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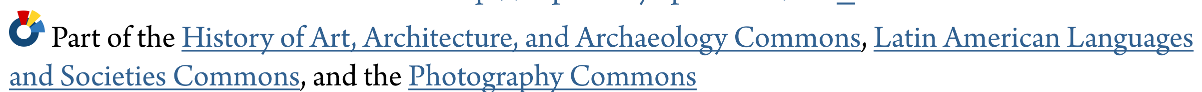
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(De)Colonizing Representations: Influence of 20th Century Indigenous/ Indigenist Art in Ecuador, Peru, and Mexico

Abstract
How has 20th century Indigenous/Indigenist art influenced the ways in which Indigenous peoples of Ecuador, Peru, and Mexico were viewed? By comparing painting's representative qualities and photography's manipulation of reality, we can begin to understand what the art evoked in the public sphere, and how it functioned to change the public's perceptions of Indigenous peoples in these areas. Shifting representations and the concept of (de)colonizing representations will illuminate the ways in which people have viewed varying degrees of indigeneity.

Keywords
Indigenism, Indigenous representations, (de)colonizing representations, Mexico, Peru, Ecuador, color, Indigenist art, Indigenous art, Egas, Kingman, Guayasamín, Sabogal, Chambi, Álvarez Bravo, Iturbide

Disciplines
History of Art, Architecture, and Archaeology | Latin American Languages and Societies | Photography

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(De)Colonizing Representations: Influence of 20th Century Indigenous/Indigenist Art in Ecuador, Peru, and Mexico

Juan Cabrera

2014-2015 Andrew W. Mellon Undergraduate Research Fellowship,
Penn Humanities Forum
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ABSTRACT

This research project will examine the ways in which indigenous peoples of Ecuador, Peru, and Mexico were viewed through 20th century Indigenous/Indigenist art. The topic of research generates a comparison between painting's representative qualities and photography's manipulation of reality. The goal is to develop a sense of what the art evoked in the public sphere and how it functioned to change the public's perceptions of indigenous peoples in these areas. Shifting representations and the concept of (de)colonizing representations will illuminate the ways in which people have viewed varying degrees of indigeneity.

Scholarship in these fields have not yet addressed how art constructs, deconstructs, reconstructs, and molds the views of the public about indigenous peoples. By researching into this type of process of shifting influences, I will be able to illuminate the associations of construction, deconstruction, reconstruction, and synthesis of public opinion of indigenous bodies in Latin America. This relationship between art and public perception is crucial to understanding how these media can positively or negatively shift people's opinions which further perpetuates degrees of racial or gender discrimination and prejudice in Latin America. To conclude, the hope is to understand the interplay between images, color, and public opinion to show how these dynamics affect its perceptions of indigenous peoples.

Tags: Indigenism, Indigenous representations, (de)colonizing representations, Mexico, Peru, Ecuador, color, Indigenist art, Indigenous art, Egas, Kingman, Guayasamín, Sabogal, Chambi, Álvarez Bravo, Iturbide

ILLUSTRATIONS

Ecuador

Camilo Egas
Grupo de Indios: danza ceremonial, 1922 from *Beyond National Identity*
Desnudo [Zámbiza], 1924 from *Beyond National Identity*

Eduardo Kingman
La hora oscura, 1936 from *Beyond National Identity*
Los guandos, 1941 from *Beyond National Identity*

Oswaldo Guayasamín
El silencio, 1940 from *Beyond National Identity*
Hambre, n.d. from WikiArt.org archives

Peru

José Sabogal
Indian Mayor of Chincheros Varayoc, 1925 from ARTSTOR archives
Water-Carrier in the Desert, 1951 from ARTSTOR archives

Martín Chambi
Campesino Playing Sampoña Pipes, 1925 from *Martín Chambi*
Chicha-bearer, Tinta, 1940 from *Martín Chambi*

Mexico

Manuel Álvarez Bravo
La desvendada, 1938 from *Manuel Álvarez Bravo*
La buena fama durmiendo, 1974 from *Manuel Álvarez Bravo*

Graciela Iturbide
Duelo, 1975 from *Eyes to fly with*
Nuestra Señora de las Iguanas, 1979 from *Eyes to fly with*

INTRODUCTION

i. Basis of Discourse

Ecuadorian, Peruvian, and Mexican artists who portrayed indigeneity through painting and photography are the main focus of this research. These landscapes were chosen because they are Latin American countries with large indigenous populations. The artists included in this study are: Camilo Egas, Eduardo Kingman, Oswaldo Guayasamín, José Sabogal, Martín Chambi, Manuel Álvarez Bravo, and Graciela Iturbide. The basis of this discussion is to understand the shifting perceptions of indigenous people throughout the 20th century by analyzing the discourse and viewing selected pieces from the artists. These artists have employed indigenous subjects and themes to portray indigeneity to evoke not only political messages, but to also expose the conditions of the oppression and realities of indigenous peoples. They have done this to varying degrees and often times they abandon their styles for new ones, more popular ones, which shift again the perceptions about the indigenous in these countries of interest. Sometimes the political implications of these images have served to push a national agenda, and other times it has been to expose the oppressive conditions the indigenous peoples live in.

This discourse also generates a comparison between painting's representative qualities and photography's manipulation of reality. The former, I propose has universal qualities, they elicit *universal feelings.* The latter, I propose is more forceful in its empathic realizations; concrete beings are portrayed and concrete feelings about them are formed, *realistic empathy* is constructed. This is the basis for interpretation of the works under review and a way of looking at these pieces with a non-critical eye, a non-academic one, rather. But both interpretations of critical value and non-critical value will be discussed later in this study.

The works under review help define these comparisons of the indigenous peoples of Ecuador, Peru, and Mexico through painting and photography through various themes. This topic is significant, because understanding indigenous portrayals through different Latin American landscapes and artistic mediums can help develop broader understandings of how indigenous peoples were represented and also misrepresented. Further research can be developed on this topic to include more artists from different Latin American regions such as Bolivia, Guatemala, and Costa Rica, among others. Other mediums of art can be explored as well for future research to understand art about indigenous peoples beyond painting and photography. Considering more images and sources on these three countries—Ecuador, Peru, and Mexico—can help to provide a network of conversations about Latin American indigeneity and representation in painting and photography throughout various time periods. This introduction will establish the basic premises of this study by elaborating and constructing a discussion about how racial theory and color theory are drawn in parallel, and also how Indigenist and Indigenous artists will be defined.

The overarching framework of this study consists of three parts. The first part will convey the intricacies and nuances of describing how indigenous peoples have been viewed in history, but not identifying who they are. It will also briefly examine the representations of indigenous peoples covered throughout history. In this section, the main point of the study will be focused on the notion of (de)colonizing representations and how the artists have used different ways to enable and disable various ways of perceiving indigenous peoples. The second part will focus on the aspects of the mediums in this study and compare and contrast their different qualities in portraying indigenous figures, and will then center on the perspectives that this art evoked in the public. I will look further into the differences between Indigenous and Indigenist art and how they each have played into molding the public's perception of indigenous peoples.

The themes of art works depicting indigenous subjects will be central to the third part, in which I will briefly discuss the various ways that these art works reach a framework for depicting indigenous peoples and how these themes shape the ways others see them. And lastly, I will conclude not with just an overview of the topics covered, but also addressing different ways to build connections within this framework of discussing art about indigenous peoples of Latin America as a whole.

ii. Color Theory and Race

The ways of viewing race through color theory can seem superficially inadequate or irrelevant, but various color theory principles apply, though, to race in my understanding of the principles of color as relative in any capacity. Understanding color and race have issues with the relativity of their nature. Colors interact with each other, and race as a source of understanding color has had various impacts in Latin America. This study will try to understand both color and racial interactions as parallel to one another when considered as a whole study of color, but diverging when taking into account the intricacies of each subject matter as its own field, such as color theory and race theory.

In Josef Alber's *Interaction of color*, he states that "we almost never… see a single color unconnected and unrelated to other colors," which leads me to believe that we also see race in this way, connected to all other races as have been previously defined and set out through the course of history.[1] The tendency towards lightening or *whitening* (of which I will discuss later) has been an issue in many nations, but in Latin America especially considering the racial mixtures that have come about since its conquest. Not only can color theory be expressed through visual studies, but it can also be discussed through linguistic studies as well. Berlin and

[1] Josef Albers. *Interaction of color*. 50th anniversary edition; 4th. (China: Yale University Press, 2013), 5

Kay's linguistic study of color vocabularies across diverse languages, *Basic Color Terms*, has shown that "a total universal inventory of exactly eleven basic color categories exists"[2] and that there "appears to be a fixed sequence of evolutionary stages through which a language must pass as its basic color vocabulary increases."[3] This is not to say that people cannot perceive things which is not in their vocabularies, but this concept builds upon the comparative nature of what we call color. One of the most amazing aspects of color are based on their interactions with each other, the nuances that fill everyday life and not just studies of perceptions of saturated colors.[4] As both visual and linguistic analyses show, color has been the most perceptually relative concept throughout the world, yet people have been transfixed, almost obsessed with a *white-black* binary, which has become a distinction of perceived inferiority and superiority, a *superior-inferior* binary.

To depart from the theory and semantics of color there are racial implications of skin colors—mostly *brown , dark* skin colors. As expressed by R. E. Hall in the article "Eurocentrism and the Postcolonial Implications of Skin Color Among Latinos," it has been observed that different skin pigments in Latinos can have implications of depression and reduced quality of living.[5] Whether mixed race Latinos or not, the fact that color pigmentation degrades quality of living in favor of *whiter* skin and against *browner, darker* skin exemplifies just how the relativity of color has been used to enforce such *racial*—such *color* discrimination. As illustrated by Chavez-Dueñas et al. the darker the skin color in colonial Latin America went as such from descending order down the social hierarchy: Spaniards, Criollos, Mestizos, Mulattos, Zambos,

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[2] Brent Berlin and Paul Kay. *Basic Color Terms; Their Universality and Evolution*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), 2
[3] *Ibid*., 14
[4] John Gage. *Color and Meaning: Art, Science, and Symbolism*. (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999), 107.
[5] R. E Hall. "Eurocentrism and the Postcolonial Implications of Skin Color Among Latinos." *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences* 33, no. 1 (2011): 105-17, doi: 10.1177/0739986310391639.

Indigenous, and lastly Africans. [6] The indigenous peoples of Latin America are considered slightly less threatening than Africans because they were considered blank slates, able to be assimilated and controlled, enslaved and taught the ways of the Spaniards. This has been observed throughout the times of colonization and the present, *white* superiority has been the custom. Later on, I will discuss steps taken for an abandonment of that ideal and the ways in which artists have tried to perceive the "Indian" as a national figure, a *non-white* figure.

Race and color are bound through and through. The notion of race is both an ethnic and cultural one, but also a visual one—a chromatic one. The relativity of color and the ideals of an ethnocentric people are what have caused conflicts between *races*. Race as defined by cultural anthropology[7] today is "a human population category whose boundaries allegedly correspond to a distinct set of biological attributes." In this study, I plan to look further into the ways color plays a role in considering race in indigenous representations in Indigenist/Indigenous art. Colors play a vital role in art, and even the black-white binary plays a special role in distinguishing race through documentation with photography. There is also interplay between the dynamics of the gradations of skin color, mostly illustrated by the term *whitening*. Bound by color, *race* can only be relative, and the shifting portrayals of not only indigenous bodies, but indigenous skin are prevalent throughout the works of Latin American artists portraying them. In the coming sections, I will assess the various ways race and colors are used in Indigenous/Indigenist art and why it matters. Other considerations will be the use of colors to create meaning, and also the use

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[6] Chavez-Dueñas, Nayeli Y., Hector Y. Adames, and Kurt C. Organista. "Skin-Color Prejudice and Within-Group Racial Discrimination: Historical and Current Impact on Latino/a Populations." *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences* 36, no. 1 (2013): 3-26, doi: 10.1177/0739986313511306.

Spaniard: Born in Spain. Criollo: Spaniard offspring born in the Americas. Mulato: mixed European and African ancestry. Zambo: mixed Indigenous and African ancestry. Indigenous: phenotypically of indigenous descent. African: phenotypically of African descent.

[7] Emily Schultz and Robert Lavenda. "What Can Anthropology Tell Us About Social Inequality?," In *Cultural Anthropology: A Perspective on the Human Condition*, 9th (Oxford University Press 2013), 321.

of black and white to illustrate an indigenous figure and how that changes the racial dynamics between the viewer and subject of the indigenous peoples (real or fictive).

iii. Indigenous/Indigenist Art

To differentiate Indigenous and Indigenist art, and to discuss the mediums of art at the start of this conversation is essential. First and foremost, I will only consider images of indigenous peoples even if artists under review have depicted non-indigenous figures. Throughout this research, Indigenous artists will refer to the only two artists of indigenous descent: Oswaldo Guayasamín and Martín Chambi. Those whom I call Indigenist will be the rest, who might not have prescribed themselves to that label, but for simplicity they are described as such. There have been "Indigenist" movements in these three locations of interest, and by that I mean that they are not all labeled as "Indigenist." In Mexico it was considered Muralism with the works of Diego Rivera and others, but both Peru and Ecuador had Indigenist movements. For the sake of simplicity and efficiency, those who have depicted indigenous peoples in their art, but are not indigenous themselves will be considered "Indigenist."

Indigenous artists (Guayasamín and Chambi) represent the ways that indigenous peoples want to be viewed since they are indigenous themselves. The implication here is that they are representatives of the indigenous peoples, but my claim is that they depict indigenous peoples in such ways that do not glorify them into exotic "others" as other artists under review do. This distinction between Indigenous and Indigenist artists stands to compare how others view indigenous peoples and how indigenous peoples view themselves. Another way to look at this issue would be to think about how others portray indigenous figures and how they represent themselves in both mediums: painting and photography. Surely these indigenous artists, like

Chambi, could have aligned themselves with Indigenist ideals or intellectuals,[8] but others like Guayasamín tried to depart from Indigenism towards a more expressionistic universalism.[9] The distinction remains, though, that Indigenist artists have had other agendas when portraying indigenous peoples while Indigenous artists have tried to bring to light other aspects of indigenous peoples that did not solely hinge on their oppression.

This taxonomy of Indigenous and Indigenist is not to say that all the implications of being an "Indigenist" apply to these artists (Egas, Kingman, Sabogal, Bravo, Iturbide) as the term can sometimes be problematic and offensive in some contexts. By this I mean that they have dealt with indigenous subjects and they have molded the ways in which people have seen indigenous peoples. Indigenists, in the correct sense of the word pertaining to those in the Peruvian and Ecuadorian Indigenist movements (Egas, Kingman, and Sabogal), have sometimes had reputations for advancing other ideals not necessarily for indigenous people's rights or protections.[10]

The choice of mediums to review was based on a choice of the different representative qualities that painting and photography bring. Paintings have been the source of depiction for many centuries and it has given the public a viable way to perceive images, especially those with groups of people, in this case indigenous peoples. I plan to explore the ways in which painting can evoke a sense of *universal feeling*, by this I am referring to the experience of looking at a picture and feeling what it is trying to communicate. There is a certain hazy quality to painting that renders it perfect for the public to view the subjects in an image without becoming attached to the people, but becoming more focused to the concept or the mood of it. There are different

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[8] Martín Chambi. *Martín Chambi, photographs 1920-1950*. (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1993), 9, 11.
[9] Michele Greet. *Beyond national identity: pictorial indigenism as a modernist strategy in Andean art, 1920-1960*. (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009), 151.
[10] Edward Sullivan. *Latin American art in the twentieth century*. (London: Phaidon, 2000), 182.

ways in which images can do this and one of the main aspects of paintings that I will be analyzing is the use of color in representing indigenous peoples—indigenous bodies. In contrast, primarily black and white photography will be analyzed in this study.

On the opposite end, I propose that there is a certain empathetic value to photographs that painting does not capture—a *realistic empathy*. Photography is a framing of reality, and this reality is felt by the viewer. The viewer is forced to feel what the people feel in photographs, the viewer is forced to realize that the subject is real, tangible. I will also discuss the implications of color in the photographic medium. This is valuable to study because of the racial binaries that race evokes. In black and white photography, there are only gradations and the distinction then does not become a question of *black* and *white*, but of a *dark* or *light* contrast. This becomes increasingly interesting when considering the racial mixing in Latin America between the races.

Generating a discussion about this topic will allow for different variations of comparisons. Conversations about different artists and different mediums could help bridge the gap in knowledge about how indigenous peoples have been viewed in art. Research into other artistic movements and time periods will certainly enlighten Latin American indigenous studies. The focal point of this research is to look into how art has played a role in the shifting perspectives of indigenous peoples and how others have taken liberties when portraying them. It will also take into account how indigenous artists have portrayed their own people and it will illuminate the similarities and differences between both sets of discourses.

I. (De)Colonizing Representations

A (de)colonizing representation is a term I have chosen, in which to understand the images I have surveyed throughout the artists' repertoires. To mention the nuances of this term, I must explicitly convey that it can both mean that an image portrays indigenous peoples as "others"—the colonizing view, and that an image portrays indigenous peoples as they want to be seen—the decolonizing view, and perhaps a combination of both when images are viewed together. This term will apply to the images in this study since they have been made both by the "colonizers" and the colonized—Indigenist and Indigenous artists.

To start, the term (de)colonizing representation suggests that only decolonization of an image will be encompassed. This is an assumption that is inaccurate and insufficient, because I understand this term to be two-sided. On one hand, an image can represent indigenous people in a colonizing way, such as the figures of Camilo Egas in his idealistic notions of what indigenous figures look like in *Grupo de Indios: danza ceremonial* (1922, Figure 1). And on the other hand, an image can be decolonizing by allowing the viewer to see indigenous peoples in a non-idealistic lens, such as in Martín Chambi's photographs like *Chicha-bearer* (1940, Figure 2).

Figure 1: *Grupo de Indios: danza ceremonial*, 1922, Camilo Egas

Figure 2: *Chicha-bearer*, 1940, Martín Chambi

The term also takes into consideration both aspects of this story of representation: these images portray how the artists represent indigenous people, while also demonstrating an insecurity of how to represent them—not a prescribed way of viewing them.

I know that this term I have developed is a problematic one since I am not using it as it has been used historically, but also in the sense that something cannot be both colonizing and decolonizing. In the specific figures above, I suggest that images individually can colonize the indigenous figures as an "other," an object to look at, but individual images taken as a collection can also decolonize the conventional ways of looking at indigenous peoples throughout the 20th century. This is because they do not prescribe a certain way of viewing an indigenous person; they describe different ways of representing them. I also understand that this term can be loaded and cannot explain the scope of this research or image making or representing indigenous people wholly or completely, but it can help to understand the ways that people have viewed indigenous peoples in the past.

(De)colonizing representations is the term I will use throughout this research to explain the ways that people have represented indigenous peoples throughout the 20th century. I will apply the term when needed, but first I need to explain a few historical contexts to justify my use of this new term. I will do this through various sections of discourse that allow for a mental depiction of how people viewed indigenous peoples in Ecuador, Peru, and Mexico. Most concepts will overlap in content about indigenous peoples, and others will be particular to the regions of interest.

As a point of departure, I want to very briefly discuss the events that will lead to the points of historical relevance to this research in this chapter. During colonization, debates about the humanity of indigenous peoples arose, and many conflicts came about because of racial and

religious differences. Firstly, racial issues were based at the visual level, since the indigenous peoples of South America were of darker complexions than Spaniards. The beginning of contact was filled with violence; land claims were a focal point of conflict and social identities were regulated by the authors of colonialism in South America.[11] Secondly, the debate between Bartolomé de Las Casas and Juan Gínes de Sepúlveda marked the time when notions of how to treat "the Indians" were challenged. The question of whether indigenous peoples could be converted to Christianity or could only serve as slaves, under Aristotle's philosophies, was a concern for power relations that would never end in the favor of indigenous peoples.[12] These two aspects of colonization are central to how colonizers have perceived indigenous peoples. The colonial views were based on difference and domination; Spaniards viewed them as others who needed to be controlled, in any case, for the good of Spain or for the "good" of the indigenous peoples themselves. During the 20th century, scholars such as Carlos Mariátegui and Manuel Gonzalez Prada tried to locate the source of the "Indian Problem." The former proposed in his *Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality: The Problem of the Indian* that Latin American indigenous suffering was rooted in the land possession system,[13] and the latter posited in his *Our Indians* that the problem was economic and social rather than educational.[14] The fact that the "Indian" is a problem is what has been the majority view in Latin America; the authors of history have always imposed others as problems. The following sections will elaborate on the historical setting of this research by viewing shared identities held by indigenous peoples, the various ways

[11] Vincent C. Peloso. "1. The Sixteenth-Century Encounter, 1492-1550". *Race and Ethnicity in Latin American History*. (New York: Routledge, 2014), 1-29.
[12] Lewis Hanke. *Aristotle and the American Indians; a study in race prejudice in the modern world*. (Chicago: H. Regnery Co.), 1959.
[13] Mariátegui, José Carlos. "Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality: The Indian Problem" In *Latin American philosophy for the 21st century: the human condition, values, and the search for identity*, trans. by Didier T. Jaén, edited by Jorge J. E. Gracia and Elizabeth Zaibert. (Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 2004), 259-265.
[14] Manuel González Prada. "Nuestros Indios." In *Horas de lucha*. Second edition (Callao: Tip. Lux, 1924, pp. 311-338); Trans. by Harold Eugene Davis, "Our Indians," *Latin American Social Thought* (Washington: The University Press of Washington, 1961), 196-208.

that indigeneity has been shaped and changed, and how the intentions of artists have had consequences on viewing indigenous peoples through exclusive or inclusive approaches.

i. Shared Identities: Oppression and Modernity

Latin America has been a place where identity was written by those who colonized it and not in collaboration with those who were originally there. In the case of indigenous peoples, they have been told who they should be and how they ought to be. Indigenous peoples have never been able to become the authors of their own identities, because the colonizers were the ones who wrote their identities for them based on their prejudices.[15] This section aims to provide a context for two points of reference towards what has been done to classify the indigenous peoples of Latin America. To avoid describing *who* they are, I opt for the opportunity to talk about what has been done to them that has shaped their realities—they have a shared identity through oppression and modernity.

Oppression as a shared identity between indigenous peoples is not one that they subscribe to, but it has shaped their realities because it is something that has been systematically done to them. Along this line, genocide and ethnocide have been some of the leading causes of why indigenous peoples would share an identity of oppression, of which these ideas I will elaborate in the next section.[16] A vital question remains: who is included and who is left out in this identity of oppression? In this discussion of representations of indigenous peoples, I choose to encompass the continuum of peoples who are represented as tribal, non-tribal, Mestizo, Mulato, Zambo, Cholo, or any other person in this continuum of being indigenous. The people being portrayed

[15]Alejandro F. Haber. "This Is Not an Answer to the Question 'Who Is Indigenous?'." *Archaeologies* 3, no. 3 (2007), 213-29.
[16] Ronald Niezen. *The origins of indigenism human rights and the politics of identity*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 56.

need not look inherently indigenous; classifications of being indigenous peoples do not belong to us, but the artists under review have made the choice to represent those people (real or fictional) who identify as indigenous (for lack of a better word). Ethnic and social identities have been contentious matters throughout the history of Latin America, and more so recently with studies about how Hispanics identify themselves in census surveys.[17] Indigeneity has been used strategically to benefit from contextually identifying as "indigenous," "white," or "other." Identity is so hard to pin down in Latin America because certain power is held in identifying according to contextual societal settings.

Modernity has also been a part of a shared identity that has arisen because of technological advances and national pressures for indigenous peoples to assimilate into the modern world. Indigenous peoples have been seen as hindrances towards modernity for the State, because indigenous peoples were perceived to be incompatible with it. Much of the literature on indigenismo tries to understand how intellectuals constructed agendas to represent the "Indio" as compatible with modernity.[18] One such example is exemplified by the opposing arguments of indigenismo constructed by Uriel Garcia's *El Nuevo Indio*, and Luis Valcarcel's *Tempestad en los Andes*. The former suggested a future that surrounded a mixed Indio—a Mestizo, and the latter was more essentialist and defined being indigenous as unchanging.[19] During the 1920s through the 1940s intellectuals were constructing the ways that indigenous peoples would assimilate into the modern State; they were imposing identities on them that were notions on their agendas. Thus, indigenous peoples were not constructing their identities during

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[17] Clara E. Rodriguez. "Race, Culture, and Latino "Otherness" in the 1980 Census." *Social Science Quarterly* 73, no. 4 (1992), 930-937.
[18] Coronado, Jorge. *The Andes Imagined: Indigenismo, Society, and Modernity*. (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009).
[19] Priscilla Archibald. *Imagining Modernity in the Andes*. (Lewisburg, Pa.: Bucknell University Press, 2010), 37-43.

the early 20th century, but many people were giving them identities that affected their realities in Latin America.

This section has only scratched the surface about indigenous identity based on how others have identified them, which has become a shared identity in and of itself. Oppression has characterized many indigenous peoples, but only because others have constructed this identity for them through systematic marginalization. Modernity as a shared identity is just as much constructed by others as oppression is, because intellectuals in the early part of the 20th century were positing ideals of how indigenous peoples will become integrated into the modern world. These identities were imposed on indigenous peoples and not created by them, imposing my own classification of indigenous peoples in this discussion would be presumptuous and futile because indigenous peoples can only truly identify themselves.

ii. Shaping Indigeneity

There have been many instances in which people have tried to define Indigenism, Mestizaje, The Indian, and other indigenous identities. Notes on terminology have been controversial, because they connote unequal power.[20] Unfortunately for the sake of simplicity I have had to use the label "indigenous" to refer to a people who, as I have mentioned before, have had a history of others telling them who they are and who they should be. That is why this section will concern itself with the strategies of constructing a *whiter* indigeneity, deconstructing a *blacker* indigeneity, and reconstructing an *ethnically homogenous* indigeneity.

Much scholarship has surrounded itself on the issue of *whitening,* or constructing a *whiter* indigeneity. This *whitening* process was a biological strategy in which indigenous peoples chose

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[20] Andrew Canessa. *Natives making nation: gender, indigeneity, and the state in the Andes*. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2005), 24.

to create a *whiter* identity, so that they could be integrated into society without the stigma of a darker skin color. It has also been noted that *whitening* is not only biological, but it can be based on the behaviors and manners of the majority.[21] It was especially believed that *whitening* would lead to improved quality of living. During the 20th century, this idea of *whitening* was strategically employed, although in some instances, *whitening* did not mean a reclassification of status.[22] While this is a racial issue, considerations in how *whitening* works in color theory could provide interesting parallels. In my version of the Weber-Fechner Law, white is added in increasing amounts to a base color; this increasing addition of white inevitably results in white being the last color in the model.[23] This can be directly associated to the social desires of indigenous peoples to whiten their race because they increasingly procreated with *whiter* people, which in turn made their children *whiter* and then led them to procreate with *whiter* people. The increasing addition of *whiter* relationships among indigenous peoples was thought to improve their living conditions; they thought constructing a *whiter* indigeneity would ameliorate their circumstances, but this was not necessarily the case.

On the other hand, deconstructing a *black* indigeneity would lead to the removal of *darkness* from racial color relativity. This deconstruction, though, was not all at once, but it did go through a process of extreme eradication and then a slower decomposition of indigenous livelihood. Others have tried to dismantle the indigenous race through various avenues, but there can also be an inversion of such a process—an *inverted ethnic mutation*.[24] Physically dismantling a *blacker* indigeneity has been done through the use of genocide and ethnocide.

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[21] *Ibid*., 17-18.
Especially considering that "money whitens."
[22] E. Telles and R. Flores. "Not Just Color: Whiteness, Nation, and Status in Latin America." *Hispanic American Historical Review* 93, no. 3 (2013), 419.
[23] Albers, *Interaction of color*, 178-179.
This is based on the model on the right side of page 179 in which the progression of black is steady.
[24] Alejandro Lipschütz. *El problema racial en la conquista de America, y el mestizaje*. 2a. (Chile: Editorial Andres Bello, 1967), 328.

Genocide (ethnic cleansing) and ethnocide (cultural genocide) have been tactics used to eradicate a people and along with them, their culture.[25] Apparently, the latter occurs much more often, because the state has more power and thus can make indigenous peoples institutionally assimilate into the culture of the nation. Ethnocide in particular is "often not even condemned when it comes to indigenous people. On the contrary, it is advocated as an appropriate policy toward them"[26] because it has often been perceived to be for their own good. This strategy is the most dangerous for deconstructing indigeneity, because it takes away a whole culture and forces people to live a different lifestyle with beliefs and views that could conflict with the values of their old lifestyles.

Throughout the 20th century much of Indigenist scholarship and attitudes were built upon the notions of an ethnic homogeneity. A particularly extreme example of such a concept comes from José Vasconcelos's ideas of racial mixture—what he calls the *cosmic race*. He also believed that indigenous peoples of Latin America would have no other future than the one that "Latin civilization" made for them.[27] This idea of an ethnically homogenous people is interesting in its triplicity, since the reconstruction of indigeneity in this strategy would mean constructing a new "indigeneity" by deconstructing the old one. The concept of a *cosmic race* gained much attention because of its idealistic stance to, not necessarily only improve the indigenous condition, but improve the human condition as a whole. But also notably on a less biological perspective, reconstructing indigeneity based on dress was also a strategy used by indigenous peoples.[28] The physical shedding of the characteristics of indigeneity reconstructs the identity of what it means to be indigenous, since dress is one of the most apparent markers of indigeneity

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[25] Niezen, *The origins of indigenism*, 53.
[26] David Maybury-Lewis. *Indigenous Peoples, Ethnic Groups, and the State*. (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2002), 7.
[27] José Vasconcelos. "The Cosmic Race: Mestizaje." In *Latin American philosophy for the 21st century: the human condition, values, and the search for identity*, 273.
[28] Marisol de la Cadena. *Indigenous Mestizos*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), 30.

and a much less involved process than a mixture of all the races of the world. This was, and still is, a feasible way of reconstructing an indigenous identity that does not readily mark them for social marginalization, although phenotypically this would be impossible. Regarding the Weber-Fechner model again,[29] this model demonstrates a steady addition of color which at some point down the gradient will be indistinguishable from surrounding colors. This is the case that Vasconcelos predicts, the homogenization of the races into one indistinct color, a color without relativity.

Indigeneity has been shaped through various ways through the 20th century by the others and the indigenous themselves. Different social motivations enabled diverse ways of shaping indigeneity to gain social access or to impose power upon indigenous peoples. The construction-deconstruction-reconstruction model I have suggested is only a way to parse out how indigeneity has been changed throughout history, and especially the 20th century. I chose a black and white binary, but also allowed for gradations to play a role in how indigenous peoples were changing and how others were changing them.

iii. Intentions: *We (exclusive)* and *We (inclusive)*

As I have mentioned in the introduction, Indigenist artists, as explained in this study, are those artists who are not indigenous, while those artists who are indigenous will be considered Indigenous artists. I will be contextualizing these artists by the subject matter of their art as well as their intentions. In this study, the artists can be split into two general categories based on how they depict indigenous subjects, a contextualization technique that I will borrow from the Quechua language for communicating a "we excluding you" and a "we including you." By this

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[29] Albers. *Interaction of color*, 178-179.
This is based on the model on the left hand side of page 179 in which the progression of black decreases.

parallelism, *We (exclusive)* artists are Camilo Egas, Eduardo Kingman, and José Sabogal, and *We (inclusive)* artists are Oswaldo Guayasamín, Martín Chambi, Manuel Álvarez Bravo, and Graciela Iturbide.

To expand on this contextualization, *We (exclusive)* artists have depicted indigenous peoples as "others"—so much so that the viewer is *excluded* from what the indigenous subjects in the image are doing. Some of the ideology behind indigenismo, especially in the Andean regions of Peru and Ecuador, were based on a white-Mestizo elite agenda. This agenda consisted of pushing for images that depicted a national "we," but in reality the images produced for this cause became material for exclusivity. The images "invoked traditions of solidarity and paternalism," and they also depicted "indigenous people as downtrodden but brave, as profoundly human yet distorted and dirty." [30] Images like these molded public opinions about leading the indigenous spirit out of oppression and integrating them into a white-Mestizo reality. Camilo Egas, Jose Sabogal, and Eduardo Kingman are in this category, because their images depict either national symbols of indigeneity, deformed conceptions of indigenous bodies, or the indigenous struggle to fight oppression as a basis for nationalist discourse. They and various other artists during the 1920s through the 1940s were the ones who led social opinions about indigenous figures.

On the other end, *We (inclusive)* artists allow the viewer to become a part of the indigenous community that they represent—the indigenous subjects are not objects to look at, they are people to interact with (whether real of fictive). Through correspondence with Graciela Iturbide, I was able to ask her opinion about creating indigenous peoples as "others." She understands that her intentions might not always come across as she wants it to, but her

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[30] Christa J. Olson. *Constitutive visions: indigeneity and commonplaces of national identity in republican Ecuador*. (US: The Pennsylvania State University, 2014), 45.

intentions when photographing indigenous peoples were never to create indigenous bodies as "others." [31] The Indigenous artists are also a part of this context because they did not try to push forth ideals that did not align with representing indigenous peoples with dignity. Guayasamín and Chambi were both of indigenous descent, and did not impose the "Western gaze" upon their own people, which their works reflect. Iturbide and Bravo are also in this context because they were already removed from the nationalism that was embedded in Indigenism movements in Mexico. These artists allowed the viewers to connect with the indigenous subjects being portrayed, and thus they did not (intentionally) portray them as less than human, as an "other."

The parallelism here with the Quechua language is fitting since it makes a distinction between *We (including the addressee)* and *We (excluding the addressee)*. This is an important distinction to make in this study, because the artists who have represented indigenous peoples follow this parallel. *We (exclusive)* artists excluded the audience to interact with the indigenous figures in their pieces—the indigenous peoples were reserved and "othered." Artists who are in the *We (inclusive)* category made the attempts to bring the viewer closer to the indigenous peoples they represented. These contextualizations of how artists' intentions influenced the 20th century in Ecuador, Peru, and Mexico are central to how they enabled or disabled the viewers' interactions with their art.

[31] Appendix, Question 3.

II. Mediums and Perspectives

So far, I have laid out the background and theoretical framework for this study by demonstrating the various historical contexts that indigenous peoples were placed in during the 20th century. The bulk of this research will remain in this chapter to discuss the differences between mediums—painting and photography—while also elaborating on the perspectives that molded the public's perceptions of indigenous peoples. The artwork displayed in this study will fuel the ideas that I propose in this chapter as well as reinforce previous concepts. Theoretical premises about the mediums will allow for a deeper analysis of the images created by the artists under review, and acknowledgement of counterarguments will be useful to understand both mediums as mere tools for representing indigenous peoples. The perspectives of this study are ways to understand how the images were able to manipulate and sway the public's view of indigenous peoples. The art pieces displayed in this study were chosen to draw parallels within the field of art about indigenous peoples, but also to physically show how they were tools for viewing them. Throughout the 20th century, I suggest that the later depictions of indigenous peoples portray an indigenous reality and less of a mystified exoticism that previous artists represented for political and social agendas.

First and foremost, I must precede the following section with clarifications on terminology that I will use in this chapter. When I discuss painting as a medium that invokes a *universal feeling*, I simply mean that the viewer feels an emotion that the image invokes. The feelings in the viewer of a picture will be *sadness* and not sadness for the person being portrayed. On the other side, I will suggest that photography is a medium that portrays *realistic empathy*, which is based on how we view images of people—we feel more empathy, sympathy, or other feelings more concretely towards a person being portrayed than we do with painting. This is

based on photography's manipulation of reality because the subjects of the photographs were or are real people, but painting is more ambiguous because the people being portrayed can be just representations of a whole. As I go along with this study, I will note the potential problems with such approaches and how this has impacts on viewing images of indigenous peoples.

i. Painting as Universal Feeling

Understanding images is only half of a battle, and when the message is not representative in nature the only thing linking us to an image is what it makes us *feel*—what the *artist wanted* to make us *feel*. Whether the artists were indigenous peoples copying art of the Old World and straying away from these representations,[32] or artists representing indigenous peoples and straying away from reality, the *intentions* of the artists make us feel something *towards* an image. I suggest that painting is a medium of *universal feeling* because its representative qualities are more suggestive and less attuned to reality—it invades a space in our minds where reality is abstracted and manipulated in ways that can exceed it. With this in mind, I will examine how color (as one aspect of painting) and exotification (as a recurrent aspect to indigenous art) can generate a discussion about painting as a medium that expresses a *universal feeling* of reality and not an actual depiction of it no matter how representative it may be.

First though, I must briefly explain this *universal feeling* through a descriptive approach—a visual approach. Consider Guayasamín's *El silencio* (1940, Figure 3) as an image

[32] Guy Brett. "Being Drawn to an Image." *Oxford Art Journal* (Oxford University Press) 14, no. 1 (1991).

Figure 3: *El silencio*, 1940, Oswaldo Guayasamín

that expresses a *universal feeling*, and this *feeling* is most visually conveyed as *sadness.* When viewing this image, though, do we exactly feel *sadness* for the subjects in the painting? I suggest that although the people look human enough, we can never really acknowledge the people in paintings to become concrete beings in our mind, whether they are fictive or real. So instead, we *feel sadness*, but we do not *feel* sad for them—we do not empathize with the people being portrayed. I take this approach to viewing a painting because it is a medium that renders reality as an abstract universe, one in which emotions and feelings are also abstracted. Thus we internalize the mood of the painting to be about *sadness* in the most abstract way we can conceive it, and we may have a hint of sympathy towards the people, but we can never really see them as actual beings that have existed in our world, they are representations of beings that look like us transferred on to two dimensions.

As an intrinsic aspect of painting, color is one of the most defining features of how a painting can project a mood, a *feeling* to a viewer. Color is such a defining aspect of an image, and the meanings of color that we construct when considering different subjects can vary not only across artists, but also across culture areas.[33] The pigments carefully selected by an artist invoke general feelings in the public such as *sadness, anger, confusion, loneliness,* and the like. An example of a feeling being conveyed not only by subject matter but also by color is depicted by José Sabogal's piece *Water-Carrier in the Desert* (1951, Figure 4), in which the color used to elicit *loneliness* is portrayed by yellow. Since we have no information about the indigenous

Figure 4: *Water-Carrier in the Desert*, 1951, José Sabogal

person in the image, we feel *loneliness* not only from the absence of another in the image, but also from the yellow ground, only meeting the horizon with the blue of the sky. Color cannot

[33] Stefano Zuffi,. *Color in art*. (New York: Abrams), 2012.

exist in a vacuum, considerations based on color as content and color as symbolism are fundamental to how we construct meanings through colors.[34] Although yellow might not mean *loneliness* by inherently, the color is used and associated nonetheless to convey the loneliness of the indigenous person in Sabogal's painting. Color is ascribed "emotional value[s]…related not to the colour itself but to symbolic associations with situations in which it is usually found."[35] The artist used this color because it is isolating, high in brightness and ever reaching in the image, yellow is used to elicit this *universal feeling* of *loneliness*.

Exotification of indigenous bodies is prevalent in earlier works of indigenous peoples, but later works allow the viewers to tap into a *universal feeling* in the images. Images that exoticize indigenous peoples are based on the "mystery" behind their culture. Camilo Egas was one of the principal artists who depicted indigenous subjects as exotic "others," but why are his images considered exoticized while Oswaldo Guayasamín's images are not? To consider Guayasamín as an example for a moment, the difference between him and Egas is fundamentally rooted in the divisions and contextualizations previously mentioned; Egas was an Indigenist artist who created *We (exlcusive)* images, and Guayasamín was an Indigenous artist who represented his people by creating *We (inclusive)* images. *Hambre* (n.d., Figure 5) is one such example of Guaysamín's ability to create *We (inclusive)* images. Guaysamín has been most noted

[34] Gage, *Color and Meaning*, 50-51, 52-53.
[35] Zuffi, *Color in Art,* 8.

Figure 5: *Hambre*, n.d., Oswaldo Guayasamín

for his expressionistic style, which enables viewers to feel a *universal feeling*. In this case, *sadness* and *pain* are the feelings elicited by this image. There is no exotification of the form, the attention is subverted from the indigenous body to the human feelings of *suffering*. He defined his themes towards more universal goals, but did not reject indigenous subjects.[36]

To consider a different point, sometimes the figures in these images can become people the viewer actually attaches feelings on to. An example of an image which directly links how others exoticize indigenous peoples and allows the viewer to have *feelings towards* the subject is exemplified by Eduardo Kingman's *La hora oscura* (1936, Figure 6). The indigenous man stands

[36] Greet, *Beyond national identity*, 160.

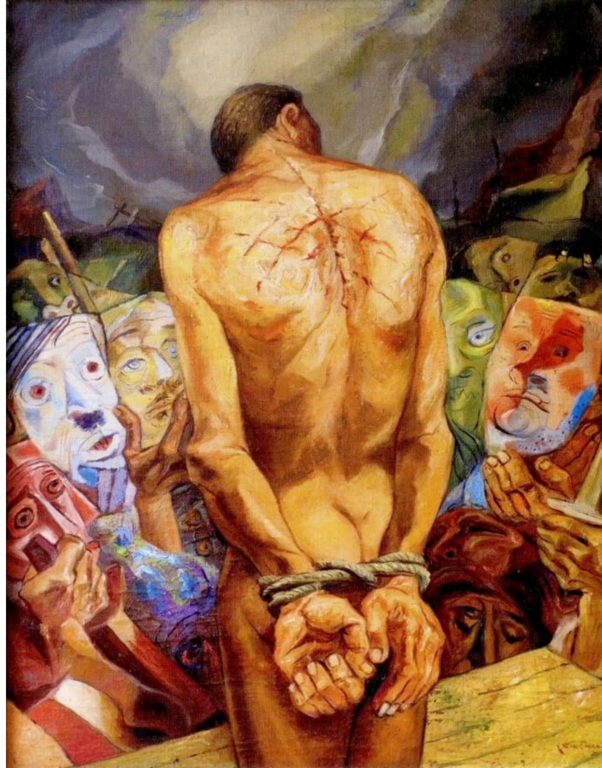

Figure 6: *La hora oscura,* 1936, Eduardo Kingman

in front of a masked crowd while they watch him. The viewer is thrusted in a situation where they need to have *feelings toward* the subject, and these feelings are manifested through *sympathy* or *indignation*. This is one example of many paintings that allow the viewer to interact with the image in this way, but I still suggest that since the identity of the man is unknown any true *feelings towards* the subject remain general and more diffused towards the situations that indigenous peoples are placed in. This is not to say that identity is the sole factor of whether we can have feelings towards someone in a painting, but we can never truly feel complete *empathy* for these subjects since they might not be real people—since they are representations of an indigenous whole.

Painting as *universal feeling* is my way of analyzing these images that has allowed me to view the art under review with a less critical lens. I have chosen to approach these paintings and how they portray *universal feelings* via color and exotification of indigenous peoples. This

discussion is only a brief one, but further conversation between how color and subject matter interact could lead to valuable insights on how this art also relates with the viewing public, and how these exchanges build frameworks for how people view these indigenous peoples.

ii. Photography as Realistic Empathy

A "photograph evokes quite clearly the fascination we feel as we gaze upon images of people who are both like, and not like, ourselves."[37] With this in mind, photography is a medium that can manipulate and frame reality in such a way that is not as far removed as painting. The lens captures what is there in space and the intentions of the artist. The framing that the artists plans out is what allows viewers to look at an image with clear conviction of what is physically there in space, but also with an uncertainty about the content, about the subject matter. Photography invokes a *realistic empathy* within the viewer towards the subject of the image, because it manipulates reality in a concrete form—the subject involved in the image is rendered physically—we know the person is tangible. Considering the colors black and white (as one of the physical aspects of photography) and acknowledging magical realism (as a lens through which indigenous peoples were viewed) enables a productive discussion of photography as a medium that invokes *empathy towards* the subject in an image.

As opposed to painting, I must explain why photography is a medium that elicits *realistic empathy* towards the subjects in the image. This time, I will consider an image that is similar to *El silencio*, from which I can draw many parallels. Graciela Iturbide's *Duelo* (1975, Figure 7) is

[37] Deborah Poole. *Vision, Race, and Modernity: A Visual Economy of the Andean Image World*. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997), 200.

Figure 7: *Duelo*, 1975, Graciela Iturbide

so similar to *El silencio* not only in subject matter but also in mood. Both images make the viewer feel *sadness*, but in the case of *Duelo* the emotion is directed towards the subjects. This is the distinction between painting and photography that I have proposed. Since the women in *Duelo* are real women, they were photographed grieving in real-time. The viewer cannot help but feel *empathetic*, because they know what it is to grieve and to mourn. In the case of photography, this *sadness* that the viewer feels is directed *towards* the women because they are exactly like us, because in our minds we do not separate them as abstract representations of people like we do when we see a painting. We have *real, concrete* feelings *towards* these people in photographs that we do not have for the subjects of a painting. These feelings need not be *sympathy* either, which is why I chose to refer to these feelings as *empathy*. We understand what the women in *Duelo* feel and we may even feel *sympathetic*, but the overarching element is that we have the ability to understand these emotions even if we do not feel it to the same degree at that time and

space. Photography as a medium that can capture feelings of *realistic empathy* is a strength in its ability to represent reality, but also to transcend it.

Black and white photography, in terms of color, is not an exact binary—gradations of grey allow photographs to have subtle shifts in values and content.[38] This subtle shift in value from dark to light allows the viewer to become more sensitive to the *realistic empathy* that photographs evoke. The gradations allow for the indigenous figures in these images to become more alive, more certain—the colors are trivial. Manuel Álvarez Bravo's photographs of indigenous peoples are "concrete beings, largely full of life, not apt to generalization."[39] Although Bravo has been noted to have a colonizing eye,[40] I suggest that his images still speak to a *We (inclusive)* context because the images are focused on the indigenous subject and not the politics of an Indigenist agenda. His photographs do not need to be in color because the focus is the subject; a wider color palate would only interfere with the content of an image. Bavo's *La buena fama durmiendo* (1974, Figure 8) is one such example of when the subject is not

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[38] Albers, *Interaction of color*, 12.

[39] Carlos Monsiváis. "I. 5. Los ojos dioses del paisaje: Manuel Álvarez Bravo." In *Maravillas que son, sombras que fueron: la fotografía en México*. (Mexico, D.F.: Ediciones Era:, 2012), 71.
Translation is my own.

[40] Fraser, Bejamin R. "Problems of Photographic Criticism and the Question of a Truly Revolutionary Image: The Photographs of Mario Algaze, Juan Rulfo, and Manuel Álvarez Bravo." *Chasqui* 33, no.2 (2004): 115-119.

Figure 8: *La buena fama durmiendo*, 1974, Manuel Álvarez Bravo

trivialized by color. Instead it is enriched by the interaction of light and shadow, which develops the gradations of grey that add the subtleties that color cannot match so seamlessly. Many critics of Bravo's works consider it poetic,[41] especially when depicting the indigenous figure.[42] Photography was not always viewed as an art form; it was considered a tool for scientific inquiry, but later on it would be considered a "black art" and still later it would be idealized and prized even though it was an art form "without color."[43] The *realistic empathy* in *La buena fama durmiendo* is based on this lack of color to produce meaning, because it does not compete with the subject of the image. The viewer feels emotions toward the subject in this picture, she is a

[41] Villaurrutia, Xavier. "Manuel Álvarez Bravo." *Manuel Álvarez Bravo: fotografías*. (Exh.cat., Mexico City: Sociedad de Arte Moderno, 1945), 21.
[42] Monsiváis, "I. 5. Los ojos dioses del paisaje: Manuel Álvarez Bravo," 71.
[43] David Alfaro Siqueiros. "Función de la Fotografía." *Hoy* (Mexico City), no. 441 (August 1945), 63.

real person, an unclothed indigenous woman, but these feelings are much harder to pin down than the *universal feelings* in painting.

The content of photographs can often get mired in the interpretations of others that are not aligned with the intentions of the artist; one of these misaligned concepts is attributed to *magical realism*. This concept of *magical realism* in photography is based on the Westerner's gaze upon foreign subjects, which leads them to mystify the subject and identify them as exotic "others."[44] Graciela Iturbide's *Nuestra Señora de las Iguanas* (1979, Figure 9) has been viewed

Figure 9: *Nuestra Señora de las Iguanas*, 1979, Graciela Iturbide

with a Westerner's gaze many times. Iturbide notes that she only interprets reality and that images can take their own paths of interpretation by others and that she cannot stop this

[44] Amanda Hopkinson. "'Mediated Worlds': Latin American Photography." *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 20, no. 4, Special Issue: Armed Actors in Latin America in the 1990s (2001), 524.

process.[45] Much of Iturbide's success is based on her images as ethnographies, and because she is able to become personally invested with her subjects she is able to allow others into the lives of the indigenous peoples.[46] The image allows the viewer to have emotions towards the woman with the iguanas; the feelings are directly related to her and not a general *feeling* about the image. The concept of *Magical realism* in photography has allowed the public to perceive indigenous peoples as exotic, but if the intentions of the artists are clear then the perceptions are reversed towards a *realistic empathy* and a not a projection of "othering."

On the other hand, the reproducibility of photographs can take away from this *realistic empathy* that I suggest photographs have. Since images are reproducible, the identities of the subjects of photographs can be diffused, the person can no longer become just an individual. This is apparent with *Nuestra Señora de las Iguanas,* because it has been circulated so many times. Once an image has been diffused enough it stands as a symbol for a cause or for a movement, but the subject is not immortalized as their own person.[47] Although Iturbide's intentions have been clear, once an image circulates it is interpreted differently—it starts to have *universal feeling*. The *realistic empathy* towards the woman in the figure does not fade completely, but the serialization of the image begins to take over and the image is given a collective *universal feeling* of *pride* or *unity* or *nationalism*. The image becomes an icon, and with this process more interpretations are formed.

Photography as *realistic empathy* allows the viewer to become invested in the subject of the image. By focusing on the black and white gradations of photographs and the concept of *magical realism* I hope to enable a discussion that connects both physical and content matter of

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[45] Appendix, Question 2.
[46] Stanley Brandes. "Graciela Iturbide as Anthropological Photographer." *Visual Anthropology Review* 24, no. 2 (2008), 98.
[47] Poole. *Vision, Race, and Modernity*, 110.

photography. Building a framework for analyzing these images is essential to how they bring about perspectives that artists have chosen to encompass in their works. It also allows me to communicate the relationship between mediums and how their qualities bring about (de)colonizing representations.

To conclude the mediums portion of this chapter, I must demonstrate the links between both mediums and how they were able to create perspectives in the second half of this chapter. The links between both mediums are not purely superficial, both are image making techniques, but their qualities are what separate them along with how the viewers interact with these images and the limitations of each. These two mediums are also not only linked by meaning since meaning is not intrinsic to the subject of an image,[48] but by overarching themes across art about indigenous peoples in Ecuador, Peru, Mexico. And even then, the link still continues in how both mediums are limited in portraying the unifying bond between them: the ability to represent reality.[49] Photography on the one hand manipulates reality and the artists intentions are carried over by factors such as framing, and painting can represent the coexistence of a reality that we do not know. The last link between the art displayed in both painting and photography in this study is the that "[f]or many Latin American photographers the human figure announced itself as the natural protagonist in the dramatization of ways that images symbolizing flux and order appear in everyday life."[50]

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[48] Brett, "Being Drawn to an Image," 8.
[49] Ricard Pau-Llosa. "Identifying the Links Between Photography and Painting in Latin America Visual Thinking." *New traditions: Thirteen Hispanica Photographers*: 22-34. (Exh. cat. Albany, New York, USA : The New York State Museum & State Education Department, 1986), 24.
[50] *Ibid.*, 27.

The rest of this chapter will focus on the perspectives that the artists depicted and how the public was able to perceive indigenous peoples based on these images. The perspectives I include in this research are based on the colors of skin and race, figures and bodies, and indigenous identity as nationalism. The artists in this study molded the ways of perceiving indigenous peoples either going along with political currents or against them.

iii. Colors of Skin and Race

Skin as a physical property has become an attribute of our humanity with social implications, and in a "post-colonial" world these implications have leaned towards a *lighter* ideal.[51] If skin has a physical color, what happens when race becomes a color vocabulary? Race as a color vocabulary was introduced by the authors of identity in Latin America, and with this vocabulary hierarchical values were placed on arbitrary identity markers.[52] Both factors of skin color and race as a color vocabulary molded people's opinions about indigenous peoples, because race outperformed skin color to classify indigenous peoples in the 20th century.

The colors of skin in Latin America are problematic, because they are not easily dividable like African and Caucasian skin. In 1825, Alcides d'Orbigny was commissioned to examine the characteristics of indigenous peoples, but in his attempt he found that the surface of indigenous skin was "infinitely variable" and an "obstacle to the perception of expression, individuality, and identity."[53] Eduardo Kingman's *Los guandos* (1941, Figure 10) displays this

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[51] Hall, "Eurocentrism and the Postcolonial Implications of Skin Color Among Latinos," 106.
[52] Revisit note 6.
[53] Poole, *Vision, Race, and Modernity*, 80.

Figure 10: *Los guandos*, 1941, Eduardo Kingman

ineptitude of using skin color to classify indigenous peoples. The man on the horse is about the same in skin color as the workers—the oppressor and the oppressed have no distinction in this feature. The only glimpse of skin seen on the oppressor is his hand holding the whip to keep the indigenous peoples in line, so Kingman does not make a distinction between the races of the people portrayed in this image. Kingman only makes note of the power relationship in the painting which is a clue that the oppressor could either be of indigenous descent or of Caucasian descent. Sometimes, though, artists do depict darker skin tones for indigenous peoples such as Sabogal's images of the stoic Indian rooted to the earth or Egas's figures almost blending in with the earth they touch. This was mostly done to emphasize indigenous peoples' relationship to the earth—to portray how rooted to it they were. The depiction of darker skin has been a

controversial way of depicting people even in European traditions,[54] but for the purposes of art in 20th century Latin America the distinctions become less and less apparent because of all of the racial mixing since colonization. These representations of a darker or lighter indigenous subject allowed the viewer to make assumptions about the indigenous peoples. Darker indigenous peoples were thought to be in tune with nature, but without the distinction between skin colors the viewer does not make such inferences from the artists' intentions. Skin color as a physical property has had various effects on how the public views indigenous peoples in both distinguishing skin tones to darker or lighter hues based on a discrimination surrounded by a superiority-inferiority binary.

Race as a color vocabulary has been the prevalent way of thinking about how indigenous peoples are separate people. The terms used to identify differing degrees of indigeneity—degrees of separation from the whiter ideal were authored by the colonizers. But these terms—Mestizo, Mulato, and Zambo—were not very clear "color" categories since they exist in social space.[55] *Huacayñan* by Guayasamín (1940s to 1951, not reproduced here) was a series of 103 paintings that portrayed themes of race: the Mestizo, the Indian, and the Black.[56] This is a clear example of how color categories of race were in fact actual ways to depict indigenous peoples. Even though Guayasamín took a more universalist approach, he still managed to capture the essence of how race becomes a vocabulary for color by creating the themes with their own color palettes. The Indian theme is "solid…stable" and "painted with earth tones," the Mestizo theme was captured by "a decomposition of form and color" with "gray, between black and white, as a range of color that expresses this nonconforming, nonresolute condition," and in the Black theme "everything is

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[54] Zuffi, *Color in art*, 296

[55] Kathryn Burns. "Unfixing Race." In *Histories of Race and Racism: The Andes and Mesoamerica from Colonial times to the Present*, edited by Laura Gotkowitz, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 60.
This note refers to note 20 in the citation, page 69.

[56] Greet, *Beyond national identity*, 178.

round, brilliant, and definitive" and "yellows, whites, reds, greens, and pure blacks dominate."[57] Images such as these that refer to the racial categories allow the viewer to rethink how race interacts with skin color. *Huacayñan* as a body of work speaks to how the public has not been able to view races without imposing skin color ideologies upon images that depict indigenous subjects. The conflicts between skin color and race are erased by contrast, and the social and cultural aspects of race claim what was lost in this conflict.[58]

The perspective of skin color and race allows for an analysis that not only reaches the superficial level of skin, but also the theoretical and cultural levels that entails race. Skin has physical properties which were able to differentiate indigenous peoples for some time, but once those distinctions become lost skin color becomes irrelevant to understanding how indigenous peoples were viewed. Race as a color vocabulary is more salient in Latin America because of the varying degrees of indigeneity and separation from the colonizers lineage. Aspects of this perspective allow the viewer to become aware of how artists have used (de)colonizing representations to convey discussions about race and skin color in Latin America about indigenous peoples.

iv. Bodies and Gendered Forms

Latin American art about indigenous peoples has molded the ways the public has perceived indigenous bodies throughout the 20th century. Whether for political agendas or poetic purposes, artists have deliberately chosen to manipulate the indigenous form for public

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[57] *Ibid.*, 179-180.
[58] Mariátegui, José Carlos. "13. Las corrientes de hoy, el indgenismo." In *Indigenismo y Propuestas Culturales: Belaúnde, Mariátegui y Basadre*, edited by Francisco José Alfonso. (Alicante: Generalitat Valenciana, 1995), 143.

consumption. Most markedly, the shift from idealized to grotesque forms and the fixations on the female indigenous nude have been prevalent in the art under review.

The shift from idealized to grotesque forms is most notably manipulated by Egas's works. The idealization of the female form has been present long before the 20th century. His early indigenous figures were more symbolic representations than actual people, and they "served the project of national self-definition" rather than depicting indigenous realities.[59] *Grupo de indios: Danza ceremonial* (Figure 1) is the epitome of the idealized form for an ideology of political interest. His shift to a more grotesque form also caught attention because it was more "primitive," but still emblematic and politically charged. His grotesque forms, such as *Desnudo [Zámbiza]* (1924, Figure 11) exemplifies how drastically he distorted the indigenous figure. This

Figure 11: *Desnudo [Zámbiza]*, 1924, Camilo Egas

[59] Greet, *Beyond national identity*, 36.

shift was a process where he "asserts his own modernity" while also asserting the viewers modernity.[60] The indigenous figure has become huge and weighted down by the mass of her body—by her marginalization, and this allows the viewer to understand their own position in society. Sabogal's work has also been criticized for distorting the indigenous forms into "ugly types."[61] Even elite members thought that representing indigenous figures (if at all) as such was not "worthy of representing a national art."[62] A survey of the art on Latin American indigenous peoples throughout the 20th century has shown a tendency of idealization towards more distorted forms, and as photography became more of an artistic medium this approach of manipulating the indigenous body was no longer of importance.

The particularity with which artists addressed the female form makes note of the gendered quality of indigeneity. The female body has been fetishized, sexualized, and fixated upon; she has also been suggested to be "more Indian," and female bodies have been "perceived sites for the reproduction of indian homes and families."[63] Many of the images such as those already mentioned have idealized the female form and have manipulated the figure to reach a gendered perspective on indigenous bodies. In fact "women became an icon of the indigenist art movement over the course of the 1920s and 1930s."[64] And through photography, Bravo's *La desvendada* (1938, Figure 12) is an example of the indigenous body as it is in reality, but particularly the woman as a surface has been partially covered—the gaze is partially subverted. Then again, indigenous men are not forgotten since they, in fact, have been classified over the

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[60] *Ibid.*, 41.
[61] Victoria A. Castillo. "Depicting the 'National Soul': Artists, Feminists, and the "Indian Woman" in Peru in the 1920s and 1930s." In "Indigenous "Messengers" Petitioning for Justice: Citizenship and Indigenous Rights in Peru, 1900-1945," 173.
[62] *Ibid.*, 174
[63] Canessa, *Natives making nation*, 16.
[64] Castillo, "Depicting the 'National Soul'," 149.

20th century as *stoic, strong,* and *brave* especially in the art of Sabogal. His *Indian Mayor of Chincheros Varayoc* (1925, Figure 13) is the visual representation of the *strong* Indian, because

Figure 12: *La desvendada*, 1938, Manuel Álvarez Bravo

Figure 13: *Indian Mayor of Chincheros Varayoc*, 1925, José Sabogal

he is portrayed as *unperturbed* and *unmoving*. The indigenous peoples he portrays are a "very different kind of Indian who has perpetuated a tearful and childlike legend."[65] He chose to represent indigenous figures, especially males, as more *durable*, *detached*, and *rigid*, and this style was partly a consequence of the Indigenista movement in Peru of creating the "Indian" as a national figure who can endure and remain unchanged.

By shifting the representations of the indigenous forms, the artists in this study have transposed colonizing and decolonizing representations on the perceptions of indigenous

[65] Jorge Basadre. "12. El Perú en el arte de José Sabogal: Peruanidad vertical." In *Indigenismo y Propuestas Culturales: Belaúnde, Mariátegui y Basadre*, 175.

peoples. The change from idealistic and European ideals to a more “primitive” state has shaped the public’s opinion to exoticize indigenous peoples through both idealization and deformation. As a collection of art about indigenous bodies, these images are (de)colonizing representations because they are not uniform in the ways of portraying the figure. The gendered aspects of representing the forms have allowed the viewers of this art to associate indigenous women as “more indigenous” and sexualized, while their male counterparts are *powerful* and *stolid*. The indigenous form has been molded time and time again throughout the 20th century, but photography as an artistic medium disables the malleability of the form and portrays the range of indigenous bodies and not just idealized or grotesque types.

v. Pan Pipes and Voyeurs

To conclude this chapter, I offer two other perspectives that artists employed to shape social opinion about indigenous peoples “in the pursuit of a coherent, legitimate, and sustainable sense of a national ‘we’.”[66] The discourse of indigenismo was based on the attempts to project the indigenous image as a national one. The images that depicted indigenous peoples of the Andes towards nationalistic goals had specific properties, such as pan flutes, which have made the viewers of such images voyeurs of indigenous culture that is forced to align with a national image.

The particularity of the pan flute (the rondador in Ecuador and the sampoña pipes in Peru) as a cultural item of national importance is one of the ways that artists tried to mark indigenous culture through visual representation. In the 19th and 20th centuries rondadors “sought and projected a common place: Ecuador,”[67] and thus placed indigenous culture as a national

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[66] Olson, *Constitutive visions*, 16.
[67] *Ibid.*, 14

identity. *Grupo de Indios: danza ceremonial* is just a glimpse of this attempt to include indigenous material culture into images. *Campesino Playing Sampoña Pipes* (1925, Figure 14)

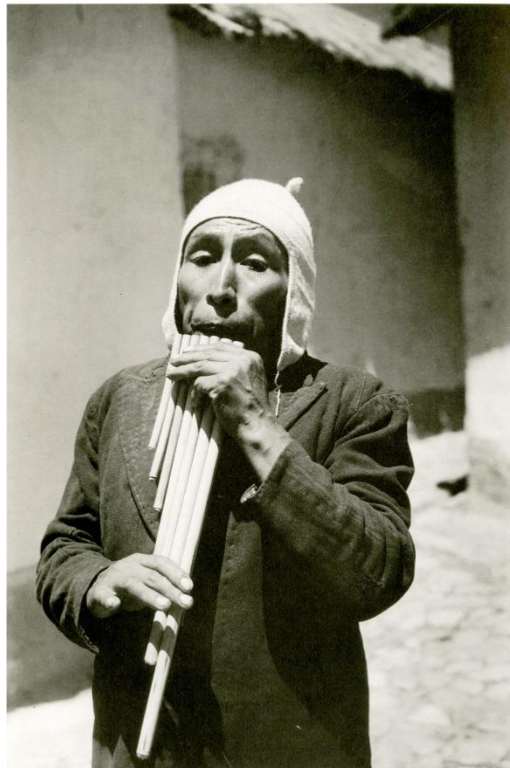

Figure 14: *Campesino Playing Sampoña Pipes,* 1925, Martín Chambi

by Chambi singularly shows that the sampoña pipes is a marker of his cultural identity, and whether it is for display as a "national" image or not is debatable but even still it is his culture he is representing. Indigenous culture was marked to project a national identity that marginalized the very culture that the nation wanted to embody.

The viewers of these images thus become voyeurs of not only indigenous bodies, but also of indigenous culture. Images that become diffused in society repeatedly become the national icons—symbols of the nation. Such images like *Nuestra señora de las iguanas* or the images of Chambi and Guayasamín are popularized to represent the nation. These types of images become

symbols of "a national *we* [that] shifts fluidly to a national *they*."[68] The images of the *stoic* Indian and the fetishized indigenous female body become images that the public starts to internalize as their culture, something that represents them. These images have influenced the social sphere to think that a culture that they stigmatized and cropped out to the margins was a culture of their own, and they became voyeurs of another's culture, of an "other" people.

The concept of the pan pipe as a national symbol and the viewer as a voyeur into a culture that has been removed from its people and the transposition of this culture on to the nation has been a perspective of importance in art about indigenous peoples. The pan pipes as a symbol of national importance was a political agenda to forward ideologies that excluded the people from which that culture was developed. In terms of (de)colonizing representations, images of "national identity" have been used to re-colonize indigenous peoples through their culture. It is difficult to understand these images as decolonizing since the intentions of the artists would come most at play in this situation.

In conclusion, this chapter has tried to face the different aspects about the art that I have reviewed. The importance of the medium and how I choose to understand these images is of great significance to this research. Understanding the perspectives that artists have chosen to focus on has also been one of the most notable aspect of the works under review. With further analysis in other areas in Latin America, I believe that these perspectives will not only hold but also expand more on how art about indigenous peoples has been an influential force in shaping the public's opinion about them. Art, as a tool to change and create perspectives, has allowed viewers to interact with all aspects of it. The chosen mediums for this study have illuminated the way in which reality has been presented, and the perspectives approached in these bodies of art

[68] *Ibid.*, 158.

have had various impacts on the dimensions of the social sphere. The viewers not only communicate with the art, but they also internalize these artistic suggestions about indigenous peoples and their opinions about them are influenced by this exchange.

III. Themes

While reviewing various art pieces by the artists under review, I came across various themes that the images portrayed. As reference, most of the pieces mentioned are not included in this study for practical measure, but can be viewed through electronic or library resources. The various pieces convey strong parallels with each other, but also with the shared and collective identity of indigenous peoples. These overarching themes are ways to categorize not the subjects of these images, but the subject-matter. There were six themes that were recurrent in many of the artists' works, and in comparison to each other.

I chose this to be one of the last topics to discuss since this could be a research topic in and of itself. I want to briefly convey the broad knowledge I have gathered about these artists and their pieces to build a larger structure, of which others can incorporate in their own work. This is a general mention of the themes that I have discovered and others could certainly be added. This is also an opportunity for the study of themes in other art pieces from different Latin American countries with indigenous populations.

The basis of this chapter is to convey the ways in which these pieces fit together to talk about the indigenous peoples they portray, but also to become a conversation in their own right about indigenous realities. In this case, they are realities since the systematic oppression of indigenous peoples has been pictured in both mediums through the 20th century. These realities have brought about these six themes I propose that are connected between these regions and perhaps others around the world.

i. Festivity

A major theme in the art under review is the presence of happiness and celebration. Art pieces that exemplify different types of celebrations include Egas's *Ecuadorian Festival* (1932), *El san juanito* (1917), and *Grupo de Indios: danza ceremonial* (1922, Figure 1), Kingman's *La fiesta* (1935), Sabogal's *Spinners* (1931), and Chambi's *Campesinos Drinking Chicha in the ViIlage of Chocco* (1927) to name a few.

All of these images provide different types of festivities in which indigenous peoples celebrate and come together in unity and happiness. This is a strong theme because of the opposing ones such as oppression and suffering, of which there are much more pieces. The fact that there are pieces that depict joy and happiness is indicative of the anthropological nature of the images. Although some pieces are based on real celebrations such as *El san juanito* "a traditional dance associated with the festival of Saint John"[69] or fictive ones as portrayed in *Grupo de Indios: danza ceremonial*, it stands to reason that not all art depicting indigenous figures has to be about their oppression or low quality of living. Many times images (especially photographs) circulate of the "poor" Indian or the Indian as a "deviant",[70] but the depictions of celebrations are very much present. Whether these indigenous peoples being portrayed are dancing, drinking, or participating in a ritual celebration the fact that artists have captured these events is noteworthy.

On the other hand, these images could reinforce the exotification of indigenous peoples. They have been marked by their exotic colors in dress and crafts. This was one way that the public's perceptions of indigenous figures were molded throughout the 20th century. These images of celebration served a dual purpose for the viewer. In painting as mentioned in previous

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[69] Greet, *Beyond national identity*, 32.
[70] Poole, Vision*, Race, and Modernity*, 117-118.

chapters, celebration becomes the feeling of *happiness* and *joy*. The way they are depicted, whether dressed in regular clothing or in tribal clothing or even naked as in and *Grupo de Indios: danza ceremonial* says many things about how the public will react to the images. At other times, such as Kingman's *La fiesta*, the realizations of these parties could have negative effects on the image of indigenous peoples. This is because the people are portrayed in drunken crowds and degrades their humanity even more through the public eye. This is not to say that these images should not exist since at the core of the matter is the fact that indigenous peoples have already been viewed as brutes and slaves, but these images should be looked over with an anthropological perspective in mind.

The theme of festivity means that indigenous peoples participate in celebrations in their own way, but also like everyone else which is not remarkable but a clear anthropological observation. This is a recurrent theme in the art that I have reviewed and to miss this fact would show a lack of analysis on my part. I acknowledge that some images are more nationalistic and others still more controversial, but when representing a group of people, carefully framing an image is the key to how the public will view the subjects beings portrayed.[71] It is not a matter of who is celebrating what, but a matter of a celebration happening at all, a moment of happiness and unity within the group being represented in these pieces exemplifies the joy indigenous peoples also experience.

ii. Oppression and Labor

Oppression through labor is a key theme to art depicting indigenous figures because of what they have had to go through during and after European colonization. Oppression is readily perceived through Egas's *Oppression: Indians of Ecuador* (ca. 1931) and *Harvesting Food in*

[71] Olson, *Constitutive visions*, 148.

Ecuador (1934) because of the way the workers seem to struggle doing their work. Oppression due to labor is heavily depicted in Kingman's work such as *in El carbonero* (1934), *Interior* (1935), *La balsa [Los balseros]* (1934), *La minga* (1938), *Los guandos* (1941, Figure 10), *Los trabajadores de la White* (1934), Álvarez Bravo's *Puesto de fruta* (1970s), and Chambi's *Campesino Chewing Coca Leaves near Cuzco* (1939), *Campesino with Foot Plow, Ocongate* (1934), and *Tea Harvest on the Amaibamba Hacienda, Quillamamba* (1944). These works depict the harsh and brutal conditions of the indigenous peoples through labor.

A small subset of images portrays the master watching over the workers. The most concrete example of this is Kingman's *Los guandos* (1941, Figure 10). This piece exemplifies the master-worker relationship between wealthy landowners and indigenous peoples. These types of images give a focal point for the indigenous peoples' oppression, which is centered on the master, in this case the unidentifiable man on a horse with a whip in one hand. There are several images with this type of relationship because it illuminated the condition of indigenous peoples in these areas and located one oppressor to represent oppression itself in the indigenous community.

A more robust subset of oppression and labor images is centered on the worker and the conflicting nature of their work. There were two periods in art of which indigenous labor was portrayed Costumbrismo and Indigenismo. Costumbrismo focused more on the work itself and not on the worker[72]. Then, Indigenism arose and the worker was the central figure of the pieces, which was based on the agenda of creating awareness of indigenous oppression.[73] These kinds of works demonstrate the shift in focus between the work and the worker from the 19th century to the 20th century; there was more of an interest in the worker so as to coincide with the Indigenist

[72] *Ibid*., 111.
[73] *Ibid*., 112

message. Chambi's *Campesino Chewing Coca Leaves near Cuzco* is an important example of this shift in attention maneuvered by artists.

These two subsets are linked because of the nature of labor. One side focuses on those who give orders to others. The other side involves those who do the work, which in this case was used to create awareness to the conditions of the indigenous peoples being depicted, while also accomplishing political agendas. This theme depicts that tactics artists used to divert attention towards the indigenous peoples being oppressed. Oppression and labor as a theme directly shows the influence of artists' pieces on public opinion because they portrayed indigenous peoples as downtrodden and suffering workers.

iii. Pain and Suffering

Pain and suffering are also very common themes in conjunction with oppression. Some works that exemplify pain and suffering include Kingman's *Flagelo* (1939) and La hora oscura (1936, Figure 6), Guayasamín's *Campo de concentración* (1945) and *El silencio* (1940, Figure 3), and Iturbide's *Duelo* (1975, Figure 7). The images previously mentioned all convey a sense of unrest and pain within the expressions of the subjects. Images with indigenous subjects usually portray this theme through the loss of someone or because of a subject's physical or spiritual pain. Many times this theme of pain and suffering resonates within the audience, because they can identify at some level with what the subjects in the images feel.

Pain and suffering due to violence is an obvious and apparent theme in works depicting indigenous peoples in the areas of concern. Clear examples of this are both of Kingman's pieces previously mentioned. They include tortured figures, in pain and humiliation. *Flagelo* reflects more of the aftermath of the violence while *La hora oscura* portrays humiliation and suffering in

progress. These types of images occur all the time, because throughout the 20th century indigenous peoples have suffered violent acts of the majority. The artists who depict these incidents of violence show the more physical side of their oppression.

On the other hand, there is emotional and spiritual pain which comes about due to loss or by injustice. This kind of pain and suffering is noted by Guayasamín's and Iturbide's pieces. They show people in despair and pain. The physical appearances of these indigenous peoples show exactly the theme of pain and suffering. Whether caused by death or processions, the pain and suffering is real and affects them all the same. This is another instance in which indigenous peoples seem to be portrayed more human and less exoticized. These images of pain and suffering do not need to be framed exotically, because they already evoke such powerful emotions in the viewer.

Pain and suffering within the indigenous community has many sources, but that does not mean that they feel pain or suffer differently. Many times indigenous peoples are portrayed as stoic or unfeeling, but this theme shows just how there have been shifting representations in the images portraying indigenous peoples. Throughout the 20th century artists were becoming more and more attuned to indigenous people's humanity and not their "exotic" or "special qualities.

iv. Identity

The theme of identity here can be a two-fold one, because it could be either nationalistic or based on a collective indigenous culture. The images created by Sabogal, Chambi, Álvarez Bravo, and Iturbide have been used to show different aspects of indigenous identities. Whether the images are used for nationalistic purposes or to show a "type" of indigenous person, these

images are products of their placement and usage. Images like these are shown to the public to create schemas in their minds of what a nation should be or who the indigenous are.

These artists have captured images that can all be used to serve as images of national identity, even if their intentions were not for this purpose. Sabogal's *Water-Carrier in the Desert* (1951, Figure 4), Chambi's *Resting, Q'Olloriti* (1935) and *Llama and Llama-driver* (1930), Álvarez Bravo's *Dia de todos muertos* (1932-33) and *Margarita de Bonampak* (1949), and Iturbide's *Nuestra Señora de las Iguanas* (1979, Figure 9) are examples of this nationalizing image process. These images provide a collective identity, of which represents distinct groups of people while representing a national figure. An example of this is portrayed by Ecuadorian Indigenists in the 1930s and 1940s who tried to change the image of the country with an indigenous national figure.[74] Many times nationalists would use images like these to convey a strong national (and indigenous) identity that identifies their country.

A collective indigenous representation is important to note, because of the many shifting views of how they have been portrayed. From Egas's transition from the European styles to deformed types,[75] indigenous peoples have been represented a number of different ways in both painting and photography. Sabogal chose to portray indigenous peoples as strong, powerful, and stoic which is exemplified in his works which include *Indian Mayor of Chincheros Varayoc* (1925), *Indian Profile* (1955), and *Perfil Huanca* (1937). All of these figures show strong and hardened appearances which suggest that Sabogal saw indigenous peoples as tough and majestic which would then lead to the public's formation of the tough and stoic Indian, which demonstrated his perception of the indigenous surface.[76] On the other hand, Chambi's photographs—*Chicha-bearer, Tinta* (1940), *Mestizo Woman Drinking Chicha, Cuzco* (1931)—

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[74] Olson, *Constitutive visions,* 23.
[75] Greet, *Beyond national identity*, 41-48.
[76] Edward Lucie-Smith. *Latin American Art of the 20th Century*. (Singapore: Thames and Hudson Ltd., 2004), 77.

portray his views of his own people. The *Chicha-bearer* almost seems to shine as a sculpture and the *Mestizo Woman Drinking Chicha* feels comfortable sitting and drinking chicha. Both images are representative of how Chambi saw them.[77] The issues of this theme in indigenous images contribute to the changing views of the indigenous peoples of these various landscapes.

These images have been used for different purposes to represent either the nation's image or the indigenous spirit (or even to negatively affect them). The theme of identity is one that should be addressed, because it speaks to the various relationships indigenous peoples have with one another but also with a nation. It is valuable to go further into this topic to see exactly how the nation's "image" has been reinvented by the indigenous figure, but also how it has influenced the country knowing that indigenous peoples are the representatives of that nation. It would also be worth noting how the image of a collective indigenous representation affects the way the public sees different peoples as a whole group.

v. Processions

Another major theme in art portraying indigenous peoples is the theme of processions, because it is notable for large groups of indigenous peoples and unity. Such works in this theme include Guayasamín's *La procesíon* (1942), Sabogal's *Procession* (1932) and *Taitacha Temblores* (1927), and Iturbide's *Procesión* (1984). These images depict narratives of groups of indigenous peoples moving as one. The procession theme is powerful because it evokes a sense of unity in the community.

The theme of processions is a notable one, because of the fact that these images include large crowds of indigenous peoples. These processions include religious ones,[78] and others based

[77] Chambi, *Martín Chambi*, 26.
[78] based on conquest and Christianization

on cultural events. What is of key focus is the numbers of indigenous peoples in these images, which all blend into one another. Guayasamín's *La procession* is an appropriate example for this since he literally blends the figures into a mass with depth. These crowds of people become one solid structure which blends into one another to portray unity within the group.

Another point of discussion for this theme is that it portrays indigenous peoples united in different ways. This is a familiar pattern, much like the theme of festivity. From my review of several pieces, procession images tend to be either solemn or as parts of celebrations. Such instances of solemnity include Guayasamín's piece and Sabogal's *Procession* (this image includes a different version of Christ bearing the cross). While other images like Sabogal's *Tiatacha Temblores* and Iturbide's *Procesíon* exemplify processions of festivities. Both types of images demonstrate the unity between each of the members in the crowd, but also demonstrate the collective unity of the group by standing together as one.

The reason this theme is noteworthy is because it is another form that artists' chose to depict indigenous peoples. Processions are based on the crowds of people, each person individually becoming part of a collective whole. The reasons for participating in procession differ based on the image, but there are still parallels with solemn and festive processions. This is another lens to look at these images to understand how artists' throughout the 20th century have shifted their attentions to portray different aspects of indigenous life.

vi. Death

The last major theme is death, which is commonly portrayed and has different aspects such as death due to violence and death as a public matter. Guayasamín's *La huelga* (1940) and *Niños muertos* (1942), Álvarez Bravo's *Enterramiento en Metepec* (1932) and *Obrero en huelga, asesinado* (1934), and Iturbide's *Muerte* (1979) either portray death directly or implicate death

through a burial ceremony. Death is a major theme, because it evokes one of the strongest emotions in the audience since it is not common place in daily life. Differences in the ways indigenous people cope with death offers a broader view of their cultural practices and traditions.

Death by violence is readily presented in both mediums. The most significant examples include *La huelga* and *Obrero en huelga, asesinado*. These two pieces show both the harsh side of death, the most tragic kind due to violence. In particular both of these images exemplify the brutal deaths of protestors. The deliberate portrayal of a death by homicide elicits strong emotions of sympathy and fright in the viewer. These images are not solely based on indigenous figures, but they are based on human matters of death by homicide and the reasons that could have motivated each individual death. These images are stronger, more powerful still because of the fact that the people were depicted or photographed without life.

The theme of death does not always have to be motivated by murder, but can be taken as a public matter. Death is hardly ever a private matter in terms of when a person stops living, since the death affects everything that the person left behind. *Muerte*, *Niños muertos* and the previous images mentioned are very powerful examples of how death becomes a public matter. The images become documents of the passing of a life, especially photography since it is the physical representation of reality. Death as a public matter can become a spectacle with other observers and bystanders, but inevitably it is about the dead subject. These images are framed so that the center of attention is the dead person, which brings our attentions and sympathies towards this subject. The fact that we know they are no longer living reacts within the public to reach differing levels of portraying indigenous peoples. These images are meant to be seen as reminders of our mortality, but also of the various ways that death can occur and how it impacts people.

The theme of death is not a hard one to come by since it is a natural part of life, but different motivations for these deaths and reasons for depicting them brings the viewer to another level of seeing indigenous people. By this, I mean that they do not die differently, and they die for the same reasons that everyone else does. The exotification of these images undermines the intensity and the subject matter; indigenous death should never be exoticized, because that is not the point of portraying or capturing these moments.

This was a brief overview of the themes that I have realized throughout my research. Looking at these images brought me to draw parallels within and across the regions of interest. These parallels suggest that scholarship within indigenous art should be further researched to develop a coherent body of knowledge about the way indigenous peoples have been represented and why the issues that are portrayed seem to be recurrent. I propose that in other areas with indigenous populations these themes will also spring up. This is not to say that all indigenous peoples experience life the same way, but as I have discussed before, an identity of oppression and inequality has been a common factor within the indigenous community.[79]

CONCLUSION

Throughout this research I have tried to communicate my insights about how art in the 20th century about indigenous peoples has influenced society's opinions about them and the various ways the art has done this. The historical aspects of this research elaborated on how society viewed indigenous peoples and why they viewed them in these ways through the 20th century. The second part expanded on the qualities of the art and exemplified works that offered valuable discussions about how the mediums and perspectives changed the viewers' perceptions

[79] Niezen. *The origins of indigenism*, 56.

of indigenous peoples. Lastly I was able to identify key themes in the art I have reviewed and briefly discussed why and how they have been important when depicting indigenous subjects. To finally conclude this study, I will offer up suggestions for future research in this subfield of art history and analysis while also discussing how the gap in the literature can be bridged.

The purpose of this research was not to just describe the art about indigenous peoples in Ecuador, Peru, and Mexico, but to understand how this subfield can be broadened by the insight of the art in these regions. To understand Indigenous/Indigenist art in Latin America, a survey of the regions with indigenous populations will allow for a holistic study of this subfield. And with this in mind, a larger survey of art about indigenous peoples in Latin America can also contribute to art about indigenous peoples around the world. Other areas of importance in Latin American can encompass areas such as Bolivia, Guatemala, Costa Rice, and many other places with not only large indigenous populations, but also smaller communities that have been underrepresented. The purpose of this research has been to identify and discuss the reasons why people view indigenous peoples the way they do and how art has facilitated different perceptions of how to view them. With a broader geographical and cultural analysis, the research in art about indigenous peoples in Latin America can produce substantial discourse that understands how art has influenced different ways of seeing indigenous peoples. It is also an attempt to understand how the shifting views of indigenous peoples has affected them, and what the trend will be for later bodies of works depicting indigenous peoples.

To bridge the gap in the literature, I have tried to interact with the various historical and artistic elements of this research. Much more knowledge about Latin America as a whole will enable a fruitful and more complete discussion of art about indigenous peoples in Latin America. This gap can be connected by allowing for more inter-regional and inter-cultural discourse

surrounding art and Latin American culture and history. It is important to note that understanding how people have depicted indigenous figures has influenced the ways people have perceived them, which enables another dimension of understanding how and why they were treated in this way. Many people have already been producing histories of art and especially in regards to indigenous studies in Latin America, but I suggest that cohesion of inter-regional and inter-cultural approaches to these fields of study will produce a larger and more meaningful corpus of knowledge. To connect all of these contexts and aspects can help us understand how indigenous peoples as a whole have been depicted by others and themselves, and how these images have affected the way we see them and perhaps also how they see themselves.

APPENDIX

Electronic correspondence with Graciela Iturbide: questions and responses, in Spanish.

1) Juan: ¿Diría usted que sus fotografías de los indígenas de México pueden ser *representaciones descolonizadoras** de ellos?

> *uso esta frase a lo largo de mi investigación para demonstrar que las imágenes pueden servir como una forma contraria de la manera colonizada en la que los indígenas se han visto previamente.

Graciela: Siempre he tenido un problema cuando los críticos dicen que fotografío al "otro" en el caso de los indígenas. Hablé con Alfredo López Austin, está de acuerdo conmigo y está escribiendo un libro respecto a esto. En un principio, vinieron muchos extranjeros a América y en ese momento se le llamó al este tipo de fotografía, "fotografiando al otro." Yo viví con los indígenas, me sentí muy feliz con ellos, viví en sus casas, de hecho, sigo visitando Juchitán donde estas personas son mis amigas y nunca sentí estar fotografiando alguna persona que no tiene que ver con México. Ellos y nosotros formamos este país.

2) J: ¿En sus imágenes de los indígenas, ha sentido que ellos se han convertido en figuras exotizadas o figuras que perpetuán la imagen exótica de los extranjeros? ¿Y es esto un problema qué piensa cuando toma imágenes de los indígenas?

G: Cuando yo fotografío en estos lugares no pienso absolutamente en el resultado, simplemente hay una complicidad entre nosotros. Si a los extranjeros les parece una imagen exótica, es su problema. Yo interpreto la realidad y ellos interpretan mi trabajo. Hay una fotografía, *La señora de las Iguanas,* que el pueblo de Juchitán la llamó "la medusa Juchiteca" cuando la casa de la cultura de Juchitán celebró su aniversario hicieron carteles con Zobeida, la medusa Juchiteca y la colocaron en todas las casas. Es decir, esta imagen pertenece al pueblo de Juchitán. Hay muchos extranjeros que la han interpretado en murales, por ejemplo en Los Ángeles y en otras partes. Cuando yo tomo una imagen, la imagen puede caminar por sí sola y yo no puedo evitarlo.

3) J: ¿Usted era la aprendiz de Manuel Álvarez Bravo por un tiempo. ¿Como la influyo su metodología? ¿Cómo describiría su propio estilo al tomar imágenes de los indígenas?

G: Fui asistente de Álvarez Bravo durante un tiempo, después, pasó a ser parte de mi familia y lo que aprendí de él fue su parte poética y su respeto por tomar fotografías. Él no sólo tomaba indígenas, sino también paisajes, objetos, desnudos, etc., etc. Él fue más que un profesor para mí, un maestro en mi vida. Me enseñó no sólo fotografía, sino parte de la cultura de mi país. En la parte técnica, nunca me dijo nada, así que es una de las cosas que más le agradezco.

4) J: ¿Creé que sus imágenes de los indígenas aíslan o invitan a un público diverso? ¿Ósea, las imágenes hacen que la gente sienta empatía por el sufrimiento del indígena? ¿Y qué piensa de las imágenes en las que los tratan como objetos?

G: Para empezar, los indígenas en el caso de Juchitán no son pobres, al contrario. Siempre he evitado fotografiar la pobreza. Me gusta expresar en mi trabajo la dignidad del indígena.

5) J: He admirado sus imágenes de los indígenas y el cuidado que ha tenido en representarlos. En particular la imagen *Nuestra Señora de las Iguana.* ¿Qué tan bien cree que esta imagen retrata a los indígenas como personas propias y no como el exótico "otro"? El titulo de la imagen es indicativo del cuidado que tomó en representar a esta mujer. ¿Me puede decir porque nombró *Nuestra Señora de las Iguanas* a esta imagen?

G: Cuando fui al mercado de Juchitán, al cual iba muy seguido para estar con las mujeres, llegó Zobeida con las iguanas en la cabeza (es la manera en que estas mujeres cargan sus productos). Fue una imagen que tomé instantánea y ahora le mando la hoja de contacto para que usted se de cuenta. Las iguanas están vivas y se venden para comer. Si algún espectador lo interpreta como exótico, es su problema.

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