

# ETHNOGENESIS, ETHNICITY, AND "CULTURAL REFUSAL" The Case of the Salasacas in Highland Ecuador

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*Abstract: The Salasacas are one of several indigenous peoples in highland Ecuador who consider themselves, and are considered by others, to be a distinct, homogeneous blood group. Throughout the Incaic, Spanish, and national periods, we trace their ethnogenesis from diverse origins to a single, highly unified ethnic community. Using an interdisciplinary methodology that combines historical and ethnographic data and follows the movement of current Salasaca anthroponyms, we identify three seventeenth-century migrations of different groups to Salasaca. These groups were still separate in the eighteenth century, and we follow their fusion into a single, exclusive, and vocal ethnic group in the postindependence period. We focus careful attention on their often novel responses to multiple historical contingencies over the course of five hundred years. Departing from writers who emphasize the political nature of ethnicity, we argue that Salasaca became a zone of cultural refusal as indigenous actors made a conscious decision to maintain a specific indigenous cultural identity.*

In Latin America, many ethnohistorians have researched the processes through which indigenous peoples continually reproduce themselves as distinct, non-Western cultures. Known as ethnogenesis, these processes result in the constant creation and re-creation of ethnic groups, and they have been simultaneously reproductive and transformative. A poignant case is the Andean region, where despite overwhelming challenges native ethnic groups represent between 40 percent and 70 percent of the populations of Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia. Here, we trace the ethnogenetic path of the Salasacas, a culturally distinct people of

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the central Ecuadorian highlands.<sup>1</sup> We emphasize the Salasacas' often powerful and seemingly autonomous responses to a multiplicity of historical contingencies. Although their agency can be characterized as political resistance, we argue that often it is also a form of "cultural refusal."<sup>2</sup> Our integrative perspective has resulted in a highly nuanced analysis of their lived experiences over five hundred years.

Works on ethnogenesis range from the pre-Incaic period (Bawden and Rey-craft 2009) to the present (Hill 1996), scaling various trajectories and resulting in a number of distinct ethnic formations and cultural identities. Some focus on the continual re-creation of a single ethnic group or region, whereas others study the fusion of diverse groups into one. Still others use the concept of ethnogenic bricolage—the process by which a new ethnicity is reconfigured from the cultural elements of numerous African ethnicities, native ethnicities, and European influences (Fennell 2007). These more complex situations usually occur at the "cross-roads of multiple diasporas" (Fennell 2007, 9); examples include the Caribbean and Brazil. According to Norman Whitten (1996, 407), "however the concept of ethnogenesis is deployed, the symbolic criterion of contrast—one language, appearance, or culture as distinct from another—is a key feature."

Ethnogenesis and ethnicity are inextricably entwined, ethnicity often being both the starting point and the product of ethnogenesis. An ambiguous term, *ethnicity* has been reified as well as encumbered with multiple subtexts. The most popular of these has been the illusion that casts present-day ethnic groups as residual fossils of a pristine, pre-Columbian past. Although this type of historical continuity was disproved long ago, laypeople (and even some scholars) can easily be tricked into thinking that the homogeneity and distinctiveness of some of today's ethnic groups has a five-hundred-year-old history. Such has been the case with the Salasacas.

As new cultural and ethnic groups emerge, they form identities that appear to be based on primordial ties, while common cultural symbols and practices lend credence to the notion that a given people have always been a homogeneous blood group (Powers 1995, 80; Schwartz and Salomon 1999). According to Kenneth Bilby (1996, 136), people will invent a primordial identity to become an ethnic group, as opposed to some other collectivity. The Salasacas have a controversial origin story that is becoming increasingly prominent and that translates well into this type of primordial construction.<sup>3</sup> Because presenting an alternative narrative to this story is our secondary objective, we discuss it in more detail in our case study.

1. In contemporary times, Salasaca is a parish, and the Salasacas are an ethnic group that inhabits this territory. During the colonial period (1534–1825), however, Salasaca was merely a place-name—an economic colony to which multiethnic peoples migrated in order to grow or extract special resources. In the nineteenth century, these peoples fused into a single ethnic group and used the place-name to identify themselves as the Salasacas.

2. "Cultural refusal" is a phrase James Scott (2009, 20) coined in *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia*, and it is a theme that we develop throughout the article.

3. We are aware that some scholars might interpret the invention of primordial identities as a form of indigenous historicity.

Unlike Latin Americanist scholars of the 1990s, we do not adhere to the principle that ethnicity is essentially a political project (e.g., Hirschkind 1995). We understand that domination, in whatever form, affects the lives of subaltern peoples, but it need not always be determinant. Using cultural refusal as a point of departure, we demonstrate that many indigenous peoples value their distinct cultural identities and have even used threats of violence to keep the state at arm's length. Even though James Scott (2009) coined this term for the same reasons that we have adopted it, he incongruously takes up the "States Make Tribes/Ethnic Groups" banner for Southeast Asia. In *The Art of Not Being Governed*, Scott's (2009) major hypothesis is that state-making projects in five lowland Southeast Asian nations and four Chinese provinces (Han) have produced a multiplicity of highland tribes or ethnic groups who have fled to the "hills" to avoid incorporation into states, thereby evading their exactions. Their repertoire of multiple identities, plural languages, porous territory, and the plasticity of tribes and ethnic groups in Zomia—his constructed name for this immense area—is unparalleled among indigenous groups in highland Ecuador, who depend on fixed boundaries of identity, language, rituals, and territory. Although Scott's "running to the hills" has also been an Andean strategy to evade state-making projects and the threat of *mestizaje*—consider those cows that appear to be standing sideways at ninety-degree angles—his "core peasantries" are more comparable to communities such as the Salasacas, who thrive in the midst of the nation-state of Ecuador without even having to budge.

The study of ethnogenesis (and ethnicity as an embedded component) has produced a rich and varied historiography. Some of its most productive methodologies and theoretical approaches include Nicolás Sánchez-Albornoz's (1978) study of migration as a cultural survival strategy; Marshall Sahlins's (1985) "structure of the conjuncture" (see Powers 1995); James Lockhart's (1994) philological approach; and Scott's (1985, 1990) model of subaltern resistance (see, e.g., Deeds 2003).<sup>4</sup> In 1978, with the publication of *Indios y tributos en el Alto Perú*, Sánchez-Albornoz set the stage for numerous studies of Andean migration and of the foreign Andeans (*forasteros*)<sup>5</sup> that it created (e.g., Saignes 1985; Wightman 1990). These works explored the multiple migrations of Andean peoples and how those migrations shaped a constantly mutating colonial world. Our work also involves tracing migratory flows, with attention to anthroponyms that are current in Salasaca.<sup>6</sup>

4. Sahlins's structure of the conjuncture is the result of a dialectical play between existing cultural structures and historical events, as a society struggles to meet new external imperatives. Lockhart's philological approach involves the translation and interpretation of indigenous-language documents that attempt to uncover native peoples' perspectives of their own history.

5. *Forasteros* were sometimes part of a "musical chairs" strategy in which caciques exchanged community members so that each could report them absent, thereby avoiding partial tribute and hiding a private workforce. At other times, they migrated alone or in families, whole ayllus, and lineages based on their own decisions.

6. This is not a study of anthroponomy but one in which we trace the location and movement of today's Salasaca surnames in an effort to uncover who inhabited Salasaca and the places from which they came.

## CASE STUDY OF THE SALASACAS' ETHNOGENESIS

In highland Ecuador, many indigenous people identify with self-described *nacionalidades* (the term preferred by the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador and which we use interchangeably with *ethnic group*), such as Otavalo, Saraguro, and Chibuleo. Several nationalities have a distinct style of dress through which they self-identify (see Rowe 1998). The Salasacas are one such nationality, and their origins are the subject of long-standing controversy. Ecuadorian writers have frequently described the Salasacas as fiercely protective of their territory and their cultural identity and as proudly refusing to show deference to whites. They are among Ecuador's most traditional indigenous people and are said to "have fended off encroachment by outsiders for centuries" (Cassagrande 1981, 267). The Salasacas reside in Tungurahua Province in the central highlands of Ecuador, and although their population is reported to be 5,195,<sup>7</sup> Salasacas report the number closer to 12,000. In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries they have been endogamous, and Salasaca elders say that, in the past, they did not allow outsiders to pass through their community. They speak their own dialect of Quichua and, like other highland indigenous nationalities, have a distinctive ethnic attire through which they self-identify as Salasacas (figures 1–2). It would be surprising to many to learn that the Salasacas emerged as an ethnic group from diverse origins and through uncountable historical transformations. Here, we trace not only the numerous historical contingencies they faced but also their unique responses to those challenges. We also have the fortunate opportunity to trace an ethnogenetic trajectory that includes their agency and lived experiences during the Incaic, Spanish, and national periods.

We have situated our study in the central highlands for several reasons. Before the Spanish arrival, the region that is currently called Ecuador had been incorporated into the Inca Empire as its northern capital, but by stages and in varying degrees (ca. 1460s–1534). During that period, dissident elements endured massive relocations to distant parts of the empire, and loyal populations were transferred north to replace them. Whether dissident or loyal, they were called *mitmaj* (pl. *mitmajkuna*), and later the Spaniards referred to them as *mitimaes*. Although the Incas' reign was relatively brief, they succeeded in establishing efficient systems of administration, roadways, *tambos* (inns or waystations), rotational labor drafts, and *kamayuj* colonies. These were specialists, called *kamayujkuna* (referred to as *camayos* by the Spaniards), who were sent by their indigenous lords to areas where they could cultivate or extract special resources not available in their communities of origin (see, for example, DeLeonardis 2011).

The Incas occupied the central sierra from approximately 1475 to 1534 and noted its rare and productive geographical features almost immediately. Although the area is considered highlands, it is also punctuated by small, lower valleys called *valles abrigados* because they are surrounded and protected by hills.

7. Municipalidad de Pelileo, "Plan estratégico de la parroquia Salasaca 2005–2009," [http://www.pelileo.gob.ec/index.php?option=com\\_phocadownload&view=category&download=96:plansalasaca&id=19:planes-de-desarrollo-local&Itemid=101](http://www.pelileo.gob.ec/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&download=96:plansalasaca&id=19:planes-de-desarrollo-local&Itemid=101).



*Figure 1 Salasacas wearing ethnic attire in the 1970s. Courtesy of the Masaquiza Masaquiza family.*

This creates a highly unusual geoclimatic situation that lent itself to the establishment of multiple kamayuj colonies for the production of fruit, coca, corn, and many other crops that would normally require lower elevations on the western or eastern slopes (figure 3). Accordingly, the central highlands became a heavy receiving area for mitmaj communities, though the members of kamayuj colonies were drawn from both mitmaj and local northern Andean groups.

Although our major focus is to trace the Salasacas' ethnogenesis, our secondary objective is to present an alternative narrative to the community's contro-



Figure 2 *Salasacas wearing ethnic attire today. Courtesy of the Masaquiza Masaquiza family.*

versal origin story—an account that began to circulate in writing in the 1940s (Guevara 1945). Some Salasacas consider themselves, and are considered by others, to be a pure homogenous blood group (see the discussion in Poeschel 1988, 32) of mitmajkuna allegedly moved from Bolivia to Ecuador by the Incas. Other writers argue that they are of purely Panzaleo-Puruhuá origins—that is, native to modern-day Ecuador (Peñaherrera de Costales and Costales Samaniego 1959). Most authors on both sides, however, assume that the Salasacas were always a homogenous blood group.<sup>8</sup>

Among the Salasacas themselves, there has been considerable disagreement regarding their origin story. Laura Miller (1998) reports that during her ethnographic fieldwork (mostly in the 1980s), the Salasacas, who were struggling with the state for political rights, were concerned about being labeled “non-Ecuadorians” because of the story (see also Wogan 2004, 24n5). At that time, many Salasacas firmly denied that their ancestors were Bolivian mitmajkuna. During fieldwork in 1991, Corr noted an attitude of indifference, as the answer to her inquiries was usually,

8. Aquiles Pérez’s (1962) work is the only exception. He breaks down surnames into discrete units and claims various, multiple linguistic origins. Although his methodology inspires scholarly skepticism, he is the only author, to the best of our knowledge, to suggest that Salasacas were not a homogenous group. María Eugenia Choque Quishpe (1992, 101) is the only writer we found who cites historical documents on multiethnic groups in colonial Salasaca, but she does not make any argument about ethnogenesis.

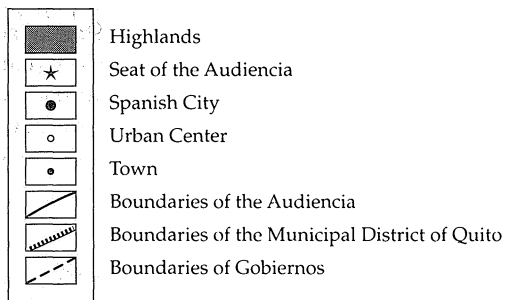
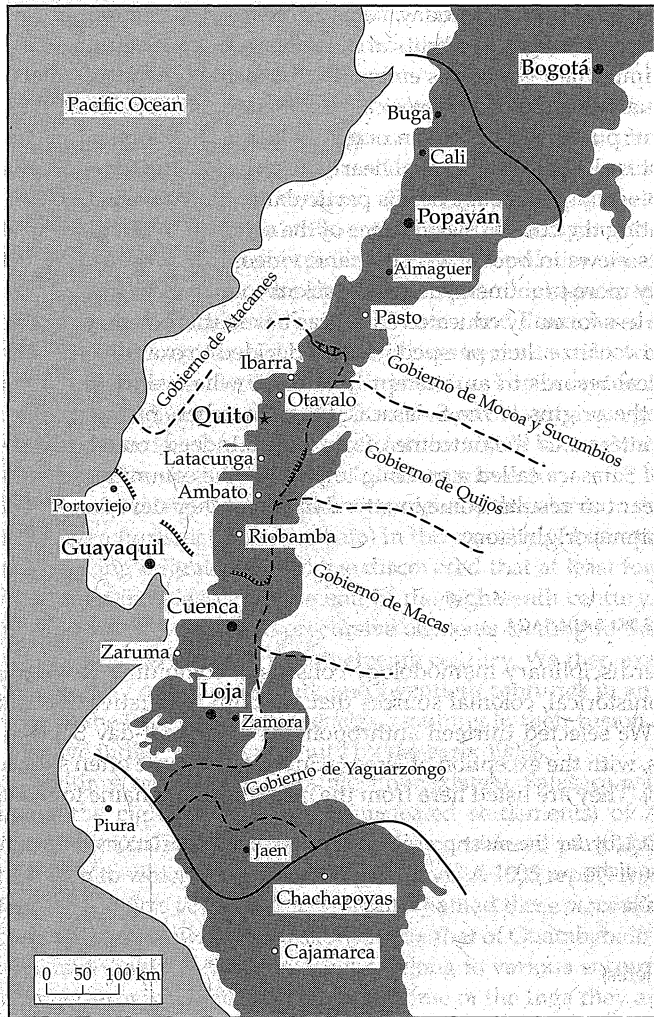


Figure 3 Administrative organization of the Audiencia of Quito, sixteenth century.

"That is what they tell us." Today, some Salasacas, especially those who are active in Ecuador's indigenous political movement, feel pride in the story. In recent years, this important group has embraced "Incaism," with all its attendant insignia and rituals of a glorified historical past (Salomon 1987, 208–211). What better than to be of pure-blood, Bolivian origins—Lake Titicaca being part of the Inca Empire that is closer to its imperial heart, the city of Cuzco. The formal education and technological knowledge of this particular faction have played an important role in creating the current significance of the origin story. It has been able to disseminate its views in books, websites, and videos. The origin story is becoming increasingly more prominent, despite a lack of community consensus.

Because less formally educated Salasacas have different views but do not have the skills to vocalize their perspectives, we decided to examine the ethnographic and historical records in an attempt to uncover whatever data they might contain about the origins of the Salasacas. Some members of the community have expressed interest in the outcome of our work. Indeed, on March 11, 2011, the governor of Salasaca called a meeting to provide the community with an opportunity to hear our results. Some in attendance said they never really believed the Bolivian-mitmaj origin story.

#### MIGRATIONS TO SALASACA

Our interdisciplinary methodology consists of combining ethnographic data with ethnohistorical, colonial sources that are both qualitative and quantitative in nature. We selected thirteen anthroponyms of current-day Salasaca that are indigenous, with the exception of Jerez (a Spanish surname often spelled *Xeres* in the records). They are listed here from the most prevalent name to the least:

- Masaquiza (by far the most prevalent) and its colonial variations: Masaquisa and Machaquicha
- Caizabanda
- Pilla
- Jerez (or Jeres)
- Chango
- Anancolla
- Comasanta
- Culqui (or Cullqui)
- Chimbosina
- Curichumbi
- Chicayza (or Chicaiza)
- Chilliquinga
- Pancha

We decided to search for anthroponyms because the Salasacas have surnames that are distinct from those of people in neighboring parishes. Although some can



be found in other regions of Ecuador, we chose surnames that have the highest frequency of occurrence in Salasaca and show continuity with colonial records of people living in the region.

Through this methodology, we present evidence of the emergence of the Salasacas through a series of planned migrations by their caciques, starting in the early seventeenth century. We suggest that the migrations began earlier, perhaps in the second half of the sixteenth century, when caciques enjoyed considerably more autonomy, owing to the Spaniards' crucial need for indigenous allies. This period, though marred by European epidemics and depopulation, was also a time in which a mercantile economy was introduced to the highlands; textile mills, many of which produced fine cloth for sale in Potosí and Lima, were established throughout most of the region; and Christian friars began to indoctrinate native peoples in the principles and rituals of Christianity. The seventeenth century, however, is probably when the migratory flow toward Salasaca was greatest, owing to the need to provide special resources for the textile boom—the central sierra being a very active site for this powerful economic sector.

The ancestors of modern-day Salasacas were sent by their lords to their current location in Salasaca (jurisdiction of Ambato) in the capacity of *kamayujkuna* and *forasteros*. By tracing migratory flows, we discovered that at least four different groups were living in Salasaca by the end of the eighteenth century. Thus, our colonial investigation revealed the precursive elements leading to the migrants' emergent identity as Salasacas in the nineteenth century. We then examined the existing bibliography of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in an attempt to identify some of the historical contingencies, resulting in their fusion as a highly unified, exclusive indigenous community by the early 1900s.

Colonial writings on Salasaca are almost nonexistent. Salasaca was not mentioned among the eighteen *reducciones* (nucleated settlements) of Ambato by Antonio de Clavijo in 1584 but was most likely considered part of the town of Pelileo (the *cantón* to which Salasaca belongs today).<sup>9</sup> A 1605 report from the *Relaciones histórico-geográficas de la Audiencia de Quito* named three *parcialidades* (indigenous sectors with their own caciques) of Pelileo: that of Guambahalo, that of the Chumaquíes, and that of the “camayos who belong to various encomiendas and caciques of other provinces; because since the time of the Inga they are assigned as camayos and gardeners of the caciques to take care of the coca” (Anónimo 1605, 55). In his geographical study, Father Mario Cicala ([1771] 1994, 392) mentioned “Salasaca Indians” who surrounded the mother parish of Pelileo, in which the priest was “in charge of 900 souls.” To our knowledge, he is the only colonial writer who mentioned Salasaca Indians, but he provided no information about them. Salasaca's absence as an indigenous *parcialidad* in early colonial reports suggests that it was originally a place, not an ethnic group. We also believe that Salasaca's colonial location coincides with that of modern-day Salasaca, because

9. Archivo General de Indias, *legajo* Quito, *carpeta* 47, no. 14, “Informaciones: Antonio de Clavijo,” 1584, digital archive, Portal de Archivos Españoles, <http://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas/servlets/ImageServlet>.

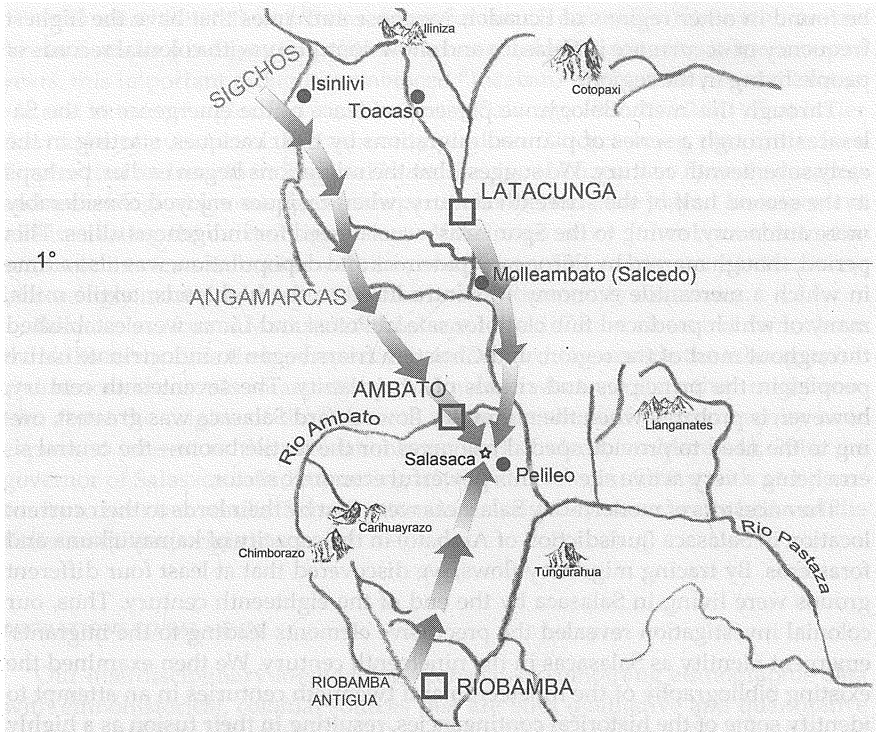


Figure 4 Colonial migrations to Salasaca.

the land disputes refer to hills that are within Salasaca today (discussed below). We now turn to the migratory flows that we traced from the Spanish documentary record of the eighteenth century. Studies of Ecuador often refer to this time period as the catastrophic century. It was a time of unrelenting epidemics, natural disasters, famine, vast depopulation, and labor shortages (Alchon 1991). It was also a time of economic collapse as global contingencies led to the debacle of the Audiencia's textile economy—an economy upon which half the population, including Andean laborers, depended for its subsistence (Andrien 1995).

#### *The Sigchos Collanas*

The first migratory flow that we identified toward Salasaca was that of the Sigchos Collanas, a group that resided and paid tribute in Sigchos, a province on the western slopes of the *corregimiento* of Latacunga (figure 4). The origins of this group are also unclear. Under the Inca, Sigchos housed both a native population and multiple ethnic groups of *mitmajkuna*. Therefore, the Sigchos Collanas could be Bolivian *mitmajkuna*, *mitmajkuna* from several ethnic groups of the Inca Empire, or a local northern Andean *ayllu* or *ayllus*, who had distinguished

themselves enough to be called *collana* (Carrera Colín 1981, 143; Quishpe 1999, 99).<sup>10</sup> Conversely, Yolanda Navas de Pozo (1990, 83–84) claims that they had northern Andean origins in the province of Angamarca.

Using our list of designated anthroponyms, we searched the colonial record for references not only to them but also to the site called Salasaca. First, a 1619 payment record of Pelileo's Jesuit-owned *obraje* (textile mill), San Ildefonso, reported a worker named Alonso Masaquiza (a surname at the top of our list), from the "parcialidad de los camayos de Pelileo."<sup>11</sup> Following this, a 1699 tribute record for the encomienda of Madrid's Bernadine nuns stated that Latacunga's *corregidor* (royal official who administers a rural, indigenous province) collected tribute from the "Salasaca camayo Indians."<sup>12</sup> Then, a 1711 census of Latacunga's "camayos" listed several people of Sigchos Collanas origins who lived in Salasaca and the surrounding area.<sup>13</sup> These documents suggest a migration of kamayujkuna from Sigchos Collanas to Salasaca that began prior to 1619.

After exhaustive research, we uncovered five lawsuits (1712–1775) in which people with modern-day Salasaca surnames testified that they were of Sigchos Collanas origins but resided in Salasaca.<sup>14</sup> Two cases (1712 and 1728) discussed the appointment of Don Francisco Masaquiza, a native of Sigchos, as the *principal* (subchief) "of the Indians of the Sacramento (Bernadine nuns) who reside in Salasaca designated camayos."<sup>15</sup> Again in 1743, a plaintiff, Carlos Masaquiza, indirectly invoked his kamayuj status, as well as that of his parents and grandparents. He did so by declaring himself exempt from the *mita* (rotational labor draft) and devoid of communal lands, both defining features of kamayujkuna. And, using the documents from 1619,<sup>16</sup> 1728, 1743, and 1775, we were able to calculate the approximate dates when some people from Sigchos Collanas (and one person from among the Tacungas) migrated to Salasaca. They are Alonso Masaquiza (prior

10. *Collana* was an adjective that described a superior ayllu or larger political unit in the Incas' tripartite social classification system.

11. Archivo Nacional del Ecuador (hereafter ANE), Obrajes, *caja 2*, 1619–1666, "Cuentas del Obraje de San Ildefonso del General Don Antonio López de Galarza hechas por mandado del señor Doctor Don Luis Joseph Merlo de la Fuente del gobierno de su Magestad," fol. 8v. Although kamayujkuna were not subject to the *mita*, they were often pressed into service as *conciertos*, as though they had contracted to work there voluntarily.

12. ANE, Tributos, *caja 6*, 28-XII-1699, "Cuenta de tributos de la encomienda de las Monjas Bernardas cituada en Sigchos, Isinlivi, Guanujo y Colorados."

13. Banco Central del Ecuador/Ambato (hereafter BCE/Ambato), Censos 7, "Numeración de los camayos de Latacunga, 1710–1711," 26 folos.

14. ANE, Cacicaizgos (Cac.) 1-I-1728, "Don Francisco Ati Haja, cacique principal y gobernador de los pueblos de Sigchos, Isinlivi y Toacaso, trae demanda sobre unos indios de la familia y apellido Masaquiza"; ANE, Indígenas (Ind.), 15-II-1712, "Don Francisco Machaquicha cacique principal de San Buena Ventura de Salasaca pide Real provisión para no repartir entero a sus vecinos"; ANE, Indígenas 9-III-1743, "Carlos Masaquiza indio natural del pueblo de Pelileo pide no estar obligado de servir en el obraje de Sn. Ildefonso por no ser de la comunidad"; ANE, Ind., 2-XI-1754, "Cecilia Comasanta contra Ignacio Fiallo por tierras de Catitagua"; ANE, Tungurahua, Notaria 2a, 23-XII-1775, "Juan Fiallo en la demanda sobre tierras de Neyton."

15. ANE, Cac. 1-I-1728.

16. ANE, Obrajes, *caja 2*, 1619–1666, "Cuentas del Obraje de San Ildefonso del General Don Antonio López de Galarza hechas por mandado del señor Doctor Don Luis Joseph Merlo de la Fuente del gobierno de su Magestad."

to 1619), María Asuchimbo (1640s–1650s), Joseph Chango (ca. 1685), and Simón Masaquiza (ca. 1693). Thus, our painstaking analysis confirmed a long-standing and continuous migration of kamayujkuna from Sigchos Collanas to Salasaca that began prior to 1619 and continued until at least 1693, despite the demographic collapse of the early 1690s.

It is clear from the first three suits (1712, 1728, and 1743) that the Sigchos Collanas were subjects of Don Leonardo Hati and Don Francisco Hati Haja, members of a famous indigenous family of the corregimiento of Latacunga. These caciques and their ancestors directed the kamayuj flow to Salasaca, during the whole of the seventeenth century, to pursue the cultivation of a particular product that was probably essential to their participation in the textile industry (we discuss the economic possibilities later). In light of the epidemiological, economic, and natural disasters of the eighteenth century, it is no longer clear whether the Sigchos Collanas were still functioning as kamayujkuna by midcentury or were implementing a survival strategy by buying lands in Salasaca and becoming peasant farmers. Whatever their pursuits, they continued to identify with their communities of origin throughout the eighteenth century, and they struggled to retain the privileges of kamayuj status—exemption from forced labor and local tribute.

Although the five suits substantiated an important movement from Sigchos Collanas, they also disclosed a rare treasure of the migrants' lived experiences. Of the three migratory flows toward Salasaca, this is the only one in which we can hear indigenous voices with extraordinary clarity.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, there are few studies of population movements or colonial ethnogenesis that provide this level of intimate knowledge about the human condition. Through the lawsuits, we witness the Sigchos Collanas' resourcefulness, improvisation, and ingenuity as they responded to the overwhelming challenges of the region's catastrophic century (i.e., the eighteenth century). Although some of their actions clearly took place within a larger environment of domination, many of their decisions and experiences had little or nothing to do with colonialism. In short, the Spanish Empire affected but did not determine their lives. Indeed, embedded within larger imperial narratives was a vast array of small stories that divulge the intimate details, not only of their own lives as kamayujkuna but of those of their ancestors as well.

As the disasters of the eighteenth century progressed, severe labor shortages and nonpayment of tribute became pervasive problems throughout the region. As a consequence, the inhabitants of Salasaca became embroiled in many local attempts to co-opt their money and services. In 1727, Doña Gertrudis Vibanco, the *cacica* of the forasteros of Ambato, had apparently tricked eighteen men from Salasaca, with the surnames Masaquiza, into being listed among her subjects.<sup>18</sup> During the proceedings, Don Francisco Hati Haja, all the witnesses, and the Masaquizas themselves claimed that they were of Sigchos Collanas origins because their

17. We emphasize these voices in opposition to recent criticism that ethnohistorians who use Spanish documents are responsible for continuing colonialism or are part of the colonial project themselves.

18. Absenteeism was so out of control by the seventeenth century that the crown tried to aggregate forasteros into crown *parcialidades* often administered by particular caciques (Powers 1995, 87–95).

grandmother, María Asuchimbo, had come from that region and "had many illegitimate children in Salasaca."<sup>19</sup> It is possible that María Asuchimbo, who migrated between 1640 and 1650, was a second wife, polygamy being a common practice, especially in outlying areas like Salasaca despite the adamant opposition of Christian friars.

Again in 1743, a local chief tried to coerce Carlos Masaquiza into working in the obraje of San Ildefonso and paying a tribute rate of six pesos and three reales per year. Carlos claimed that his grandfather, Simón Masaquiza, came from Collanas to reside in "a site named Salasaca," where he married Marta Jerez, an Andean woman from the same community ("ayllu y parcialidad") of Collanas. In Salasaca they "procreated" his father, Lucas Masaquiza.<sup>20</sup> As evidence, Carlos showed the 1730 registry of Collanas, where his parents' names and his appeared, with the statement "they live in Salasaca with their parents." This case also demonstrated that, through different migrations, people of Sigchos Collanas origins were marrying in Salasaca, as Carlos Masaquiza's parents and grandparents did. Consequently, we are tempted to speculate whether members of the migrant community were remaining endogamous in their new territory. If this were the case, then at the time (1743) Salasaca was still a mix of groups who remained separate from one another.

In the 1754 case, Cecilia Comasanta of Salasaca filed suit against Ignacio Fiallo over lands called Catitagua. During this suit, some witnesses claimed that a Spaniard, Joseph de la Parra, had been renting out plots of land near Salasaca to Andeans and that the indigenous renters had begun to mark off their plots with century plants and to pass the land on to their own descendants in their wills. Apparently, the renters had learned this land-grabbing strategy from Spaniards who had used this exact trick to wrestle land away from Andeans since the early colonial period. This could then be considered a form of indigenous resistance in which the natives beat the Spaniards at their own game. Today, the place known as Catitagua belongs exclusively to the Salasacas, supporting our claim that the "Salasaca" of colonial records overlaps with the place called Salasaca today. The case, which was continued in 1775, was also significant because it showed how modern-day Salasacas acquired some of their current territory.

Taken together, these documents showed a migration of Andeans with the last names Masaquiza, Chango, Jerez, Comasanta, Caisabanda, and Anancolla<sup>21</sup>—all names from modern-day Salasaca. This migratory flow came from the corregimiento of Latacunga (mainly from Sigchos Collanas) to Salasaca, and some served as kamayujkuna under the leadership of the principal, Francisco Masaquiza. Despite the migrants' continual identification with Sigchos Collanas, it appears that they were no longer coming to Salasaca as kamayujkuna in the eighteenth century

19. ANE, Cac., 1-I-1728.

20. ANE, Ind., 9-III-1743.

21. Anancolla suggests a southern Andean origin, as the Quichua term *Hanan* could refer to the upper moiety of an ethnic group called Colla—Collasuyu being a part of the Inca Empire that included modern-day Bolivia. We thank an anonymous reviewer for this suggestion.

but rather were forming a survival strategy by purchasing lands there, perhaps in response to a failing economy in the central highlands. In 1743, Carlos Masaquiza stated that he had purchased lands locally; by 1754 several Masaquizas claimed possession of lands in Salasaca. Their ability to act autonomously, on behalf of their own survival, by creating a smallholder colony out of their kamayuj colony is little short of startling. Whatever their provenance, we believe that the Sigchos Collanas were part of the Hati family's triangular enterprise that drew from Quijos in the east, Sigchos in the west, and both Ambato and Latacunga in the central highlands (for extensive discussion of their assets and economic activities, see Powers 1991).

We now turn to tracing movements of peoples from among the Tacungas and the Puruhuayes. The documents we reviewed include twenty-five censuses (*numeraciones*) and twenty-six tribute records (*cartas cuentas*) from the towns in the jurisdiction of Ambato, ranging from 1710 to 1778.<sup>22</sup> We selected them for their proximity to the kamayuj colony of Salasaca (from the city of Ambato eastward).<sup>23</sup> We believe that this rather large corpus of data sheds further light on both the long-standing question of who the inhabitants of Salasaca are and on the Bolivian-mitmaj origin story.

### *The Tacungas*

The second migratory flow from Latacunga to Salasaca was that of the Tacungas, also subjects of the Hatis. The Sigchos Collanas were sent to Salasaca to work as kamayujkuna, whereas the Tacungas were listed as *suelos* (forasteros) but were still sent there by the same caciques. We believe that they were part of the Hatis' substantial private workforce of forasteros (Powers 1991, 230–242), especially because they were paying the typical forastero tribute rate of 2.5 pesos. Nevertheless, they were probably functioning as informal kamayujkuna, thereby swelling the Hati-directed flow toward the kamayuj colony of Salasaca. The Hati lords were probably mitmajkuna rather than native northern Andeans, as their name appears among commoners in eighteenth-century censuses of mitmaj groups in the central sierra (until now, this has been a controversial question). Nevertheless, the Tacungas (forasteros) who they sent to Salasaca were clearly a mix of the two, as Guamán and Condori (southern Andean anthroponyms) appeared among their surnames.

The earliest evidence we found of a migration from among the Tacungas was

22. BCE/Ambato, Censos 1-25, 1710–1760, “Cartas cuentas de los repartimientos del jurisdicción del asiento de Hambato, 1768-1777” (hereafter “Cartas cuentas . . . Hambato”), fols. 131–180. The above citations appear somewhat incomplete, owing to the following circumstances. While conducting her dissertation research in 1986, Powers found the above records in the archives of the Banco Central in Ambato. They were in a corner on the floor, uncataloged. In exchange for assigning subject headings, numbers, titles, years, and folios, the archivist Ana María Larrea permitted her to photocopy the documents.

23. The *cartas cuentas* were unusual for their inclusion of the names and places of residence of the indigenous men who owed tribute for four *tercios* (semiannual tribute payments at Christmas and St. John's Day in June) between 1768 and 1777.

around 1685,<sup>24</sup> and the latest was 1777.<sup>25</sup> At that time, there were forty-six *tributarios* (tribute-paying men) who were accompanied by extended families, which is evident from the sequential manner in which their surnames were grouped. Sixteen of their surnames overlapped with those of current-day Salasacas—several Cullqis, Chilliquingas, and Changos. Yanchapanta was also a prevalent name (nine in this document) and, according to Salasaca’s parish registry, was common until 1920, after which it faded away (Guevara Moposita, Jiménez Mata, and Periche Masaquiza 1992). This would place the original number of overlapping surnames at twenty-five, which represents more than half the Tacungas sent to Salasaca. It is evident that the original movement took place at a much earlier date, as only eighteen of the *tributarios* were still present in Salasaca in 1777. Evidently, by the late eighteenth century, the purpose of the movement, originally orchestrated by the Hatis, was breaking down. In conclusion, the first two migratory flows were orchestrated by an important colonial family of entrepreneurial caciques, named the Hatis.

### *The Puruhuayes*

The third migratory flow to Salasaca came from the southern corregimiento of Riobamba. The Puruhuá lords sent delegations of *kamayujkuna* from nearly every town in their jurisdiction to the town of Pelileo.<sup>26</sup> Probably, most of these families were sent to Guambahalo (also spelled Guambaló), where the lords of the Puruhuayes had traditional rights to work the coca fields. Nevertheless, among them was a small group that carried the surnames of modern-day Salasacas—Anancolla, Culqui, Comasanta, Chango, Chilliquinga, Jeres, Chicaiza, and Pancha—eight of the thirteen names we selected. This concurrence in the census with Salasaca anthroponyms showed that some undoubtedly went to Salasaca as well. Subsequent migrations from southern Riobamba to Pelileo followed. The corregimiento of Riobamba was one of the worst regions for fraudulent Spanish privatization of indigenous communal lands. This generated a continual out-migration during the entire sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The subsequent crises of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries caused the flow out of the region to become a veritable exodus (for a full discussion, see Borchart de Moreno 1998, 75–97). As a result, we have found several censuses and *cartas cuentas* from 1710 to 1778 of “Yndios puruhuayes que residen en [numerous towns under the jurisdiction of Ambato].” One such town was Pelileo, and as part of Pelileo, Salasaca was sure to have captured its share of the Puruhuá flow. Indeed, in the “Car-

24. ANE, Ind., 23-XII-1754.

25. BCE/Ambato, “Cartaquenta . . . Hambato,” “Cartaquenta de los Yndios Tacungas que residen en Salasaca por 4 tercios hasta San Juan de 77 (1777) su Principal Vicente Chango,” fols. 143–143v.

26. BCE/Ambato, Censos 10, “Numeración del Haillo y parcialidad de los Yndios Camaio Puruaies que Residen En el Pueblo de San Pedro de Pelileo Jurisdision del Asiento Hambato de que es Casique Principal Don Ambrosio Machuca,” 1711, 27 fols.; BCE/Ambato, Cartaquenta . . . Hambato,” “Suelos Purguayes de Pueblo de Pelileo y su Jurisdigion que deven 4 tercios desde Navidad de 768 (1768) hasta San Juan de 77 (1777) su Principal Fernando Naunay y Balentín Chayo,” fols. 144–144v.

taquenta de los Suelos Purguayes del Pueblo de Pelileo . . . 1777," the Salasaca surnames Anancolla and Chango appeared.

### *The Pilalatas*

The last group to be incorporated into Salasaca were the Pilalatas. They were a local ethnic group that belonged to the town of Pelileo but has now disappeared. At one time they shared land that was interspersed with lands of the Salasacas on the hill called Catitagua. It is likely that this group eventually merged with the Salasacas in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. As Scott (2009) points out, ethnic groups who live in close proximity to one another often merge into one group over time. Other Pilalatas, perhaps those living closer to the center of the town of Pelileo, may have become mestizos. In the 1754 case of Cecilia Comasanta, some witnesses said that the lands on the hill, Catitagua (a part of current-day Salasaca), were owned by the Pilalata Indians, whose local caciques were the Changos and whose principales were the Caizas. In fact, some indigenous witnesses claimed that the Pilalatas had always cultivated the lands in question and that they had sold some land to Cecilia Comasanta. A common last name of the Pilalatas, Quillicana, no longer exists today in Salasaca, and there is no memory of this ethnic group. Among the census material, we found only one carta cuenta in which they were mentioned,<sup>27</sup> and the anthroponyms that overlapped with those of Salasaca were Chango and Pilla. Because they belonged to the town of Pelileo to begin with, it is puzzling that they appeared here as *suelos*.

In conclusion, at the end of the eighteenth century, there were four different groups residing in Salasaca—the Sigchos Collanas, the Tacungas, the Puruhuayes, and the Pilalatas.<sup>28</sup> We know that the Pilalatas were an ethnic group and speculate that the Sigchos Collanas were as well. Nevertheless, those who migrated to Salasaca from among the Sigchos Collanas, the Tacungas, and the Puruhuayes carried surnames that overlapped, not only with one another but also with people throughout the eastern Ambato region. The last name Chicayza, for example, was the name of an elite Panzaleo family.<sup>29</sup> Puzzling as it may be, we cannot say that each constituted a distinct ethnic group. We can only speculate that these anthroponyms may have represented kamayujkuna who belonged to a mitmaj or local ethnic group, scattered throughout Ambato, or that the overlap was owing to the multiple migrations of the colonial period. Also, the evidence showed that having some ancestors who were mitmajkuna would hardly make the Salasacas unique in the region or account for their traditional isolation and cultural distinctiveness, as there were many mitmajkuna interspersed with northern Andean groups

27. BCE/Ambato, "Cartaquenta . . . Hambato," "Suelos Pilalatas del Pueblo de Pelileo por 4 tercios desde Navidad de 768 (1768) hasta San Juan de 77 (1777) Sus Principales Don Manuel Tintin y Gregorio Tintin," fols. 145–145v.

28. In addition, there may have been a fifth group of originarios, either mitmaj or native. Nevertheless, we have not been able to identify a preexisting ethnic group in Salasaca.

29. Deborah Truhan, personal communication, February 7, 2011.



throughout the whole central sierra (see Carrera Colín 1981; Moreno Yáñez 1988; Oberem 1981; Salomon 1986).

The study of surnames also showed that indigenous peoples in the Ambato region were still practicing a form of parallel descent throughout the eighteenth century. Almost every one of the twenty-five censuses (even those of *forasteros*) was organized by naming patterns in which families transmitted fathers' surnames to sons and mothers' surnames to daughters (see also Muñoz Bernand 1996; Reino Garcés 2002, 106). As nineteenth-century registries imposed the Hispanic system of giving all children the father's last name (followed by the mother's), the female surnames generally disappeared. Oddly, at least seven of the Salasaca anthroponyms that we selected were originally female and survived the abolition of parallel descent after independence.

We have not been able to place the names Chimbosina and Curichumbi precisely in Salasaca during the colonial period. They do, however, appear in significant numbers in a 1720 census of Quito migrants to the Ambato region.<sup>30</sup> More important, these were prevalent names in the *parcialidad* of Chumaquí, one of the three *parcialidades* of Pelileo. Although it is possible that Salasaca had its own Chimbosinas and Curichumbis, and that they simply have not appeared in the historical record, it is also likely that they may have migrated to Salasaca during the nineteenth century when mestizo invasions of Pelileo intensified. In fact, elders say that the lands of Chumaquí were once part of Salasaca, but mestizos bought up the land and today it is part of Pelileo. The places known as Chumaquí and Guambahalo (spelled Huambaló today) are close to Salasaca; elders estimate that from the center of modern-day Salasaca, Chumaquí is about a half-hour walk and Huambaló about two and a half hours (both are east of Salasaca). The Salasacas consider both parishes *blanco-mestizo*. In summary, although the earliest colonial report of the region mentioned the indigenous *parcialidades* of Guambahalo and Chumaquí but not Salasaca, today Salasaca constitutes a distinct indigenous nationality and the neighboring parishes do not. Despite the diverse origins of people who migrated there during the colonial period, Salasaca became home to a distinct, unified indigenous people.

Indeed, we argue here that Salasaca became a safe haven for indigenous people who wanted to maintain an indigenous identity in the face of increasing *mestizaje* in the surrounding towns. The people in Salasaca who carry these last names today self-identify as indigenous and wear ethnic attire, whereas they consider the people of modern-day Chumaquí and Huambaló, who do not wear ethnic attire, to be *blanco-mestizos*.

What resources were *kamayujkuna* cultivating in the region during the colonial period? The anonymous report from the *Relaciones histórico-geográficas de la*

30. BCE/Ambato, Censos 15, "Numeración de Algunas Parcialidades de Hambato y Quito, 1720," 18 fols.; BCE/Ambato, Censos 8, "Numeración de Patate, Chumaquí, Yndios Camayos Puruaiques que Residen en este Pueblo de Pillaro y demás Pueblos de la jurisdicción del Asiento de Hambato, 1710," 23 fols.; BCE/Ambato, Censos 16, "Numeración del Hayllo y parcialidad de los Yndios chumaquíes pertenecientes a la encomienda que fue del General Antonio Lopez de Galarza de que es Casique principal Don Gregorio Toasa, 1718-1721," 19 fols.

*Audiencia de Quito* mentioned that those of Pelileo specialized in coca. The Puruhuayes sent kamayuj colonies to work coca fields in Guambaló (Salomon 1986, 197), which is warmer and more humid than Salasaca. Coca cultivation disappeared from Ecuador during the colonial period (Hirschkind 2005, 97–99). Although the climate of Salasaca made it questionable for coca growing, it was ideal for other resources. One such resource was the century plant, known in Spanish as *cabuya blanca*. The Salasacas specialized in the hand manufacture of rope and sacks from century plants well into the twentieth century, and Cicala ([1771] 1994) mentioned this same economic activity in Chumaquí. Salasaca adults today recall their grandparents making rope and sacks from century plants, and they sometimes used water and plants from Chumaquí in the process (figure 5). Given Salasaca's proximity to multiple obrajes in the Spanish colonial period, we suggest a scenario in which the Salasacas made sacks and rope for textile transport.

#### THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The identity with one's community of origin (or with one's grandparents' origin) seems to have shifted in the early nineteenth century. We find, for example, the 1809 case of Pedro Masaquiza, listed as an "Indian of Salasaca" (rather than of Sigchos Collanas) who purchased lands from a local Pilalata Indian from Pelileo.<sup>31</sup> In 1816 Juan Masaquiza was also identified as an "Indian of Salasaca" who, along with his two brothers, inherited lands from his father and fought over them with his sister, Juana Guamán.<sup>32</sup> Although this may not have been a self-identification, it is possible that the ethnogenetic process began with an identity as Salasaca Indians imposed by colonial officials. We believe that this is part of the process of ethnogenesis. In his study of ethnicity in Southeast Asia, Scott states (2009, 238), "most of the tribal designations were exonyms applied by outsiders and not used at all by the people so designated." Even if it was an exonym, the 1816 case shows that the Salasacas already had a strong attachment to inherited lands in the community.

#### *Changes in Indigenous Communities*

After independence, caciques were replaced by indigenous governors (*gobernadores*) and white lieutenants, called *tenientes políticos* (O'Connor 2007, 36). During this transition, the cantonal parish appointed additional civil and ecclesiastical authorities, both white and indigenous, to control indigenous peoples (Ibarra 1990, 219). Hernán Ibarra (1990) provides nineteenth- and twentieth-century evidence showing that the Salasacas continually resisted white authorities in their community.

The first allusion to Salasaca appeared in Ambato's land registry between 1845 and 1859 (Ibarra 1990, 162). Most transactions occurred between mestizos and indigenous peoples, but among the "Salasacas" land transactions were taking place

31. ANE T, Notaria 2da, 20-IV-1809, "Juan Guatumillo por unas tierras de Nitón."

32. ANE T, Notaria 1a, 12-IX-1816, "Juan Mañquiza contra Juana Guamán."



*Figure 5 The late Francisco Criollo making rope from century-plant fibers (date unknown).  
Courtesy of the Masaquiza Masaquiza family.*

only inside the community. These former kamayujkuna purchased lands both inside and outside their colony, from the eighteenth century onward. It is telling that they were not selling lands to outsiders, for this may have represented the beginning of their exclusivity as a community.

In the next reference to the Salasacas, which appeared in 1872, they opposed both control by the cantonal parish of Pelileo and the appointment of white officials in their annex parish of Pachanlica. This is the first recorded instance in which we found them acting together as an ethnic group. Since Ibarra (1990, 216) stated that the Salasacas had exhibited “a continual tension with local authorities,” we can assume that they had been acting together previous to this date as well. In a strongly worded petition to the “Gobernador de Pelileo,” several men with the surnames Masaquiza and Pilla demanded that they be permitted to elect their own indigenous officials, as was permitted in other indigenous parishes. They stated that they were being abused at the hands of white agents and felt certain that their own people could function better in those positions (Ibarra 1990, 219). Recall that Masaquiza was a surname of Sigchos Collanas origins, whereas Pilla was of Pilalata and Puruhuá origins; in 1872, they were acting together as one people: the indigenous Salasacas. Marriage records from the period show that the annexes of Chumaquí and Guambaló were a mixture of mestizos and indigenous people,<sup>33</sup> whereas Salasaca was an indigenous community that excluded white authorities and blanco-mestizo property owners.

#### THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Between 1908 and 1930, republican officials constructed an image of the Salasacas as “being in historically permanent conflict with the authorities,” constant rebellion, and “savage” behavior (Ibarra 1990, 235–236). In 1908, the Salasacas were accused of allowing their cacti to grow out of control, thereby impeding transit across their lands. In 1913 they attacked the *teniente político* of Pelileo en masse when he attempted to found a school in their community, and they were opposed to the imposition of the *catastro de dos jornales* (a civil register of subsidiary labor), thus causing the commissioners to flee by threatening to kill them. In 1928 the Salasacas resisted the construction of a road that would link Pelileo with Ambato. Again, in 1930 the director of public works reported to the provincial governor that “three-hundred Salasaca Indians, armed with sticks, axes and banners,” impeded construction of a bridge across the Pachanlica River (Ibarra 1990, 237). Interestingly, in the case of the road, the Salasacas finally agreed not only to allow its construction but also to work on it without pay for one mile, in return for permission to dance in Pelileo during Carnival. Perhaps it was worth cooperating with state projects if doing so allowed them to retain their indigenous cultural identity through ritual practices. If so, this would support the idea that culture was as important in the making of ethnicity as political resistance.

What pressures was the community experiencing at this time? According to

33. Libro de Matrimonios 1869–1885, located in the Casa Parroquial, Pelileo.

Kim Clark (1988, 170), the Ambato region became the greatest beneficiary of increased trade between the coast and the central highlands by 1916. This must have put considerable pressure on the land and exacerbated mestizo invasions. Ibarra (1990, 242) noted that toward the 1920s the continual disputes between mestizo pueblos and indigenous communities had intensified, and by 1930 the number of indigenous communities had diminished considerably (Ibarra 1990, 177). Rather than become another mestizo community, Salasaca became a zone of cultural refusal.

What were the historical contingencies of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that might have led the Salasacas to become so defensive against outsiders entering their community? The postindependence period was characterized by massive challenges for all indigenous peoples, including forced conscription into the armies of the period's many civil wars; new fiscal impositions; the constant push to include indigenous smallholders in the property registers; their early twentieth-century incorporation into subsidiary labor; and the continual attempts, both legal and fraudulent, to expropriate their lands. Yet the Salasacas were continually singled out by Tungurahua's authorities as being the most "fierce," "barbarian," and rebellious group in the region (Ibarra 1990, 236). There is one thing that perhaps makes them unique among other groups in the Ambato area—they were never an official "indigenous community" before officials mistakenly labeled them as one, from 1857 onward. Since they were members of a kamayuj colony until at least the early eighteenth century, without access to communal lands, they purchased their lands and were already smallholders from the inception of independence. Because they did not have the rights (whether enforced or not) afforded to *comuneros*, this may have led them to become more resistant to any intrusion on their territory. If so, this also implied that, sometime during the second half of the nineteenth century, they fused as a single ethnic group and defended themselves as such, leading to the exclusivity so noted by the early twentieth century.

## CONCLUSION

To summarize, nineteenth-century Spanish lawsuits begin to identify the inhabitants of Salasaca as "Salasaca Indians" and to discuss lands that overlap with the location of modern-day Salasaca. We know little about indigenous leadership for most of the nineteenth century, but from 1908 to 1914 we find evidence of indigenous *gobernadores* and *alcaldes* (watchmen and festival sponsors) dealing with church authorities (Corr 2010, 41–48).<sup>34</sup> In short, the evidence points to a shift from eighteenth-century *principales*, or secondary *caciques*, two of whom claimed alle-

34. Archivo Histórico de la Curia de Ambato, legajo 4, "Manuel Caizabanda Gobernador de Salasaca al Arzobispo de Quito," May 1908; "Carrillo a Subsecretario Pablo Sánchez: Da cuenta respecto a alcaldes de Salasaca," August 28, 1908; "Subsecretario a Carrillo: Pide indicar a cuales de 2 candidatos ha de nombrar alcalde en Salasaca," October 17, 1908; "Remigio Cuato a Arzobispo: Agustín Masaquiza ha sido nombrado alcalde mayor," October 17, 1908; "Cecilio Masaquiza a Arzobispo pide se nombre alcalde de la doctrina," October 22, 1908; "Raimundo Chango, Gobernador de Salasaca envía nombres para los empleados del caserío," December 18, 1914.

giance to Latacunga lords (the Hatis), to twentieth-century, autonomous gobernadores, two of whom carried the surname Chango, like the caciques of the Pilalatas of Pelileo. This group disappears from documents at some point in the nineteenth century. They likely intermarried with the Salasacas and were subsumed by the ethnic designation. Some, like indigenous people throughout Ecuador, no doubt became mestizos of the town of Pelileo.

We find that, rather than disintegrate under nineteenth- and early twentieth-century pressures, the Salasacas solidified their community and indigenous identity to the point that they later gained a reputation for being defensive against outsiders. With the exception of the Quichua-speaking (but distinctly non-Salasaca) people of Nitón, Salasaca is surrounded on all its borders by mestizo parishes. It seems that Salasaca became a haven for people who wanted to maintain an indigenous identity during postindependence fluctuations and increasing mestizaje. Evidence to support our argument includes colonial censuses in which people with the last names Chimbosina and Curichumbi were listed as residing in Chumaquí; by the 1920s these were last names appearing in registries of the Salasacas (Guevara Moposita, Jiménez Mata, and Periche Masaquiza 1992). Furthermore, although colonial reports mention Pelileo's indigenous parcialidades of Chumaquí and Guambaló (but not Salasaca), today these are mestizo communities, whereas Salasaca is an indigenous community, and there are no self-identifying Pilalatas.

Why would people fight to maintain an indigenous identity during historical periods when doing so put them at a disadvantage? Why would the Salasacas want to remain indigenous when many of Ecuador's native people were shedding their ethnic attire, speaking Spanish, and in some cases officially changing their last names to become mestizos? Some political and economic advantages, such as defense of lands, have been suggested here. However, we believe that the Salasacas transformed their "purchased" smallholder community into a zone of cultural refusal (Scott 2009). We propose that they, along with Ecuador's other indigenous nationalities, valued their indigenous cultural identity, even in the absence of economic and sociopolitical advantages—even when it meant discrimination and disadvantage—vis-à-vis the dominant society. In his study of mestizaje in Ecuador, Ronald Stutzman (1981, 72–73) challenges social scientists who treat ethnicity as something people embrace only when it offers political or economic benefits. Rather, he argues, indigenous peoples valued their cultural identity and resisted the state-making goals of mestizaje.

To view this distinct ethnic enclave with its unique style of dress, dialect of Quichua, and clearly defined boundaries, one would not guess that in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries it was the site of migration and intermarriage. For the very traditionalism and defensiveness attributed to the Salasacas by both outsiders and the Salasacas themselves has been used to support the idea that their ancestors originally came from Bolivia.

Although it is true that some members of the sending populations of kama-yukuna and forasteros were of mitmaj origins, they were most likely multiethnic and settled in Salasaca over a period of time. By 1872 the descendants of the Sigchos Collanas, Puruhuayes, Tacungas, and Pilalatas had fused enough as an ethnic

group and a community to present considerable opposition to control by outsiders. At this point, the case of the Salasacas represents the stage of ethnogenesis that Patricia Albers (1996, 93) calls the "emergent ethnic community, where the process of ethnogenesis has reached its completion. . . . In the process, they not only form a political entity that is separate from their parent populations, but they also assume an ethnic identification that is distinctive as well. It is an identity that emphasizes unity and solidarity over any differences from their ethnic pasts." So strong has this distinctive identity been in the twentieth century that many non-Salasaca writers, and the Salasacas themselves, assume that they have always been a pure, homogenous blood group. We argue that the unique identity of this nationality is due not to the Incaic transplant of a single ethnic group from Bolivia to Salasaca but rather to postindependence transformations and a conscious choice to maintain an indigenous cultural identity in order to secure an ethnic enclave in a region that underwent a process of cultural whitening.

This case study of ethnogenesis contributes to a greater understanding of what may underlay today's indigenous pride, a pride based not only on political resistance to state projects but also on cultural refusal. In addition, it has been our intention to lay bare the human condition of migrants, whether through the voices and intimate stories of the Sigchos Collanas of the colonial period or through the brave and loud communications of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Salasacas. Other case studies have traced the ethnogenesis of the Saraguro and the Cañar of the southern highlands of Ecuador (Belote and Belote n.d.; Hirschkind 1995; Ogburn 2008; Truhan 1997). Like the Salasacas of the central sierra, the Cañar and Saraguro do not remember their diverse origins, and today they use clear, outward markers such as clothing and hairstyles to distinguish themselves not only from whites and mestizos but from other indigenous nationalities as well.

All these cases, including our own, challenge the mistaken assumption that the distinct indigenous nacionalidades of today, with their symbolic markers of hairstyle and ethnic attire, are the "unproblematic heirs"<sup>35</sup> of a stable, pre-Columbian ethnic heritage. We show that the Salasacas, like other indigenous nationalities, have multiple, multiethnic origins. We diverge from writers who view ethnogenesis as the product of colonialism and state making, and we focus on the cultural refusal that we see and hear in their stories and actions, in their seemingly autonomous responses to a multiplicity of historical contingencies during Inca, Spanish, and republican periods. We are witnesses to the Salasacas' frequent ability to create autarkic space in the midst of the nation-state of Ecuador, without even having to budge.

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