009), such imageries create a "hyperreal identification" of indigenous people to which potential beneficiaries may feel compelled to adapt in order to obtain projects and funding (70). Resonating with Hale's (2004) notion of the "indio permitido," the result can be that the groups or individuals privileged are those who modify their rhetoric and actions in a way that upholds certain political and economic precepts (17-18). Scholars thus argue that ethnodevelopment serves to depoliticize indigenous populations by making them dependent on foreign capital, forcing leaders into technocratic roles from which they do not contest potentially harmful social and economic policies, but rather remain passive in order to obtain funds (Bretón 2008; see Laurie et al. 2003). The critique bolsters the notion that the parallel rise of indigenous

movements and neoliberalism in Latin America has resulted in a form of "social neoliberalism" (Andolina et al. 2009) or "neoliberal multiculturalism" (Hale 2002, 2004) in which limited versions of indigenous cultural rights, autonomy, and development have been incorporated into state and transnational rhetoric, giving way to the cultural claims of indigenous movements in order to silence their more substantive demands for social and economic change.

Similar to these critiques, ethnographic studies have addressed the potential for indigenous self-essentialism to distract from socioeconomic injuries, in particular those produced by neoliberalism (Hale 2005; Jackson and Warren 2005; Li 2000; see also Fraser 2000 for more generalized critique). Many of these studies have uncovered examples of self-essentialized representations of indigenous populations as constructed through the articulation of global and local and historical and contemporary discourses and dynamics (see Li 1996; Gordillo and Hirsch 2003). Examination of such articulations has brought attention to the specific contexts in which indigenous people engage in modes of self-representation that align with certain stereotypes; for example, to seek recognition and demand rights (De Vries and Nuitjen 2003; Warren 1998), to increase the appeal and economic value of locally produced goods (Colloredo-Mansfeld 1999; Korovkin 1998), and to achieve local conservation goals (Brosius 2006; Velásquez Runk 2009). It has also drawn attention to what Shah terms "the dark side of indigeneity," in which the local use of global discourses can reinforce class systems that further marginalize certain populations (2010:12), undermine local political agendas and projects of self-determination (Conklin and Graham 1995), and reproduce colonial systems of exclusion and discrimination (Coulthard 2007; Hale 2002).

Relatedly, but more broadly, others have argued that when essentialism is strategic, it sacrifices "sincerity and becomes an obstacle to the moral projects that indigenous activism

135

promotes" (Sylvain 2014:253). Yet as Hale (2006) has shown, not all indigenous populations engaging in essentialism would understand their positioning as "merely strategic," adding that while the notion of "strategic essentialism" is an "indispensable part of our intellectual repertoire," it is also insufficient: "Anyone who has worked closely in support of indigenous land claims, for example, cannot be completely comfortable with the way these phrases sit with our allies. Quite apart from remaining awfully abstract, they often do not capture very well what is going on" (2006:114). For Clifford, the challenge is "to recognize overlapping but discrepant histories that struggle for position, for room to maneuver, in a paradoxically systematic and chaotic modernity," in order to avoid the risk of reductionism, "where difference becomes merely derivative of, or contained by, structural power" (2000:102-103). Clifford (2000) proposes that this may be accomplished by analyzing structural understandings of cultural representations together with knowledge of the historical and ethnographic contexts from within which these emerge.

Scholars have utilized such an approach to call attention to the "historical necessities, critical potential, and conflicts" surrounding postcolonial identities (Hoffman and Peeren 2010:12), the objects and events of representation (see Gunner 2009), and the misrecognition of others in historical documents (Wilson 2004). Others have drawn on this and related approaches (Hall 1996; Li 1999) to examine the composition of political identities by indigenous movements in Ecuador and Bolivia, revealing important insights not only about the foundations of imagined indigenous collectivities, but also about the political economies from which these emerge (Lucero 2007; Postero 2004). Together these works convey the need for a dynamic conception of the articulations of all actors, whether indigenous populations, states, or movements, as all are "constellations of practices and ideas that interact with broader social forces" (Lucero 2007:210).

This paper adds that comparative understanding of claims to culture and identity are also important within development contexts, where relying on overly structural critiques of policies, projects, and programs risks obscuring associated local cultural and other goals that may be of significance.

In the analysis that follows, I highlight where, how, and why essentialized notions of indigenous culture in ethnodevelopment converge with local processes of cultural valorization aimed at preserving language, dress, festivals, and other customs. In so doing, I argue for more nuanced understanding of ethnodevelopment in which overlapping projects of indigenous essentialism are teased apart and grounded in understanding of local historical and cultural contexts. I then suggest a future path of research to deepen understanding of some of the contradictions and opportunities that may result from the intersection of local and external goals.

Methods

Understanding ethnodevelopment in an ethnographic context involved daily participant observation within UNORCAC for a total of ten months, from February to December 2013, as well semi-structured interviews with exhaustive samples of current leaders (n=18) and long-time technical and auxiliary staff (n=3), and four past leaders selected for their life-long involvement within the organization. Additional insights are derived from participation in, and study of, three of UNORCAC's development projects, and household surveys and semi-structured interviews with a sample of 75 beneficiaries of those projects from a total of 26 communities. A number table was used to select interviewees randomly from UNORCAC's lists of participants. Finally, during the course of the research, I lived with an indigenous family in the community of Turucu,

where I participated in daily household and community activities as well as festival and ritual events. My observations from those experiences also inform the body of this work.

During my time with UNORCAC, I worked in a number of broader organizational activities, such as project management and evaluation. When not working within UNORCAC, but rather in one of the three projects studied, I worked alongside beneficiaries to help perform the operational duties of those projects, in addition to attending workshops and organizational meetings and helping at *mingas*, work parties involving physical labor. My participation within these activities deepened my knowledge of the organization, its projects and operations, and helped me to become more familiar with its leaders, staff, and beneficiaries, allowing me to refine the interview questions later asked of those same individuals.

Interviews with current and past leaders inquired into the history of UNORCAC and its relationship to local communities, as well as into leaders' personal histories and experiences within the organization; their interpretations of ethnodevelopment and their perspectives on its significance and outcomes for both the organization and local communities. Interviews with technical and auxiliary staff focused on understanding how UNORCAC enacts ethnodevelopment; the types of projects implemented and the procedures for implementing them. Finally, interviews with project beneficiaries focused on exploring their relationships to and participation within UNORCAC and related activities, as well as the perceived benefits of that participation. Household surveys with beneficiaries collected basic demographic information, and inquired into such topics as employment and access to healthcare and other social services. Survey data has been used to contextualize beneficiaries' responses to interview questions as well as the general socio-economic context in which ethnodevelopment is enacted. All interviews were conducted by the author and a bilingual (Spanish-Kichwa) research assistant,

either in UNORCAC or in the homes of interviewees. Most of the interviews were conducted in Spanish. Those conducted in Kichwa were later translated into Spanish by the research assistant. Interview excerpts that appear in this paper were translated into English by the author, and were selected based on level of detail and clarity.

UNORCAC and Cultural Valorization in Cotacachi

Founded in 1977, UNORCAC is a second-tier organization (o*rganización de segundo grado*, OSG) located in the urban town of Cotacachi, the political center of the greater *cantón* Cotacachi (a county-like jurisdiction), approximately 80 kilometers north of the capital, Quito (PUCE 2005; UNORCAC 2005). Rising to the west of the small town is Mt. Cotacachi, home to the 43 communities which are the main beneficiaries of UNORCAC's development interventions. There are approximately 15,878 people living within those communities, 78% of whom identify as indigenous, Kichwa (UNORCAC 2005). UNORCAC additionally serves two mixed (*mestizo* and Afro-Ecuadorian) communities in the county's subtropical zone, Intag, located on the western side of the mountain (UNORCAC 2008).

The history of UNORCAC is similar to that of other OSGs that emerged in the late 1970s. Agrarian reform in Ecuador (1964-1973) had altered dominant power structures and opened social and political spaces for indigenous populations to mobilize. UNORCAC took advantage of these openings and formed in defense of the local indigenous population, which for centuries had suffered exploitation by large landowners, discrimination by local authorities, and exclusion from basic services, infrastructure, and citizenship rights (Becker 2008; Yashar 2005; UNORCAC 2008). During its first years, UNORCAC worked to incorporate local demands for access to land and productive resources into the agendas of broader peasant and indigenous

movements, aided communities in land conflicts with *hacendados* (large landowners), eliminated tithing in local communities by the Catholic Church, and launched indigenous leaders into advisory positions within the local municipality (García 2002; Pallares 2002; UNORCAC 2008).

By the 1980s and 90s, however, many OSGs had begun a gradual transition from peasant and indigenous rights advocates to local development practitioners as first the state, then NGOs, and later foreign and transnational development institutions began to target them as partners in the development of local communities (Bretón 2008; Martínez 2006). Reflecting this trend, by the mid-1980s, UNORCAC had begun to work with the state and NGOs to bring basic services and infrastructure to local communities, most notably roads, electricity, water, and *casas comunales* (community meeting houses) (UNORCAC 2008). As the offer of projects from NGOs increased in response to the retraction of state services under the neoliberal reforms of the 1980s and 90s, UNORCAC expanded its work into new areas, primarily social development (CCMU 2012; UNORCAC 2008). Around the time that the World Bank introduced ethnodevelopment via PROPEDINE in the late 1990s, UNORCAC became a recipient of this and other culture and identity based projects. *Desarrollo con identidad* (development with identity) later became UNORCAC's motto, and still today most of the organization's projects and programs actively incorporate different aspects or representations of local indigenous culture, thus following a general ethnodevelopment framework.

Alongside these broader advocacy and development activities, since its founding, UNORCAC has worked in different ways to valorize local Kichwa culture, thus not only fighting for the inclusion of indigenous people into the political and social spaces from which they historically have been excluded, but doing so in a way that has not required them to assimilate to dominant mestizo culture. As one of UNORCAC's leaders explained: "UNORCAC was founded

140

in 1977, and from that moment the fight was for the revindication of the rights of indigenous

people, this includes culture and the strengthening of cultural demonstrations and values."[45] The

lack of separation between rights and culture alluded to in the above quote is reflected in many

of UNORCAC's early activities. For example, one leader explained that the 1980 national

literacy plan of President Jaime Roldós implemented locally in partnership with UNORCAC

served to "strengthen UNORCAC's proposal for education, and with the possibility of

indigenous people to read and write, and above all sign their names, they were guaranteed,

among other benefits, the right to vote in political elections."[46] Another leader has commented of

the same program:

> From this literacy program indigenous people began to have self-esteem, to say that our
> language is very important, to give value to our language, Kichwa, to give value to our
> customs, our values, our mingas, all of our indigenous values. We fought for our culture
> and we also fought for our identity […] Of course there had been progress before, but
> from the literacy program everyone began to take pride in being indigenous, nationally as
> well.[47]

Further evidence for the union of rights and culture in the organization's early thinking

and activities can be found within single reflections by leaders as well. For example, one leader

commented: "Imagine that people would say 'no' [to] our customs, our ethnic group, simply

make us excluded, our own cultural manifestations such as music, language, clothes, [and] say

that these look bad. So UNORCAC generated a process of revindication in the issue of language

and the issue of dress."[48] Often these activities were designed not only to reinforce the right to

local cultural traditions, but to instill pride in people for the same. For example, one leader

explained that "We have always maintained [our culture], we [UNORCAC] have given this

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[45] Interview with leader of UNORCAC, 26 February 2013.
[46] Interview with leader of UNORCAC, 26 February 2013.
[47] Interview with Alberto Anrango, cited in Lalander (2010).
[48] Interview with leader of UNORCAC, 26 February 2013.

priority to maintaining our ancestral language that we have had from before, our clothes that we have had from before, we must continue maintaining it, and if we lose this we are disparaging ourselves."[49]

Today UNORCAC organizes rituals at the summer and winter solstices and fall and spring equinoxes, and also plans and coordinates other major festivals (in particular, San Juan or Inti Raymi) as well as a pageant for female indigenous youth,[50] among other activities meant to celebrate and strengthen local Kichwa culture and traditions. Thus for UNORCAC, ethnodevelopment, with its emphasis on exalting culture, is to some degree conceptually congruent with certain values and activities that the organization has promoted since its founding. Closer examination of the cultural forms used in local ethnodevelopment projects and UNORCAC's conceptualization of the framework reveals how and where these projects align with some of the organization's long-standing goals.

Ethnodevelopment Realized

Ethnodevelopment projects take many forms in Cotacachi, relating to any one of UNORCAC's four main areas of work: organizational strengthening, natural resources, social development, and economic development. Since the mid-1990s, a progression of ethnodevelopment projects have come and gone, flourishing and fading in tempo with changes in funding streams, market interest, leadership, and personnel.[51] Among UNORCAC's lasting

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[49] Interview with leader of UNORCAC, 16 March 2013.

[50] Similar to other pageants that have emerged in the Andes alongside greater processes of cultural valorization and revitalization (Rogers 1999; Wroblewski 2014), participants of UNORCAC's pageant compete for the title of "Sumak Warmi" (Beautiful Woman) and are evaluated according to how well they represent the pachamama, signifying the supreme female divine being and biophysical world within local Kichwa cosmology (see Skarbø et al. 2013).

[51] In some cases, funders, or funders together with UNORCAC, have designed projects to fit an ethnodevelopment framework. In other cases, UNORCAC has modified projects that may not have been designed originally under an ethnodevelopment framework in order for these to align with the organization's mission and goals.

initiatives is a food dehydration plant. Located adjacent to the organization's main offices in urban Cotacachi, the plant contains processing equipment and stacks of bags revealing the reds and oranges of locally produced native *ají* (hot pepper) and *uvilla* (goldenberry), packaged and awaiting export. A few blocks away, another building accommodates a traditional healing center where local residents may go for diagnosis and treatment. The same building houses a sewing room containing a dozen machines for women to use in the fabrication of the intricately embroidered blouses donned by indigenous women and sold within this and certain neighboring *cantones*, such as Otavalo. Other women work Monday through Friday to sell hearty lunches composed primarily of traditional foods along with some mestizo staples, like rice, from a kitchen located in the back basement. On any given day a mix of laborers, NGO staff, local politicians and business owners, and general public converse in Spanish and Kichwa at shared tables while enjoying their meals: *chuchuca* (soup made from ground maize harvested when midway between fresh and dry), *kinuwa api* (quinoa soup), and *muti papawan* (hominy with potatoes), among others. On Sunday mornings, urban mestizo residents and members of a growing expatriate community flood the side of the building where the same women sell the small excess of mostly organic fresh fruits, tubers, and grains from their fields and home gardens.

Leaving town and heading toward the mountain, a network of unpaved roads linking local communities to the urban center give access to the *granja*, or farm, where UNORCAC realizes the majority of its economic development activities. Alongside a citrus grove dense with blue and green hive boxes stands the infrastructure (wood workshop, extraction room, processing and packaging rooms) for a semi-autonomous beekeeping association. Born as a project under the support of two Spanish government institutions in 2004, in 2007 participants decided to

associate, and five years later the association became self-sustaining except for its use of UNORCAC's infrastructure and technical assistance. Here, two full-time and one part-time employees work daily, building and refurbishing boxes, frames, and pollen traps, stamping wax foundations, making mead and bottling honey. On the opposite side of the farm is a small, white building, where innumerable kernels of maize sit malting and mashing to form the base of the locally prized *chicha de jora*, one of the many varieties of chicha, a specialty corn beverage, consumed in the area's communities on festival and ritual occasions. Inside, a single employee works daily to process the grain, maintain the equipment, and keep the building clean. Filled bottles cover the metal storage racks in the cold room, awaiting sale.

The above projects have achieved continuity by becoming financially self-sustaining. Yet there are a number of common obstacles, including the expiration of grants, lack of market interest, the inability to acquire legal permits, and sometimes poor management, that have led others to close. For example, midway between the beekeeping association and chicha plant are the splintered raised-beds and exposed metal frames of an old greenhouse, which together once formed UNORCAC's *vivero*, or plant nursery. For years, multiple staff spent their days here cultivating a variety of native crop plants and trees, many of which UNORCAC would purchase and put to use in reforestation and agro-ecological projects while others were sold to the public. Across the road are the remains of a vast ethnobotanical garden that once exhibited an impressive collection of native crops and crop varieties; the centerpiece a prominent circular three-tiered terrace displaying a number of the native crops found within each of the three agro-ecological zones on Mt. Cotacachi's eastern slopes. Intended to promote food sovereignty and serve as an educational site for local school children as well as an attraction for foreign and national tourists, for many years the garden flourished, boasting the area's high levels of

agrobiodiversity in addition to generating additional employment for a handful of community residents. Alongside the garden stands a compact two-story building and accompanying quarter hectare of cultivable land, now fallow. The building, displaying chipped murals of native botanicals, remains fully equipped to process and dry the medicinal herbs once grown in the adjacent plot for use and sale within UNORCAC's traditional healing center.

It is important to note that the above projects may be considered essentializing for the limited and perhaps selective forms of culture utilized, but they are not necessarily incongruent with the lives and values shared by certain sectors of the local population. For example, the former plant nursery and ethnobotanical garden that promoted food sovereignty through agrobiodiversity conservation dovetailed nicely, if not effortlessly, with the subsistence efforts of especially older generations who maintain a remarkable diversity of crops and crop varieties within their fields and homegardens (see Skarbø 2006, 2012). Similarly, the embroidery of blouses may be considered a fitting economic activity given that most adult and elder women continue to use traditional clothing; *anaco* (skirt), *blusa* (embroidered blouse), *alpargates* (sandals), *hualca* (necklace of gold beads representing grains of corn), and *manillas* (bracelets of reddish beads representing *granos*[52]). As one 42 year old indigenous woman commented: "My daughters ask me why I do not try wearing pants. I tell them that I would look like a clown. I will die before I wear pants. I am not going to wear them, and that is that!"[53] The following examination of UNORCAC's conceptualization of ethnodevelopment provides further insight into some of the reasons for which the cultural representations utilized in these projects are supported and maintained.

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[52] Grano is a Spanish term used within the communities of Cotacachi as a synonym to *murukuna* in Kichwa. The term refers to all crops that can be shelled (i.e. grains and legumes), but can also signify locally grown tubers, roots, squashes, and sometimes wild greens (see Skarbø 2012)
[53] Interview with 40 year old indigenous woman, 10 July 2013.

Ethnodevelopment Conceptualized

UNORCAC's leaders and technical staff acknowledge the instrumental value in having adopted an ethnodevelopment framework, namely that it attracts the support of foreign funders, but there is also symbolic value in the same. For UNORCAC, ethnodevelopment is not just a framework, but also an ideal; both a conceptualization of life lived well in community and a possible means for achieving it. For its incorporation of cultural capital, ethnodevelopment is viewed as a more locally adapted form of development that unfolds in pace with life in local communities; an ongoing social process rather than a series of isolated projects. As one of UNORCAC's leaders explained: "It is an endogenous development, and this we translate as development with identity […] We have made mistakes along the way, but we have learned, and this is not a finished development, it is a development in construction. In many ways, development with identity means a development that we are living day to day."[54] The notion of process implied in the acknowledgement of past mistakes and future learning reflects awareness of the mutable nature of social and economic life in local communities; a point that also relates to UNORCAC's desire to preserve indigenous culture and identity while at the same time keep up with the fast pace of modernization. As another leader commented: "The indigenous world is being bombarded with things like television, informatics, the internet. Now young people, now we forget and it even makes us ashamed maybe that our grandparents were indigenous or because our grandparents dressed with our traditional clothes. So all of these things we have to fight against because if we do not it will all be lost."[55]

Cotacachi is rural but by no means isolated. Community traditions have long been shaped by generations of local experiences infused with new ideas through regional and global flows of

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[54] Interview with leader, 26 February 2013.
[55] Interview with leader, 22 March 2013.

people, information, goods, and non-native plants and animals. Located in a region of Ecuador that experiences exceptionally high rates of internationalization (see Wibbelsman 2009), not only are radio, television, and internet highly prevalent, but scores of tourists from across the world visit the area every year and many locals engage in labor migration, both within and beyond national borders (see Flora 2006). In addition, since the late 2000s, a fast growing expatriate population has taken root in and around urban Cotacachi, the economy allowing for locally unparalleled displays of wealth in the form of gated communities and comparatively expensive locales (Quishpe and Alvarado 2012).

Further, young people increasingly are exposed to alternative worldviews through growing opportunities for secondary and tertiary education, and relatedly, new social and professional futures. For some, among the results of this exposure is loss of interest in the traditions and lifeways of their home communities. As the distance broadens between members of older and younger generations, the former often lament the changes taking place around them. They note that not all parents teach their children Kichwa, that sometimes young women prefer pants to *anacos* (traditional skirts), and that some young men wear cropped hair instead of long braids. However, all of this is not to say that youth do not maintain diverse forms of cultural expression or participate in local traditions. For example, when the exasperated parents of a 17 year old indigenous boy declared futile their attempts to shift his attention from social media to his flagging academic record, they took him willingly to a *yachak* (healer). After a cleansing and a series of other ritual activities performed over a period of several weeks, the boy's grades improved and he began to spend more of his free time drawing and engaged with friends than he did online. In the same house, a 13 year old girl yet unskilled in producing the neat folds of the *anaco* and the tight, cinching pull of the *faja* (woven belt) that secures it, defiantly reproached

147

her mother when the latter commented that she would have to leave the house too early the next day to help her daughter dress for school: "Maaaaaaa, but who will dress me? I will *not* go in pants, how embarrassing!" Such examples demonstrate not only willingness among youth to participate in certain cultural traditions, but also belief in and attachment to them.

In addition to participating in daily and ritual forms of cultural expression, some youth also actively engage in processes of cultural revitalization. For example, in the early 2000s, a Youth Commission[56] formed within UNORCAC to provide a leadership role and give voice to young people within the organization. The impetus to form the commission originated among certain youth who felt excluded from some of the broader socio-political processes, like community and territorial governance, taking place around them. Today the Commission is composed of approximately 20 young people between 18 and 29 years of age from a number of the area's communities. Similar to the positioning of other leaders within UNORCAC, the young man serving as president of the Commission explained that "Identity has been lost above all in the migration of young people, for example, the language is being lost. So, UNORCAC wants to rehabilitate, it wants to strengthen all of these cultural aspects that we, well, do not want to lose, that is, recover [them], strengthening our cultural identity."[57] Accordingly, it is the Youth Commission that coordinates UNORCAC's annual Sumak Warmi pageant, in addition to spearheading other activities to promote cultural revitalization and pride in the area's youth. The president explained that "Within culture is the theme of music, dress, customs, traditional games of the communities, all of this we recover. For example, when we meet as young people in the

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[56] UNORCAC is governed by a *Cabildo Central* (Central Council) headed by a president, four vice-presidents, and eight commissions: Women; Youth; Children and Adolescents; Health and Nutrition; Credit, Production and Commercialization; Natural Patrimony; Cultural and Intellectual Patrimony; and Sports and Recreation. The heads of commission provide oversight in projects implemented within their area of supervision as well as input into the management of the organization during the monthly meetings of the Cabildo.

[57] Interview with leader, 30 March 2013.

workshops we always play a traditional game, or, well, games that are from the communities. For example, the squash game, chicken fight, and other games. These games we have always tried to recover because they should not be lost."[58]

Still, intensely aware of the cultural and other changes taking place within local communities, for UNORCAC, projects that incorporate different aspects of indigenous culture are meant to valorize and revitalize local traditions in addition to improving household and community wellbeing. For example, one leader commented of the aforementioned embroidery project:

> For women there is no source of employment, so what we want is that they embroider blouses, for their economy and for their own use and for their daughters, to value our clothing, our culture […] Many times, maybe because of the cost of our clothes, young girls wear jeans and shirts and they lose this cultural identity. Many times they change their clothing and they think they are mestizas. Many times they come here [to UNORCAC] and I ask them 'what do you consider yourself?' 'Mestiza,' they say. 'Ooooh, but are you not *índigena* [indigenous]?' They say 'yes, but I consider myself mestiza.'[59]

From this perspective, the ideal to be realized, in part through ethnodevelopment, resembles a context in which tradition is not sacrificed to change. As some leaders have explained:

> Development with identity means that we develop but without losing our identity […] Development with identity means that we advance, but without losing our customs, our wisdom, things have to go hand in hand. Maybe I no longer have a house of straw, I have a house made of cement, but I cannot stop having my traditions of marriage, of baptisms,[60] the solidarity of the minga, our own food, our own music, these things.[61]

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[58] Interview with leader, 30 March 2013.
[59] Interview with leader, 22 March 2013.
[60] Like elsewhere in the Andean highlands, many local traditions in Cotacachi reflect a syncretism of Andean and Catholic beliefs (Sarmiento et al. 2008; Skarbø et al. 2012).
[61] Interview with leader, 26 March 2013.

> We are going to continue to plant, we are going to continue to dress ourselves [in traditional clothing], we are going to continue to speak our language, but we are not going to stop studying, we are not going to stop using computers, and we are going to have cellular phones. This, for us, is development with identity, that we do not lose our customs, our way of being, our conviviality, our identity.[62]

Yet for local leaders, culture and tradition cannot be conserved where indigenous pride is lacking. This means that to valorize culture is not only to conserve certain customs, but also to define the terms of recognition and cultivate pride in their manifestation. The following quotes from leaders highlight this point, while also conveying the contrast in local relationships to indigenous identity. One relates self-consciousness; a trend exhibited among youth in particular. The other conveys self-assuredness; an example of someone who not only actively preserves outward markers of indigeneity, but does so assertively.

> We have a cultural richness, ancestral *pueblos* unlike in other places and this should be maintained. This is our identity. You have been in the communities and have seen there are some youth, some children, they are embarrassed to dress in their own clothing. They are embarrassed to speak the language, they do not like it or their parents say 'no, I do not want my son to dress that way, I do not want him to speak Kichwa, oooh, how embarrassing,' and they speak in Kichwa and he does not understand. This happens, and if on the other hand as parents we give this guideline to say 'look, neither one extreme or the other, we share, we have to co-exist, we *must* co-exist, but neither has to cease to exist so that the other can live, nor are we going to assimilate and throw away our own.'[63]

> A *pueblo* without identity does not have a history. A *pueblo* without identity and history is like not having a mother. I am indigenous, my identity is in self-identifying as indigenous wherever I go. I speak the Kichwa language wherever I am and I identify myself as *runa* [indigenous]. But if I identify as *mestizo* I would be disowning my mother, my father too, disowning him. They could probably say that I was a citizen of Quito or Cotacachi, from the [urban] center here in Cotacachi, but I am from the countryside, I have my animals and I take care of them in my free time. So this allows me to be proud of who I am and to put emphasis in who I am. When I identify myself I am making it known what I am, my knowledge, my history, my relationship to the land, to the water, to my parents, to my siblings, to everything.[64]

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[62] Interview with leader, 3 May 2013.
[63] Interview with leader, 29 April 2013.
[64] Interview with leader, 17 March 2013.

Thus the scope and nature of UNORCAC's activities have changed over time, having shifted from the advocacy for the rights and respect of the local indigenous population to the social and economic development, and eventually ethnodevelopment, of the same. However, UNORCAC's adoption of ethnodevelopment cannot be viewed entirely as a schism in the organization's focus and activities as the emphasis placed on indigenous culture within the framework lends some continuity to its past.

Complementing the Structural with the Local

Certainly some critiques of ethnodevelopment may be extended to the case of Cotacachi, where projects are relatively small in scale and spatially and culturally fixed. However, the forms of culture utilized are not necessarily incongruent with some local realities. For example, native agrobiodiversity projects may not appeal to youth that envisage professional urban futures, but they do have the potential to further enhance the already highly diverse fields and homegardens of older generations. Similarly, adult women may more fully embrace embroidery classes than do teenage girls who gradually but increasingly prefer Western clothing to traditional blouses, but there remains a vast market for such items that makes embroidery a profitable skill. Further, UNORCAC's leaders openly acknowledge the benefits of strategic essentialism, for example, in helping to attract the attention of foreign and transnational funders, and in gaining influence in local and national political arenas. However, there is also palpable concern for and deliberate attempt to foster and conserve a shared indigenous identity that links people not only through history, place, and customs, but also in pride. The multiple motivations for the direct engagement of cultural forms in local development processes therefore suggest that the use and/or cooptation of essentialized imageries is not necessarily insincere. Rather, UNORCAC's efforts to valorize

151

indigenous culture may be interpreted as part of an ongoing historical process to define the terms

of recognition in a way that positively reframes notions of indigeneity (see also Skarbø 2012).

All of this is not to say, however, that the predominant critique of ethnodevelopment as a

form of transnational governance (see Andolina et al. 2009) does not also apply. For example,

although UNORCAC's leaders continue to embrace ethnodevelopment ideals of respecting and

conserving culture, more recently both they and project beneficiaries have become reflective and

critical of the relatively small scale and impact of projects, as well as the gradual depoliticization

of the organization as it becomes increasingly distanced from its prior advocacy role (Chapter 2).

The development of UNORCAC's 2008-2018 Strategic Development Plan is a reflection of this

trend. The document emerged from a process of internal reflection that began in the early 2000s,

prompted in part by the organization's participation in a number of studies of OSGs that

examined the strengths and weaknesses of these organizations as well as their relationships to

local communities (see Agriterra 2007, 2010; Carroll 2002). In the Plan, UNORCAC

acknowledges its depoliticization as highlighted through these studies and the organization's

own process of internal reflection:

> A major weakness is the lack of clear political proposal to guide the actions of the Union,
> its leaders, community leaders, and authorities elected with the support of the
> organization. [UNORCAC] has focused increasingly on the management and execution
> of development projects in function with the agendas of NGOs, without considering
> sufficiently the real needs of the communities, which has gradually weakened the
> identification of the communities with UNORCAC as an advocacy and representational
> organization, creating distancing.[65] (UNORCAC 2008:43-44)

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[65] Excerpt translated by the author.

Still today leaders reaffirm this point:

> It pains me to say this, but the organization is increasingly losing its identity because the organization formed with the goal of seeking rights, especially collective rights. All of the problems that are happening to us today, many things happen and we cannot do anything, and in the past the organization was quite critical, when it was created. So of course time has passed, but the situation itself, the basic, basic needs have not changed. So I think that the organization should not lose the identity with which it was created, it should not lose it. Of course it should change, update itself in every way, but not change the purpose, the essence for which the organization was created.[66]

Relatedly, beneficiaries make such comments as:

> [UNORCAC] is very important because it has defended the rights of our fathers, of us, so that neither we nor our husbands nor our children are marginalized. We have the right to education, to health, to a space where we can demand rights, but that is the organization which many years ago we lost. I would not like it to disappear, but I would like it to return to the path that it walked before. Now we no longer fight, we just work in projects, it has changed.[67]

This paper therefore upholds the critique that ethnodevelopment acts as a form of governance whereby state and transnational funders depoliticize indigenous movements by channeling aid to them in the form of projects designed to address local needs and exalt local culture, both in terms defined by the former (see Andolina et al. 2009). However, it also adds that it is important to acknowledge the multiple social projects that such essentialism may feed, and relatedly, to explore the effects of the overlap in local and external goals on local populations.

Research into the potential contributions of ethnodevelopment and related efforts to local processes of cultural valorization and revitalization may be lacking, but Skarbø (2012) makes an insightful start by examining the role of indigenous culture and identity in fostering the maintenance of agrobiodiversity in the fields and homegardens of Cotacachi's communities. Supported by and situating its efforts within the greater national and international promotion of

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[66] Interview with female indigenous leader, 10 October 213.
[67] Interview with 46 year old indigenous woman, 20 August 2013.

the re-localization of food systems, over the last years UNORCAC has organized awareness

building workshops, seed exchanges, agrobiodiversity and culinary contests, food and

agrobiodiversity fairs, cooking classes, and the establishment of the formerly vibrant

ethnobotanical garden and plant nursery, all in an effort to increase food sovereignty through the

revitalization of traditional foodways. Skarbø's (2012) findings show not only an increase in

agrobiodiversity but also in pride for indigenous foods, as well as changes in gustatory

preferences and food choices among rural and urban indigenous and mestizo residents related to

the efforts of UNORCAC and similar organizations. Evidence for the latter became clear

throughout my own experiences in Cotacachi as well; for example, one afternoon a local mestizo

man sitting across from me at UNORCAC's lunchroom exclaimed: "So you have discovered the

best place to eat, huh? The mestizo cafeterias, they are just so-so. *Here* is where the women

know how to cook!"[68] This implies that even though ethnodevelopment might not contribute in

great measure to local development goals, like increased household economic wellbeing, there

may be value in the capacity of some projects to produce positive change towards acceptance,

appreciation, and respect for cultural difference.

Thus ethnodevelopment may indeed have a depoliticizing effect on indigenous leaders

and distract from some of the larger social, economic, and political problems afflicting

indigenous populations, but it does not necessarily contradict local agendas wholesale. With

historically grounded aims to end discrimination, certain aspects of UNORCAC's efforts to

valorize indigenous culture may be considered sincere in a moral sense. This is not to say that

UNORCAC's self-essentialism has not also been strategic, as noted, but rather that the goals of

such actions may be multiple and varied. The potential problems associated with the use of

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[68] Conversation with mestizo resident of urban Cotacachi, 7 September 2012.

essentialism by indigenous movements have been noted widely (Jackson and Warren 2005), but perhaps there is room left to examine these within the overlapping yet conflicting contexts of ethnodevelopment and contemporary cultural processes. For example, more research into the different forms and outcomes of ethnodevelopment and how these may relate to processes of cultural valorization and revitalization, among other local goals, would be helpful for further balancing structural and local perspectives in current analyses and understandings of the framework. Relatedly, the meanings ascribed to the forms of culture utilized in or supported by ethnodevelopment may also be explored, with emphasis on understanding how these are negotiated and transformed (see Tsing 1993; Wroblewski 2014). Such inquiries would provide more insight into local interpretations of the "ethno" in ethnodevelopment, in addition to shedding light on how indigenous populations use their agency to connect to global activities (see Brysk 2000; Zimmerer 2006), reorienting these towards the fulfillment of local-level goals (see Baviskar 2004; Mosse 2006; Mosse and Lewis 2005; Velásquez Runk 2009). Further, moving beyond generalized critique to understanding the effects of ethnodevelopment as it relates to local-level goals may better bring to light not only some of the challenges and contradictions that arise for local practitioner organizations and beneficiary populations, but also some of the potential opportunities. This paper argues that such local understandings are essential to include in critiquing and rethinking current approaches to development in order to not undermine the associated cultural and other potentially significant local projects these may support.

Such findings are not only relevant to the case of ethnodevelopment, but to development more broadly; an arena that long has been examined through structural analyses of related frameworks, policies, and programs (see Yarrow and Venkatesan 2012). Whether the focus is on

health, gender, the environment, or other common development foci (see Reimann 2006), understanding why local populations are accepting of the associated representations of needs and identities may reveal important insights about their histories and related contemporary social, cultural, and other goals. This may be especially true of development in contemporary Latin America, where NGOs have proliferated during the last decades (Dagnino 2008; Petras 1999). The diverse agendas of these organizations and their frequent loyalty to donor interests (Biekart 2008; Edwards 2008) implies that there is ample room for overlapping yet discrepant interpretations of needs and identities to arise, and for any number of constraints and opportunities to follow.

Conclusion

Since it emerged in the late 1990s, ethnodevelopment has fallen under heavy critique as scholars have argued that policymakers have tended to frame solutions to development needs within essentialized notions of indigenous culture. They further argue that the emphasis on culture in projects has limited these to small-scale socio-cultural activities that propose transient fixes to chronic problems. This paper demonstrates the conceptualization and practice of ethnodevelopment by a local practitioner organization, UNORCAC, arguing that local culture and development goals should not be overlooked at the expense of problematizing the framework.

UNORCAC emerged in 1977 as an advocate for the rights and respect of the local indigenous population that had suffered a history of exploitation and abuse. Over the following decades, UNORCAC's role in local communities changed from indigenous rights advocate to development practitioner as the offer of projects grew from the state, foreign, and transnational

funders. As a result of this transition, UNORCAC's focus may have shifted from indigenous rights to project management, but it continued to promote the valorization of indigenous culture through political, ritual, and festival activities. In many ways, UNORCAC's adoption of ethnodevelopment in the late 1990s therefore lends continuity to the organization's past. Close examination of the cultural forms highlighted in local ethnodevelopment projects reveals that such notions of indigeneity, while perhaps essentializing, are neither entirely incongruent with the organization's activities of cultural valorization nor with contemporary life in local communities. Further, examination of UNORCAC's conceptualization of ethnodevelopment reveals that it represents part of a larger social process more than a series of projects. For UNORCAC, the importance of conserving a shared indigenous identity relates to issues of maintaining unity between generations and within families, and ultimately developing pride in one's history, family, and self.

Given the intersecting nature of ethnodevelopment and local processes of cultural valorization, this paper cautions that local ethnodevelopment goals should not be overlooked at the expense of problematizing the framework, and suggests further research to illuminate where, how, and why local and official goals coincide and vary. Supporting this assertion is the fact that ethnodevelopment may not significantly aid local wellbeing, but its allure to UNORCAC relates more to the organization's agenda to valorize culture; an agenda that is at once rooted in a local history of discrimination and linked contemporarily to the culturally erosive effects of modernization. Drawing on Clifford (2000), this paper suggests that such understandings of ethnodevelopment may be achieved by delving more deeply into the history and goals of local practitioner organizations and beneficiary populations regarding matters of culture. It further suggests that such understanding is needed not only to enrich our knowledge of the interaction of

global and local forces in maintaining and co-producing certain forms of culture and

development, but also to make us more critically aware of our critiques.

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CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Introduction

      In this chapter, I draw on my findings to answer the overarching questions that guided the research: one, in what ways does UNORCAC conceptualize and operationalize cultural capital in seeking to achieve local development and broader organizational goals? Two, how do interpretations of ethnodevelopment by local stakeholders contribute to sustained participation and support? After addressing these questions, I conclude with some suggestions for potential new lines of research.

Cultural Capital Conceptualized and Operationalized

      Cultural capital takes many forms in ethnodevelopment projects in Cotacachi; for example, as native crops, traditional clothing, medicinal knowledge, and even daily tasks, such as the food preparation and agricultural and ritual activities performed in ethnotourism (Chapter 4). Such forms of cultural capital reflect Radcliffe and Laurie's (2006a) assertion that ethnodevelopment tends to treat indigenous culture as a product or service that can be put to use in the social and economic development of local communities. In this case, households that convert portions of their fields and homegardens to the production and export of native *ají* (hot pepper) and *uvilla* (goldenberry or ground cherry) receive payment for their crops, as do the women who learn to embroider the blouses worn and sold within their own and neighboring

communities and *cantones* (counties). Similarly, the many households that have constructed *albergues* (guesthouses) to receive tourists are compensated for their services, as are the local healers and midwives who offer treatment and care within UNORCAC's offices; the latter additionally fostering the social wellbeing of local patrons.

The forms of cultural capital utilized also support the broader assertion that these tend to stereotype and romanticize indigenous populations in ways that obscure the diversity within them (see Andolina et al. 2009; Radcliffe and Laurie 2006b; Radcliffe et al. 2003). For example, uvilla typically no longer is consumed within local communities; not all women wear traditional clothing; and many people prefer or combine western medicine with traditional healing. Moreover, the use of only select forms of cultural capital supports the overarching critique of ethnodevelopment as a form of transnational governance (Andolina et al. 2009; Bretón 2008; Radcliffe and Laurie 2006a, 2006b). From this perspective, funding intuitions determine the needs of local populations and frame solutions to those needs within their own definitions of indigenous culture and identity. The result, critics argue, are small-scale socio-cultural activities that neither accurately reflect local indigenous culture nor contribute in great measure to improving household and community wellbeing, but do serve to depoliticize indigenous movements by making them dependent on foreign capital (Andolina et al. 2009; Bretón 2008; Radcliffe and Laurie 2006a, 2006b).

Yet for UNORCAC, ethnodevelopment relates to local processes of cultural valorization that have been in progress since the organization's founding in the late 1970s. When young indigenous leaders formed UNORCAC, they generated an organizational base from which to advocate not only for the inclusion of indigenous people in some of the social, economic, and political spaces from which they historically had been excluded, but also for the valorization of

indigenous culture and lifeways. In its earlier years, UNORCAC pursued the latter by teaching literacy in Kichwa, initiating a return to Kichwa names, and coordinating the celebration of important festival and ritual events, among other activities meant to valorize indigenous culture and instill pride in people for the same. More contemporarily, UNORCAC has expanded these activities through ethnodevelopment and related projects. Sometimes these projects have featured different aspects of indigenous culture within products and services meant to improve the social and economic wellbeing of local communities, as described above. At other times they have exalted indigenous culture within such activities as pageants and festivals meant to contest ethnic marginalization and unify communities through the creation or revitalization of tradition and notions of a collective past. For UNORCAC, the latter have become all the more important as the fast pace of modernization takes ever greater hold of local communities, and especially of youth, who increasingly adopt Western and Westernized forms of cultural expression and values (Chapter 4).

Grounding the above Foucauldian critiques of ethnodevelopment (Andolina et al. 2009; Bretón 2008; Radcliffe and Laurie 2006a) in UNORCAC's conceptualization and practice of the framework (see Clifford 2000) therefore reveals overlapping external and local projects of indigenous essentialism that create, simultaneously, opportunities and constraints for the realization of local goals. On one hand, ethnodevelopment aids UNORCAC's efforts to valorize and revitalize local Kichwa culture; for example, by providing funding for festival and ritual activities and projects that foster appreciation and respect for cultural difference (Chapter 4; Skarbø 2012). Yet on the other, ethnodevelopment does little to aid the social and economic wellbeing of local communities, and, further, compromises the organization's ability to engage, through advocacy, the social, economic, and other structural issues affecting local communities

(Chapters 2 and 4). These findings contribute important balance to the dominant interpretations of ethnodevelopment found in current literature (see Andolina et al. 2009; Bretón 2008; Radcliffe and Laurie 2006a). That is, the findings do not entirely refute the critique of ethnodevelopment as a form of transnational governance, but rather temper it with ethnographic understanding of some of the ways in which local populations have appropriated the framework for their own ends (see also Rhoades 2008; Tsing 2005). The findings also reorient discussions of cultural representation in ethnodevelopment towards broader anthropological debates on the opportunities and constraints of self-essentialism for indigenous populations (Conklin and Graham 1995; Coulthard 2007; Hale 2002; Jackson and Warren 2005; Velásquez Runk 2009). As discussed in Chapter 4, such reorientation is important for rethinking current approaches to development without undermining the associated cultural and other potentially significant local projects these approaches may support.

Stakeholder Interpretations of Ethnodevelopment

Like many OSGs, UNORCAC formed to advocate for the rights and respect of the local indigenous population that had endured centuries of exploitation by large landowners, discrimination by local authorities, and exclusion from basic services, infrastructure, and citizenship rights (Pallares 2002; UNORCAC 2008). By the 1980s, however, UNORCAC had begun a gradual process of NGOization (see Choudry and Kapoor 2013) as it transitioned from peasant and indigenous rights advocate to local development practitioner. First the state, then NGOs, and later foreign and transnational development institutions prompted the transition by targeting UNORCAC as partner in the infrastructural, agricultural, and social development of local communities (Bretón 2008; Martínez 2006). Around the time that the World Bank

introduced ethnodevelopment in the late 1990s, UNORCAC became a recipient of this and other culture and identity based projects. UNORCAC's adoption of ethnodevelopment deepened its transition from advocacy to development organization and produced an accompanying shift in its scope of activities, and ultimately, its relationship to local communities (see Bretón 2008; UNORCAC 2008).

As an advocacy organization, UNORCAC provided representation and voice for marginalized communities in many of the social, economic, and political spaces from which they historically had been excluded. Now, however, that voice is somewhat limited to decisions surrounding the implementation and management of small-scale socio-cultural projects that pose transient fixes to what are more realistically chronic social and economic problems (Chapter 2). Exploration of the "moral and social worlds" (Yarrow and Venkatesan 2012:8) underlying stakeholder interests in two of those projects, a microcredit program for women and a beekeeping association, reveals that the unintended outcomes have sustained beneficiary participation and support. For example, in the case of the microcredit program, loans have been largely unproductive, yet the majority of women continue their participation for reasons related to social support and learning. Similarly, despite the overall lack of profitability associated with membership in the beekeeping association, most members continue to participate given the ease it provides in offloading products, ultimately helping to facilitate what is for many a lifelong hobby, and in addition, generate a source of emergency funds (Chapter 3). The findings demonstrate that more nuanced understanding of the motivations that underlie stakeholder support for development can help to explain the persistence of particular frameworks. In doing so, the findings contribute to a growing body of literature that calls for an ethnographic approach to understanding not whether projects succeed, but rather what success is and how success is

produced (Baviskar 2004; Gould 2005; Gow 2008; Mosse 2005; Mosse and Lewis 2006; Velásquez Runk 2009; Yarrow and Venkatesan 2012). Such contributions are important for moving development research beyond the post-structuralist tendencies to one, consider projects failed when they do not produce their intended outcomes; and two, reduce stakeholder participation in development to mere cooptation (see Gow 2008; Yarrow and Venkatesan 2012). The findings further demonstrate that identification of the moral and social worlds in which development becomes meaningful to stakeholders can serve as an important heuristic, revealing additional development needs and potential new paths of action for policymakers. For example, women's use of the microcredit program to challenge patriarchy reveals important insights about the social reality of everyday life in local communities, and in doing so, suggests that the effectiveness of women's development projects may be hindered until their participation in activities outside of the home becomes normalized (Chapter 3). Such findings further bolster the notion that only when scholars do not critique development a priori may it be "re-perceived and hence re-oriented" as a "potentially positive force for good" (Yarrow and Venkatesan 2012:2). In this sense, to have limited examination of the microcredit program to critique of its shortcomings would have been to miss the ways in which it positively impacts beneficiaries. Contrarily, knowledge and understanding of those impacts can inform recommendations for the tailoring of this and other programs to better suit local needs.

Sustained interest in these projects aside, recent critical reflection by leaders and beneficiaries of UNORCAC reveals a collective disillusionment in the results of the organization's transition from indigenous rights advocate to local development practitioner. Both leaders and beneficiaries note the depoliticizing effects of the transition as well as the deficiencies of ethnodevelopment as a means for addressing local needs. As UNORCAC has

171

been unable to meet the expectations of beneficiaries in aiding the fulfillment of those needs, some have turned increasingly to support from neighboring OSGs, NGOs, and government institutions. The growing disillusionment and related shift in alliances pose a potential fracture to the social sustainability of UNORCAC, and relatedly, to the solidity of the organizational hierarchy that has bound local populations to greater social and political processes during the last decades. Such a threat suggests the need to renegotiate definitions of rural development with local populations and state and transnational actors, as well as the very role of OSGs in rural contexts. Given the crucial link that OSGs provide between local communities and peasant and indigenous movements, defining a new role and executing it successfully will be important not only for the future sustainability of these organizations, but possibly for the movements as well (Chapter 2).

Such findings complement current post-structuralist interpretations of ethnodevelopment (see Andolina et al. 2009; Bretón 2008; Radcliffe and Laurie 2006a) by exploring the effects of depoliticization on local populations. The findings are also relevant to broader discussions of the NGOization and related depoliticization of social movements in Latin America (Dagnino 2008; Deere and Royce 2009) and beyond (Choudry 2010; Choudry and Kapoor 2013; Kamat 2004), where there is concern not only for understanding the effects of depoliticization on such movements-turned-NGOs, but also for determining how these new organizational forms can most effectively make a difference (Bebbington et al. 2008).

Suggestions for Future Research

The findings of this research highlight multiple paths of further inquiry. Scholars largely have overlooked the role of OSGs in the governance, representation, and development of local

communities. To date, most research on OSGs has sought to evaluate the operational capacities of these organizations to enact local development (Bebbington and Carroll 2000, 2001; Bretón 2005; Martínez 2003; Ramón 2001). Further, only Carroll (2002) has attempted to typify OSGs, and only PRODEPINE has conducted a census of them (see Martínez 2006). Elucidation of the multiple pressures on and changing roles of OSGs in rural contexts suggests the need for an updated census of these organizations and their activities. Such a census would allow for comparison of the changes that have taken place within and across these organizations and their activities during the past twenty-five years, simultaneously generating more specific and generalizable understanding of the effects of NGOization on OSGs presented here. Such research could contribute long-term analyses of these organizations while also uncovering potential new roles, activities, and paths of action for OSGs that merit further exploration. In this sense, there may be a role for scholars in helping OSGs to rethink their roles in rural contexts.

Ecuadorian scholar Luciano Martínez long has argued that the changes that take place within OSGs "should be analyzed from the perspective of the real accumulated experience and practices of the communities themselves" (2003:96). The same would likely constitute a good starting point for imagining a way forward for these organizations. Further, such an approach resonates with recent proposals for envisioning futures that foreground "everyday attitudes, images, stories, performances, debris, movement, lifestyles, and work" in an effort to ground larger narratives, visions, and predictions of change in relation to the "places, practices, and objects through which they take shape" (Rosenberg and Harding 2005:14; see also Rhoades and Zapata 2006). Such approaches promote exploration of "the relationship between expectation and experience on the level of everyday life" (Rosenberg and Harding 2005:15; see also Rhoades and Zapata 2006) while also remaining open to the "unexpected connections" that can emerge

from different contingencies of new technologies, economies, identities, and political and other visions that can bring change into being (Tsing and Pollman 2005:107). For example, in advocating for the rethinking of conservation practices under the notion of "spaces of hope," or more simply, "new spatialities," Zimmerer has imagined a series of possible future connections, termed "social-environmental networks," that link people and their activities across areas of natural resources use, such as farmers, resource cooperatives, and land use organizations; seed exchange circuits that include multiple communities; and rural-rural migrant networks, among others (2006:320-333). In essence, many such networks are already in place, but not necessarily utilized to achieve shared conservation goals. Zimmerer therefore proposes to draw on the "established mechanisms and capacities for social organization, information exchange, and political mobilization" within and between the various actors that comprise these assemblages in imagining a way forward (Zimmerer 2006:334). Similarly, OSGs typically possess certain qualities, like knowledge of local language, politics, culture and customs, work and leadership experience, power to convene, and ties to local, state, foreign, and transnational institutions, among others, that make them uniquely situated to exercise an organizational role in rural contexts, and which may be drawn upon while shaping new connections and imagining new futures. Further, such research would be timely given three recent socio-political changes in Ecuador, all of which pose new challenges not only to OSGs, but to civil society organizations in general. These are: one, the criminalization of social protest; two, increased government control of NGOs; and three, government promotion of competing organizational forms, explained below.

In 2008, the Ecuadorian government criminalized social protest, deterring indigenous movements from employing the one method through which they typically have demanded rights, denounced government policies, and inserted their voices into public debates (Salazar 2010). As

174

such, it is perhaps unlikely that OSGs will return to past tactics of protest and politics.

Furthermore, the Ecuadorian government recently made it harder for both domestic and foreign

NGOs to remain active in Ecuador. On June 4, 2013, President Rafael Correa adopted a

presidential decree (Executive Decree No. 16) that created new procedures for domestic NGOs

to obtain legal status and that requires foreign NGOs to undergo special screening to be able to

operate in Ecuador (Human Rights Watch 2013; Presidencia de la República 2013). The decree

also grants the government the power to intervene in the operations of all civil society

organizations, whether foreign or domestic (Human Rights Watch 2013; Presidencia de la

República 2013). In fact, already the government has used this power to intervene by expelling

foreign NGOs from the country as in the case of the Pachamama Alliance, a U.S. based civil

society organization dedicated to the protection of the Amazon rainforest and the defense of its

indigenous inhabitants (ICNL 2014). On the morning of December 4, 2013, government officials

entered the Alliance's offices in Quito and shut down their services, having accused them of

"fomenting dissent and violence" through their opposition to the bidding of new oil concessions

in Yasuni National Park (Pachamama Alliance 2013). Since then, several other foreign and

domestic NGOs have closed, and USAID has exited under pressure from the government as well

(NBC News 2014).

Also within the last years, the Ecuadorian government has invested in other forms of

rural organizing, including *juntas parroquiales* (parish-level government institutions),

mancomunidades (associations of two or more government institutions of contiguous parishes,

counties, or provinces) and *consorcios* (associations of two or more government institutions of

noncontiguous parishes, counties, or provinces). All three organizational forms pose competition

to OSGs, suggesting that inquiry into their activities and relationships to local communities may

provide important insights into new changes in rural organizing, and relatedly, new threats to

OSGs and the stability of peasant and indigenous movements in Ecuador. Exploration of these

new challenges to OSGs – criminalization of social protest, government control of NGOs, and

new organizational forms – could therefore provide important insights into the future

sustainability of these organizations, and also to broader discussions of the interplay of the

agency and governance of indigenous populations in Ecuador and beyond.

Relatedly, additional ethnographically informed development research would likely

produce more findings to contribute to scholarship in development and indigenous sovereignty.

For example, such research may reveal other important local activities that are tied to, or

supported by, externally funded development, as is the case of cultural valorization and

ethnodevelopment in Cotacachi. As it is, there is ample room for further inquiry into the

entangled nature of these activities in Cotacachi alone. For example, deeper understanding of the

contributions of ethnodevelopment to UNORCAC's goals to valorize local Kichwa culture

would help both scholars and policymakers to know more fully the effects of the framework for

beneficiaries. Such insights, whether derived from the case of UNORCAC, other OSGs, or

equivalent organizations in other parts of the world, would contribute new knowledge of some of

the ways in which local populations exercise agency and give meaning to their participation

within development activities that may be meant to govern them. As suggested by the findings of

this research, such knowledge would be fruitful not only in furthering new directions in

anthropological contributions to development research, but also in illuminating new paths in

development practice. Paths that are, ideally, more meaningful for those involved.

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