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Review/Reseña

Marc Becker, *Indians and Leftists in the Making of Ecuador's Modern Indigenous Movements* Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2008.

Mapping the Foundations of a Modern Social Movement

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The indigenous uprising that brought Ecuador to a halt in 1990 represented a transformative event for the country, both politically, and at the level of academic representation. Where in 1985 Andeanist historian David Bushnell famously fretted that Ecuador “would again lose half its territory, this time by reason of North American [intellectual] neglect rather than war and diplomacy” (772), the *levantamiento* created an academic “generation of 1990”—sociologists, anthropologists, and political scientists who sought to analyze the dynamics of the indigenous movement

as it emerged into one of the most powerful and visible in Latin America. The vast majority of these studies were grounded in “new social movement theory,” and started from the premise that this indigenous activism was something “new” which could be said to begin with the 1990 *levantamiento*. Certainly, this is the commonplace assumption in studies exploring the evolution of the indigenous movement from the more ad-hoc nature of the 1990 revolt to its institutionalization in the Pachakutik political party. To historians, the ahistoricity of this formulation has been striking, and a much smaller body of work has emerged to try and examine the historical nature of state-indigenous relations (Clark and Becker 2007; Foote 2006; Lyons 2006; O Connor 2007; Williams 2003). However, *Indians and Leftists* is the first work to fully overturn this paradigm and to conclusively show that far from being “new,” the “1990 uprising was not the birth but the culmination of years of organizing efforts that introduced innovative strategies and discourses to advance Indigenous rights and preserve ethnic identities” (3).

As ground-breaking and important as this is, this is far from the limit of the book’s achievement. Becker does not trace indigenous resistance back into the colonial period or the early republic. Instead, he is primarily concerned with exploring the intersection between left-wing activism and indigenous organization, taking the region of Cayambe, north of Quito, as his focus, and arguing that it was left-wing union organizers—typically dismissed by contemporary elites and historians alike as outside rabble-rousers pushing their own agenda—who introduced indigenous leaders to modern mechanisms of protest and transformed indigenous protest from the sporadic and isolated rebellions that had characterized the colonial era and 19th century into a systematic and structured political movement. As such Becker transforms our understanding of rural left-wing activism.

Indians and Leftists traces the connections between the two groups to the original foundation of the Partido Socialista Ecuatoriano in 1926, which emerged out of a broader shift to the left in Ecuadorian politics in the context of disillusionment over the stalled agenda of the Liberal government, and marked most notably by the July Revolution of young

leftist army officers in 1925, and the radicalization of the urban labor movement. In its founding constitution, the PSE listed the “redemption of the Indian” as one of its primary concerns. Indeed, Becker argues that awareness of indigenous activism in Cayambe was part of the logic for the initial formation of the party, and that its founding was aimed at enabling a more active fight for indigenous rights. Chapter two shows how socialist leaders integrated indigenous leaders into the party, inviting them to speak at party congresses and seeking feedback on policies and programs. He lays out the history of some of the key leaders on each side, including Jesús Gualavisí and Dolores Caucango, two of the earliest indigenous leaders to become engaged with the socialist party, as well as Ricardo Paredes, the first Socialist Party leader. He portrays the relations between the two sets of leaders in egalitarian, mutually constitutive terms, and shows the deep-rooted connections and commitment between the two sides. Urban leftists would travel to indigenous communities for weddings, baptisms and other festivals and discuss with them their commitment to social justice. Cayambe became a particular focus for such meetings both because of its close proximity to Quito and the existing radicalization of indigenous peasants there.

The next section of the book explores how these interactions led to the introduction of the strike as a political weapon on the haciendas for the first time during the 1930s. Chapter three examines an extended strike that took place on the Pesillo hacienda in Cayambe between 1930 and 1931. It emphasizes both the active role played by indigenous workers in advancing a sophisticated critique of economic and social structures, and the importance of leftist support in the face of state repression of the movement. This support became especially important in efforts to expand indigenous resistance beyond the bounds of the Pesillo hacienda. Becker emphasizes the importance of leftist logistical support in establishing the First Congress of Peasant Organizations in 1931, which represented a turning point in creating a basis for indigenous protest at the national level, as well as in translating and transcribing demands from spoken Quichua into written Spanish. He also shows how this support was manipulated by

contemporary elites to present indigenous workers as the unwitting stooges of leftist agendas—a perspective later taken up by historians.

Chapter four focuses on the formation of the Federation of Ecuadorian Indians (FEI), which was established in 1944 in the aftermath of the May Revolution as the first national indigenous organization, and was the counterpoint in many ways to the Confederation of Ecuadorian Workers. This chapter is, in my opinion, especially important because the FEI has been almost entirely overlooked by social scientists and historians trying to pinpoint the origins of the modern indigenous movement. Becker shows how the FEI went from initially being ignored by the government to being an outlet for state negotiation with indigenous communities, most notably in the context of the furor created by the 1950 census. That the organization was used to mediate reflects the power and legitimacy it had achieved in a short space of time. What is especially striking is how ambitious the group was in its efforts to unify indigenous peasants from across the nation—including the coastal regions which are not typically imagined as areas of “indigenous activism.” Becker makes a very fruitful and illuminating comparison between the composition of the FEI and of the Ecuadorian Indigenist Institute (IIE), which emerged at the same time but which was entirely composed of white male elites, and had a mission of studying indigenous lifestyles in order to undertake reform via state structures. The two institutions were totally separate and did not refer to each other’s existence in any of their published materials. Becker argues cogently that this undermines the conventional assumption that leftist activism on indigenous issues emerged out of *indigenista* ideologies. This chapter includes useful comparisons with pan-Indian movements in other parts of Latin America—notably the National Indigenous Congress in Bolivia and the National Association of Chilean Indians in Chile.

The book then continues with an in-depth analysis of a major strike in 1954 at the Guachalá hacienda, owned by the founder of the Ecuadorian National Bank, putting it into the context of a wave of hacienda uprisings in the highlands during the 1950s. Becker shows how the brutal police repression of the uprising, which attracted unprecedented amounts of publicity, led to the FEI and the PCE both taking a more active interest in

haciendas, and also served to push agricultural workers into their camp as they became the major advocates for massacre victims. Both parties began to insist on the dissolution of government-owned haciendas, and the redistribution of land to indigenous peasants, significantly affecting the future orientation of the indigenous rights movement. As in the 1930s, this led to indigenous protest being dismissed by ruling elites as the result of leftist puppetry.

Chapter six, which explores the major agrarian reform of 1964, is another standout. It shows how land reform did not stem from the logics of capitalist production as is often argued, but from class tensions and peasant activism on the haciendas. As Becker puts it: “Land distribution was costly, but not nearly as expensive as if a successful revolt was to result in complete expropriation of the hacienda” (129). As noted above, extreme repression on the government-run haciendas during the 1950s made their dissolution a key part of the FEI agenda. Becker shows how the FEI organization of a march of more than 12,000 Indians in 1961 was crucial in making land reform to indigenous peasants a national issue, and bringing it to the attention of democratic reformists such as student groups who rapidly became indigenous allies.

Chapter seven assesses how the stalling of agrarian reform with the rise of the military government in 1976 pushed indigenous activists towards new strategies to advance their agenda, leading to the decline of the FEI, and with it the power of the leftist alliance in the context of the continent-wide decline of the left. However, the indigenous activist tradition of seeking out external support continued, as progressive Catholic priests and missionaries became important collaborators in the movement, particularly in the Amazonian region. The analysis of the parallels between the way the left and indigenous activists had come together in the FEI and this engagement with progressive elements in the Church is especially illuminating. Becker also shows how the decline of the FEI in this period fed into the way it has been represented by scholars who were just becoming interested in indigenous issues at this time. Social science critiques of the FEI as too class-oriented and ideologically distant from indigenous ethnic concerns stems from the realities of the institutions’

“dying days” of the 1980s, and cannot be applied back to the early foundations of the organization. This assertion is backed up by the fond memories of it by contemporary indigenous political organizations. Both CONAIE and ECUARUNI recognize it as having been essential to the struggle for indigenous rights.

The book ends with the events surrounding the 1990 uprising and the emergence of CONAIE as a leading national and international political actor. Here Becker develops most fully his argument that strategies defined as “new,” such as engaging in street demonstrations, blockading roads, and running for electoral office, had deep historical roots; and that success, as in the past, depended on the help of sympathetic supporters.

If there are any weaknesses in the book they stem from the extraordinary empirical and theoretical breadth of the material. An enormous number of very complex arguments are packed in very densely. Transitions between case-study material and theoretical framework and analysis are often very abrupt, and in places detailed engagements with the ideas of other scholars are not fully connected to the original analysis presented, with the result that those not familiar with some of the basic underpinnings of the arguments at stake might find themselves a little lost, despite the general fluency of the writing.

Throughout *Indians and Leftists*, Becker highlights the primary role played by women in indigenous uprisings at all the historical stages he discusses, most of whom were mothers and grandmothers. This is counter to the image of the typical political rebel: a young, unattached militant who can fight with little thought for the consequences of their actions. As Becker puts it: “Indigenous women fought for their rights not because they had nothing to lose, but because they had everything to gain.” They “bet the present to have a future” (61). While it is to be commended that Becker makes such a concerted effort to emphasize the contributions of women and to integrate gender perspectives into what many scholars would have left as a narrative of ethnicity and class, his use of gender is not quite as sophisticated as his engagement with other theoretical concepts. For example, there is a contradiction between his argument that the left helped to sponsor female activism and that women leaders were celebrated by the

indigenous movement in its early stages, and his acknowledgement that male indigenous leaders “gloss[ed] over the central role of women in the struggle” in many speeches (93). This is an issue that needed to be interrogated much more fully. Later he suggests that the recent paucity of female indigenous leaders (notwithstanding notable exceptions such as Nina Pacari and Blanca Chancoso) in comparison with the earlier stages of the movement represents pollution from the sexist gender norms of mainstream society:

As more Indians became part of mainstream Ecuadorian society, gender roles increasingly reflected those of the dominant society. Unique gendered ideologies such as gender complementarity, became less apparent. The gendered characteristics of Indigenous movements changed in ways that may not necessarily be positive development in comparison to earlier in the twentieth century. (189)

This is certainly the argument propagated by male indigenous leaders, but it has been roundly challenged by Erin O’Connor in her 2007 book, and Becker might have engaged these ideas a little more critically.

Some might also question Becker’s interpretations of the periods immediately preceding those on which *Indians and Leftists* focuses. Chapter one presents liberalism as an entirely negative force for Indians, emphasizing the state “ventriloquism” laid out by Andrés Guerrero (1997), by which liberals adopted the vocabulary of concern for indigenous rights in order to undermine their political enemies, most notably highland landowners and the Catholic Church. While it is true that the commitment of most Liberal leaders (with Eloy Alfaro as only a partial exception) to indigenous causes was questionable, to focus only on the instrumentalist nature of Liberal engagement and the limitations of their legislative achievements in this realm overlooks the space that liberal discourse opened for indigenous engagement with the state, which has been underlined by several recent works including Becker’s own co-edited volume, *Highland Indians and the State in Modern Ecuador*. Moreover, in identifying and aggressively pursuing indigenous peoples as a political base, it may be that there were more parallels between early-twentieth century liberals and mid-twentieth century leftists than Becker implies. The revered memories among Cayambe Indians of Communist leader Ricardo

Pallares are not so dissimilar—although more intimate and personal—from the ceremonies anthropologists Norman Whitten and Rachel Corr uncovered in the indigenous highlands celebrating the legacy of Eloy Alfaro, or of the folk songs sang by Afro-Esmeraldan peasants in memory of Liberal governor Carlos Concha: all recognize the elite leaders in question as having helped peasants work towards their own goals. The language used on the left is often reminiscent of liberal discourse: the leftist “redemption of the Indian” as counterposed with the Liberal framework of “Indian uplift.” In his effort to identify leftist engagement as representing a key shift in indigenous activism, Becker is perhaps overly dismissive of broader continuities in terms of Indian-elite relations.

These criticisms are just minor quibbles however. *Indians and Leftists* is incredibly effective in advancing its thesis and constantly making links between shifts in the national political context and the nature and aims of indigenous activism. Taken as a whole it shows how class, ethnic and, to a lesser extent, gender identities intersected in the indigenous activism of the 1930s through 80s, undermining the conventional assumption that early class-based forms of activism were replaced and superseded over time by a new focus on ethnicity. For all the focus that has been placed on the theoretical models that demonstrate that class, race and gender are interlocking identities that cannot be separated from one another, scholars have been strangely unsophisticated in assuming that the adoption of class identities by leftist influenced peasant organizations necessarily meant the negation of their ethnic identities. Becker shows how socialist emphasis on worker unification could co-exist with demands specific to indigenous communities. As early as 1926 Ecuadorian socialists were discussing the “double oppression” faced by Indians who were marginalized by both class and race. Becker reminds us that class and ethnic consciousness can and do exist in tandem. The book also brings to a wider audience the lives of important individuals whose stories deserve to be part of the Latin Americanist pantheon, such as Jesus Gualavisí and Dolores Cacuango.

The book’s real value though, is in the way it helps us think more systemically about the structural realities of subaltern politics. Becker

suggests that “political organizing never occurs in a vacuum and astute leaders are [always] ready to cooperate with sympathetic observers to achieve shared goals.” A focus on the sole agency of the subaltern as the hallmark of “authenticity” in political activism has obscured our understanding of the complex web of relations that are at the heart of any social movement.

Becker’s work breaks new ground in ways that will doubtless blaze a path for future research. His core argument—that there are as many continuities as differences between the “old” and “new” social movements—is an important one that can doubtless be applied to multiple other case studies, and which suggests rich directions for future research in indigenous activism. What are the parallels with the spread of tactics such as the strike and the sit-in in other parts of the region? As Becker insists, rather than focusing on the false paradigm between “old” and “new,” the important thing is to “understand how various forms of identity (including class, ethnicity and gender) interact with each other in various historical circumstances” (167).

By orienting us to the importance of intermediaries in subaltern activism, and the ease with which contemporary disapproval can feed into historical narratives, Becker opens up avenues for rethinking the role of other intermediate groups. Might the *tinterillos*, or country lawyers, who were so important in presenting indigenous legal cases be found to be something very different to the parasitic rabble-rousers that they were characterized as by contemporaries and which many historians have assumed them to be?

This book is unparalleled as a case study in the history of twentieth century Ecuador, and will doubtless be greeted with intense enthusiasm by specialists in the region. However, the scope of Becker’s arguments and insight means that it will also be required reading for anyone interested in peasant activism, in Latin America, and far beyond.

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Does *reseña* mean review only in the literary sense? What about a review on a site like Yelp? Would that be a *reseña*? ¿Cómo se traduce la palabra "review" en el contexto de un site como Yelp? ¿Reseña? Last edited: Mar 16, 2010. Damnjoe. Senior Member. Peru. U.S. English. Write a review for purchased item and get store credit! Text review : \$0.3 credit / Picture review : \$0.5 credit. Please write text reviews at least 2 lines, and the 'picture' should be taken by yourself. The credit will NOT be added automatically after you write the review. It will take 2-4 business days. And please note buyers are able to write review within 6 months after place an order. Reseña en YouTube!!! POSTED BY: 1708560952564753@f (ip Review/Reseña - NC State University. Contesting the Origins of Costa Rica's Welfare State 580 producing, Molina argues, a historiographical tradition that greatly exaggerates the role of Category: All View Text Version Copyright Report. Our purpose in this review is to outline the core tenets of Tagliamonte's book titled Variationist Sociolinguistics. Change, Observation, Interpretation. Dr. Tagliamonte reviews variationism in its various guises and raises some of the underlying questions and ideas the readers should bear in their minds throughout the book. In addition, she focuses in particular on a variationist theory of sociolinguistics. ONOMAZON 28 (diciembre de 2013): 42 - 49 Cristina Bleor, tu y Miguel Cuevas-Alonso Sali A. Tagliamonte: Variationist Sociolinguistics. Many languages use the same word for repeat, review and revise. So in this post, we are going to look at the differences between these English verbs. repeat. Can you repeat it? I repeated her name three times, but she still didn't hear me. review. If you review something, you study material again (usually for a test or examination). She's reviewing her notes. You need to review for your exam if you want to pass it. revise. The verb revise has the same meaning as review, but it is used more in British and Australian English