

**NEGOTIATING INDIGENOUS AUTONOMY:
POLITICS, LAND, AND RELIGION IN TIERRADENTRO (COLOMBIA), 1905-1950**

by

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For decades after Independence more than half of continental Latin America's territory remained beyond the nascent republics' control. Indigenous populations inhabited most of these regions, and by the late-nineteenth century the Latin American states started to target them in an effort to secure national borders and consolidate territorial control. With only a few exceptions, states turned to international Christian missionary orders to help them in the "civilization" of these indigenous areas, and by the first decade of the twentieth century the missionaries were active in many of them, from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego. In spite of the missionaries' widespread presence, there exist only a few studies about the impact they had on the indigenous populations they targeted and on the states' nation-building projects. This study examines precisely these questions by focusing on the case of Tierradentro, a region in southwestern Colombia inhabited mostly by Nasa Indians, and where Catholic missionaries from the Congregation of the Mission initiated a mission in 1905 that survives until the present.

This dissertation studies the transformations that indigenous authorities underwent in response to the new republican reality, the missionaries' "civilizing" agenda and the ways in which indigenous demands shaped it, the Indians' active participation in elections and political parties, their struggles to defend their communal lands, and the negotiation between Catholic and non-Catholic traditions that characterized the Indians' ritual life. It utilizes documentation

produced by the missionaries, local and national authorities, travelers, anthropologists, and the Indians themselves.

This study argues that the Nasa Indians from Tierradentro managed to retain significant levels of political and cultural autonomy not by remaining isolated, but by actively engaging with a wide variety of local, national, and international actors. Starting in the 1970s Indians from Tierradentro and other localities used several of these strategies to build one of the most successful self-identified indigenous movements in Latin America.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In 1928 the Governor of the Colombian Department of Cauca sent a letter to the Minister of Government praising the work of the Catholic missionaries from the Congregation of the Mission among the Indians of the region known as Tierradentro. The Caucan official explained that in Tierradentro these missionaries had converted many indigenous “infidels” but, more importantly, had brought “many indigenous tribes not only to the social life, but also to the affection and respect for the authorities and the government, which they formerly loathed...” These missionaries were, in the words of the governor, “real watchtowers of the national security,” whose actions were one of the main reasons why the local Indians had abandoned the hostile attitude against the official authorities that just a decade before had pushed them to rebel.¹

The feat the governor was attributing to the missionaries was not a small one. The Indians from Tierradentro, most of them part of the Nasa group, had earned a fame of fierce warriors during the many civil wars that wreaked havoc in nineteenth-century Colombia, and between 1914 and 1917 had played a crucial role in the *Quintinada*, an indigenous movement that had shaken Cauca and some of its neighboring departments. This was the revolt the governor was referencing in his letter. The governor’s letter bespoke some of the anxieties that Tierradentro Indians produced in local authorities, especially due to their ability to take up arms to resist the government’s designs. The letter also revealed the high expectations that these authorities placed on the ability of a few Catholic missionaries, many of them foreigners, to finally integrate these

¹ “muchas tribus indígenas no solo a la vida social sino al afecto y al respeto por las autoridades y por el Gobierno, que otrora repugnaban”, “verdaderos atalayas de la seguridad nacional.” AGN/MG/S1, vol. 964, ff. 563-564.

Indians into the Colombian nation. But, was this portrayal of the missionaries' impact on Tierradentro accurate?

The missionaries the governor was referring to belonged to the Congregation of the Mission, a international congregation of Catholic secular priests founded in 1625 in France, whose main goals were the education of the clergy and the evangelization of the rural poor. Priests of this congregation were more commonly known as Vincentians or Lazarists. By the nineteenth century they had missions throughout the world, and in 1905 one of the Vincentian French Provinces funded the mission in Tierradentro. This mission continues to operate to this day.²

In the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries Christian missionaries targeted indigenous populations not only in Tierradentro but all across the Americas.³ Yet the literature on their impact on those populations and on the states' nation building projects remains scarce. The question then remains; did the missionaries facilitate the Indians' integration into the nation, as states across the region hoped? Or did they become partners in the Indians' struggle against the state's encroachment, as the literature on post-1950s missions suggests?

² For the history of the Congregation in Colombia see: Juan Floro Bret, *Fundación y primeros años de la provincia vicentina de Colombia* (Bogotá: Ediciones Sembrador, 1962). David González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio y luchas indígenas en Colombia* (Bogotá: Editorial La Rueda Suelta, n.d.). For a general overview of the Vincentian's history see: Stafford Poole, *A History of the Congregation of the Mission, 1625-1843* (Santa Barbara: Vincentian Fathers and Brothers, St. Mary's Seminary, 1973). An excellent recent study about the congregation in nineteenth-century Europe is: Edward R. Udovic, *Jean-Baptiste Etienne and the Vincentian Revival* (Chicago, IL: Vincentian Studies Institute Monographs, 2001). General histories of the Congregation are scarce, especially for the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Histories of some Provinces or Viceprovinces exist, but most of them are unpublished manuscripts, and can be found only in specialized archives or libraries. Most of these books and manuscripts were written by the missionaries themselves, who based their work either on Congregation archives or their personal experiences. Thus, when referring to the Congregation of the Mission and unlike other religious orders—Jesuits, Franciscans, or Dominicans for example—, academic historiography is almost non-existent. One exception is: Silvia Arrom, "Social Catholicism and Voluntary Associations in Mexico," in *Philanthropy and Social Change in Latin America*, ed. Cynthia Sanborn and Felipe Portocarrero (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies, 2005).

³ See notes 22 to 31 ahead.

I will explore these questions through the case study of Tierradentro, an indigenous region located in southwestern Colombia. Within the Americas it was in Colombia where Christian (in this case Catholic) missions among Indians gained the greatest formal power and had the largest geographic reach, amounting to more than 70 per cent of the country's territory. Additionally, the indigenous movement that arose in Colombia in the 1970s remains one of the strongest of the continent. For these reasons Colombia is an excellent case to examine the interactions between nation-states, missionaries, and indigenous populations.

In spite of the Vincentians' presence in Tierradentro for well over a century, there exist no recent academic studies about their activities in the region.⁴ Scholars writing about Tierradentro, nonetheless, have tended to assert that the missionaries gained great, and almost unchecked, powers over the region and its inhabitants. For example, in an influential study Rappaport argued that the missionaries kept "a stranglehold in cabildos and schools," "ruled the region with an iron fist," and "control[led] myriad aspects of the life of the region."⁵ Sevilla claimed that in the mid-1970s the mission maintained a "strict ideological control over the community" in Tumbichukue.⁶ And yet that same literature presents evidence that challenges the idea that the missionaries gained such widespread control. At the religious and cultural level, Nasa shamans originally from Tierradentro—where missionaries have been centered for over a century—are currently the most famous among the Nasa communities; Rappaport claims that a "syncretistic ritual practice" exists in this region that has disappeared from other Nasa areas.

⁴ Anthropologist Segundo Bernal Villa's study of 1956 remains unpublished. Segundo E. Bernal Villa, "Religious Life of the Paez Indians of Colombia" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1956). The most thorough study in existence is a mixture of historical apology and witness account written by a Vincentian missionary. González, *Los paezes, o, genocidio*.

⁵ Joanne Rappaport, *Intercultural Utopias: Public Intellectuals, Cultural Experimentation, and Ethnic Pluralism in Colombia* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 123, 125, 132.

⁶ "estricto control ideológico de la comunidad." Elías Sevilla Casas, *La pobreza de los excluidos: economía y sobrevivencia en un resguardo indígena del Cauca* (Cali, Colombia: Ethnos, 1986), 29, 91.

Moreover, several current indigenous activists claim that it is in Tierradentro where the “authentic” Nasa culture still survives.⁷ At the economic and social level, even though Vincentians worked actively to eradicate indigenous communal lands (known as *resguardos*), these lands continue to exist in Tierradentro. In the case of Tumbichukue, the community Sevilla claimed was under the missionaries’ ideological grip, was the first one in all of Colombia to reestablish a *resguardo* after its dissolution by the government.⁸ At the political level, until the late-twentieth century most Indians remained loyal to the Liberal party, even though the missionaries were Conservative and had tried to bring the local population into the Conservative fold.⁹ Finally, missionary influence did not quell indigenous activism, as Cauca’s governor had claimed in the letter I referenced at the beginning of this introduction. For in the early 1970s indigenous activists from Tierradentro joined Indians from other Caucan regions to form the first self-identified indigenous organization in Colombia, thus giving birth to one of the strongest and earliest indigenous movements in modern Latin America.¹⁰

To judge by all this evidence, indigenous autonomy and activism seems to have been strongest, not weakest, in precisely the region the Colombian state handed over to the Vincentians. Is it perhaps that the Vincentians acted as handmaidens of resistance here, as scholars have argued was the case for missionaries elsewhere in Latin America in the second half of the twentieth century? In sum, how did missionaries’ activities impact the indigenous populations of Tierradentro, as well as the nation-building projects that the Colombia state was

⁷ Rappaport, *Intercultural Utopias*.

⁸ Tumbichukue was part of Calderas, which was dissolved in 1970. Tumbichukue had a separate *cabildo*, and the community fought until a *resguardo* was reestablished in the lands of Tumbichukue, in 1978. Sevilla, *La pobreza de los excluidos*, 104-108.

⁹ Sevilla, *La pobreza de los excluidos*.

¹⁰ Brett Bodley Troyan, "Ethnic Citizenship in Colombia: The Experience of the Regional Indigenous Council of the Cauca in Southwestern Colombia from 1970 to 1990," *Latin American Research Review* 43, no. 3 (2008).

advancing in this area—and why? The answers can shed light on trends far beyond Colombia's borders.

1.1 INDIANS AND NATIONS IN LATIN AMERICA

By the 1990s indigenous peoples all across Latin America had gained an unprecedented visibility in the political arena, thanks to the emergence in country after country of self-identified indigenous movements that demanded recognition from the states of their rights to autonomy, cultural difference, and territory. This novel prominence brought about one of the most dramatic revisions of the scholarship about Latin America, which now strove not only to understand the new movements but also to rethink the role indigenous groups had played in the region's post-colonial history. Influenced by an evolutionist framework, up until the 1980s most intellectuals had presumed that an ethnically-homogeneous citizenry was the hallmark of "modern" societies. Indigenous and other ethnically-differentiated groups were therefore understood as archaic survivals from pre-modern times, which had already disappeared from Latin American nations or were at least declining steadily.¹¹ But as ethnic activism, indigenous and otherwise, emerged in the region, new studies started to argue that state-sponsored narratives of successful *mestizaje*, whitening, or extermination masked the very real ethnic diversity that continued to characterize Latin American societies into the twentieth century. Moreover, the existence of these ethnically-differentiated populations was not predicated on their isolation from their larger national societies (as traditional anthropological theories suggested). On the contrary, scholars continue to

¹¹ Peter Wade, *Race and Ethnicity in Latin America* (London, Chicago: Pluto Press, 1997), 31-32, 60.

uncover the indigenous roots and agendas that shaped many social movements previously understood as exclusively class-based, as well as the many ways in which individuals and groups that claimed indigenous identifications shaped the modern nation-states by appropriating and refashioning ideas about nation and citizenship.¹²

In spite of their breadth and depth, few of these studies have examined the influence that religious actors had on the post-colonial history of these populations.¹³ This is especially intriguing because, as noted above, a variety of Christian organizations were very active among indigenous groups across the region during the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. My dissertation examines the case of Tierradentro in order to shed light precisely on the impact that interactions with non-indigenous religious actors had over both indigenous populations and the nation-building projects that states directed at these indigenous regions during the first half of the twentieth century.

¹² Some examples include: Laura Gotkowitz, *A Revolution for Our Rights: Indigenous Struggles for Land and Justice in Bolivia, 1880-1952* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007). Diego Escolar, *Los dones étnicos de la nación: identidades huarpe y modos de producción de soberanía en Argentina*, Colección miradas antropológicas (Buenos Aires: Prometeo, 2007). Virginia Q. Tilley, *Seeing Indians: a Study of Race, Nation, and Power in El Salvador* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005). Florencia E. Mallon, *Courage Tastes of Blood: The Mapuche Community of Nicolás Ailío and the Chilean State, 1906-2001* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005). Greg Grandin, *The Blood of Guatemala: A History of Race and Nation* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2000). Jeffrey Gould, *To Die in This Way: Nicaraguan Indians and the Myth of Mestizaje, 1880-1965* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1998).

¹³ Two important exceptions are: Erick D. Langer, *Expecting Pears from an Elm Tree: Franciscan Missions on the Chiriguano Frontier in the Heart of South America, 1830-1949* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2009). Pilar García Jordán, *Cruz y arado, fusiles y discursos: la construcción de los Orientes en el Perú y Bolivia, 1820-1940* (Lima: Instituto Francés de Estudios Andinos and Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 2001).

1.2 CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES AND INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS

Recent work on the emergence of the indigenous movements during the late-twentieth century has underscored the crucial role that non-indigenous religious actors have played in the recent history of indigenous populations, especially in facilitating and even furthering their political and cultural mobilization. Most of these writings, however, date the influence of missionaries back a half a century at most, starting in the 1950s and 1960s, suggesting that before these years such influence was negligible.¹⁴

This oversight mirrors the general trends in the historiography about the interactions between native populations and religious organizations in Latin America, which clusters into two periods: the colonial era¹⁵ and the 1950s onward.¹⁶ In contrast, considerably fewer works have focused on the nineteenth or early twentieth centuries.¹⁷ As Ivereigh has pointed out, this trend responds to the widespread assumption that during these years the influence of ecclesiastical institutions decreased steadily due to the process of secularization that Latin America (as other regions in the world) was presumably undergoing.¹⁸ Within this frame, the few studies that have explored the relationships between non-indigenous religious actors and indigenous communities

¹⁴ Edward L. Cleary and Timothy J. Steigenga, *Resurgent Voices in Latin America: Indigenous Peoples, Political Mobilization, and Religious Change* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2004). Deborah J. Yashar, *Contesting Citizenship in Latin America: the Rise of Indigenous Movements and the Postliberal Challenge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

¹⁵ The literature is too vast to cite. For the case of Colombia see: Héctor Llanos Vargas, *En el nombre del Padre, del Hijo y el Espíritu Santo: adoctrinamiento de indígenas y religiosidades populares en el Nuevo Reino de Granada (siglos XVI-XVIII)* (Bogotá: Héctor Llanos Vargas, 2007). Bruno Schlegelberger, *Los arhuacos en defensa de su identidad y autonomía, resistencia y sincretismo* (Bogotá: Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, 1995). Mercedes López Rodríguez, *Tiempos para rezar y tiempos para trabajar: la cristianización de las comunidades muisca coloniales durante el siglo XVI, 1550-1600*, Colección Cuadernos coloniales (Bogotá: Instituto Colombiano de Antropología e Historia, 2001).

¹⁶ A useful review of some recent publications is: Virginia Garrard-Burnett, "The Third Church in Latin America: Religion and Globalization in Contemporary Latin America," *Latin American Research Review* 39, no. 3 (2004).

¹⁷ Two pioneer studies are: Langer, *Expecting Pears from an Elm Tree*. García, *Cruz y arado*.

¹⁸ Austen Ivereigh, ed. *The Politics of Religion in an Age of Revival. Studies in Nineteenth-Century Europe and Latin America* (London: Institute of Latin American Studies, 2000).

have been those focusing on the Conservative administrations that were in power at different times during the nineteenth century, and which tended to ally with the Catholic Church and with indigenous communities to face its Liberal contenders.¹⁹

Recent studies, however, have revealed that the process of separation between Church and State that Liberals advanced in post-Independence Latin America did not translate into a weaker Catholic Church or a more secular society. Instead, scholars have found that nineteenth-century Latin America witnessed an intense religious revival that translated into significant levels of religious zeal and activism among both laity and clergy, even as Liberalism gained hegemony in most Latin American countries by the late-nineteenth century.²⁰ In spite of this novel interest in the role of religious ideas and institutions, analysis of nineteenth and early-twentieth century missionary activities among indigenous groups in the region remains marginal.

Christian missionaries, both Protestant and Catholic, were not minor players in the post-colonial Americas.²¹ In fact, at the turn of the century a variety of missionary organizations were active among Indians in regions as varied as Alaska,²² northern Canada, the American West,²³

¹⁹ Two examples are: Douglass Sullivan-González, *Piety, Power, and Politics: Religion and Nation Formation in Guatemala, 1821-1871* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1998). Derek Williams, "Negotiating the State: National Utopias and Local Politics in Andean Ecuador, 1845-1875" (PhD diss., State University of New York at Stony Brook, 2001).

²⁰ Ivereigh, *The Politics of Religion*. Derek Williams, "Assembling the 'Empire of Morality': State Building Strategies in Catholic Ecuador, 1861-1875," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 14, no. 2 (2001). Arrom, "Social Catholicism and Voluntary Associations." For the case of Colombia, see: Patricia Londoño-Vega, *Religion, Culture, and Society in Colombia: Medellín and Antioquia, 1850-1930*, Oxford historical monographs (Oxford and New York: Clarendon Press, Oxford University Press, 2002). Hayley Froyland, "Trabajo, Ahorro, Familia, y Caridad: Poverty and the Catholic Moral Imperative in the Era of 'Order and Progress' in Regeneration Colombia, 1878-1900," *The Latin Americanist* 53, no. 1 (2009).

²¹ The use of Christian missionaries as a means to gain political control was not exclusive of the Americas. Multiple European nations utilized missionaries to build their overseas empires in Africa and Asia during the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. See: Owen White and J. P. Daughton, eds., *In God's Empire: French Missionaries and the Modern World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012). Hilary M. Carey, *God's Empire: Religion and Colonialism in the British World, c.1801-1908* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

²² Kirk Dombrowski, *Against Culture: Development, Politics, and Religion in Indian Alaska* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001).

the Sierra Tarahumara in northern Mexico,²⁴ the Mosquitia in Caribbean Central America,²⁵ Talamanca in Caribbean Costa Rica,²⁶ Guyana and Surinam,²⁷ several regions of Colombia (including Tierradentro),²⁸ the Amazon basin,²⁹ the “Gran Chaco”,³⁰ Patagonia, as well as Tierra del Fuego in southernmost Chile.³¹

Bringing these missions into our understanding of Latin American history challenges the assumption, still dominant in the literature about nationalism, that nation-making was mostly about secularizing the state and the society as a whole.³² As the widespread presence of missionaries in indigenous regions suggests, in large sections of Latin America both religious organizations and ideas of religious conversion played a key role on the process of nation-building. However, we know very little about the impact these religious actors had on the indigenous populations they targeted.

The case of Tierradentro complicates the existing narrative about the impact of Christian missionaries on indigenous populations in post-colonial Latin America. Existing case studies

²³ C.L. Higham, *Noble, Wretched & Redeemable: Protestant Missionaries to the Indians in Canada and the United States, 1820-1900* (Albuquerque and Alberta: University of New Mexico Press and University of Calgary Press, 2000).

²⁴ Ricardo León García and Carlos González Herrera, *Civilizar o exterminar: tarahumaras y apaches en Chihuahua, siglo XIX* (México D.F.: CIESA, INI, 2000).

²⁵ Benjamin F. Tillman, *La influencia morava en el paisaje de la Mosquitia hondureña*, trans. Janeth Blanco (Tegucigalpa: Editorial Guaymuras, 2004). Susan Hawley, "Protestantism and Indigenous Mobilisation: The Moravian Church among the Miskitu Indians of Nicaragua," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 29, no. 1 (1997).

²⁶ Bernardo Drüg, *Historia de la Viceprovincia de Costa Rica, 1873-1993* (Teruel: Ediciones Fe y Vida, 1995).

²⁷ Andrew Sanders, *The Powerless People: an Analysis of the Amerindians of the Corentyne River* (London and New York: Macmillan Caribbean, 1987).

²⁸ Myriam Jimeno Santoyo, "El estado, las políticas estatales y los indígenas," in *Estado y minorías étnicas en Colombia*, ed. Myriam Jimeno Santoyo and Adolfo Triana Antorveza (Bogotá: Fundación para las Comunidades Colombianas, 1985).

²⁹ Gabriel Cabrera Becerra, *La Iglesia en la frontera: misiones católicas en el Vaupés, 1850-1950* (Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Sede Leticia, 2002). García Jordán, *Cruz y arado, fusiles y discursos*. Michael Taussig, *Shamanism, Colonialism, and the Wild Man. A Study in Terror and Healing* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991).

³⁰ Langer, *Expecting Pears from an Elm Tree*. García Jordán, *Cruz y arado, fusiles y discursos*.

³¹ C. A. Brebbia, *Patagonia, a Forgotten Land: From Magellan to Perón* (Boston: WIT Press, 2006).

³² Benedict R. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Rev. ed. (London and New York: Verso, 2006). Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, The Wiles lectures (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

offer evidence that under early-nineteenth-century Conservative regimes and during the second half of the twentieth century alike, as a general rule Christian missionaries working among indigenous populations adopted a protective role towards these communities. One might then assume that during the less-studied period of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century, missionaries would have maintained a similar attitude. And yet, this was not the case in Tierradentro, where in the early-twentieth century the Vincentian missionaries became a major driving force in the efforts to dismantle indigenous communities and lands.

This is the first irony of my findings. The second is that rather than succeeding in disempowering Indians and speeding their assimilation, missionary efforts spurred the opposite results.

1.3 FRONTIERS, MISSIONARIES, STATE, AND RELIGION

The case of Tierradentro also leads us to interrogate the concept of “frontiers.” For in spite of being far from Colombia’s international borders, this region shared some of the features that have been commonly considered particular to areas located along national or imperial borders. In turn-of-the-century Tierradentro, as recent scholarship claims was the case in frontier areas, the local indigenous communities had managed to retain significant levels of autonomy, preventing the national state from establishing full administrative control or an uncontested hegemony. Furthermore, Tierradentro, just like regions that have been considered frontiers, was the stage of ongoing cross-cultural interactions between indigenous and non-indigenous groups.³³

³³ Some of the most relevant recent scholarship on frontiers include: Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815*, 20th anniversary ed. (New York: Cambridge

Tierradentro was only one among several indigenous areas in Colombia where Catholic missionaries established themselves with the support of the post-Independence national government. By the late-nineteenth century the Colombian state had successfully dismantled most of the indigenous communities located in the regions closer to the country's capital, especially in the departments of Cundinamarca and Boyacá. However, indigenous communities continued to exist in the southwestern highlands of Cauca (including Tierradentro) and Nariño, as well as in the vast lowlands of the Amazonia, the Orinoquia, the southern Pacific Coast, and the eastern Caribbean littoral.³⁴ In an effort to "civilize" and control those indigenous areas, as well as other areas where Afro-descendant population was dominant, starting in the late-nineteenth century the Colombian state promoted the establishment of foreign Catholic missionary organizations, especially in the lowlands but also in a few of the highland regions, such as Tierradentro. In many of these areas, which altogether covered more than 70 per cent of Colombia's territory, the missionaries were granted control not only over the religious administration, but also over educational, judicial, and administrative matters.³⁵

Although these policies were fiercely attacked by Liberal politicians and, beginning in the 1930s, also by the first generations of Colombian social scientists, scholarly studies about

University Press, 2011). Danilo Geiger, ed. *Frontier Encounters: Indigenous Communities and Settlers in Asia and Latin America* (Copenhagen and Bern: International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs and Swiss National Centre of Competence in Research North-South, 2008). Andrew R. L. Cayton and Fredrika J. Teute, eds., *Contact Points: American Frontiers from the Mohawk Valley to the Mississippi, 1750-1830* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998). Donna J. Guy and Thomas E. Sheridan, eds., *Contested Ground. Comparative Frontiers on the Northern and Southern Edges of the Spanish Empire* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1998). David J. Weber and Jane M. Rausch, *Where Cultures Meet: Frontiers in Latin American History* (Wilmington, Del.: SR Books, 1994).

³⁴ Brooke Larson, *Trials of Nation Making: Liberalism, Race, and Ethnicity in the Andes, 1810-1910* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 77-78. Glenn Thomas Curry, "The Disappearance of the Resguardos Indígenas of Cundinamarca, Colombia, 1800-1863" (PhD diss., Vanderbilt University, 1981). Amada Carolina Pérez Benavides, "Representaciones y prácticas sobre las tribus errantes: la construcción de la otredad en el proceso de redefinición de la política misional en Colombia. 1868 - 1902" (paper presented at the XIV Congreso Colombiano de Historia, Tunja, Colombia, Aug 12-16, 2008).

³⁵ Myriam Jimeno Santoyo and Adolfo Triana Antorveza, *Estado y minorías étnicas en Colombia* (Bogotá: Fundación para las Comunidades Colombianas, 1985), 43-45.

these missions appeared only in the late 1960s.³⁶ Moreover, in spite of the considerable size of the territories placed under missionary supervision in Colombia, unmatched by far by any other Latin American country, works on the topic have remained scant.³⁷ These few works tend to portray the missionaries as holding almost omnipotent power within those regions, gained at the expense of the state's effective hegemony and, moreover, with the state's complicity. These were, in the words of the most influential book on the topic, "state[s] within a state," regions that the Colombian government had willingly handed over to the missionaries.³⁸

But, is it true that in all these areas missionary presence led to a reduced or even inexistent presence of the state? Certainly, as in so many other areas of Colombia, in Tierradentro the missionaries assumed a number of functions that in other areas were under the purview of the state, including infrastructural and economic development. But this did not mean that state institutions failed to reach into Tierradentro, or that the Colombian state did not gain some level of control and legitimacy in the region. Moreover, in this area the effective presence of state officials and institutions was the product not only of the state officials' schemes, but of the local population's active efforts to connect and bring into the region military, electoral, and administrative institutions. They did so in search of allies to advance goals that included, but were not limited to, defending their communal lands—in part against missionary efforts to

³⁶ Víctor Daniel Bonilla, *Servants of God or Masters of Men? The Story of a Capuchin Mission in Amazonia*, trans. Rosemary Sheed (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972). Published originally in 1968, this work remains the leading reference in the field.

³⁷ Bonilla, *Servants of God or Masters of Men?* Juan Friede, *La explotación indígena en Colombia bajo el gobierno de las misiones; el caso de los aruacos de la Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta*, 2 ed. (Bogotá: Punta de Lanza, 1973). Cabrera, *La iglesia en la frontera*. Jane M. Rausch, "Church-State Relations on the Colombian Frontier: The National Intendency of Meta, 1909-1930," *The Americas* 49 (1992). Aída Cecilia Gálvez Abadía, *Por obligación de conciencia. Los misioneros del Carmen Descalzo en Urabá (Colombia), 1918-1941* (Bogotá: Instituto Colombiano de Antropología e Historia, Universidad de Antioquia, Universidad del Rosario, 2006).

³⁸ Bonilla, *Servants of God or Masters of Men?*, 189. Brett Bodley Troyan, "The Intersection of Politics and Religion in 20th century Southwestern Colombia," *Revista Cultura y religión* 4, no. 2 (2010): 112-113. Rausch, "Church-State Relations on the Colombian Frontier." One exception to this portrait is presented in: Sharika Crawford, "'Under the Colombian Flag': Nation-Building on San Andres and Providence Islands, 1886-1930" (PhD diss., University of Pittsburgh, 2009).

dismantle them. In Tierradentro, then, indigenous autonomy was not predicated on an unqualified resistance to state authority or missionary power, but rather depended on their ability to pull in different local, regional, national, and international actors at different times. Again and again it was the Indians who took the initiative to connect with national political institutions, making state presence a reality in the area.

Most studies about Catholic missions in indigenous areas of Colombia have focused on their negative effects on the local communities' access to land and other resources. However, very few have considered their impact on the indigenous culture, religious or otherwise, in spite of the fact that Christianization was one of these organizations' main stated goals. In the case of Tierradentro, the existing literature has emphasized that the Indians managed to maintain their culture and religion in spite of the missionaries' efforts.³⁹ And yet, within anthropology and religious studies more broadly, understanding of the way intercultural exchanges operate has moved away from the traditional view that there were only two possible outcomes: assimilation or resistance. Instead recent literature has explored the complexities of cultural encounters, finding them to be better characterized not as a one-way imposition, but rather as processes of repeated mistranslation and partial understanding out of which new cultural patterns emerge.⁴⁰ In line with these findings, my own research reveals that in Tierradentro cultural exchanges were more complex than previously thought. Indians adopted several ideas and practices of Catholicism, while at the same time maintaining others that were not Catholic. Indeed ironically, given the repeated discord between missionaries and indigenous communities in regard to

³⁹ Jimeno Santoyo, "Cauca: las armas de lo sagrado." Bernal Villa, "Religious Life of the Paez."

⁴⁰ Good examples of this approach include: Paul Sullivan, *Unfinished Conversations. Mayas and Foreigners between two Wars* (New York: University of California Press, 1991). Serge Gruzinski, *The Conquest of Mexico: the Incorporation of Indian Societies into the Western World, 16th-18th Centuries* (Cambridge and Oxford: Polity Press, 1993). Gauvin Alexander Bailey, *Art on the Jesuit Missions in Asia and Latin America, 1542-1773* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, Scholarly Publishing Division, 1999). William F. Hanks, *Converting Words: Maya in the Age of the Cross* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010).

politics, land policy, education, and more in Tierradentro religion did not become a major issue of contention between local populations and priests, but rather an area where a successful accommodation emerged.

1.4 THE CASE OF TIERRADENTRO

Tierradentro sits in the northeastern corner of the Department of Cauca, in southwestern Colombia. The Central Cordillera, one of three branches into which the northern section of the Andes divide, separates the region from the rest of Cauca. Abutting the Department of Tolima to the northeast, and the Department of Huila to the east, Tierradentro has a nearly triangular shape. The tall peak known as the Nevado del Huila in its northernmost vertex, the junction of the rivers Negro de Narváez and Páez in its easternmost one, and the *páramo* (high plateau) of Guanacas in its westernmost point. The region extends for approximately 4,000 km² (about 1540 mi²)—approximately the size of Massachusetts and Connecticut combined. Furthermore, it, has an extremely rugged terrain crisscrossed by deep river valleys and mountains that reach an average of 3,000 meters (10,000 feet).



Figure 1. Location of Cauca and Tierradentro in Colombia

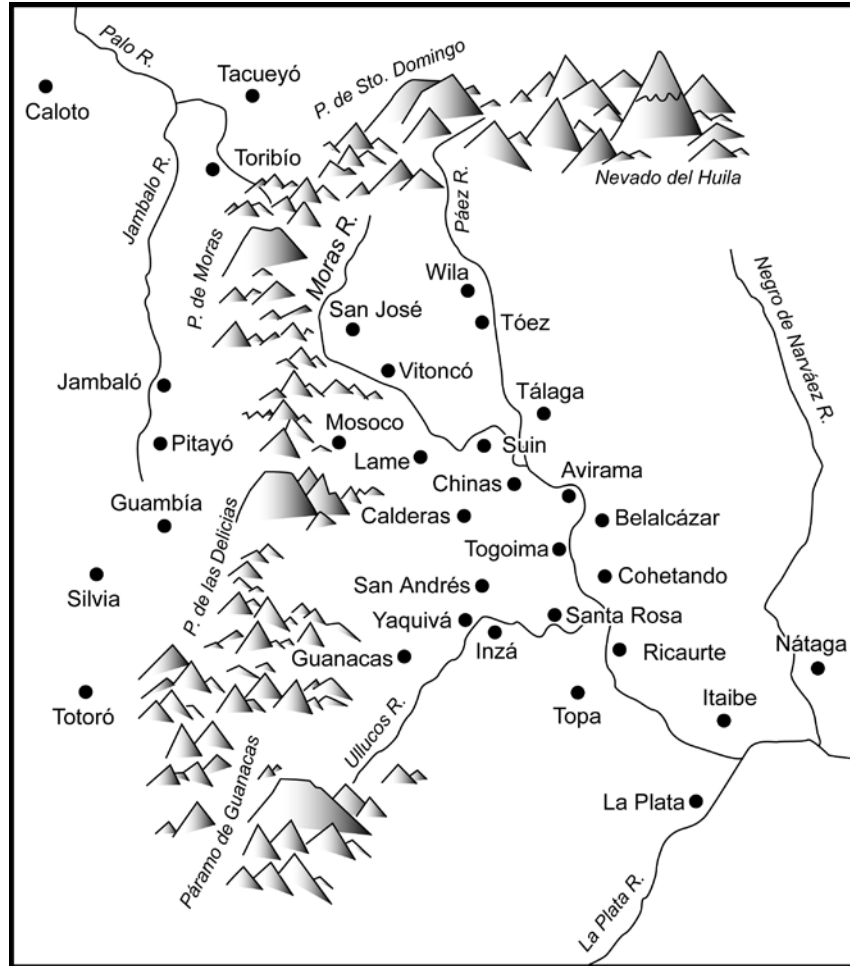


Figure 2. Communities in Tierradentro⁴¹

⁴¹ Based on Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 5.

Nasa Indians still make up the majority of Tierradentro's population, which remained stable across the first half of the twentieth century at around 30,000 to 35,000 inhabitants.⁴² As late as the end of the nineteenth century the only non-indigenous inhabitants were a small number of families concentrated around the village of Inzá and in the region of Pueblito (current Belalcázar).⁴³ Non-Indians still represented a small minority decades later. In 1938 missionary Larquère estimated they comprised 4,000 of the region's 32,000 inhabitants, that is, 12,5%.⁴⁴ Most of these individuals were classified as "*blancos*" (white), an ethno-racial label that meant non-indigenous. A few of them were identified as "*mestizos*," individuals who had some indigenous ancestry but no longer belonged to an indigenous community. There were also Afro-descendants, referred to as *negros* or *morenos*, and whose ancestors had been slaves sent during the colonial period to Tierradentro to work on a local salt mine.⁴⁵

The early-twentieth-century Nasa devoted most of their time to subsistence agriculture. Their main staple was maize, but they grew a wide variety of crops. Depending upon the elevation at which they lived, which ranged from 1,000 to 3,500 meters above sea level, these crops included potatoes, wheat, *arracachas*, *ullucos*, beans, coca, and sugar cane, among others. They grew cash crops on a very small scale, especially coffee and potatoes, which they traded with neighboring indigenous and non-indigenous villages. The Indians also traded a few wild products, including quinine in the late nineteenth century and laurel wax in the 1940s.

⁴² In 1906 missionary Rojas estimated the population in 30,000. ACM/CG, Boîte 497, Maison Tierradentro (Missions), 1905-1912 (Carta de Guillaume Rojas a Monseñor Antoine Fiat, Superior General de la Congregación de la Misión; sobre la misión de Tierradentro. Calderas, 5 enero 1906). In the 1950s priest González estimated it in 36,000. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 256.

⁴³ Elías Sevilla Casas, "Estudios antropológicos sobre Tierradentro," (Cali: Fundación para la Educación Superior, 1976), 14, 17.

⁴⁴ ACM/CG, Boîte 276, Province Colombie, Préfecture Apostolique de Tierradentro, 1916-1946. ("Pro Archivo Curiae Generalitiae." Émile Larquère. Inzá, 10 julio 1937).

⁴⁵ Sutti Reissig Ortiz, *Uncertainties in Peasant Farming: a Colombian Case* (New York: Humanities Press, 1973), 35. Sevilla, "Estudios antropológicos sobre Tierradentro," 17.

Additionally, during the months that preceded the maize and wheat harvests many Indians abandoned their homes to hire themselves out as field hands to plantations located in nearby Inzá, La Plata, Popayán, and even Valle del Cauca.⁴⁶ In sum, Tierradentro was a small indigenous region, difficult to traverse and of little economic significance, disconnected from Colombia's main commercial networks. And yet in the twentieth century it became a remarkably important battleground in shaping the fate of the country's indigenous policies.

Tierradentro's utility as a case study is further enhanced by the particular position of native populations within Colombia, and of Colombia within Latin America. Indigenous communities in Colombia represent a small percentage of the total population, adding up to about 2% of the country's 42 million inhabitants.⁴⁷ Already by the late nineteenth century these populations concentrated in marginal regions far from the main administrative centers.⁴⁸ Yet, in spite of their small size and geographical location, Colombia's Indians have had a significant weight in the country's post-colonial history. They control a significant portion of the national territory, slightly over one quarter, and with it, eighty percent of Colombia's mineral resources. These populations have been, therefore, at the heart of many of the most intense conflicts afflicting the country. Moreover, the current Colombian indigenous movement is one of the strongest in Latin America, and it has been very successful in its negotiations for autonomy, territory, and cultural rights with the national state.⁴⁹

Colombia is also an interesting case because of the geographical reach and extensive power that Catholic missionaries gained over its indigenous populations starting in the late

⁴⁶ Segundo E. Bernal Villa, "Economía de los páez," *Revista Colombiana de Antropología* 3 (1954): 293, 296-299, 305, 328. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 7, 104-112.

⁴⁷ Rappaport, *Intercultural Utopias*, 1.

⁴⁸ Larson, *Trials of Nation Making*.

⁴⁹ Rappaport, *Intercultural Utopias*, 2-3. Theodor Rathgeber, "Indigenous Struggles in Colombia: Historical Changes and Perspectives," in *The Struggle for Indigenous Rights in Latin America*, ed. Nancy Grey Postero and León Zamosc (Brighton and Portland: Sussex Academic Press, 2004).

nineteenth century. While several Latin American nations sought Christian missionaries' help for gaining control over indigenous frontiers, it was in Colombia where this policy reached its summit. By the late nineteenth century the Colombian state in collaboration with the national clergy had labeled large areas of the country, most of them inhabited by Indians or Afro-Colombians, as "mission territories" to be placed under the religious care of Catholic orders. In many of these areas the missionaries were also granted control over educational, judicial, and administrative matters. In the late 1970s these mission territories still comprised seventy-seven percent of the country's territory, and, while currently missionaries have considerably reduced power, several of these mission territories remain in place.⁵⁰ Tierradentro is one of them.

Up until the 1950s Tierradentro was the only mission territory located in the Department of Cauca.⁵¹ This department has played a significant role in the history of Colombian indigenous policies. Starting in the 1850s, indigenous policies adopted locally or promoted nationally by Cauca elites have strongly influenced national-level policies.⁵² Additionally, as I explain later in this dissertation, it was in Cauca where the first wave of Colombian *indigenismo* emerged among non-indigenous intellectuals in the late 1930s. Moreover, Colombia's indigenous movement was also born in Cauca, where the first organization self-identified as indigenous was formed in 1971 (the *Consejo Regional Indígena del Cauca*, CRIC). The CRIC remains one of the most influential indigenous organizations in the country.⁵³ Cauca was also the main theater of

⁵⁰ Jimeno and Triana, *Estado y minorías étnicas en Colombia*, 43-45.

⁵¹ In 1954 was created the Apostolic Prefecture of Guapi, in Cauca's Pacific coast. Conferencia Episcopal de Colombia, "Vicariatos Apostólicos de Guapi," Conferencia Episcopal de Colombia, <http://190.242.99.185/index.shtml?apc=ba1;005;:-&x=8949#> (accessed July 11, 2012)

⁵² María Alicia Santacruz Caicedo, "Proceso de extinción de las parcialidades indígenas del Departamento del Cauca" (Thesis, Universidad del Cauca, 1982). Antonio García Nossa, "El indigenismo en Colombia: génesis y evolución," *América Indígena* 5, no. 3 (1945).

⁵³ Rathgeber, "Indigenous Struggles in Colombia."

the largest self-identified indigenous mobilization before the 1970s. Stretching from 1910 to 1917, it was called the *Quintinada* in honor of its leader, Manuel Quintín Lame.

Within Cauca, Tierradentro has been significant not only because it became the epicenter of the *Quintinada* during its final years, but also because it retains a crucial place in the projects and ideology of Cauca's modern indigenous movement: Nasa activists affiliated to the CRIC argue that the "authentic" Nasa are in Tierradentro, while the Nasa from other areas are more acculturated.⁵⁴

The Nasa Indians, part of which live in Tierradentro, represent the second largest indigenous group in Colombia after the Wayuus from the Guajira Peninsula, and the largest group in Cauca. They amount to some 120,000 individuals, representing around 17% of Colombia's total indigenous population. Tierradentro concentrates between 33 and 40% of the total Nasa population.⁵⁵ Hence Tierradentro is the Nasa Indians' demographic, but also historic heartland, since it was there were various indigenous groups fused into the modern Nasa in the eighteenth century.⁵⁶

Finally, by the late 1930s Tierradentro constituted the broadest continuous region under indigenous control in Cauca. It contained the largest number of *resguardos* in the whole department, 23 out of 56. And while other municipalities in Cauca had four *resguardos* at most,

⁵⁴ Rappaport, *Intercultural Utopias*, 189.

⁵⁵ Different authors present different numbers. See: Raúl Arango and Enrique Sánchez, *Los pueblos indígenas de Colombia 1997: desarrollo y territorio* (Colombia: Departamento Nacional de Planeación, Unidad Administrativa Especial de Desarrollo Territorial, TM Editores, 1998), 174, 183-184, 163-167. Roberto Pineda Camacho, "Pueblos indígenas de Colombia: una aproximación a su historia, economía y sociedad," in *Tierra profanada: grandes proyectos en territorios indígenas de Colombia* (Bogotá: Disloque Editores, 1995), 13, 24. Brett Bodley Troyan, "Ethnic Identity and State Formation in the Cauca, Colombia from 1930 to 1991" (PhD diss., Cornell University, 2002), 57.

⁵⁶ María Teresa Findji and José María Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez* (Cali, Colombia: Universidad del Valle, 1985), 58.

the two that composed Tierradentro (Inzá and Páez) had 8 and 15 *resguardos* respectively.⁵⁷ By the 1970s Tierradentro's *resguardos* had been reduced to 19,⁵⁸ but they represented an even higher percentage of Cauca's *resguardos*, as many of those closer to the departmental capital had been dismantled. The persistence of these *resguardos* in the face of missionaries' efforts—in alliance with regional elites and some national politicians—to dissolve them is one of the key puzzles my research unravels.

1.5 RESGUARDO LEGISLATION IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY COLOMBIA, 1820S-1900

By the time Colombia gained its Independence from Spain in 1819 there were indigenous populations both in the Andean highlands, and in the vast lowlands of the Orinoquia, the Amazonia, the southern Pacific Coast, and the eastern Caribbean littoral.⁵⁹ In the early years after Independence, Colombian elites conceived of highland Indians as the prime recipients of Independence's benefits. They were declared full citizens, tribute was eliminated, forced labor was legally banned, and efforts were made to reduce the power that the Church exercised over their communities. The government also ordered the partition of indigenous *resguardos* among its individual members, so that the new citizens could enjoy the alleged benefits of private

⁵⁷ Troyan, "Ethnic Identity and State Formation in the Cauca," 57.

⁵⁸ Sevilla, *La pobreza de los excluidos*, 36, 103. Sevilla lists 21 *resguardos*, but in the early 1970s they were only 19, since Tumbichukue was reconstituted as a new *resguardo* only in 1978, while Guanacas had already been divided. See chapter 5, and table 9.

⁵⁹ Larson, *Trials of Nation Making*, 77-80.

property. This “integrationist”⁶⁰ or anti-corporatist approach, whose main goal was to incorporate Indians to the nation as undifferentiated citizens, dominated Colombian indigenous policy until the late 1880s. Even though the dismantling of *resguardos* was a complex and contradictory process, by the 1860s they had been practically liquidated in the eastern highlands, especially in Cundinamarca, Boyacá, Tolima and Antioquia.⁶¹

Anti-*resguardo* measures were less successful in the southwestern highlands, where the indigenous communities’ sustained resistance and their salience as labor force in the *haciendas* had created doubts among factions of the local elites as to whether a rapid division of the remaining communal lands was the best way to deal with indigenous integration.⁶² Developments in the State of Cauca⁶³ during the second half of the nineteenth century were especially important, since they influenced a major transformation in national-level policies towards the indigenous communities in the 1880s.

Starting in the late 1850s a faction of Caucan politicians seeking the support of indigenous communities in the civil wars that were ravaging Colombia at the time developed legislation that, for the first time since Independence, protected *resguardos*.⁶⁴ The Caucan politicians that had advanced this legislation gained national power in the early 1880s, and

⁶⁰ Frank Safford, "Race, Integration and Progress: Elite Attitudes and the Indian in Colombia 1750-1870," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 71, no. 1 (1991).

⁶¹ Ibid, 11-20. Curry, "The Disappearance of the Resguardos," 11, 60-79, 150-152. Antonio García Nossa, *Legislación indigenista de Colombia* (México D.F.: Instituto Indigenista Interamericano, 1952), 31-35.

⁶² Adolfo Triana Antorveza, *Legislación indígena nacional. Leyes, decretos, resoluciones, jurisprudencia y doctrina* (Bogotá: FUNCOL, 1980), 27-28. Safford, "Race, Integration and Progress," 15-16.

⁶³ Until 1905 it encompassed the current Departments of Chocó, Caldas, Cauca, Nariño, Putumayo, Caquetá, Amazonas, Vaupés, and parts of Valle del Cauca. Luis Ervin Prado Arellano, *Rebeliones en la provincia. La guerra de los supremos en las provincias suroccidentales y nororientales granadinas, 1839-1842* (Cali: Universidad del Valle, 2007), 281-288.

⁶⁴ García, *Legislación indigenista de Colombia*, 37. James E. Sanders, "Pertener a la gran familia granadina. Lucha partidista y contrucción de la identidad indígena y política en el Cauca, Colombia, 1849-1890," *Revista de Estudios Sociales*, no. 26 (2007): 38-39.

turned their local law into national policy when they pushed for Law 89 of 1890 to pass.⁶⁵ This law became one of the most powerful instruments that Colombian indigenous communities wielded for over a century to defend their lands and their rights.

Law 89 of 1890 contained protective measures for *resguardos* and expanded legal functions for *cabildos* (indigenous councils). *Cabildos* not only had the express duty of preventing any Indian from the *parcialidad* from leasing or selling any section of the *resguardo*, but they also could initiate legal action to recuperate any *resguardo* lands that had been illegally sold, leased, or mortgaged. Additionally, leases of *resguardo* plots to outsiders were limited to three years (thus curtailing long-term leases, one of the common ways to lose lands). The law also expanded the legal authority of *cabildos* beyond economic functions like managing *resguardos* (a role recognized since 1821),⁶⁶ to include the ability to correct “*faltas a la moral*” (moral transgressions).⁶⁷

Law 89 also had negative aspects. First, it included provisions for the dismemberment of *resguardos*, which should be completed in fifty years’ time. In consequence it considered *cabildos* and *resguardos* as temporary institutions. Second, it provided for the expropriation, whenever municipal authorities decided, of one section of each *resguardo* to establish a “settlement area” (*área de población*) under direct municipal control, which would be available for settlement by individuals that did not belong to the indigenous community. Fourth, it gave local authorities greater oversight over indigenous lands and authorities.⁶⁸ Finally, this law also facilitated the indigenous communities’ fragmentation into smaller political units than those that

⁶⁵ Alonso Valencia Llano, *Estado Soberano del Cauca. Federalismo y regionalización* (Bogotá: Banco de la República, 1988), 226-279. Triana, *Legislación indígena nacional*, 31.

⁶⁶ For the case of Cundinamarca see: Curry, “The Disappearance of the Resguardos,” 85-98.

⁶⁷ Marino Balcázar Pardo, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas, Baldíos y Estados Antisociales (Vagos, Maleantes y Rateros)* (Popayán: Editorial Universidad del Cauca, 1954), 91-96.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 90-110. Importantly, Law 89 established that the national laws’ jurisdiction over these populations was lifted in matters related to their *resguardos*, which had to be managed in turn according to Law 89’s dispositions.

had existed in colonial times. As Findji and Rojas have stressed, during colonial times *parcialidades* were minor political units integrated into larger *resguardos* and *cacicazgos*. In contrast, the only indigenous social unit that Law 89 recognized was the *parcialidad*, which appointed the *cabildo* as its representative. Hence this law continued the policy started in the 1820s (when indigenous *cacicazgos* were legally abolished) of denying indigenous political units larger than the small local community. With the legality of any political or other links uniting *parcialidades* thus erased, each *cabildo* had to deal with state authorities from a weaker position.⁶⁹

All these provisions applied only to the “*comunidades de indígenas ya reducidas a la vida civil*” (indigenous communities already reduced to civil life). That is, to the indigenous groups that had integrated into the colonial system and had organized around *resguardos* and *cabildos*. The Regeneration (*Regeneración*), as the regime that came to power in 1878 was known, devised a different strategy for the lowland Indians, which had remained largely independent during the colonial period.

Unlike the previous, Liberal administrations, the Regeneration (1878-1899) sought to strengthen the alliance between the state and the Catholic Church. This alliance was institutionalized when the Pope and the Colombian government signed a Concordat in 1887, restoring most of the privileges that Liberal administrations had taken away from the Church especially after the 1860s.⁷⁰ Importantly, the Church obtained financial compensation, in the form of an annual payment by the government, for the seizure and sale of its properties that had

⁶⁹ Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 67-69. Curry, “The Disappearance of the Resguardos,” 82-83. Law 89 clarified that when several *parcialidades* were under a single *cabildo* they could remain in the same situation. Balcázar, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 91.

⁷⁰ For example, public authorities were obliged to protect Catholicism and its ministers; full independence from civil power was granted; as well as control over civil registry, cemeteries, and supervision of public education.

occurred in the 1860s. This money had to be dedicated to strengthen the “civilizing action” of the Church, and as part of this agreement the Church promised to promote the arrival of foreign religious organizations that would cooperate in education, charity, and missions among outlying indigenous populations. In time the Church developed an almost monopolistic control over these three realms.⁷¹

One of the realms where the Regeneration conceded a central role to the church was in the “civilization” of lowland, or “savage,” Indians. In fact, this regime institutionalized the division between “civilized” and “savage” Indians, placing them in two different administrative systems and legal categories.⁷² For the “savage” Indians, the government committed to procure the establishment of Catholic missions, and these populations would remain free from national laws until they were considered civilized. In 1892 Law 72 confirmed that in the case of “savage” Indians the jurisdiction of national laws was suspended until they left their “savage state.” Law 72 also increased legal and financial support for the missions and established that the government could delegate to the Catholic missionaries civil, penal, and judicial authority over those Indians.⁷³

While these laws created two clearly differentiated categories of Indians, in practice the lines between them were hard to draw in cases such as Tierradentro, where in practice laws related to both “civilized” and “savage” Indians were applied. Thus, by 1905 a system had emerged that mixed *cabildos* and *resguardos* with a mission led by Vincentian priests.

⁷¹ Frank Safford and Marco Palacios, *Colombia: Fragmented Land, Divided Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 246. Marco Palacios, *Between Legitimacy and Violence. A History of Colombia 1875-2002* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006), 29-30, 76-79.

⁷² The distinction between “savage” and “civilized” Indians had first emerged in the 1850s, when antiquarians started to stress that Colombian nationality was connected to the highly civilized cultures of the Andean highlands, and not to the savage Carib groups of the lowlands. Roberto Pineda Camacho, “La reivindicación del indio en el pensamiento social colombiano (1850-1950),” in *Un siglo de investigación social: antropología en Colombia*, ed. Nina S. de Friedemann and Jaime Arocha (Bogotá: Etno, 1984), 202-204.

⁷³ Triana, *Legislación indígena nacional*, 166.

In the Department of Cauca, regional elites expressed their interest in putting the new legislation to work when the departmental assembly (*Asamblea Departamental*) passed Decree 74 of 1898. A response to Law 89's instructions that each department should dictate regulations to apply the law and solve its gaps, this decree sustained the division between the "savages that are reducing themselves to a civilized life" ("*salvajes que vayan reduciéndose a la vida civilizada*") and the "already reduced" indigenous communities.⁷⁴

The bulk of Decree 74 referred to the "civilized" Indians. Here the decree was much more comprehensive than the national law. For example, it provided a precise definition for *parcialidad*, established who could be considered an Indian, detailed the procedures that *cabildos* had to follow to adjudicate plots, how *cabildos* that included more than one *parcialidad* had to be constituted, and so on. This concern with detail indicated a clear will to regulate more closely the indigenous communities, as did the increased oversight powers that the decree vested in municipal and judicial authorities. On the other hand, the decree enhanced protections for indigenous lands. Thus *cabildos* could oppose the delimitation of settlement areas within their *resguardos*, and the request to divide the *resguardo* had to be signed not only by the *cabildo* in full, but also by all the *parcialidad* members older than eighteen years who supported the division petition. Moreover, the decree made provisions so that even after the division of a *resguardo* had been approved, indigenous families that opposed it could create a new *parcialidad* with a *resguardo*.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Balcázar, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 110-165. In the case of the former, the 1898 decree sought to put Law 72 of 1892 in operation, specifying that in the missions located in Cauca the Superior of the Mission would have civil and police powers, as well as the ability to appoint police agents and impose penalties. It also established some protection for the lands of the Indians that accepted to settle, and declared that the Indians should keep their own "customs of government," if possible. "costumbres de gobierno." Balcázar, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 110-112. Víctor Daniel Bonilla, *Siervos de dios y amos de indios. El estado y la misión capuchina en el Putumayo*, Biblioteca del Gran Cauca (Cali: Editorial Universidad del Cauca, Universidad del Valle, 2006), 113.

⁷⁵ Balcázar, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 110-165.

In sum, by the 1890s both the Regeneration regime and Cauca's elites had laid out some basic policies towards indigenous populations that would last one century.⁷⁶ These included both measures that could be used to defend indigenous communities' corporate governance and collective resources, and measures that could be used to dissolve them. Which would predominate in the law's application remained, for the moment, unclear. The political instability that shook the country during those years prevented any systematic application of most of these measures until after the Thousand Days War was over, in 1903. After the war, however, official support for the measures that protected *resguardos* and *cabildos* had eroded considerably.

1.6 CHAPTER OUTLINE

Chapter 2 begins to trace nineteenth-century Tierradentro's frontier-like political autonomy, focusing on the fate of Nasa *cabildos* and *caciques* after Independence. These two indigenous institutions had first emerged in the colonial period and endured into the twentieth century. Their survival was not, however, predicated on the Nasa Indians' isolation from the larger Colombian context. In fact, *cabildos* and *caciques* transformed considerably from their colonial predecessors after Independence. These changes responded, at least in part, to legal and political pressures from the new Colombian state and, in the *caciques*' particular case, to their involvement in the civil wars that enveloped the country during the nineteenth century. These transformations notwithstanding, *cabildos* and *caciques* continued to function as key brokers between the Nasa Indians and the larger Colombian society, crucial components in the delicate and tense balance

⁷⁶ Herinaldy Gómez Valencia, *De la justicia y el poder indígena* (Popayán, Colombia: Editorial Universidad del Cauca, 2000), 94-95.

between integration and autonomy, compliance and resistance that characterized post-colonial Tierradentro.

The same political instability that Nasa *caciques* had harnessed to reconstitute their authority prevented the nineteenth-century Colombian state from putting in place many of the policies it had designed to deal with the indigenous populations that controlled significant sections of its territory, including Tierradentro. But with the end of the bloody Thousand Days War in 1903 and the relative peace that followed, the Colombian state renewed its efforts to rein in those regions, now with a new ally: Catholic missionaries. Chapter 3 examines how both the Indians' interests and the Vincentians' plans shaped the Tierradentro mission's setup, showing that the missionaries were far from omnipotent. It also analyzes the missionaries' non-religious "civilizing" agenda for the region, which included efforts at providing healthcare and other charitable services, running the regions' elementary schools, creating urbanized population centers, and introducing new economic activities in the region—but, paradoxically, showed little concern for moral reform.

Chapter 4 describes the enthusiastic participation of Tierradentro's inhabitants, indigenous and otherwise, in electoral politics and the two-party system that had emerged in Colombia since the mid-nineteenth century, demonstrating that in Tierradentro missionary influence did not supplant or preclude engagement with national state processes. Moreover, the missionaries themselves became deeply involved in electoral politics, hence helping to bring state institutions into the region. The chapter then follows the careers of two very different Nasa political leaders, José Pío Collo and Manuel Quintín Lame, to delineate the opportunities and limitations that this type of political participation created for the local Indians during the first half of the twentieth century.

Indigenous communities often tried to use electoral politics and partisan loyalties to defend their *resguardos* from encroachment by outsiders. Chapter 5 examines the multiple factors that allowed indigenous communities in Tierradentro to retain most of their *resguardos* to this day, even though local, regional, and national authorities, as well as outsider settlers, pushed for these communal lands' dissolution. Starting in the 1920s greater support from the Vatican led to a flourishing of the Tierradentro mission, and many of the missionaries devoted their resources to advance the dismantling of the region's *resguardos* that local and regional authorities were trying to implement. When the national government decided to fund these efforts in the 1940s, Tierradentro's *resguardos* faced effective dismemberment for the first time. Just like they had done before with the two traditional political parties, some of Tierradentro's Indians now allied themselves with emerging political and academic groups to resist this all-out attack. Defending their lands and autonomy, therefore, implied for the Indians an even deeper engagement with different sectors of Colombian society.

Between the 1930s and the 1950s the same academic sectors that allied with the Nasa Indians to defend their *resguardos* started to confront the Vincentians on another front: religion. Chapter 6 examines the ongoing cross-cultural exchange that began in Tierradentro during the late colonial period and continued to develop after the Vincentians took charge of the mission in the early twentieth century. This exchange did not result either in the Indians' unqualified conversion to the missionaries' Catholicism or in the uncontaminated survival of the Indians' previous worldview. Rather, what emerged was a new system where elements from both traditions mixed and coexisted. The *cabildos*' continued role as religious brokers between the Vincentians and the indigenous community at large facilitated this outcome. Neither the Vincentians nor the mid-century anthropologists that studied Tierradentro's Indians

acknowledged the accommodation that had effectively emerged on the ground. The anthropologists' claim that the Indians' original religion had survived untouched put them at odds with the Vincentians' narrative that the Indians had effectively converted to Catholicism. Neither claim captured the reality lived in the region.

2.0 INDIGENOUS AUTHORITIES IN REPUBLICAN TIERRADENTRO, 1820S-1950S

In 1971 Cauca witnessed the birth of the first self-identified indigenous organization in Colombia, the *Consejo Regional Indígena del Cauca* (Indigenous Regional Council of Cauca, CRIC). The CRIC followed a novel organizational model integrating Cauca's indigenous *parcialidades* into a single department-level movement. Within each community, however, the CRIC relied on an institution that had been in place since the colonial period: the indigenous *cabildo*. In fact, one of CRIC's central goals was strengthening *cabildos*, and even reestablishing them in the communities where they had disappeared.¹ In spite of *cabildos'* centrality within the current indigenous movement, scholars studying Colombia have largely failed to examine their history, especially for the republican period.² In this chapter I trace the profound transformations that *cabildos* and another colonial institution, *cacique* dynasties, underwent after Independence

¹ Christian Gros, *Colombia indígena. Identidad cultural y cambio social*, trans. Jesús Alberto Valencia (Bogotá: CEREC, 1991), 193-194. Jasmin Hristov, "Social Class and Ethnicity/Race in the Dynamics of Indigenous Peasant Movements: The Case of the CRIC in Colombia," *Latin American Perspectives* 36, no. 4 (2009): 47-48.

² Sevilla emphasizes that there are no studies about colonial *cabildos* in New Granada. Sevilla, *La pobreza de los excluidos*, 128. *Cabildos* are mentioned in passing in innumerable studies about Colombia's indigenous communities, but detailed analyses are rare. One exception is Sevilla, who examines the organization and functions of Tumbichukue's *cabildo* in the mid-1970s. Sevilla, *La pobreza de los excluidos*, 123-149. For the case of colonial *cabildos* in Mexico, see: Sergio Quezada, "Encomienda, cabildo y gubernatura indígena en Yucatán, 1541-1583," *Historia Mexicana* 34, no. 4 (1985). Arij Ouweneel, "From 'tlahtocayotl' to 'gobernadoryotl': A Critical Examination of Indigenous Rule in 18th-Century Central Mexico," *American Ethnologist* 22, no. 4 (1995). Cynthia Radding, "Comun, Local Governance, and Defiance in Colonial Sonora," in *Choice, Persuasion, and Coercion: Social Control on Spain's North American frontiers*, ed. Jesús F. de la Teja and Ross Frank (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005).

in Tierradentro, and illuminate how it was that they managed to remain crucial brokers between indigenous communities and the larger Colombian society.

I begin by summarizing the colonial history of these two institutions, which emerged in close relation with *resguardos*. I then turn to the republican period, starting with a brief account of the changes that Tierradentro's administrative status underwent between the 1840s and 1907, and what those changes meant in terms of government control (or lack thereof). Finally, I examine how the interaction with the Colombian state affected the two most salient political institutions that the Nasa communities had inherited from the colonial period: *cabildos* and *cacique* dynasties.

2.1 TIERRADENTRO FROM COLONIAL TIMES TO INDEPENDENCE

When the Spanish arrived in the mid-sixteenth century to the territory of what today is southern Colombia, the Nasa—also known as Páez or Paeces—occupied two main territories. The first one was the valley of La Plata, on the banks of the river Magdalena. The second one was modern-day Tierradentro, located on the banks of the Páez River and the lower reaches of the Moras River, on the eastern slopes of the Central Cordillera.³ The Nasa were not Tierradentro's sole inhabitants, since the Guanaca Indians had settled south of the Ullucos river.⁴

After several decades of indigenous armed resistance, by the seventeenth century Tierradentro had come under Spanish control. However, the region's indigenous communities found ways to maintain their autonomy and reconstitute their communities and polities.

³ Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 15. Rappaport, "Territory and Tradition," 118-169. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 32-41.

⁴ Sevilla, *La pobreza de los excluidos*, 35. Rappaport, "Territory and Tradition," 60, 157.

2.1.1 Tierradentro Under Colonial Rule

After the Spanish invasion the fate of the two Nasa regions diverged. In Tierradentro the Indians were never defeated militarily, but after eight decades of war (from 1538 to 1623) they abandoned their armed resistance when the Spanish practically exterminated their main ally, the Pijao Indians.⁵ In contrast with Tierradentro, the Spanish did conquer the Nasa in the neighboring La Plata valley, who ended up disappearing into the *mestizo* population that emerged there in the following centuries.⁶

During the colonial period, however, the Nasa did not remain bounded to Tierradentro. Instead they spread to other regions, sometimes voluntarily and other times forcibly. Some of them crossed the Central Cordillera and established themselves on its western slopes around Pitayó, Jambaló, Toribío, and as far as Caloto. To this day these western-slope Indians represent an important portion of the Nasa people. In contrast, those who moved east into the *Gobernación* of Neiva (present-day Department of Huila) had disappeared as an ethnically-differentiated population by the end of the colonial period.⁷ Hence at the end of the colonial period the bulk of the Nasa population was concentrated in Tierradentro and the Central Cordillera's western slopes.

It is not clear what the fate of the Guanaca Indians was. Some authors claimed they disappeared and other indigenous groups occupied their lands.⁸ Rappaport, on the other hand, argues that the Guanaca survived but during the colonial period slowly lost their separate identity

⁵ Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 18-25.

⁶ Rappaport, "Territory and Tradition," 70, 172.

⁷ Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 22-24, 26-31. Rappaport, "Territory and Tradition," 71-77, 179-186, 236-245. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 44-46. Nasa Indians continue to populate new regions until today. Currently there are important Nasa populations in the Pacific coast and the eastern lowlands of the Department of Caquetá. Rappaport, "Territory and Tradition," 23.

⁸ Sevilla, *La pobreza de los excluidos*, 39. Otero, *Etnología Caucana*, 159. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 51.

and began to consider themselves as Nasa, even though they did not speak Nasa Yuwe but Spanish.⁹ In any case, these communities remained ethnically differentiated from their non-indigenous neighbors into the twentieth century.

Starting in the 1620s the Nasa from Tierradentro gradually came under Spanish control via the penetration of Catholic missionaries and the imposition of *encomiendas*,¹⁰ grants that the Crown awarded to an individual (*encomendero*) allowing him to extract tribute from specific indigenous communities.¹¹ In Tierradentro the *encomiendas* were initially vested to specific Spanish conquerors, but by the 1750s most of Tierradentro's communities were sending their tribute directly to the Crown.¹² Nonetheless, former *encomenderos* continued to extract work from some of these communities, now in the form of *mitas*. In this system, indigenous communities had to send each year a certain number of their inhabitants to work either for private enterprises or in public works in exchange for a salary.¹³

The existing literature provides no information on how *encomiendas* were implemented during the colonial period in Tierradentro, and hence their relations to the *resguardos* that started to emerge during the last decades of the seventeenth century remains unclear.

⁹ Rappaport, "Territory and Tradition," 60.

¹⁰ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 101. Sevilla Casas, "Estudios antropológicos sobre Tierradentro," 53-54. Sevilla, *La pobreza de los excluidos*, 40-41. Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 25. Rappaport, "Territory and Tradition," 60. Sevilla, *La pobreza de los excluidos*, 35, 39. According to Otero, *encomiendas* among the Guanaca Indians started to operate in the 1630s. Otero, *Etnología Caucaña*, 150. Marcela Quiroga Zuluaga, "La encomienda entre los pueblos de la Provincia de Páez en el siglo XVII," *Fronteras de la Historia* 15, no. 1 (2010).

¹¹ Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 42. Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 26.

¹² Sevilla, *La pobreza de los excluidos*, 41. González claims that *encomiendas* had disappeared in 1742. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 79.

¹³ According to Sevilla, only some of Tierradentro's communities participated in *mitas*, which reached their peak in the late 1750s. Sevilla, "Estudios antropológicos sobre Tierradentro," 68. Sevilla, *La pobreza de los excluidos*, 47-50.

2.1.2 *Resguardos* and *Nuevos Caciques* in Eighteenth-Century Tierradentro

In the sixteenth century the Spanish Crown started to advance a policy across its American colonies to concentrate the indigenous population in areas known as *congregaciones*, *pueblos de indios*, or *reducciones*. In the New Kingdom of Granada (modern-day Colombia) these new circumscriptions were called *resguardos*.¹⁴ Their first and foremost goal was shifting control of the indigenous population from the *encomenderos* to the Crown. Additionally, they were to deter the indigenous communities' demographic decline by providing them with an adequate land base and by congregating the Indians in villages, they were to facilitate agricultural exploitation, access to indigenous labor, and the Indians' religious conversion and indoctrination.¹⁵

In colonial Colombia, the Spanish Crown first created *resguardos* in the late-sixteenth century in areas near the capital of Santa Fe (Bogotá). By the late 1630s the colonial administration had generalized them to most of the New Kingdom of Granada's territory.¹⁶ The *resguardo* consisted of an indigenous community (*parcialidad*) living within the lands Spanish authorities designated. These lands belonged to the Crown; could not be bought, sold, or rented; and were reserved exclusively for the members of the indigenous community. The largest part of the *resguardo* lands were dedicated to collective exploitation to pay tribute. There were also communal forests and grazing areas that the Indians could use to raise cattle (for tribute or

¹⁴ The word "*resguardo*" came from the idea that these institutions would protect ("*resguardar*") the Indians from the *encomenderos*' extreme exploitation. Carmen L. Bohórquez, *El resguardo en la Nueva Granada: ¿proteccionismo o despojo?* (Bogotá: Editorial Nueva América, 1997), 75.

¹⁵ Alexandre Coello de la Rosa, "Espacios de exclusión, espacios de poder: la reducción de indios de Santiago del Cercado a la Lima colonial (1568-1590)," in *Estudios sobre América: siglos XVI-XX*, ed. Antonio Gutiérrez Escudero and María Luisa Laviana Cuetos (Sevilla: Asociación Española de Americanistas, 2005), 1509-1510. For the case of Colombia, see: Bohórquez, *El resguardo en la Nueva Granada*, 71-75. Armando Martínez Garnica, *El régimen del resguardo en Santander* (Bucaramanga: Gobernación de Santander, 1993), 10-19.

¹⁶ Bohórquez, *El resguardo en la Nueva Granada*, 74, 78. Margarita González, *El resguardo en el Nuevo Reino de Granada*, 3 ed. (Bogotá: El Áncora Editores, 1992), 42-45.

otherwise) and access other resources. Additionally, each indigenous family was granted usufruct over an individual parcel to obtain their own subsistence.¹⁷

The *resguardo* was under the care and administration of an indigenous *cabildo* (council) composed of the *cacique* and other influential Indians. The *cacique* was in charge of the *resguardo*'s economic administration, including organizing the production within it, collecting the tribute, and controlling the number of Indians that were sent to work in private estates or public works. *Caciques* also enjoyed special privileges, including land for their particular use and access to goods and titles that showed their high status.¹⁸

The usual way to establish a *resguardo* was through a "*visita*" (visit) during which royal officials determined where to establish the *resguardo*, what its extension would be, the groups to be transferred or congregated there, and the tribute rate they would pay. An official recorded all this information and once the procedure was finished the local *cacique* received a copy of this document, which he had to guard. Although in theory the *resguardos*' extension had to correspond with the number of tributaries, in practice it varied considerably across region and time. Subsequent *visitas* could modify the *resguardo*'s size, tribute rate, and even eliminate it or merge it with another *resguardo*.¹⁹

Unlike in other areas of Colombia, in Tierradentro and the Central Cordillera's western slopes most *resguardos* arose not out of the Crown's initiative but out of the Indians' efforts to secure territorial and political autonomy.²⁰ Between 1667 and 1735 the indigenous communities

¹⁷ González, *El resguardo en el Nuevo Reino de Granada*, 37-41. Bohórquez, *El resguardo en la Nueva Granada*, 102-104. Rappaport, "Territory and Tradition," 190-193.

¹⁸ González, *El resguardo en el Nuevo Reino de Granada*, 48-50. Bohórquez, *El resguardo en la Nueva Granada*, 161-162.

¹⁹ Bohórquez, *El resguardo en la Nueva Granada*, 97-100.

²⁰ Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 50. There is a document dated 1679 in which Captain Juan de Vargas Figueroa created three *resguardos* in Tierradentro (Tálaga, Tóez, and Vitoncó) through a *visita*. Information contained in this document suggests that Vargas Figueroa had a mandate to create *resguardos* all across

of these two areas obtained *resguardos* via lawsuits,²¹ by petitioning the Crown,²² or by petitioning their *encomenderos*.²³ Along with these *resguardos* indigenous *cabildos* were created.

As some influential studies have shown, colonial *resguardos* in Tierradentro were important not only because they granted the Indians some measure of territorial autonomy, but also because they legitimized the power of a new political figure: the “*nuevos caciques*” (new *caciques*) that had emerged around the mid-seventeenth century.²⁴

These *nuevos caciques* were very different from the indigenous leaders that had existed before the Spanish invasion. The pre-Columbian *caciques* had functioned as arbitrators who depended on group consensus, enjoyed supreme powers only during wartime, and had no ability to collect tribute from their followers.²⁵ In contrast, the *nuevos caciques* established permanent and supreme authority over their communities, authority that was not military but civil. They also started to create strong political units by unifying the previously small *cacicaзgos* and communities of the area, thus achieving a level of centralization previously unknown in the region. Additionally, they served as mediators between the *encomenderos* and the Indians, and legitimized their authority using both Spanish and indigenous methods.²⁶

Tierradentro. If he created any other *resguardos* besides the three already mentioned, those records have yet to be found. ANI/P 1912-1913, vol. 1, año 1912, escritura 10, ff. 20-25v. In spite of this title, the origins of Tálaga, Tóez, and Vitoncó are commonly linked with the title *cacique* Juan Tama obtained in 1708.

²¹ This happened in the cases of Togoima and El Pedregal de Topa. Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 39-41. BLAA/LRM, MSS1494, f. 6. AGN/MI/AI, caja 269, carpeta 2554, ff. 68-80. Ricardo Quintero Nieto, *Territorio ignoto (Tierradentro): monografía* (Cali: Imprenta Márquez, 1955), 110.

²² This happened in the cases of Pitayó and Tacueyó, in the western slopes. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 51. Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 43-44.

²³ This was the case of Vitoncó. AGN/MI/AI, caja 182, carpeta 1526, ff. 10-13v.

²⁴ Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 51-60. Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 38-45.

²⁵ Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 36-38.

²⁶ Rappaport, “Territory and Tradition,” 198-221. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 48-54. Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 39-42.

The support of the Spanish Crown for these new political actors was expressed clearly in the *resguardo* titles of Togoima, Pitayó, and Vitoncó, which not only secured the communities' lands but also recognized the *nuevos caciques*' supreme power and their right to pass this power on to their descendants, hence legally establishing hereditary *cacicazgos*.²⁷ Two *nuevo cacique* dynasties were legitimized in Tierradentro in this fashion: the Guyumús²⁸ and the Calambás. The Guyumús family controlled several villages in southern Tierradentro, and it survived until the twentieth century. According to Hernández de Alba its last member, Isidoro Guyumús, died in 1916.²⁹

Juan Tama founded the Calambás dynasty. This dynasty solidified control over an area much larger than that under the Guyumús, encompassing lands in both Tierradentro and the western slopes. By creating different kinship ties the Calambás expanded their area of influence beyond the *resguardos* of Vitoncó³⁰ and Pitayó³¹ (each one grouping several villages) to Tacueyó³² in the western slopes, and Wila³³ in northern Tierradentro.³⁴ As I will examine later in this chapter, these *cacique* families managed to retain political power even after Colombia's Independence and remained influential political actors into the twentieth-century. These two

²⁷ Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 39-42.

²⁸ There are multiple spellings for this last name, some of them are: Guaymús, Gullumuz, Gueymús, Gueyomuse, Gueyomusa, Ullumuza. In order to maintain consistency, I will use Guyumús throughout this work.

²⁹ BLAA/LRM, MSS1494, f. 7.

³⁰ This *resguardo* included: Vitoncó, Lame, Chinas, Suin, and Mosoco. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 51.

³¹ The *resguardo* of Pitayó included: Pitayó, Jambaló, Quichaya, Pueblo Nuevo and Caldon. Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 43-44. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 51.

³² The *resguardo* of Tacueyó or Toribío encompassed: Tacueyó, San Francisco, and Cuetayuc. Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 43-44. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 51.

³³ In the eighteenth century there existed a *cacicazgo* in Wila (which probably included present-day Wila and Tálaga), led by María Mondiguagua, who was Juan Tama's wife. However, according to Rappaport Wila remained a polity more similar to its sixteenth-century predecessors, "small and with little administrative legitimation," than to the ones the *nuevos caciques* were developing. In fact, no title of this *resguardo* has ever been found, and there exist no oral tradition on its territorial limits. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 51-52. Rappaport, "Territory and Tradition," 197.

³⁴ Rappaport, "Territory and Tradition," 176, 211-213.

dynasties played a crucial role in Tierradentro's history and even its present. In fact, present-day Nasa Indians consider Juan Tama and Angelina Guyumús culture heroes.³⁵

The existing literature on Tierradentro fails to explain how political and territorial control developed in the areas inhabited by the Guanaca Indians, but there is no evidence that a figure equivalent to the *nuevos caciques* emerged there, even after the *resguardo* of El Pedregal de Topa was created in 1735.³⁶

As different authors have argued, in Tierradentro and the western slopes the *nuevos caciques* appropriated the institution of the *resguardo* and transformed it into a tool to defend their lands from Spanish encroachment and legitimate the *nuevos caciques'* political authority. By the early years of the eighteenth century the *caciques'* actions had resulted in the consolidation of a vast and continuous Nasa territory covering Tierradentro and the western slopes.³⁷

Colombia's independence from Spain in the early-nineteenth century presented novel challenges for the host of indigenous institutions that had emerged during the colonial period in Tierradentro. I will analyze the fate of *resguardos* in chapter 5. Here I will focus on the history of the Nasa *caciques* and *cabildos* after Independence. As we shall see, these actors and institutions would be crucial mediators, determining in large part the course that missionaries' impact on Tierradentro would take.

³⁵ Rappaport, "Territory and Tradition," 176-177.

³⁶ To the best of my knowledge there exists only one short published account on the history of the Guanaca Indians, and it dates back to 1952. See: Otero, *Etnología Caucana*, 145-165.

³⁷ Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 45.

2.2 FROM *TERRITORIO* TO MUNICIPALITY: BRINGING TIERRADENTRO INTO THE NATION, 1840-1907

In Colombia the constant redrawing of the country's administrative make up was a manifestation of the political instability that enfolded the country in the nineteenth century. Successive Constitutions, laws, and decrees reshaped large and small administrative units almost on a yearly basis up until the 1910s, when the modern configuration finally emerged.³⁸ Tierradentro was no exception to this trend, and thus between 1847 and 1907 its administrative status remained in flux. Literature on this region has so far paid little attention to these shifts, and it is not my intention to present here a detailed account of them. Instead, I want to stress that before the late 1880s these changes had but insignificant effects on the ground, since the Colombian nation had no effective sovereign power over the region. The situation changed when some of the outsiders that a quinine bonanza attracted to the region in the 1870s decided to settle there permanently, for in the late 1880s they became the driving force behind efforts, successful in the long run, to bring the region under government control.

Just like many other outlying areas of the country, between 1847 and the 1870s Tierradentro's status oscillated between segregation as a *territorio nacional* directly under central government administration, and integration into a regular administrative unit (a Department, Province, or State, depending on the year).³⁹ This juggling, however, did not translate into effective control. In 1890 Leon Douay, a French merchant who traded in cinchona bark in the area for many years, testified to this when he explained that until 1859 the authority

³⁸ Gustavo Arboleda, "Divisiones territoriales de Colombia," *Boletín de historia y antigüedades* 11, no. 122 (1916). Rausch, "Church-State Relations," 51-52.

³⁹ In 1847 Tierradentro became the "Territory of Guanacas," but a year later this territory was extinguished. In 1857 it was again turned into the "Territory of Páez," and two years later its status changed to be integrated into the district of Popayán. Santacruz, "Proceso de extinción de las parcialidades," 53-54, 58-59.

of the Colombian state on Tierradentro had been only nominal.⁴⁰ Colombian authorities did not make a serious attempt to control the region until the early 1870s, when Tierradentro became a center of national economic interest thanks to the cinchona trees that its forests contained.

Cinchona bark (from which quinine is extracted), became one of the main export products in Colombia for three decades starting in the 1850s.⁴¹ In Colombia, as in the rest of South America, cinchona bark was harvested exclusively from wild forests and using methods that destroyed the plants in a few years. This meant that a single area could not offer continuing supply, and hence the frontier of extraction was constantly on the move.⁴² The first Nasa communities that the quinine bonanza impacted were those of the western slopes, where forests had already been depleted of the bark by the late 1850s. In the 1860s the quinine frontier crossed the cordillera reaching southern Tierradentro.⁴³ It was then when the Colombian government made its first serious attempt to control the region.

It is unclear when exactly Colombian authorities changed Tierradentro's status to that of "Territory of Huila," but by 1871 it was under the authority of a Prefect with a seat in Vitoncó, who was aided by a "*corregidor*" in Inzá and a Municipal Judge in Pueblito (current Belalcázar).⁴⁴ According to the only detailed account that exists about this episode, the Nasa did not welcome the Prefect and forced him to move from Vitoncó to San Andrés de Pisimbalá and,

⁴⁰ Leon Douay, "Contribution a l'Américanisme du Cauca (Colombie)," in *Congrès International des Américanistes, Comptendu de la Septième Session* (Berlin: Librairie W. H. Kuhl, 1890), 785-786.

⁴¹ Safford and Palacios, *Colombia: Fragmented Land*, 194-195, 230. José Antonio Ocampo, *Colombia y la economía mundial, 1830-1910* (México D. F.: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1984), 271-282.

⁴² Safford and Palacios, *Colombia: Fragmented Land*, 194-195. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 104-106. José Antonio Ocampo, *Colombia y la economía mundial*, 265-266.

⁴³ Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 105-106. Robert Cross, *Report by Robert Cross of his Mission to South America in 1877-78* (London: George E. Eyre and William Spottiswoode, 1879), 8-24, 27.

⁴⁴ ACC/S, paq. 495, legajo 35 and legajo 40, year 1871. Information on this remains extremely fragmentary, and there are alternative versions on when this administrative unit was created, what its name was, and when it disappeared. Missionary David González claimed that it was called "Prefecture of Páez," and it had been created in 1872. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 103, 202.

as the hostilities continued, to abandon Tierradentro for good.⁴⁵ It is very likely that this failure was the cause of yet another modification in administrative status in October of 1872, when Tierradentro became the “District of Páez.”⁴⁶ The full implications of this change are not clear, but missionary David González claimed that Tierradentro was left alone for another decade.⁴⁷ Thus the Colombian government had no effective oversight on Tierradentro during the peak of the cinchona bark boom. By the late 1870s the bark had been collected already for a long time in the vicinity of Inzá, El Pedregal, and Turminá, and the frontier was advancing towards northern Tierradentro,⁴⁸ where the extraction continued for another decade.⁴⁹

By the early 1880s Tierradentro’s forests had been practically cleared of cinchona, and the quinine interests left as suddenly as they had arrived. This bonanza, however, had at least one long-lasting legacy. Some of the outsiders that the quinine had brought decided to stay and join the very few non-indigenous families already settled in Inzá.⁵⁰ In the following years these settlers became a key driving force in bringing the area under government control.

⁴⁵ The Prefect was General Vicente Guevara Cajiao. In page 103 González stated incorrectly that the Prefect’s name was Vicente Guerra Cajiao. This misspelled name has been repeated in many articles and books that cite González. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 103, 202. Quintero also mentioned this Prefect. Quintero, *Territorio ignoto*, 45-46. Another account, for which no supporting evidence has been found, was presented in 1898 by Francisco Rebolledo in his biography of the Italian entrepreneur Ernesto Cerutti, who in 1873 formed a company with two influential generals in Popayán to buy cinchona bark. Rebolledo said that rumors had it that the partners managed to get Vicente Garcés C. appointed as Prefect of Páez, so that he could facilitate the extraction of cinchona bark in the area. Alonso Valencia Llano, “¡Centu per centu, moderata ganancia!” Ernesto Cerutti, un comerciante italiano en el Estado Soberano del Cauca,” *Boletín Cultural y Bibliográfico*, no. 17 (1981).

⁴⁶ A decree (“ordenanza”) of the Municipality of Popayán created the District of Páez in October of 1872, with Pueblito as its administrative capital, and three “corregimientos”: Inzá, Huila, and Calambás. This decree explained that the area had been known previously as the “Territory of Huila,” which had been extinguished. AGN/MRE, transf. 10, carp. 47, ff. 180-181. The extinction of the Territory of Huila is also mentioned in: ACC/S, pag. 495, legajo 44, f. 27, year 1871.

⁴⁷ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 103, 202.

⁴⁸ Cross, *Report by Robert Cross*, 27-28, 31.

⁴⁹ ACC/NS, 1927, vol. 2, escritura 131, ff. 663-688.

⁵⁰ Sevilla Casas, *La pobreza de los excluidos*, 42. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 103-104. According to Quintero most of the settlers came from Popayán, Bolívar, and La Plata. Quintero, *Territorio ignoto*, 33.

In 1886 two of them, Luis Adriano Pérez and Benjamín Nieto,⁵¹ decided to convince Cauca's governor to establish municipal authorities in the region. According to González, Cauca authorities were not especially interested in the matter, and it took Pérez two visits to Popayán and the promise that he would serve as municipal mayor for two years without pay to convince the governor to turning Tierradentro into the Municipality of Páez, with Inzá as its capital.⁵²

This change did not easily translate into effective authority, for the new government officials found themselves unable to enforce tax payments and had no police force to back them up.⁵³ But however unstable and weak their authority, these officials lived permanently in the area and thus managed to ensure for the first time continued government presence. Once the national-level political instability of the nineteenth century was over, in the early 1900s, the government was able to further consolidate its control. Hence in 1907 Tierradentro adopted its current administrative make up, when it was divided into two municipalities: Inzá and Páez. The first one had the village of Belalcázar (former Pueblito) as its head, and encompassed three quarters of Tierradentro's territory. The remaining quarter corresponded to the Municipality of Inzá, with the homonymous village as its capital.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Pérez had arrived to Inzá in 1872 as a two year old with his mother, as part of the entourage of the newly-appointed Prefect. Nieto, originally from Bolívar, arrived to Tierradentro looking for cinchona bark and stayed in Inzá for the rest of his life. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 103-104.

⁵² González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 103-104, 202-203.

⁵³ ACC/AM, paq. 177, legajo 3, s.n.f. (Inzá, 17 agosto 1887. Inzá, 15 setiembre 1887. Inzá, 3 marzo 1888. Inzá, 8 mayo 1888. Inzá, 20 mayo 1888).

⁵⁴ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 203. In 1907 the Municipality of Inzá included: the *parcialidades* of Topa, El Pedregal, La Laguna, Turminá, Yaquivá, Santa Rosa, San Andrés, Calderas and Inzá; and the *caseríos* of Segovia, Viborá, and Rionegro. The Municipality of Páez included: the *parcialidades* of Mosoco, San José, Vitoncó, Wila, Tálaga, Lame, Suín, Chinas, Avirama, Togoima, Cohetando, Ricaurte and Pueblito; and the *caseríos* of: Potrerillos, El Colorado, Araujo, El Huaco, Itaibe, and El Hato. "Decreto Presidencial 1510 del 13 de diciembre de 1907" *Diario Oficial* 20 diciembre 1907. In 1911 there were two *corregimientos* in Inzá (Pedregal and San Andrés), while three *parcialidades* were directly under the control of Inzá's municipality. Páez had three *corregimientos* (Mosoco, Araujo, and Itaibe) and seven *parcialidades* depended directly from the municipality. AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 16, carpeta 1, ff. 11-12v.

The lack of effective governmental control over Tierradentro for the bulk of the nineteenth century did not mean that the region remained isolated economically (as the quinine boom shows) or even politically. On the contrary, government policies and especially the armed conflicts that afflicted Colombia since the 1810s affected not only the internal political structure of the Nasa communities, but also their connections with the larger Colombian society.

2.3 NASA CACIQUES AND THE CIVIL WARS IN TIERRADENTRO, 1811-1903

In 1927 the captain of the indigenous council of Wila,⁵⁵ a *parcialidad* in northern Tierradentro, asked a Municipal Judge to certify the qualities of several witnesses as a first step to create a legal deed for Wila's *resguardo*. In the particular case of the indigenous witness Jacinto Guainás⁵⁶ from Lame, Wila's captain requested that the Judge certify that he "has been recognized and respected as a descendant of the caciques by all of the Tierradentro Indians." When the judge submitted his certification all it said about Guainás was that he was an Indian from Lame.⁵⁷

The discrepancy between the indigenous captain's request and the Judge's certification shows two things. First, that the Judge was not willing to endorse Jacinto Guainás' membership in a *cacique* dynasty. Such a response was not surprising, but rather a continuation of the

⁵⁵ There are multiple ways to spell this name, the most common one is Huila. However, I opted for Wila to make it easier to differentiate between the indigenous *parcialidad*, here spelled as Wila, and the Department of Huila, neighbor to the Department of Cauca.

⁵⁶ The sources present multiple spellings for this last name, like: Waynass, Güeinas, Guaynas, Güeynás. In order to maintain uniformity, I will use Guainás throughout the dissertation.

⁵⁷ ACC/NS, 1927, vol. 2, escritura 31, f. 687

government policy that had legally erased indigenous hereditary *cacicazgos* in the 1820s.⁵⁸ Second, that in Tierradentro, as many authors have argued, the *caciques*' legal liquidation did not lead to their elimination in practice.⁵⁹

On the contrary, during the nineteenth century a new type of Nasa *cacique* emerged who, by becoming military *caudillo*, retained power over large expanses of the Nasa territory. Rappaport refers to them as "*caciques* without *cacicazgos*,"⁶⁰ but while she has presented them as a monolithic group, I argue that there were very different types of Nasa *caciques* without *cacicazgos*. In this section I refer to one of these types, the *caciques* that could claim ancestry to the colonial *nuevos caciques*, such as Jacinto Guainás. I use the term "*caciques-cum-caudillos*" that Pumarada coined⁶¹ to refer to them as a group. Other "*caciques* without *cacicazgos*," in contrast, could not claim *nuevo cacique* lineage, and instead used either partisan affiliation or a sense of shared Indianness that transcended the Nasa as a way to build political power. I will discuss these latter leaders in chapter 4.

⁵⁸ Simón Bolívar liquidated the indigenous hereditary *cacicazgos* by an 1824 decree. Roberto Choque Canqui, *Cinco siglos de historia. 1. Jesús de Machaca: la marka rebelde*, vol. 1 (La Paz: Plural Editores, 2003), 258. Triana, *Legislación indígena nacional*, 14. For the case of Cauca: Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 68. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 95. There is additional evidence that in Tierradentro the government's policy towards *cacicazgos* remained consistent with the 1824 decree. For example, in the official documentation that I worked with government officials never used the word *cacique*. However, travelers that visited Tierradentro did use the term, showing that in practice *caciques* were recognized. Carlos Cuervo Márquez, *Estudios arqueológicos y etnográficos*, 2 ed., vols. 1-2 (Madrid: América, 1920). Douay, "Contribution a l'Américanisme."

⁵⁹ The best studies on this matter are: Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*. Yesenia C. Pumarada Cruz, "Nasa Politics in Nineteenth Century Colombia: Warfare and the Negotiation of Distance and Integration (1810s-1860s)" (Master's thesis, University of Wisconsin, 2006). Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*.

⁶⁰ Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 96-101. Findji and Rojas were the first to coin this term in 1985, but they used it to refer to post-colonial indigenous political leaders (*caciques*) whose political agenda was not to strengthen the Nasa territory's unity (*cacicazgo*), but instead promoted internal division. Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 73-77.

⁶¹ See Pumarada, "Nasa Politics in Nineteenth Century Colombia."

2.3.1 The *Caciques* Become Military *Caudillos*

The relative isolation that Tierradentro had enjoyed since the eighteenth century came to an abrupt end with the Wars of Independence of the 1810s and 1820s, when the area's strategic position—astride the best routes to Tolima, Cundinamarca, Valle del Cauca, Antioquia, Popayán and Pasto—made it into an important battleground.⁶² The region retained this unfortunate role during the rest of the nineteenth century, as civil conflicts continued to wreak havoc in Colombia. Just like in the rest of the country, these clashes brought destruction and death to Tierradentro. But they also put some Nasa *caciques* in a privileged position to retain political power even after their dynastic rights had been disallowed by the Colombian state. They reinvented themselves as military *caudillos*.⁶³

The Indians of Tierradentro were not quiescent victims of their territory's strategic location, but rather made themselves into active participants. Nasa Indians fought in the Independence wars and in many of the civil struggles that ensued: 1831, 1839, 1860-1862, 1876, 1885, 1895, and the Thousand Days War (1899-1903).⁶⁴ In a recent study Pumarada has argued that Nasa participation in these wars had complex results. On the one hand, by taking sides in these struggles the Indians involved themselves in national politics to unprecedented levels, thus losing some of their previous autonomy. But on the other hand the Indians were able to deter

⁶² Carlos Cuervo Márquez, *Estudios arqueológicos y etnográficos*, 2 ed., vol. 1 (Madrid: América, 1920), 32.

⁶³ Pumarada, "Nasa Politics in Nineteenth Century Colombia," 100. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 96-101. Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 70-75.

⁶⁴ Pumarada, "Nasa Politics in Nineteenth Century Colombia." Ary R. Campo Chicangana, *Montoneras, deserciones e insubordinaciones: yanaconas y paeces en la guerra de los mil días* (Cali: Secretaría de Cultura y Turismo Municipal, Archivo Histórico de Cali, 2003). Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 98-101. Anthony Henman, *Mama Coca*, 2 ed. (Popayán: Biblioteca del Gran Cauca, 2008), 279-283.

non-indigenous settlement on their lands, gain lands and other material benefits, press for policies that protected their *resguardos*, and subvert racial hierarchies.⁶⁵

A number of Nasa military leaders emerged during these conflicts, but the most famous ones were connected to the colonial *nuevos caciques*' lineage, specifically to the Calambás dynasty. Thus Agustín Calambás reached the military rank of Colonel and became an Independence martyr in 1816,⁶⁶ while Lorenzo Ibito y Calambás stood out in the 1831 and 1839 wars.⁶⁷

Fighting with Lorenzo Ibito in the 1830s was a rising leader, whom the military reports identified only by his surname: Guainás.⁶⁸ It is my contention that this collaboration between Calambás and Guainás, whose terms are not known, had lasting consequences. Although previous scholars mentioned the salience of this particular Guainás and his descendants in Tierradentro's history, they have failed to stress the direct connection that existed between the Calambás and the Guainás dynasties. However, there is evidence that at some point, probably in the 1840s or 1850s, the Calambás's political and symbolic clout was transferred to a new surname: Guainás. According to Douay, a French quinine trader who lived in Nasa territory in the 1860s and 1870s, Guainás was the brother-in-law of the last *cacique* who descended directly from the Calambás dynasty. Douay also explained that the totality of Tierradentro Indians had

⁶⁵ Pumarada, "Nasa Politics in Nineteenth Century Colombia," 162-170. Anthony Henman, *Mama Coca*, 281-282.

⁶⁶ Pumarada, "Nasa Politics in Nineteenth Century Colombia," 105-113. Joaquín García Borrero, *El Huila y sus aspectos* (Bogotá: Editorial Cromos, 1935), 227-236. Quintero, *Territorio ignoto*, 44-46. Gustavo Arboleda, *Diccionario biográfico y genealógico del antiguo Departamento del Cauca*, 2 ed. (Bogotá: Biblioteca Horizontes, 1962), 81.

⁶⁷ Ibito's local Tierradentro guerrilla was never defeated by the government troops, but it surrendered when the government issued a pardon in 1841. Ibito died in jail awaiting his exile from Colombia, one of the conditions he had accepted when surrendering. Pumarada, "Nasa Politics in Nineteenth Century Colombia," 121-125. Prado Arellano, *Rebeliones en la provincia. La guerra de los supremos en las provincias suroccidentales y nororientales granadinas, 1839-1842*, 199.

⁶⁸ Pumarada, "Nasa Politics in Nineteenth Century Colombia," 121-125.

recognized Guainás's authority until his death by drowning in 1859.⁶⁹ Even though Douay did not reveal Guainás's first name, he was in all likelihood referring to José María Guainás, whose death in the same circumstances and date that Douay described was reported by other sources. José María Guainás, like the Calambás *caciques* that had preceded him, was a military leader and had obtained the military rank of Colonel.⁷⁰

Independently of whether the kinship link that Douay reported between Calambás and Guainás lay at the root of the latter's authority or was an after the fact invention to legitimize it, from then on the Guainás surname continued to be associated with powerful *caciques*, as the testimony from Wila that I quoted at the beginning of this section shows. Francisco Guainás (one of José María's sons) was the most famous one. Just like his father, Francisco fought in several civil wars and created close connections with the military. He obtained the military rank of Colonel in 1877, two years later became a General, and in the Thousand Days War was the only Nasa Indian who led an official battalion.⁷¹ In contrast with the visibility and prestige of the Guainás, the Calambás surname retained no clout and became extremely common.⁷² In sum, some of the descendants the colonial *cacique* dynasties managed to dodge republican anti-*cacique* policies by connecting with Colombia's military, and sustained their internal power by creating new kinship ties.

⁶⁹ Douay, "Contribution a l'Américanisme," 785.

⁷⁰ Arboleda, *Diccionario biográfico y genealógico*, 193.

⁷¹ Ibid. Francisco Guainás also participated in the coup d'état led by Payán in 1879 (on a coalition of conservatives and Independent Liberals). James E. Sanders, *Contentious Republicans. Popular Politics, Race, and Class in Nineteenth-Century Colombia* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2004), 170-171. Campo, *Montoneras, deserciones e insubordinaciones*, 179.

⁷² González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 163.

2.3.2 Change and Continuity: the Power of the “*Caciques-cum-Caudillos*”

To secure their internal power and external influence, the Guainás mixed skillfully old and new elements. In this they were typical of a broader pattern. The sustained influence of the Nasa “*caciques-cum-caudillos*,” as Rappaport has argued, rested not only on allying with non-indigenous interests (military or otherwise), but also on their presumed links, either dynastic⁷³ or symbolic,⁷⁴ with the colonial *nuevos caciques*.⁷⁵ There was another, more practical feature of the colonial *cacique* lineages (and one that scholars have largely neglected)⁷⁶ that also continued with the Guainás *caudillos*. Unlike the great majority of their followers, they spoke Spanish, were literate, and some had spent time in Popayán.⁷⁷ Hence the Nasa *cacique* dynasties that survived their *cacicazgos*’ legal vanishing retained their privileged access to the non-indigenous world.

⁷³ Different sources attributed Francisco or Jacinto Guainás’ authority to the birthright that derived from their *cacique* lineage. Cuervo, *Estudios arqueológicos y etnográficos*, 1: 12. ACC/NS, 1927, vol. 2, escritura 31, f. 687.

⁷⁴ As Rappaport has noted, stories that remembered José María’s death by drowning in a river were recalling Nasa notions that link rivers and *caciques*. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 97. The same applies to stories claiming that Francisco had been born inside another river. *Las luchas de los mayores son nuestra fuerza*, (Bogotá: Cátedra Nasa Unesco, Asociación de Cabildos Indígenas del Norte del Cauca, 2001), 14. The Nasa believe that three centuries ago Juan Tama, an 18th century *cacique* and mythical hero, was born during a great flood. Nasa shamans rescued Tama from the water and raised him to be the savior of the Nasa. Rappaport, *Intercultural Utopias*, 185-226.

⁷⁵ Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 96.

⁷⁶ Findji and Rojas made a passing remark about the hispanicization (“*castellanización*”) of these leaders. Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 73.

⁷⁷ These features were exceptional in the 1860s, and they remained unusual enough in the early twentieth century that the missionary David González noted them in Jacinto Guainás. Robert Cross, *Report on the Collecting of Seeds and Plants of the Cinchonas of Pitayo* (London: George E. Eyre and William Spottiswoode, 1871), 36. González described Jacinto Guainás as an unusually cultured Indian, who the missionary enjoyed inviting to share his meals because he showed admirable “neatness and propriety at the table, his conversation always attentive, respectful and delicate.” González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 166. Jacinto knew how to read and write. ACC/NS, 1927, vol. 2, escritura 31, f. 687. According to Rueda, the dynasty’s last member died in 1959. José Eduardo Rueda Enciso, “Quintín Lame y el movimiento indígena en el Cauca,” in *Historia del Gran Cauca. Historia Regional del Suroccidente Colombiano*, ed. Alonso Valencia Llano (Bogotá: Fundación General de Apoyo Universidad del Valle, 1996), 190.

As Rappaport does note, these “*caciques-cum-caudillos*” kept another of the *nuevos caciques*’ features: influence over a territory much wider than a single *parcialidad*. While Rappaport suggests that this territory remained more or less the same as the colonial *cacicazgos*,⁷⁸ I find in contrast that the supra-local authority of the Guainás *caudillos* from the 1850s onwards was geographically more limited. There exists considerable evidence that José María⁷⁹ and Francisco⁸⁰ Guainás (and possibly two later *caudillos*, Jacinto⁸¹ and Apolinar⁸² Guainás) kept their strongest and more direct ties with two *parcialidades*: San Francisco (in the western slopes) and Lame (in Tierradentro). Additionally, Francisco’s influence reached other *parcialidades* on both slopes: Chinas and Wila in Tierradentro; and Toribío in the western slopes.⁸³ All of these *parcialidades* had belonged to colonial *cacicazgos* under the Calambás dynasty’s authority.⁸⁴ However, there is no mention that the Guainás *caudillos* had any clout over Vitoncó in Tierradentro and Pitayó in the western slopes, the two *parcialidades* that had been at the core of the Calambás’s colonial *cacicazgos*. That is, the Guainás’ authority, like their predecessors’, reached Nasa communities on both sides of the cordillera, but unlike their ancestors, they influenced a smaller area.

⁷⁸ Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 96-101.

⁷⁹ José María Guainás (Francisco’s father) was the captain of San Francisco’s *cabildo* in the 1850s. Pumarada, “Nasa Politics in Nineteenth Century Colombia,” 92.

⁸⁰ *Las luchas de los mayores*, 13-14. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 98. Cuervo, *Estudios arqueológicos y etnográficos*, 1: 12-13. ACC/AM, paq. 332, legajo 89, s.n.f. San Francisco, 12 junio 1905.

⁸¹ In the 1950s the missionary González explained that the village of Lame was still linked to the Guainás, “who have always been *principales*.” Jacinto Guainás was from Lame. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 166.

⁸² There is information about an Apolinar Guainás that moved with Francisco from Lame to San Francisco. They were relatives, but the exact relationship between them is unclear. Moreover, Apolinar was a military *caudillo* himself. In 1917 there were reports that Colonel Apolinar Guainás, from San Francisco, helped Pío Collo to quell Quintín Lame’s rebellion in Tierradentro. AGN/MG/S4/V, vol. 129, ff. 139-143. AGN/MG/S4/V, vol. 113, ff. 485-487. *Las luchas de los mayores*, 13-14.

⁸³ In Chinas, elderly people in 1940 remembered hearing him read their *resguardo*’s title in 1865. AGN/MI/AI, caja 218, carpeta 2046, ff. 14-15, 29-29v. He was also said to be “popular” in Wila in the 1870s. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 97, 98. Cuervo Márquez mentions Francisco’s influence on Toribío. Cuervo, *Estudios arqueológicos y etnográficos*, 1: 12. In 1910 Guainás considered himself to have enough authority to send a letter to the Department of Cauca’s Governor asking to clearly establish the limits between the *resguardos* of Toribío and Jambaló, since the Indians from the latter village were abusing Toribío. ACC/AM, paq. 370, legajo 5, s.n.f. 26 agosto 1910.

⁸⁴ On colonial *cacicazgos* see: Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 51-60.

While the Guainás *caudillos* were able to retain some of the *nuevos caciques*' features, they also had to adapt to the new circumstances. Externally they had to innovate the most, since the government's anti-*cacicaazgo* policy had stripped them of their dynastic claims to power. Hence, they had become involved in military conflicts in a manner that had no precedent in the colonial period. Moreover, their military status legitimized in a new way their political power in dealings with the Colombian government. Thus when Francisco Guainás identified himself as "General of all Tierradentro Indians" in a 1910 letter to Cauca's governor, he was tying his power exclusively to his military trajectory (instead of his birthright).⁸⁵ Moreover, in the government's eyes the legitimacy of Guainás' martial career was tied to defending the interest of one of Colombia's political parties (specifically the Conservative party, as I will explain later).

The military connection also provided these leaders with new tools to strengthen their influence within the indigenous world. For example, in 1905 Francisco Guainás sent a letter to the indigenous authorities of Calderas threatening to use his good relations with the government to get them punished for a dispute over land.⁸⁶ In this way Guainás was linking his authority not to his ancestry, but to his ability to channel the government's power.⁸⁷ Additionally, the *caciques-cum-caudillos*' military feats also increased their prestige within the indigenous world.⁸⁸

In dealing with power structures external to Tierradentro these indigenous *caudillos* continuously and strategically managed partisan alliances. However, within the indigenous world these same *caudillos*' alliances and loyalties did not follow partisan lines. Although little is

⁸⁵ ACC/AM, paq. 370, legajo 5, s.n.f. (26 agosto 1910).

⁸⁶ ACC/AM, paq. 332, legajo 89, s.n.f. (San Francisco, 12 junio 1905).

⁸⁷ This could have been a strategy to gain some authority over an indigenous community that had never been under the jurisdiction of Juan Tama's descendants, such as Calderas.

⁸⁸ In the late 1990s Pedro Nel Yule, a seventy-three-year-old Nasa elder from the *resguardo* of San Francisco and Francisco Guainás' grandson, stressed his grandfather's military prowess. *Las luchas de los mayores*, 14.

known of how exactly they sustained their influence⁸⁹ there is evidence that when dealing with Nasa communities other aspects of the *caciques'* loyalties had precedence over partisanship. Thus Francisco Guainás was Conservative and yet he had strong clout over Lame and San Francisco, both Liberal *parcialidades*. Moreover, in one occasion Francisco openly threatened a Conservative *parcialidad* (Calderas) in order to defend Lame's territorial claims. On this occasion he recognized that the Indians from Calderas were "companions of the same cause and defenders of the same flag" as he himself, but explained that their actions against Lame had left him no other option.⁹⁰ Hence it seems that for these Nasa leaders partisanship was a road to connect with the larger Colombian world, but it remained an external element that did not reorganize their relations within the indigenous society.

The anti-*cacicazgo* policy's rejection of dynastic rights had another important consequence: the disappearance of women from any officially-recognized position of authority. Female *caciques* had not been uncommon in Nasa societies during the conquest,⁹¹ and were also part of the eighteenth century dynasties.⁹² In contrast, post-Independence civil war chronicles do not report any indigenous female leader, and the lists of *cabildo* members that I have found never mention a woman in any *cabildo* position during this period.⁹³ This does not mean that women

⁸⁹ Some authors have identified the creation of kinship ties as an important mechanism. Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 72. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 98.

⁹⁰ ACC/AM, paq. 332, legajo 89, s.n.f. (San Francisco, 12 junio 1905).

⁹¹ The "Gaitana" remains one of the most famous Nasa leaders of the period. Quintero, *Territorio ignoto*, 39-43.

⁹² In fact, Angelina Guyumús is the most famous member of her dynasty, and there are references to female *caciques* also in the Calambás line. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 57-58. Quintero, *Territorio ignoto*, 115.

⁹³ According to the list of governors of Belalcázar from 1903 to 2008, the first time a woman held the position was 2003. "Gobernadores del resguardo de Belalcázar" *El Enjambre* 10, 9 agosto 2008, 14. (Belalcázar, Cauca) <http://gcollo.comunidadcoomeva.com/blog/uploads/EL-ENJAMBRE-10.pdf>. In the case of Avirama, the first female governor was elected in 1997. Yolimar Medina Quirá, *Aspectos históricos del resguardo de Avirama Páez* (Cali 1999), 120. See also Table 2. According to Rappaport, in the 1970s when she started her fieldwork in Tierradentro all *cabildo* members were male. Rappaport, "Territory and Tradition," 273.

did not hold prestigious positions within their communities,⁹⁴ but it appears that they were relegated to those that did not require direct contact with government officials.

Importantly, the same martial paths that the *caciques-cum-caudillos* had resorted to in order to retain their privileged position were open to other Nasa Indians who could not claim the same *nuevo cacique* lineage. At least two other types of Nasa leaders emerged that took advantage of the military context. As I will analyze in chapter 4, like the Guainás these leaders' authority extended over multiple *parcialidades*, hence they could also be considered *caciques* without *cacicazgos*. But unlike the descendants of *nuevos caciques* who used military leadership as a route to reconstitute authority, these other leaders used partisan affiliation (in the case of José Pío Collo) or a sense of shared Indianness that went beyond the Nasa themselves (in the case of Manuel Quintín Lame) as a base to build their political power.

Meanwhile, for all their significance, the *caciques* without *cacicazgos* were but one component of a complex Nasa political structure. Since the colonial times there had been Nasa *caciques* whose authority was circumscribed to a single *parcialidad*, as well as *cabildos* (indigenous councils), which had first appeared in Tierradentro with the creation of the *resguardos* in the eighteenth century.⁹⁵ While in the colonial period *cabildos* had been clearly subordinated to the *caciques*, in the republican era *cabildos* were the only indigenous authorities legally recognized, and thus they gained an unprecedented centrality in the indigenous world.

⁹⁴ For example, in the early 1940s Hernández de Alba reported that in Calderas Clementina Iquinás was the “*fiestera*”, a highly prestigious ritual position. BLAA/LRM, MSS1344, f. 10.

⁹⁵ Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 95.

2.4 PEQUEÑOS CABILDOS: ACCOMODATION AND AUTONOMY

For one decade after Colombia's Independence indigenous *cabildos* were conspicuously absent from the new republic's legislation. They were not legally revived (although in practice they had not ceased to exist) until 1821, a year after Bolívar decreed the re-instatement of indigenous *resguardos*.⁹⁶ As I explained in the previous section, after *cacicaezgos* were banned in 1824, *caciques-cum-caudillos* could no longer claim to represent indigenous communities as such; from that point onwards, *cabildos* became the only legal representatives of the "civilized" indigenous communities.⁹⁷

Given the primacy that indigenous *cabildos* gained at this juncture, it is surprising that Nasa *cabildos*' organization and development have attracted so little scholarly attention.⁹⁸ In what follows I analyze what republican laws established about *cabildos*. I also argue that in Tierradentro *cabildos* sustained significant autonomy, while at the same time accepting subordination to the Colombian government and embracing their role as state representatives within the indigenous community.

⁹⁶ Triana, *Legislación indígena nacional*, 13-15. Balcázar, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 6-13.

⁹⁷ National laws said little about who the legal representatives of the Indians classified as "savages that are reducing themselves to a civilized life" would be, besides stressing that Catholic missionaries entrusted with the administration of these peoples could be granted extraordinary judicial, civil, and penal faculties. Triana, *Legislación indígena nacional*, 166. In the case of Cauca an 1898 decree declared that, if possible, the Indians should keep their own government institutions, while at the same time providing the "Superior of the Mission" with civil and police powers. Balcázar Pardo, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 110-112.

⁹⁸ The three studies that present the most detailed analysis of the Nasa Indians' political history fail to make any substantive points on the transformations of *cabildos* after Independence. Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*. Rappaport, "Territory and Tradition." Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*.

2.4.1 *Cabildos* in the Law

Early Colombian lawmakers were interested in *cabildos* only in so far as they provided the easiest way to handle *resguardos* until their division, which was expected to happen soon. The legislators' unwillingness to recognize *cabildos* as anything but land administrators was clear in the way laws from 1821 to 1859 explicitly restricted the indigenous councils' legal functions to those related to the economic administration of the *parcialidades'* goods, especially *resguardos*.⁹⁹ This tendency ended with Cauca's Law 90 of 1859. This law presented a detailed list of the *cabildos'* duties in relation with *resguardos*,¹⁰⁰ but it also broadened the *cabildos'* power, establishing that they could exercise all of the economic functions that their own "*usos y estatutos*" (usages and statutes) determined, as long as they did not contravene Colombian law or civic guaranties.¹⁰¹

There was another realm where Cauca's Law 90 departed more dramatically from its predecessors: it stated that the *cabildo's* governor had the power to correct the Indians' "*faltas contra la moral*" (misdeeds against morality). According to Sanders, this change in the law responded to the pressure that indigenous communities had imposed on Cauca's politicians since the 1840s to secure not only their *resguardos* but also their moral control over their communities.¹⁰² Importantly, and in contrast with the detailed description that the same law gave

⁹⁹ Balcázar, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 6-13, 24-35.

¹⁰⁰ Including: creating and guarding the *parcialidad's* census and a chart with all the approved land adjudications; guarding the *resguardo's* titles and other legal documents that *cabildos* could legally produce; fairly distributing the lands owned in common between all the community members; seeing that each family's possession was respected; and making lease arrangements for the *resguardo's* forests, natural resources and unused land, as well as determining how to invest the income thus obtained. The *cabildo* also was in charge of keeping the *resguardo* titles. Balcázar, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 57-65.

¹⁰¹ Ibid, 57-65.

¹⁰² Sanders, "Pertenece a la gran familia granadina," 37.

for *resguardo* administration, there was no explanation of what this oversight over moral misbehavior included.¹⁰³

The effects of this rather vague provision were far reaching. This article, just like most of Cauca's Law 90 of 1859, was adopted at the national level when Law 89 of 1890 was passed, and it remained in place for another century. As Gómez has stressed, this was one of only two provisions in all of Colombia's legal *corpus* (before the Constitution of 1991) dealing with how the national judicial system would be applied to the special case of the "civilized" indigenous communities.¹⁰⁴ I want to stress that the article on moral misdeeds is the only part of Law 89 of 1890 that could explain Colombian scholars' repeated and otherwise unjustified assertion that this law granted judicial power to *cabildos*.¹⁰⁵ How and when this interpretation emerged remains an extremely intriguing issue that has not yet been satisfactorily explained in the literature.¹⁰⁶ But indeed it is true, as I will confirm in the next section, that whether under the protection of the moral misbehavior article or by some other disposition, in Tierradentro the *cabildos* actively policed their communities.

¹⁰³ Balcázar, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 57-65. The full article read: "Article 3. Misdeeds against morality committed by the Indians will be corrected by the gobernador or alcalde with correctional penalties not to exceed one day of detention." Ibid, 58.

¹⁰⁴ Gómez, *De la justicia y el poder indígena*, 90-91. The other one was Law 89 of 1890's stipulation that Colombian law would not apply to the "civilized" Indians in matters of *resguardos*, matters which would be run in accordance with Law 89. The full article reads: "Article 2. The indigenous communities already reduced to the civil life will not be governed by the general laws of the Republic in matters of *resguardos*. Instead they will be governed by the dispositions stated following." Balcázar, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 91.

¹⁰⁵ Triana claimed that Law 89 of 1890 granted *cabildos* the ability to perform judicial functions in accordance with indigenous custom. Triana, *Legislación indígena nacional*, 31-32. Medina asserted that according to Law 89 of 1890 "the cabildo can exercise the role of judge in lesser civil and penal causes: theft, insults, injuries and family problems..." Medina, *Aspectos históricos del resguardo*, 113.

¹⁰⁶ In a recent study, Gómez argues that the state did not concede *cabildos* judicial functions explicitly, but because neither the Church nor the state took an active interest in how indigenous groups dealt with judicial and penal issues, their juridical systems remained largely in place. While this is an interesting hypothesis, there are no studies explaining when and how this arrangement emerged and gained such widespread acceptance. Gómez, *De la justicia y el poder indígena*, 94-105.

As Curry has stressed, Colombian law showed little concern with indigenous communities' internal organization because of the widespread assumption that they would not survive as separate entities for long.¹⁰⁷ This is probably why laws displayed considerable disregard on matters of *cabildo* composition and election process. For several decades Colombian laws did not detail what positions, besides the *cabildo* head, had to exist in these indigenous councils. In 1936 a Departmental decree in Cauca established that each *cabildo* had to have a treasurer, but the rest of the spots went, again, unmentioned.¹⁰⁸ Laws not only failed to standardize *cabildo* composition, but they also stated that the Indians had to follow their “*usos y costumbres*”¹⁰⁹ (usages and customs) for determining these issues. This explicit acceptance of local custom seems to indicate that the legislation's lack of detail was not a lapse, but rather a conscious decision to leave local practices in place, probably from a sense that reorganizing *cabildos* was an unnecessary complication.

Up until the 1920s *cabildo* elections elicited as little attention from the state as did *cabildo* composition. Since 1859, republican laws had insisted that a new *cabildo* had to be elected each year, but they provided no guidelines other than stating that the Indians had to follow their “*usos y estatutos*”¹¹⁰ (usages and statutes). The only additional requirement listed in Cauca's Law 90 of 1859 was that the *parcialidad* had to recognize the new *cabildo* in front of the old one, and successive laws and decrees established that the Municipal Mayor had to witness this ceremony.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁷ Curry, “The Disappearance of the Resguardos,” 82.

¹⁰⁸ Balcázar, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 216-221

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, 58, 91-96. Another example of this general attitude was that, when referring to the head of the *cabildo* these laws did not attempt to homogenize his title, sanctioning instead whichever “customary nomenclature” each community preferred. Ibid, 115.

¹¹⁰ Ibid, 58, 92, 115.

¹¹¹ Ibid, 110-165

Then in 1920 a departmental decree in Cauca mandated that *cabildos* had to be elected by voting, established some conditions for the election to be valid, and banned the *cabildo* governors' reelection.¹¹² This happened only a few years after the 1914-1917 indigenous upheaval known as *la Quintinada* and which I will describe in chapter 4. This episode had prompted calls from some politicians for putting *cabildos* more squarely under Colombian authorities' control.¹¹³ It is unclear whether the 1920 decree was a response to these concerns, but if that was the case, this decree cannot have satisfied those voices since it did not attack *cabildos'* autonomy in any clear way.

Cabildo elections elicited Cauca legislators' interest again in the mid-1930s, but in a very different context. For a brief period between 1935 and 1937, as I will discuss in chapter 5, Cauca's Governor adopted a policy proposing, for the first time in Colombian history, that solving indigenous communities' problems required *resguardos* to be strengthened, not divided. In consequence departmental lawmakers set out to increase the government's oversight over *cabildos*, as well as *cabildos'* accountability towards their *parcialidades*. Thus a 1936 decree forbade the election of Indians who formed part of cliques or who had disrespected the authorities,¹¹⁴ and a year later another decree established two causes for the removal of *cabildo* members.¹¹⁵ Such removals had to be consulted with the Municipal Mayor, who then would

¹¹² Ibid, 184-188.

¹¹³ In 1916 the President forwarded to the Minister of the Interior a note by an individual identified as Dr. Rancocha, stating that the Law 89 of 1890 had to be changed, so that *cabildos* would be appointed either by the Municipal Mayor or by the Provincial Prefect. AGN/MG/S4/V, vol. 107, f. 150. The Governor of the Department of Huila also criticized the "quasi-autonomy" of the *cabildos*. AGN/MG/S4/V, vol. 112, ff. 122-124. In 1919 an unidentified source urged the Minister of the Interior to change Law 89, so that *cabildos* were replaced by boards appointed in a different way. AGN/MG/S4/V, vol. 129, ff. 139-143.

¹¹⁴ Balcázar, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 216-221.

¹¹⁵ First, if the *parcialidad* in a general assembly requested his removal; second, if the member opposed the authorities.

appoint a substitute.¹¹⁶ These decrees were the most serious effort to reform *cabildos* since Independence, and they were undertaken, paradoxically, not by administrations whose goal was to end *resguardos*, but by one that had attempted to strengthen them.

In sum, from Independence up until 1950, and with the exception of *resguardo* management, Colombian laws dealing with indigenous *cabildos* were either unspecific or recognized the Indians' local customs. While early legislators had set out to restrict *cabildo* tasks to the administration of *resguardos*, starting in 1859 *cabildos*' legal functions broadened to include all of their customary economic functions and, importantly, vigilance of their communities' moral behavior. Moreover, while *cabildo* oversight over *resguardos* was highly regulated, their other functions were not. Lawmakers showed even greater disregard for legislating *cabildo* composition and, to a lesser degree, its election process, stressing instead the need to follow local custom in these matters. Although no systematic studies exist on republican-era *cabildos* in Colombia, it is very likely that the law's vagueness and its acceptance of local custom facilitated the existence of great variability among indigenous *cabildos* throughout the country. In the case of Tierradentro, *cabildos* mixed legal and extralegal means to maintain a considerable level of autonomy.

2.4.2 *Cabildos* in Practice: Tierradentro

Republican *cabildos* in Tierradentro were different from their colonial ancestors. As some scholars have noted, colonial *resguardos* in Tierradentro had been large expanses of land inhabited by many *parcialidades* with informal boundaries between them, and with some

¹¹⁶ Balcázar, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 221-226.

informal, small *cabildos* under the authority of the larger, formally constituted *cabildo* of the *resguardo*.¹¹⁷ In contrast, Cauca's Law 90 of 1859 (and in consequence the national Law 89 of 1890) stated that each *parcialidad* had to have its correspondent *cabildo* to manage its *resguardo*, thus imposing a novel one-to-one correspondence (one *parcialidad*, one *resguardo*, one *cabildo*).¹¹⁸ This meant, as many authors have pointed out, that republican laws helped in the fragmentation of Nasa political units from the colonial *cacicazgos* (which could encompass one or more *resguardos*) into individual *parcialidades*, each one with a *pequeño cabildo* as its highest authority, but with no legally-recognized indigenous authority connecting these smaller units.¹¹⁹

Some communities in Tierradentro, however, managed to counter this atomization by recreating some of the hierarchical relations that had tied *cabildos* together during the colonial period. For example, missionary David González reported that when he lived in Tierradentro, between the 1920s and the 1950s, the *cabildos* from Lame and Mosoco considered themselves “minor *cabildos*,” depending for certain decisions (such as accepting a present from a priest) on the “major *cabildo*” of Vitoncó.¹²⁰ Both Lame and Mosoco had belonged to the *cacicazgo* of Vitoncó during the colonial period.

¹¹⁷ Pumarada, “Nasa Politics in Nineteenth Century Colombia,” 132.

¹¹⁸ The laws also accepted the cases in which one *cabildo* ruled over two *parcialidades*. In a 1898 decree in Cauca, if two *parcialidades* were governed by a single *cabildo*, but their *resguardos* were completely separated, these *parcialidades* could wean from each other. Balcázar, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 115.

¹¹⁹ Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 90-95. Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 68-69. In 1920 the government's unwillingness to recognize any supra-local authority that openly identified as indigenous was made clear. That year an official from the Ministry of Government denied a petition signed by several *cabildos* to recognize Manuel Quintín Lame as their “Jefe o Gobernador General de las Parcialidades de Indígenas de los Departamentos,” arguing that by law *cabildos* were the Indians' only representatives. AGN/MG/S4/V, vol. 137, ff. 16-21v.

¹²⁰ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 165. There is indirect evidence that a similar relationship might have existed between Belalcázar's and Togoima's *cabildos*. In 1923 there was a conflict between the former and the black inhabitants of Belalcázar, the latter arguing that Togoima's *cabildo* had legally granted them land in Belalcázar's *resguardo*. This might be an indication that Togoima's *cabildo* had, at some point, played the role of “major *cabildo*” to Belalcázar's. ACC/NS, 1940, vol. 2, escritura 66, ff. 712v-720v, 722-722v.

As the previous example indicates, *cabildos* in Tierradentro overlooked some of the legal dispositions that affected them. However, they also assumed some of their legal tasks with a great deal of dedication. National and Cauca archives are full of documents that bear witness to the *cabildos*' commitment to administer *resguardos*, especially when it came to defending their lands from outsiders or from neighboring *parcialidades*, and to formalizing documents that proved the community's legal possession of the *resguardo*.¹²¹ These councils, however, were less eager to fulfill other of their *resguardo*-related duties. For example, at least until the 1930s *cabildos* systematically failed to create censuses of their *parcialidades*. Given that the censuses' goal was to facilitate *resguardo* division, this was no mere oversight.¹²²

In Tierradentro other *cabildo* economic functions (all of which were deemed legal since 1859) included organizing communal works for constructing and repairing infrastructure and for cultivating a communal field known as the “*roza del santo*” (field of the saint).¹²³ Although very little has been written on the subject, there is evidence that some *cabildo* members also organized gangs that worked as waged laborers outside the indigenous communities.¹²⁴

Cabildos also displayed great zeal in punishing certain of their community members' transgressions. Some of them, like robbery, were also criminalized in Colombian law. But others such as infidelity, disrespect to *cabildo* officials, the activities of the “sorcerers,” and marrying

¹²¹ See list of sources at the end for references to *cabildo* disputes.

¹²² In 1923 the Municipal Council of Inzá denounced indigenous *cabildos* for this. AGN/MG/S4/V, vol. 175, ff. 176-177. There is some evidence that Tierradentro's *parcialidades* were rather hostile to efforts at forming censuses of any kind. In 1931 the National Inspector of Schools for Tierradentro reported that indigenous parents were not willing to tell the missionaries how many of school-aged children they had. AGN/AA2/MEN, legajo 72, carpeta 3, ff. 550-551v.

¹²³ Segundo E. Bernal Villa, “Economía de los Páez,” *Revista Colombiana de Antropología* 3 (1954): 332.

¹²⁴ For example, in 1913 or 1914 captain Dicué, from Vitoncó, oversaw the work of the Nasa field hands that spent four months a year clearing Ignacio Muñoz's hacienda Calaguala, in the Coconuno area. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 113. Probably Pío Collo had a similar function. In 1936 Cauca's governor sent him a telegram reminding him that he had to send workers to Mosoco for Guillermo Valencia. AGC, Copiador de Telegramas de la Gobernación, de octubre a diciembre de 1935 y de enero a abril de 1936, f. 304.

whites (and in some communities even marrying Indians from outside their *parcialidad*)¹²⁵ clearly did not contravene Colombian law. That is, *cabildos* were not enforcing Colombian laws, but rather their own moral norms. With these actions *cabildos* were not, as Arcila wrongly stated in 1951, administering “justice in the first instance.”¹²⁶ In fact, *cabildo* judicial acts were not integrated into the larger Colombian judicial system,¹²⁷ since these councils were never mentioned in the civil or penal codes, and they were not the local representatives of the Colombian judiciary. Municipal judges were, and there was one of these in Inzá and another in Belalcázar.¹²⁸

Cabildos did not police their communities on the quiet. Quite the contrary, state officials, anthropologists and missionaries were well aware of these activities, and there is no evidence that they considered them illegal.¹²⁹ Thus I can only hypothesize that there probably existed a widespread interpretation that considered that Law 89 of 1890 backed up these activities, as I already mentioned. However, we do not know when and how this idea would have gained such generalized acceptance.

Some have seen in this history a system of “juridical parallelism” in which *cabildos* judged certain infractions while the national court system dealt with others. In fact, Tierradentro *cabildos* did not exercise exclusive jurisdiction over their communities. On the contrary, Indians

¹²⁵ Segundo E. Bernal Villa, “Bases para el estudio de la organización social de los Páez,” *Revista Colombiana de Antropología* 4 (1955): 182, 185-186. Bernal, “Religious Life of the Páez,” 144. González, *Los paezes, o, genocidio*, 179.

¹²⁶ Graciliano Arcila Vélez, “Impresiones de una excursión a Tierradentro (Cauca),” *Universidad de Antioquia* 104 (1951): 660.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Examples of the role of these judges in Tierradentro can be found in: ACC/AM, paq. 177, legajo 3, s.n.f. (Inzá, 1 noviembre 1887). ANI/P año 1921, escritura 11, ff. 39-40.

¹²⁹ Emilio Larquère, “Notes sur la Préfecture Apostolique de Tierradentro,” *Annales de la Congrégation de la Mission* 90 (1925): 938-939. Gregorio Hernández de Alba, *The Highland Tribes of Southern Colombia* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1946), 946. Arcila, “Impresiones de una excursión,” 660. Otero, *Etnología Caucana*, 32.

from Tierradentro had both appealed and been tried in the ordinary court system since at least the 1870s.¹³⁰ The hypothesis of “juridical parallelism” was recently proposed by the anthropologist Herinaldy Gómez in reference to the indigenous communities in the Departments of Cauca and Nariño. Gómez, however, made no claim as to when exactly this arrangement emerged and did not back his assertion with empirical data.¹³¹ Although my evidence seems to corroborate Gómez’s hypothesis to some degree, more empirical research is needed to fully support it. In the meantime, it remains unclear how exactly *cabildo* justice worked and how it articulated with the larger national justice system.

Even though all the transgressions *cabildos* prosecuted could have fit into the vague category of “moral misbehavior” that these councils could legally punish, some of the punishments they imposed clearly surpassed the legal provision that penalties could not be greater than two days in prison.¹³² According to Bernal Villa, the punishments administered in Calderas were especially harsh, and could include hanging from the stocks (*cepo*), whipping, beating, consuming human or animal excrement, and even exile.¹³³ These punishments were not exclusive to Calderas, but according to Hernández de Alba were imposed by all *cabildos* across Tierradentro.¹³⁴

Cabildo justice seems to be one of the realms where Tierradentro communities lost the most ground in the 1950s. Anthropologist Ortiz reported that by 1955 non-indigenous municipal officials had collected the stocks from all *cabildos*, and that as a consequence by the early 1960s

¹³⁰ Bernal, “Bases para el estudio de la organización,” 186. ACC/S, paq. 495, legajo 35 y 40, año 1871.

¹³¹ Gómez, *De la justicia y el poder indígena*, 103-104, 116-117. Another important study focused on contemporary Nasa Indians from the western slopes is: Carlos César Perafán Simmonds, “Sistema jurídico páez,” in *Sistemas jurídicos páez, kogi, wayúu y tule* (Bogotá: Instituto Colombiano de Cultura, Instituto Colombiano de Antropología, 1995).

¹³² Balcázar, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 58, 92.

¹³³ Bernal, “Religious Life of the Páez,” 150

¹³⁴ Hernández, *The Highland Tribes of Southern*, 946.

cabildos had no effective punishing power.¹³⁵ While little is known about this process, it is very likely that it was at least partially the result of the force that *La Violencia* took in the area in the 1950s and 1960s.¹³⁶

Apart from their economic and judicial interventions, all of which were legal at least to a point, *cabildos* in Tierradentro also fulfilled at least one more function that was not backed by the law. They openly participated in electoral processes. David González reported that in the early twentieth century Liberal *caudillos* “put cabildos in vertiginous activity so that on Election Day not a single voter was missed.”¹³⁷ Nasa *cabildos* pushed the limits of the law in other ways besides electioneering and administering harsh punishments. One of them was their dual composition.¹³⁸

Nineteenth and twentieth century ethnologists and travelers reported that Nasa *cabildos* had a group of elected officials who, as the laws mandated, had a one-year stint and pledged in front of the municipal mayor (usually non-indigenous locals who were appointed directly by Cauca’s governor). All known sources indicate that Tierradentro communities did not defy the few legal dispositions that governed the election of these yearly functionaries. Hernández de Alba, who started his field work in the region in the late 1930s, explained that the *cabildo* was elected each December by all the “*macaneros*” (male Indians who participated in communal work), from a list presented by a group composed of all former *cabildo* governors, the captain

¹³⁵ Ortiz, *Uncertainties in Peasant Farming*, 41. It seems that Bernal Villa was referring to the same episode when he reported that an Indian punished by Calderas’s *cabildo* complained to the Mayor of Inzá, who destroyed the stocks. Bernal, “Religious Life of the Paez,” 151.

¹³⁶ Ortiz, *Uncertainties in Peasant Farming*, 33. Rappaport, *Intercultural Utopias*, 240-244.

¹³⁷ González, *Los paezes, o, genocidio*, 331.

¹³⁸ Hernández, *The Highland Tribes of Southern*, 945. Bernal, “Religious Life of the Paez,” 65, 67. Horst Nachtigall, *Tierradentro: archaologie und ethnographie einer kolumbianischen landschaft* (Zurich: Origo Verlag, 1955), 172-174. It seems that this dual composition was unique to the Nasa *cabildo*. For example, in 1867 the *cabildo* of Mallamués (Department of Nariño) was composed of one governor, two *regidores* and two *alcaldes*. Jeanette Kloosterman, *Identidad indígena: 'entre el romanticismo y la realidad'. El derecho a la autodeterminación y la tierra en el 'resguardo' de Muellamués, en el sur-oeste de Colombia* (Amsterdam: Thela Publishers, 1997), 65.

and the *síndico*. The *cabildo* thus elected took their oath of office on January 1st in the presence of the municipal mayor.¹³⁹ Arcila, who visited Tierradentro on several occasions starting in 1941, explained that *cabildo* members could be reelected, received no salary, and had to accept the position.¹⁴⁰ The officials elected in this manner included the governor (*gobernador*) and a varying number of additional positions such as *alguacil* (constable), *alcalde* (mayor), and in some cases *comisario* (commissioner), *fiscal* (prosecutor), and *comisario escolar* (school commissioner).¹⁴¹

The second group of *cabildo* officials included the *capitán* (captain) and *síndico* (treasurer). They were also elected by the community but separately from the yearly officials. Unlike the other *cabildo* members, they had to receive the priest's approval and had to be inaugurated in the local church.¹⁴² Moreover, their tenures had no definite period, and sometimes were even for life.¹⁴³ Captain and *síndico*, in sum, were extralegal.

The scholars who first noted this dual composition stressed that the functions of the two sections were different. While the yearly-elected officials had administrative and police powers, *capitán* and *síndico* had moral and fiscal functions, as well as a "certain divine authority"

¹³⁹ Hernández, *The Highland Tribes of Southern*, 945-946.

¹⁴⁰ Arcila, "Impresiones de una excursión," 660.

¹⁴¹ Table 1 shows the variation in *cabildo* composition in Tierradentro.

¹⁴² Ortiz, *Uncertainties in Peasant Farming*, 32, 39-40. According to Bernal Villa, the priest appointed the captain from a list presented by the Indians. Bernal, "Religious Life of the Páez," 65.

¹⁴³ That was the case in Calderas at least from 1914 to 1953. On Manuel Urriaga as captain: Campo, *Montoneras, deserciones e insubordinaciones*, 204. ACC/AM, paq. 332, legajo 89, s.n.f. (Inzá, 15 abril 1905). ACC/NS, 1914, vol. 1, escritura 42, ff. 240v, 251-269v. BLAA/LRM, MSS1344, 10. He was then succeeded by Bruno Guagás, whose son Manuel José (who was alternate captain during his father's tenure) inherited the position in the early 1930s and held it until his death in 1953. BLAA/LRM, MSS1344, 10. Graciliano Arcila Vélez, *Los indígenas Páez de Tierradentro Cauca, Colombia: descripción etnográfica y lingüística de estos aborígenes en el año de 1940* (Medellín: Universidad de Antioquia, 1989), 40. Nachtigall, *Tierradentro: archaologie und ethnographie*, 174. Apparently there were captains with very long stints in Belalcázar, Wila, and Togoima. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 189-190. ACC/AM, paquete 371, legajo 44, s.n.f. Belalcázar, 11 agosto 1910. "Gobernadores del resguardo de Belalcázar" *El Enjambre* 10, 9 agosto 2008, p. 14. (Belalcázar, Cauca)

<http://gcollo.comunidadcoomeva.com/blog/uploads/EL-ENJAMBRE-10.pdf>

because of their connections with the Church.¹⁴⁴ I will analyze these connections with the Church in chapter 6. Here I want to stress that, while the two sections were elected differently and had some different tasks, the separation between them was not as sharp and rigid as scholars have so far argued. For example, sometimes captains joined the rest of the newly-elected *cabildo* in the annual pledge ceremony in front of the municipal mayor.¹⁴⁵ Moreover, in spite of the extralegal way in which captains were elected, they seem to have been accepted as full members of the *cabildo* not only inside their communities but also by government officials, since captains very frequently signed legal documents along with the rest of the *cabildo*, or even initiated legal actions in their *parcialidad*'s name.¹⁴⁶ Furthermore, in some *parcialidades* such as Calderas they were the highest authority.¹⁴⁷

In sum, post-Independence *cabildos* in Tierradentro reached a working arrangement in which they complied with some of the loose requirements mandated by the law (procedures to elect its members, pledge in front of the municipal mayors), embraced some of their legally recognized functions (economic ones and moral oversight) but disregarded others (such as census-making). However, in other realms they stretched the letter of the law (punishments) or even bypassed it altogether (retaining hierarchical relations among themselves, organizing the community's participation in national and local elections, and maintaining captains and *síndicos*).

¹⁴⁴ Hernández, *The Highland Tribes of Southern*, 945.

¹⁴⁵ That was the case of Manuel Urriaga, Calderas's captain, in 1905 and 1914. ACC/AM, paq. 332, legajo 89, s.n.f. ACC/NS, 1914, vol. 1, escritura 42, ff. 240v, 251-269v. In a 1999 historic rendition of Avirama's *cabildo*, Yolimar Medina stated that even though Avirama's captain was appointed for life by the Church, he was also ratified annually by the municipal mayor with the rest of the *cabildo*. Medina, *Aspectos históricos del resguardo*, 115.

¹⁴⁶ The *síndico*'s inclusion was less frequent. From the list of documents signed by the *cabildos* presented in Table 2, 28 out of 36 included the captain, while only 11 included the *síndico*. See Table 2. Additionally, captains and *síndicos* had significant influence in selecting future *cabildo* members. Hernández, *The Highland Tribes of Southern*, 945-946.

¹⁴⁷ BLAA/LRM, MSS1494, f. 10. Arcila, *Los indígenas Páez de Tierradentro*, 40.

2.4.3 *Cabildos* as State Officials

Cabildos were the indigenous communities' representatives in front of the state, but they also doubled as the state's proxy inside the indigenous world, as several scholars have attested.¹⁴⁸ According to Law 89 of 1890 the indigenous governor (or his subordinates) had to make sure that Indians responded to the authorities' requests for public service or any other legal act, whenever the authorities ordered it¹⁴⁹ and, as several sources reported, Tierradentro *cabildos* complied with this provision. Hence the municipal mayor communicated requests to the *cabildo*'s governor, who then made sure that the individual or the community fulfilled them.¹⁵⁰ That is, *cabildos* not only had to manage internal affairs, but also had to ensure that local and national government dispositions were properly carried out.

Moreover, successive laws vested municipal mayors with greater oversight over *cabildos* and, in the case of Tierradentro, once the region's administrative organization stabilized around 1907, it became possible for mayors to exert some measure of effective control. For example, there is no evidence that *cabildos* resisted the legal mandate to pledge in front on the municipal mayor. On the contrary, when *cabildos* presented an official request it was not unusual that they attached their act of possession signed by the municipal mayor.¹⁵¹ In this way by the early twentieth century *cabildos* in Tierradentro had been integrated into the hierarchy of public authorities.

¹⁴⁸ Pumarada, "Nasa Politics in Nineteenth Century Colombia," 90, 171. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 96.

¹⁴⁹ Balcázar, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 91-96.

¹⁵⁰ Otero, *Etnología Caucana*, 32. Hernández, *The Highland Tribes of Southern*, 945-946. Ortiz, *Uncertainties in Peasant Farming*, 38-39.

¹⁵¹ ACC/AM, paq. 332, legajo 89, s.n.f. (Inzá, 15 abril 1905). ACC/NS, 1914, vol. 1, escritura 41, ff. 238v-250. ACC/NS, 1914, vol. 1, escritura 42, ff. 251-269v.

This did not mean that relations between the councils and the municipal mayors were without conflict. For one, municipal mayors made efforts to exert greater power over *cabildos* than the law recognized. For example, in 1887 the mayor removed the governor of the *cabildo* of Inzá (Guanacas).¹⁵² In 1935 the Mayor of Páez was accused of refusing to recognize the *cabildo* of Araujo and taking advantage of the situation,¹⁵³ while the Indians from Calderas complained that the mayor of Inzá was keeping their captain prisoner and demanding more “*trabajo personal*” from them.¹⁵⁴

2.5 CONCLUSION

During the colonial period the Nasa Indians appropriated colonial institutions such as *resguardos*, *cabildos*, and *cacicazgos* to connect with the colonial world, while at the same time maintaining political and territorial autonomy. After Independence *cabildos* and hereditary *cacicazgos* in Tierradentro underwent profound transformations, but remained crucial brokers between the Nasa communities and the larger Colombian society. This was the case even after the region was effectively included within the new nation’s administrative structure, by becoming a municipality in the late 1880s.

Probably the strongest challenge to Colombian state authority in Tierradentro during the early years of the republic was the hereditary *caciques*’ authority over the large *cacicazgos* created in colonial times. These *cacicazgos* not only limited the state’s effective sovereignty over

¹⁵² ACC/AM, paq. 177, legajo 3, s.n.f. (Inzá, 3 junio 1887). It seems that higher authorities found the mayor’s conduct reprehensible, since he later sent proof that the rest of the *cabildo* agreed with his decision, and that they had elected a new governor. ACC/AM, paq. 177, legajo 3, s.n.f. (Inzá, 16 junio 1887).

¹⁵³ AGC, Copiador de telegramas de la Secretaría de Gobierno, 18 junio a 21 noviembre 1935, f. 97

¹⁵⁴ AGC, Copiador de telegramas de la Secretaría de Gobierno, 18 junio a 21 noviembre 1935, f. 435.

the area, but also actualized a principle of political power (inherited right) that was not directly tied to the state's authority. The government's strategy consisted of rejecting the *caciques'* claims to such dynastic rights, a policy that remained consistent since 1824, when a decree banned such *cacicazgos*. This policy was remarkably successful in expunging from public discourse any reference to indigenous leaders' inherited rights. However, Nasa *caciques* did not simply disappear from the landscape. In fact, the numerous civil wars that ravaged Colombia in the nineteenth century created opportunities for some descendants of the *nuevos caciques* to retain power by transforming themselves into military *caudillos*. The best example of these *caciques-cum-caudillos* was the Guainás dynasty.

Military careers, hence, were essential for the emergence of *caciques* without *cacicazgos*. These indigenous leaders, unlike *cabildos*, retained power over a territory wider than a single *parcialidad*. *Caciques-cum-caudillos* (those who could claim *nuevo cacique* ancestry) such as Francisco Guainás were but one type of *caciques* without *cacicazgos*. *Caciques-cum-caudillos* retained influence over portions of the colonial *cacicazgos*, and while they were careful to present themselves to the state as simple military *caudillos*, they legitimized their authority within the indigenous world by combining such martial credentials with (real or presumed) links to the colonial *nuevos caciques*. Moreover, while *caciques-cum-caudillos* adopted partisanship in their dealings with the Colombian political system, their internal alliances did not follow such criteria. Therefore a Conservative *cacique* such as Francisco Guainás could defend the interests of a Liberal *parcialidad* (like Lame) against a Conservative one (such as Calderas). José Pío Collo and Manuel Quintín Lame are contrasting examples of two other types of *caciques* without *cacicazgos*. Unlike the Guainás dynasty, their influence was never based on dynastic claims, as I will show in chapter 4.

While some male descendants of the *nuevos caciques* found in martial careers an avenue to keep some of their former power, female descendants were less lucky. The government's increasing intervention in Tierradentro's political sphere ruled out women from all officially-recognized positions of political power. While in the colonial period many well-known *caciques* were women (we do not know whether women served in colonial *cabildos*), nineteenth and early-twentieth century official Nasa authorities were all male.

The other colonial indigenous institutions that carried into the republic were the *cabildos*. Unlike the *caciques*, who had no legal backing for their role as indigenous leaders after 1824, republican laws openly (although probably unintentionally) strengthened *cabildos* by transforming them into the only officially-recognized representative of the indigenous communities, and thus the main institutional link between the *parcialidades* and the non-indigenous authorities. These laws, however, also had significant success in breaking the continuity of Nasa colonial territory into smaller units (many individual *resguardos*, each one under the authority of its respective *cabildo*), since no officially recognized supra-local authority could provide pan-Nasa unity like *nuevos caciques* had done before.

Government authorities, nevertheless, did not gain direct control over these fragmented territories; on the contrary, they had to act through the *cabildos*. Throughout the period *cabildos* legally retained a significant level of autonomy regarding the administration of their *resguardo* lands and the communities' internal affairs. Moreover, laws remained vague on issues such as the *cabildos*' composition and election process, and on their ability to impose justice. This trend most likely responded to the dominant idea that *cabildos* and *resguardos* were only temporary institutions, tolerated while the obstacles to *resguardo* division were being resolved. From this

perspective, it made sense to maintain current “*usos y estatutos*”, as different laws stated, instead of disrupting the system by mandating major changes.

In Tierradentro *cabildos* managed to maintain some of the characteristics of the previous inheritance-based hierarchies, despite legal dispositions to the contrary, by developing a dual structure. One part of the *cabildo* (governor, *alcades*, *alguaciles*, etc.) was elected annually and had to pledge in front of the municipal mayor, as the law required. The other part (captain and *síndico*) retained some ability to claim inherited rights, could keep their positions for periods of time that were not specified in advance (and sometimes for life), and were elected with the Catholic Church’s support, not the government’s.

Yet at the same time that *cabildos* retained a level of internal autonomy, the Colombian state successfully integrated them into a hierarchy of administrative authorities; hence municipal mayors exercised oversight over many of the *cabildos*’ actions, and *cabildos* were willing to function as part of a larger, national justice system. Moreover, *cabildos* doubled as the representatives of the government within their communities, in charge of enforcing the local and national authorities’ demands.

3.0 BRINGING THE MISSION TO TIERRADENTRO, 1905-1950

In 1936 an envoy from the Ministry of Industry visited Tierradentro and then granted an interview to a Caucan newspaper. There the official blamed what he considered the region's isolation from the rest of the nation on a "satanic trinity": *guarapo* (sugar cane liquor), coca, and "clerical exploitation." In the case of the latter, he further explained that Tierradentro "is a feudal state inside another state. Nothing moves there without the omnipotent will of the missionaries."¹ While no systematic study exists of these missionaries' activities in Tierradentro, this image of missionary omnipotence remains well alive in the academic literature on this and other indigenous areas of Colombia.² In this chapter I examine precisely these activities, and show that the missionaries not only were far from being able to manage the region as their feudal estate, but also that their acculturation agenda had a limited impact within the indigenous communities.

I begin with a short overview of the booming of Catholic missions among indigenous populations that characterized Colombia in the early-twentieth century, followed by a summary of the Congregation of the Mission's history in Colombia. Next I examine how the Vincentians' plans and goals interacted with the Indians' own agenda to shape the organization of the Tierradentro mission, and the process of consolidation that the mission went through starting in

¹ "satánica trinidad," "explotación clerical," "Es un estado feudal dentro de otro estado. Nada se mueve allí sin la voluntad omnipotente de los misioneros." "Impresiones de Tierradentro por Roberto Liévano, enviado especial del Mtro. De Industrias" *El Cauca*, 15 mayo 1936, p. 8.

² Rausch, "Church-State Relations on the Colombian Frontier," 66, 68. Bonilla, *Servants of God or Masters of Men?*

the 1920s. Then I turn to the civilizing agenda that the missionaries advanced in the region, and how it was influenced by their understanding of what specific obstacles to “progress” Tierradentro and its inhabitants presented. Finally, I examine the school system that the Vincentians set up and ran in the region, and the factors that kept it from becoming the acculturating tool that the Vincentians and the government had envisioned.

3.1 CONSERVATIVE HEGEMONY AND THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE MISSIONS, 1900-1920

As I examined in chapter 1, it was during the last two decades of the twentieth century, a period known as the Regeneration, that the Colombian state devised the legislation that would guide its policies towards indigenous populations for a century. The political instability that shook Colombia during the late-nineteenth century, however, prevented the state from applying most of these measures in any systematic way. This changed after 1902 when, as a result of the horrors of the Thousand Days War (1899-1902), Conservative and Liberal elites rejected civil war as a legitimate form of political competition and advanced constitutional amendments to prevent the monopolization of power by a single party, which had been one of the main reasons for political violence.³

The political stability that these changes brought about, together with Colombia’s full integration into the world market as coffee producer, created a propitious environment for putting in place the indigenous policies devised during the previous decades. In this new context,

³ Sebastián Mazzuca and James A. Robinson, "Political Conflict and Power Sharing in the Origins of Modern Colombia," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 89, no. 2 (2009). David Bushnell, *The Making of Modern Colombia: A Nation in Spite of Itself* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 161-162.

Catholic missions in the indigenous frontiers thrived. In 1902 the Colombian government signed its first Missions' Agreement (*Convenio de Misiones*) with the Holy See, followed by others in 1928 and 1953. These treaties delimited several "mission territories" (*territorios de misión*) in Colombia. Most of them were located in regions that were already or would become *territorios nacionales*, that is, special civil administrative units under the national government's direct oversight.⁴ However, a few of the *territorios de misión* were located in regular administrative units (such as municipalities) integrated into the nation's Departments. This was the case of Tumaco (in Nariño), Urabá (in Antioquia), San Jorge (in Bolívar), and Río Magdalena (including sections of Santander, Antioquia, and Bolívar). It was also the case of Tierradentro, which was a *territorio de misión* that encompassed two municipalities (Inzá and Páez) within the Department of Cauca.

The Missions' Agreements were an expression of the alliance between church and state that had first emerged during the Regeneration. In the *territorios de misión* the missionaries had to promote not only "Christian civilization" but also material prosperity and the creation of population centers where nomadic Indians would settle permanently. Additionally, the missionaries were entrusted with establishing and running public schools for male students. The government in turn committed to providing the missions with the necessary financial means and

⁴ The government had revived the figure of *territorios nacionales* in 1897 with the idea of facilitating cooperation between civil authorities and the missionaries. Pérez, "Representaciones y prácticas sobre las tribus," 17-18. With less administrative autonomy than the departments, in the twentieth century *territorios nacionales* were renamed *intendencias* and *comisarías* and remained as distinct administrative units until 1991. By 1930 there were seven *comisarías* (Guajira, Arauca, Vichada, Vaupés, Caquetá, Putumayo, Amazonas) and three *intendencias* (Chocó, Meta, San Andrés and Providencia). David Julián Jara Moreno, "Administración territorial y representación política: antecedentes de la violencia en la Intendencia Nacional del Meta, 1930-1949," *Memoria y Sociedad* 2, no. 22 (2007): 38. Humberto Plazas Olarte, *Los territorios nacionales* (Bogotá: Editorial Pax, 1944), 135-182.

access to *baldíos* (public lands) for their proper operation, and to ensuring that the officials in charge of the regions' civil administration were supportive of the missions.⁵

This policy proved successful in expanding the number of Catholic missions to unprecedented levels. By 1934 all the areas of the country that the Missions' Agreements had established as *territorios de misión* had been effectively entrusted to foreign Catholic congregations. Moreover, in all of them additional religious groups were in charge of some elementary or secondary schools and charity works.⁶

In the 1970s these *territorios de misión* spanned an impressive 881.227 square kilometers, that is, 77% of Colombia's territory.⁷ The majority of the religious institutes in charge of mission territories, even into the 1980s, were transnational organizations whose main centers were located in Europe, although most of them included both Colombian and foreign personnel.⁸ The mission to Tierradentro was entrusted to the Congregation of the Mission.

3.1.1 The Congregation of the Mission in Colombia

The Congregation of the Mission is an organization of secular priests whose main goals are the education of the clergy and the evangelization of the rural poor. In Colombia it has had a continued presence for over one hundred and thirty years. The first priests from this congregation, commonly known as Vincentians or Lazarists, arrived from France to Popayán in

⁵ Triana, *Legislación indígena nacional*, 40-46. Pérez, "Representaciones y prácticas sobre las tribus errantes," 10, 31-36. Bonilla, *Siervos de dios y amos de indios*, 109-111. For the full text of the 1928 agreement see: Plazas, *Los territorios nacionales*, 241-244. For the full text of the 1953 agreement see: Quintero, *Territorio ignoto*, 151-155.

⁶ Apostolic Vicariats: Guajira, Sierra Nevada and Motilones; Casanare; Caquetá; Llanos of San Martín. Apostolic Prefectures: Tumaco; Tierradentro; Chocó; Arauca; Urabá; San Jorge; Río Magdalena. Apostolic Mission: San Andrés and Providencia. Diocesan Mission: Sarare. Consejo Nacional de la Obra de la Propagación de la Fe, *La obra de las misiones católicas en Colombia* (Bogotá: Imprenta de la Luz, 1934).

⁷ Jimeno, "El estado, las políticas estatales," 43. The territory of Colombia amounts to 1,141.748 square kilometers.

⁸ In the 1980s only four of the eighteen mission territories were in the hands of a Colombian missionary organization, the *Instituto de Misiones Extranjeras de Yarumal*. Jimeno, "El estado, las políticas estatales," 41-42.

1870 at the request of the local Bishop, in order to run the diocesan seminary where secular priests were educated. They had to leave seven years later, but returned in 1881 and have remained in Colombia ever since.⁹

In Colombia the congregation moved slowly towards greater administrative autonomy from the Mother House. Up until 1872 the missionaries sent to Colombia had belonged to the Congregation's Province of Paris,¹⁰ but that year the Superior General segregated them into an independent province. The new Central America Province included Vincentians working in Colombia, Guatemala, Ecuador, Perú and, later on, Panamá, and El Salvador. Almost four decades later, in 1913, Colombia became an independent Vincentian province under the care of a Provincial Visitor.¹¹

In spite its increasing administrative independence, vocations of Colombian nationals remained low, which meant that the Colombian Province continued to depend greatly on the Mother House's ability to provide it with personnel. According to Fernández, of all the missionaries that were either ordained in Colombia or arrived there between 1881 and 1913, only 29,5% (33 individuals) were Colombian. Moreover, of all the foreign Vincentians, 70% (55 individuals) were French.¹²

⁹ José Naranjo, "Apuntes para una historia de la Congregación de la Misión en Colombia," (Bogotá 1985), 31-66. Martín Amaya Roldán. "La Provincia Vicenciana de Colombia." (Bogotá, 1951), 79-84. Álvaro Mauricio Fernández Monsalve, "L'épopée missionnaire des Lazaristes français en Colombie 1870-1913. Mission populaire et formation du clergé local" (Master's thesis, Université de Paris-Sorbonne (IV), 2010), 79-94. Bret, *Fundación y primeros años*, 3-11.

¹⁰ This Province was also known as Île de France. Fernández, "L'épopée missionnaire des Lazaristes," 67-68.

¹¹ That year the province had six houses and fifty priests. The houses were: Cali, Ibagué, Nátaga, Popayán, Santa Rosa de Cabal, Tunja. There were also 5 coadjutor brothers, 1 seminarian in the internal seminary, and 6 students. Ibid, 125. Bret, *Fundación y primeros años*, 6.

¹² Fernández, "L'épopée missionnaire des Lazaristes," 160-161.

In Colombia the education of the clergy, expressed in the running of several diocesan seminaries, took most of the congregation's resources and personnel.¹³ Nonetheless, missions among the rural poor remained important for the organization, which ran two different types. The short-term "popular missions" targeted especially areas that parish priests had difficulty reaching on a regular basis, and their goal was to heighten local piety.¹⁴ The second type, "institutional" missions, consisted in assuming the entire religious administration of a region, such as a parish that the local prelate commissioned to the Congregation. This was the case of Nátaga (Huila),¹⁵ and also Tierradentro between 1905 and 1921. The Holy See also assigned the Vincentians institutional missions in Colombia, including the Apostolic Prefecture of Arauca (1915-1956), as well as Tierradentro once it became an Apostolic Prefecture in 1921.¹⁶

3.2 ORGANIZING THE MISSION OF TIERRADENTRO, 1905-1950

In 1888 Popayán's Bishop singled Tierradentro out as one of the two areas (together with Chocó) in the Great Cauca where the evangelization of the population had to be entrusted to missions instead of secular clergy. We have no specific information on the reasons that led to this decision, but it is likely that the continued difficulties in staffing Tierradentro's parishes together

¹³ Amaya, "La provincial vicenciana de Colombia," 72. The Vincentians ran the seminaries in Popayán (1870-1877, 1882-present), Tunja (1891-1951), Ibagué (1908-1938, 1951-present), Garzón (1920-1924, 1943-2004), Santa Marta (1941-1968), and San Gil (1946-1960). They were also in charge of minor Seminaries in other localities: Zipaquirá, Fusagasugá, and Facatativá. Aurelio Londoño G., "Semblanza de la Provincia de Colombia," *CLAPVI* 19, no. 77 (1992): 334-336. Fernández, "L'épopée missionnaire des Lazaristes," 95-105. José Naranjo, "Apuntes para una historia de la Congregación de la Misión en Colombia. Cali, Tunja, Santa Rosa," (Bogotá, 1986), 49-96. José Naranjo, "Apuntes para una historia de la Congregación de la Misión en Colombia. Nátaga, Tierradentro, Ibagué, Prefectura de Arauca, Bogotá, Garzón, Casa de formación," (Bogotá 1988), 67-83, 188-199. Bret, *Fundación y primeros años*, 11-23, 30-32.

¹⁴ What Amaya called "*misioneros-misionantes*." Amaya, "La provincial vicenciana de Colombia," 80.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 141-194.

¹⁶ Londoño, "Semblanza de la Provincia de Colombia," 335, 338-340.

with the indigenous character of the local population played an important role. Missionary presence in Tierradentro had been constant since 1682, but it had also been tenuous, since many of the region's parishes had had no permanent priest assigned for long periods of time.¹⁷ Tierradentro's status as a "mission territory" was consolidated in the twentieth century, as it was included in the list contained in the Missions' Agreements of 1902, 1928, and 1953.

In 1905 the Congregation of the Mission accepted the repeated requests of Popayán's Archbishop to take Tierradentro's mission. The Vincentians had a variety of reasons to accept Tierradentro. First, this was the heyday of indigenous missions in Colombia, which meant that both religious and civil authorities were committed to supporting the expansion of missions. In the case of Tierradentro, the Provincial Visitor (head of the congregation in Colombia) repeatedly reported that Popayán's Archbishop, the Apostolic Nuncio, as well as the departmental and national authorities actively requested that they take the mission, offering financial and political support.¹⁸ Moreover, in a context where the Congregation was struggling financially, the stable subsidy that the government provided to congregations in charge of indigenous missions proved very attractive.¹⁹ Second, the Congregation had a historical relation with Popayán, since it was here, as I already mentioned, where it launched its activities in Colombia. Moreover, Vincentians from the house of Popayán had been performing occasional missions in Tierradentro for some time already.²⁰ Finally, Tierradentro's proximity to Nátaga (Huila), a parish whose administration the Vincentians had accepted in 1904, made the mission

¹⁷ See table 3. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 109. Quintero, *Territorio ignoto*, 86.

¹⁸ ACM/CG, Boîte 496, Province Colombie, Lettres du Visiteur 1903-1905. (Carta de Jean F. Bret. Cali, 16 octobre 1905). (Carta de Jean F. Bret. Cali, 22 febrero 1905). (Carta de Jean F. Bret. Cali, 1 mayo 1905).

¹⁹ Amaya mentions the financial struggles that the Vincentian foundation of Nátaga faced since its inception. He explains that these problems were one of the reasons for the unification of the houses of Nátaga and Tierradentro between 1906 and 1912. Amaya, "La provincial vicenciana de Colombia," 144-151. Mario García Isaza, "La Prefectura Apostólica de Tierradentro," *CLAPVI* 19, no. 77 (1992): 390.

²⁰ ACM/CG, Luis Durou's File. (Letter to the Superior General. Popayán, 8 mayo 1904). Naranjo, "Apuntes para una historia de la Congregación de la Misión en Colombia. Nátaga, Tierradentro," 38.

more attractive. The Provincial Visitor, for instance, explained that given this proximity it was convenient that they accept Tierradentro, so as to avoid any rivalry that could emerge if a different group took it.²¹ Under their care Tierradentro assumed a special administrative status: diocesan mission. That is, the parish was still part of the diocese of Popayán, but the Archbishop assigned its temporal and religious administration to a religious order instead of secular clergy.²²

3.2.1 The Diocesan Mission, 1905-1921

During the process leading to the Vincentians accepting Tierradentro, both Popayán's Archbishop and the Congregation's Provincial Visitor had repeatedly stated that the missionaries could count on the support of the local Indians to set up the mission.²³ But these statements proved wrong, for while the Indians were happy to receive an occasional visit from a priest, securing their cooperation to establish a permanent missionary house within their *parcialidades* proved almost impossible.²⁴ During the first two years the missionaries tried successively in Wila, San Andrés, and Tálaga, but in all three cases the Indians proved uncooperative enough

²¹ ACM/CG, Boîte 496, Province Colombie, Lettres du Visiteur, 1903-1905. (Carta de Jean F. Bret. Cali, 22 febrero 1905). (Carta de Jean F. Bret. Cali, 14 diciembre 1903).

²² Within the organizational structure of the Congregation, concerns about financial resources and personnel kept Tierradentro's status in flux between 1905 and 1921. In 1905 the mission was created as an independent Vincentian house with its own Superior, but in November of 1907 it was transformed into a residence subordinated to the house of Nátaga (Huila). In 1916 Tierradentro regained its autonomy from Nátaga, and in 1921 it became an Apostolic Prefecture. Naranjo, "Apuntes para una historia de la Congregación de la Misión en Colombia. Nátaga, Tierradentro," 47. García, "La Prefectura Apostólica de Tierradentro," 390. Emilio Larquère, "Informe del Prefecto Apostólico de Tierradentro," in *Informes de las misiones católicas de Colombia relativos a los años de 1925 y 1926*, ed. República de Colombia (Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional, 1926), 17. Consejo Nacional de la Obra de la Propagación de la Fe, "Prefectura Apostólica de Tierradentro," 104.

²³ ACM/CG, Boîte 497, Province Colombie, Maison Tierradentro (missions), 1905-1912. (Carta del Arzobispo de Popayán, Manuel José Caicedo, al Sr. Fiat, Superior General de la Congregación de la Misión. Popayán, 29 enero 1905). González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 109-114. Naranjo, "Apuntes para una historia de la Congregación de la Misión en Colombia. Nátaga, Tierradentro," 39-40. ACM/CG, Boîte 496, Province Colombie, Lettres du Visiteur 1903-1905. (Carta de Jean F. Bret. Cali, 16 octubre 1905).

²⁴ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 115-116.

that the missionaries had to leave.²⁵ Finally, in 1907 the missionaries decided to move to Inzá, the most important non-indigenous village in Tierradentro.²⁶ In this way, two years into the mission the Vincentians had to give up on establishing their headquarters directly within the indigenous area. Inzá became their only residence in Tierradentro for ten years.²⁷

This arrangement was not fully satisfactory for the missionaries. They recognized that in Inzá communications were easier than anywhere else in Tierradentro: the village had mail and telegraph service, and the road connecting Popayán and La Plata (Huila) crossed it. However, Inzá was too far away from the main indigenous area, located in northern Tierradentro.²⁸ In an effort to situate themselves closer to the indigenous core, in 1917 the Vincentians opened a second permanent residence in Belalcázar, a village that had become the capital of Tierradentro's municipality of Páez (created in 1907). Belalcázar already had a mixed population of Indians, *morenos*, and mestizos, and in time would become the second most important non-indigenous settlement in Tierradentro, after Inzá. This village proved a more convenient location, and Belalcázar's house soon displaced Inzá's as the Vincentian headquarters.²⁹ Inzá and Belalcázar remained the priests' only two permanent residencies until the early 1920s.³⁰

²⁵ Naranjo, "Apuntes para una historia de la Congregación de la Misión en Colombia. Nátaga, Tierradentro," 41, 46-47.

²⁶ Ibid, 46-47.

²⁷ González, *Los paces, o, genocidio*, 116, 214.

²⁸ Naranjo, "Apuntes para una historia de la Congregación de la Misión en Colombia. Nátaga, Tierradentro," 47. González, *Los paces, o, genocidio*, 116.

²⁹ The new house was created in August of 1917. Luis Tramecourt, "Misiones de Tierradentro," in *Informes que rinden el Vicario Apostólico de la Guajira y el Prefecto Apostólico del Caquetá y Putumayo*, ed. República de Colombia (Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional, 1918), 40. González, *Los paces, o, genocidio*, 118, 214. In another part of his book González says the Belalcázar residence was created in 1912. González, *Los paces, o, genocidio*, 331. The same date, 1912, is also cited in an article from a Vincentian journal. José Naranjo, "Synopsis Historica Congregationis Missionis in Ditione Columbiana," *Vincentiana* 29 (1961): 281.

³⁰ Naranjo, "Apuntes para una historia de la Congregación de la Misión en Colombia. Nátaga, Tierradentro," 55. González, *Los paces, o, genocidio*, 221-222. ACM/CG, Luis Mosquera's File. Between 1913 and 1928 Luis Mosquera, a missionary from the Inzá house, established himself in El Pedregal.

The way Vincentians structured their missionary activities in Tierradentro responded, at least in part, to the Indians' resistance to the establishment of permanent missionary houses in their *parcialidades*. Hence the mission's activities were organized around the residencies of Inzá and Belalcázar. Each priest belonged to one of the two, whose jurisdiction matched each municipality's territory. From there the missionaries organized short visits to the different *parcialidades* and villages, where churches or chapels had existed since the colonial period or were now built, usually in collaboration between the missionary and the community.³¹

During the years Tierradentro was a diocesan mission (1905-1921) the number of missionaries increased, but at a very slow pace. Between 1905 and 1907 there were two of them,³² increasing to an average of three for the period 1907-1916, and to four between 1916 and 1924.³³ Presumably, there were also secular brothers helping the priests, but I have found no information about them.³⁴ Between 1905 and 1921 eleven different missionaries worked in Tierradentro at some time or another. In average they stayed eleven years in the region, but the length of their stays varied widely, from one year to thirty one.³⁵ Only four out of these eleven missionaries are reported to have learned the indigenous language, Nasa Yuwe, and even in these four cases the missionaries' proficiency cannot be assessed. Moreover, only one of these four had a tenure longer than the average eleven years.³⁶

³¹ Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 52. González, *Los paezes, o, genocidio*, 220.

³² They were Guillermo Rojas and David Ortiz. Naranjo, "Apuntes para una historia de la Congregación de la Misión en Colombia. Nátaga, Tierradentro," 40-41.

³³ Consejo Nacional de la Obra de la Propagación de la Fe, "Prefectura Apostólica de Tierradentro," 104. Naranjo, "Apuntes para una historia de la Congregación de la Misión en Colombia. Nátaga, Tierradentro," 47. García, "La Prefectura Apostólica de Tierradentro," 390. In 1918 Tramecourt said that there were five missionaries in Tierradentro. Tramecourt, "Misiones de Tierradentro," 40. See Table 4.

³⁴ Naranjo gives information on secular brothers for Tierradentro only starting in 1960. Naranjo, "Apuntes para una historia de la Congregación de la Misión en Colombia. Nátaga, Tierradentro," 63.

³⁵ See Table 4.

³⁶ Guillermo Rojas, David Ortiz, Luis Durou, and Pedro María Puyo. Their tenures were respectively 2, 24, 4, and 8 years. See Table 4.

In terms of nationality, five of these eleven Vincentians were French, five Colombian, and one was Costa Rican. In spite of this significant presence of Colombian priests, they did not gain access to leadership positions during these early years. All of the House Superiors, Mission Chiefs, National Education Inspectors, and Mission Directors were foreign, French with the only exception of the single Costa Rican Vincentian in the region (who became the first Mission Chief in 1905).³⁷

3.2.2 The Apostolic Prefecture, 1921-1950

By 1919 the Vincentian Visitor (the Congregation's head in Colombia), the Apostolic Nuncio (the Pope's ambassador in Colombia), and Popayán's Archbishop had agreed to transform Tierradentro from a diocesan mission into an Apostolic Prefecture.³⁸ The Colombian Vincentian Province already had some experience with this type of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, since they had been in charge of the Apostolic Prefecture of Arauca since 1915. In the case of Tierradentro, the Pope signed the decree creating the Prefecture on 13 May 1921, and in 1923 the French priest Emilio Larquère was appointed as its first Prefect.³⁹

Transforming into an Apostolic Prefecture meant a promotion in Tierradentro's place within the ecclesiastical hierarchy. First, it separated the mission from Popayán's archdiocese

³⁷ See Table 4.

³⁸ ACM/CG, Boîte 276, Province Colombie, Préfecture Apostolique de Tierradentro, 1916-1946 (J. F. Bret "Province de Colombie. Projet d'érection de la Mission de Tierradentro en Préfecture Apostolique." Octobre 1919). Naranjo, "Apuntes para una historia de la Congregación de la Misión en Colombia. Nátaga, Tierradentro," 48-49.

³⁹ Consejo Nacional de la Obra de la Propagación de la Fe, "Prefectura Apostólica de Tierradentro," 104. "Prefectura Apostólica de Tierradentro," in *Anuario de la Iglesia Católica en Colombia* (Bogotá: Ediciones de Revista Javeriana, 1938), 157.

and placed it under the Pope's direct jurisdiction. Second, the missions' head could no longer be a rank-and-file priest but had to be a bishop.⁴⁰

The Prefecture inaugurated a period of considerable expansion for the mission, which was expressed in several ways. One of them was the creation of another permanent residence, this time at the core of the indigenous area. In 1922 Colombia's Visitor sent missionary David González to Tierradentro to create a residence in Vitoncó, ascribed to Belalcázar's house. According to González's own account, he decided to abandon that village only four years later because of the Indians' hostility.⁴¹ González then moved to Wila, where he stayed for twenty years until 1946.⁴²

A second sign of the missions' growth was the increase in the number of Vincentians working in Tierradentro. Starting in the late 1920s their numbers reached seven missionaries on average per year, nearly doubling the previous decade's averages.⁴³ Between 1921 and 1950 a total of thirteen new missionaries arrived, joining the five who had arrived before 1921 and stayed beyond that date. The new missionaries' tenures were on average longer than in the previous period, amounting to fourteen years. But just like before, these stints varied widely, from two years to thirty-two. Available records fail to indicate if any of the newcomers learned Nasa Yuwe.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ On Apostolic Prefectures in general: Óscar Álvarez Gila, "Notas sobre la etapa más desconocida de un político y escritor vasco. Jon Andoni Irazusta, de parlamentario a misionero en Perú (1950-1952) " *Sancho el sabio: revista de cultura e investigación vasca*, no. 14 (2001): 113.

⁴¹ González, *Los paece*, o, *genocidio*, 282-288.

⁴² *Ibid*, 290-291, 310-312.

⁴³ Consejo Nacional de la Obra de la Propagación de la Fe, "Prefectura Apostólica de Tierradentro," 104. There were still seven priests reported in 1936. "Prefectura Apostólica de Tierradentro," 1938, 157.

⁴⁴ See Table 4. There exists some anecdotal evidence that some priest might have learned some Nasa Yuwe. Missionary González indicated that he spent time learning some "dialect." He also mentioned that the Indians preferred to confess with a priest that understood them in their language, suggesting that at least one of the priests had learned enough Nasa Yuwe as to understand a confession. González, *Los paece*, o, *genocidio*, 256, 271.

Unlike in previous years, when there had been an even number of Colombians and French missionaries, during this period the great majority of the new missionaries were Colombian (9), more than twice as many as the Frenchmen (4). While quickly becoming a minority, French missionaries (especially Emilio Larquère and Louis Tramecourt) retained privileged access to leadership positions. However, at least one Colombian priest, David González, gained access to prominent positions during those years, becoming National Education Inspector after Tramecourt died, and functioning as Pro-Prefect in the last years of Larquère's tenure.⁴⁵

The Vincentians' ability to enroll female religious groups to help them was another expression of the mission's growing strength. The group that first joined them were the "Daughters of Charity" (also known as Vincentian Sisters), a women's congregation historically connected to the Congregation of the Mission.⁴⁶ The Daughters opened houses in the villages of Belalcázar (1917) and Inzá (1924), where they took charge of schools and other charitable activities.⁴⁷ In 1936 there were eleven Daughters in Tierradentro.⁴⁸ In the 1940s the Vincentians also recruited the Congregation of the Missionaries of Mary Immaculate and Saint Catalina de Siena (*Congregación de las Misioneras de María Inmaculada y Santa Catalina de Siena*). This was a group of Colombian nuns commonly known as *lauritas* in honor of their founder, Laura Montoya y Upegui. Unlike the Daughters, whose houses and main activities revolved around the region's two small urban centers, the *lauritas*' houses were located in the rural areas and targeted

⁴⁵ See Table 4.

⁴⁶ The Daughters of Charity arrived to Colombia in 1882, to manage the hospital of Popayán. Their presence in Colombia was institutionalized in 1888, when they created a Colombian Province consisting of four houses in Colombia and one in Panama. Bret, *Fundación y primeros años*, 24. For a short history of their activities in Colombia, see: "Espíritu de Vicente de Paul en [Colombia], 1882-1982." (Bogotá. ACM/B). On the relationship between the Congregation and the Daughters of Charity, see: Udovic, *Jean-Baptiste Etienne*, 153-157.

⁴⁷ Larquère, "Informe del Prefecto Apostólico," 20. "Espíritu de Vicente de Paul", 97-100, 101-103. Naranjo, "Apuntes para una historia de la Congregación de la Misión en Colombia. Nátaga, Tierradentro," 50.

⁴⁸ "Prefectura Apostólica de Tierradentro," 1938, 157.

mainly indigenous people. Between 1941 and 1955 they established five houses in the area,⁴⁹ and in all of those locations they ran the elementary schools.⁵⁰

There are no studies on the *lauritas*' activities in Tierradentro, but there is evidence that, at least on some occasions, these nuns faced similar resistance from the Indians as the Vincentians had when opening permanent houses within the indigenous areas. For example, in 1946 their house in Wila was burned, together with the missionaries' house and the school, and they were forced to move to Tóez.⁵¹ Resistance from the local population to their establishment in Calderas in 1951 was very strong. According to González, the *cabildo* officials accepted the nuns only after they were told that it was the Conservative president (Laureano Gómez) who was sending the nuns. And even after this, the local Indians did not actively help the nuns to get established.⁵²

The resistance the *lauritas* faced, especially in the 1940s, was part of a larger context in which hostility against the missionaries grew among some indigenous sectors. In his memoirs missionary González blamed this on the influence that Communists had been gaining in the region since the mid-1930s.⁵³ His account, however, reveals the larger context in which this influence had allegedly spread: an all-out attack against the indigenous *resguardos* in which the Vincentians had enthusiastically participated. I examine this attack and the missionaries' role in it in chapter 5. In this conflictive context the missionaries' house, the school, and the nuns'

⁴⁹ They erected their first house in 1941 in Vitoncó and the second one three years later in Wila (which they moved to Tóez in 1946 and to Santa Rosa in 1952), their third one in Calderas in 1951, and by 1955 they had two more, one in Vitoncó and one in Guanacas. *Lauritas*' archive in Popayán. Quintero, *Territorio ignoto*, 53. Carlos E. Mesa, *Laura Montoya. Una antorcha de Dios en las selvas de América* (Medellín: Cargraphics, 1999), 757. Naranjo, "Apuntes para una historia de la Congregación de la Misión en Colombia. Nátaga, Tierradentro," 50. On the *lauritas*: Gálvez, *Por obligación de conciencia*, 91-93.

⁵⁰ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 302.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 310-312.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 178. Horst Nachtigall, "Shamanismo entre los indios Paeces," *Revista de Folklore* 2 (1953): 233. Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 95.

⁵³ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 294-303, 312.

residence in Wila were burned in 1946. In consequence González moved the nuns' house to Tóez and the Vincentians' residence to Irlanda, a nearby non-indigenous settlement that González himself had created and promoted since the late-1920s.⁵⁴ That is, in 1946 the missionaries lost the foothold they had gained twenty years before within the indigenous area.⁵⁵

Ironically, even as the mission was consolidating in the 1930s, the Vincentians lost their religious monopoly over the region: since 1929 a protestant pastor who lived in a small town across the cordillera started to gain some followers among Tierradentro's Indians. We know next to nothing about the impact of this group on the region, but it seems that before the 1970s Protestantism remained marginal in Tierradentro.⁵⁶

By the 1970s public and political support for Catholic missions had started to decrease in light of criticisms to their "civilizing" methods and accusations that they were exploiting their indigenous protégés. In 1973 a new Concordat reduced the Catholic missions' legal powers, and by the 1980s Catholic missionaries were in a position fragile enough that the Arhuaco Indians from the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta were able to successfully expel the Capuchins from their territory and end the mission there in 1982.⁵⁷ Catholic missionaries are still present in several frontier regions, including Tierradentro,⁵⁸ but their power has been considerably reduced.

⁵⁴ Ibid, 186, 310-313.

⁵⁵ In 1948 Tierradentro's first Apostolic Prefect, Emilio Larquère, died. ACM/CG, David González's file. (Carta de David González al Superior General. Belalcázar, 22 julio 1948). (Carta de David González al Superior General. Bogotá, 18 octubre 1951). ACM/CG, Boîte 276, Province Colombie, Visiteur, 1948. (Carta de Martiniano Trujillo, sobre Tierradentro. Bogotá, 22 agosto 1948). Two years later the Vatican appointed a Colombian Vincentian, Enrique Vallejo, as Apostolic Prefect.

⁵⁶ The pastor was Federico Smith and the group was called *Alianza Criatiana y Misionera*. BLAA/LRM, MSS1343, 17. Joanne Rappaport, "Las misiones protestantes y la resistencia indígena en el sur de Colombia," *América Indígena* 44 no. 1 (1984): 113.

⁵⁷ Pineda, "Estado y pueblos indígenas en el siglo XX." Triana, *Legislación indígena nacional*, 67-69. Troyan, "The Intersection of Politics and Religion," 113-114.

⁵⁸ Today the mission of Tierradentro (an Apostolic Vicariate since 2000) is still entrusted to the Vincentians, but the Apostolic Vicar belongs to a different religious group since 2004. His name is Edgar Hernando Tirado Mazo, from the *Instituto de Misiones Extranjeras de Yarumal* (Institute of Foreign Missions of Yarumal).

3.2.3 Funding the Mission

The Vincentians had multiple sources of revenue for their Tierradentro mission, but the most important ones were subsidies from the Colombian government.⁵⁹ According to the 1887 Concordat and the multiple Missions' Agreements, Colombia's government had committed to provide funds to sustain missions among indigenous populations, including those of Tierradentro.⁶⁰ Because, in accordance with the Missions' Agreements, the Vincentians were in charge of directing the public elementary schools in the region, the government also paid one monthly salary to the missionary appointed as National Education Inspector.⁶¹ Another significant source of subsidies was Colombia's *Junta Arquidiocesana de Misiones* (Archdiocesan Missions' Board), a board in charge of managing an additional fund of one hundred thousand pesos from the Colombian government directed at supporting the "civilization of the Indians."⁶² This board first funded Tierradentro in 1918 and at least until 1932.⁶³

Although the Colombian government was the most significant contributor, the missionaries had other funding sources. Once Tierradentro became an Apostolic Prefecture the

⁵⁹ Apart from the sources that I mention here, in 1938 Pastor Santos claimed that Popayán's Archdiocese also gave them some funding. I have been unable to find any additional sources confirming this claim. ACM/CG, file of Pastor Santos. (Carta de Pastor Santos al Superior General. Inzá, setiembre 1938)

⁶⁰ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 112. In Tierradentro this subsidy ranged between 350 and 450 Colombian pesos for the period 1905-1916, increased to 900 pesos for the period 1916-1925, and by 1932 was three thousand pesos. Larquère, "Informe del Prefecto Apostólico," 20. AVAT, Notebook: "Cuentas de la Prefectura de Tierradentro", 2, 4, 6, 8, 12, 28, 32.

⁶¹ This salary started as 30 pesos, and by the 1930s amounted to 120 pesos. AVAT, Notebook: "Cuentas de la Prefectura de Tierradentro", 13, 16.

⁶² This *Junta* was created in the 1910s to manage the subsidies coming from the Colombian government and from the Vatican for the missions. The fund of 100,000 pesos was approved by Law 14 of 1912. Gálvez, *Por obligación de conciencia*, 96. Bonilla, *Siervos de dios y amos de indios*, 167. José A. Villalba Hernández, "Wayúu resistencia histórica a la violencia," *Historia Caribe*, no. 13 (2008): 52. Rausch, "Church-State Relations," 67.

⁶³ In 1918 it gave one thousand pesos to this mission, between 1925 and 1929 provided two thousand pesos annually. However, by 1932 it was sending only 750 pesos. Celso Forero Nieto, "Junta Arquidiocesana Nacional de las Misiones en Colombia," in *Informes que rinden el Vicario Apostólico de la Guajira y el Prefecto Apostólico del Caquetá y Putumayo*, ed. República de Colombia (Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional, 1918). Larquère, "Informe del Prefecto Apostólico," 20. AVAT, Notebook: "Cuentas de la Prefectura de Tierradentro", 16, 20. AVAT, Notebook: "Cuentas de la Prefectura de Tierradentro", 3, 5, 7, 11, 15, 17, 29, 33.

mission started to receive significant resources from the Vatican through the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith.⁶⁴

The priests themselves became an irregular source of money. Some of them, such as Luis Tramecourt, Emilio Larquère, and David González, decided to use their own personal patrimony for the mission.⁶⁵ Parishioners' payments for the missionaries' parochial activities, including tithes, first fruits, parochial duties, and other fees, were also an important source of income.⁶⁶

The Vincentians also had access to the profits from the "*roza del santo*" (field of the saint) that existed in each *resguardo*. These plots were administered by the *cabildo* and its earnings were dedicated to the local church's maintenance. According to custom, the missionaries had the right to demand unpaid labor from the community for growing crops or raising cattle in these fields.⁶⁷ However, access to this income was not always uncontested. For example, in the early 1920s David González tried to use the income from that plot to rebuild Vitoncó's church. However, he faced major difficulties because he opposed the Indians' custom of taking some of the harvested wheat for themselves.⁶⁸ Another such disagreement arose in San Andrés in the 1950s, when the *cabildo* decided to sell some of the cattle to meet the cost of an

⁶⁴ Between 1926 and 1936 these funds ranged from 1480 to 3400 pesos per year. AVAT, Notebook: "Cuentas de la Prefectura de Tierradentro", 9, 10, 14, 22, 27.

⁶⁵ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 214. ACM/CG, David González's file. (Carta de David González al Superior General. Belalcázar, 22 julio 1948). Consejo Nacional de la Obra de la Propagación de la Fe, "Prefectura Apostólica de Tierradentro," 107. Pastor Santos mentioned that Popayán's Archbishop also provided funds, but I have been unable to determine this information's veracity. ACM/CG, Pastor Santos's file. (Carta de Pastor Santos al Superior General. Inzá, setiembre 1938).

⁶⁶ They could charge fees for masses, baptisms, marriages, last rites, *novenas*, anointing of the sick, and so forth. AVAT, Notebook: "Congr. Entradas". I have no reliable figures about what these payments amounted to. However, in 1905 Jean F. Bret estimated that they surpassed the government's annual subvention. ACM/CG, Boîte 496, Province Colombie, Lettres du Visiteur, 1903-1905. (Carta de Jean F. Bret. Cali, 7 de agosto de 1905). According to the agreement celebrated between Popayán's Archbishop and the Vincentians' Visitor in 1905, the missionaries were granted the right to use that income at their discretion. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 112.

⁶⁷ Ortiz, *Uncertainties in Peasant Farming*, 92. AVAT, Notebook: "Libro de cuentas del Síndico Aurelio Lis."

⁶⁸ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 285.

ongoing land dispute with neighboring non-Indians, but the priest considered this use to be illegal.⁶⁹

Finally, the missionaries rented or otherwise gained access to more land, which they dedicated to agriculture and cattle grazing. As Amaya noted in 1951, this way to secure resources was common among Vincentians across Colombia.⁷⁰ In Tierradentro, it seems that David González was the most active missionary in this enterprise.⁷¹ In Tálaga he rented a plot called Minas, where he kept a significant herd. In Wila he took a plot known as La Colorada where he exploited the wood and grew different crops.⁷² He also had two hectares inside Wila's *resguardo*, and ten more hectares in Irlanda, the settlement area near Wila whose creation he had supported in the 1920s.⁷³ In 1948 anthropologist Hernández de Alba visited Tierradentro and described González's property in La Colorada as "one of the largest and best [*haciendas*] of the region," containing 200 heads of cattle and a lumber mill.⁷⁴ These activities put González in direct confrontation with some indigenous sectors, as I will examine in chapter 5.

⁶⁹ Ortiz, *Uncertainties in Peasant Farming*, 92. There is some evidence that using church's funds for community purposes was not unusual. In Togoima the treasurer recorded many instances in which a cow or another animal was sold to finance border disputes with other *resguardos*. AVAT, Notebook: Libro de Cuentas del Síndico Aurelio Liz.

⁷⁰ Amaya, "La Provincia Vicenciana," 152-154.

⁷¹ While González's economic enterprises are the best documented ones, there is evidence that other missionaries might have engaged in similar activities. In 1948 anthropologist Hernández de Alba commented that missionary Felipe Arévalo was clearing some land. BLAA/LRM, MSS1343. "Notas de viaje," 66-67.

⁷² González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 194-198, 274-275.

⁷³ *Ibid*, 298.

⁷⁴ "una de las mejores y más grandes [haciendas] que hay en la región." BLAA/LRM, MSS1343. "Notas de viaje," 66.

3.3 BEYOND RELIGION: THE MISSIONARIES' CIVILIZING AGENDA

The interest of missionary David González in these productive and extractive enterprises went beyond merely obtaining resources for the mission. In fact, he argued that they were also instrumental in the missionaries' task of "civilizing" the Indians, since they would teach the Indians what a modern *finca* looked like.⁷⁵ These goals were in line with the multifold agenda that the Missions' Agreements had delineated for the missions in indigenous regions. This agenda included the Indians' evangelization, but also called for the promotion of material prosperity and the creation of urban centers. I will analyze the Vincentians' religious agenda in chapter 6. Here I will focus on the secular aspects of their activities. Ironically, as we shall see, it was the latter that were far more ambitious and threatening. The particular ways in which the Vincentians approached their secular "civilizing" agenda in Tierradentro responded, at least in part, to their diagnosis of the particular obstacles to "progress" here.

3.3.1 Missionaries' Views About the Nasa Indians

The Vincentians had extremely negative views about their Nasa charges. They consistently condemned the Indians' apathy, resistance to change, bellicosity, hatred towards whites, and desire for isolation.⁷⁶

One of the elements that, the Vincentians claimed, incapacitated these Indians for progress was their apathy. According to missionary Buitrago, they had no "aspirations or desires or passions or doubts or fears..." they were in a "lethargy that likens them to beasts," they had a

⁷⁵ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 275, 298.

⁷⁶ Vincentians that did not work in the missions of Tierradentro shared very contemptuous views about the Indians in general. See for example: Amaya, "La Provincia Vicenciana," 86-87.

“natural apathy” and a “sleepy imagination.”⁷⁷ González explained that the Indians, “left to their natural initiative are incapable of all progress, of wanting to improve their condition... not even by pushing them will the Indians enter the road to civilization.”⁷⁸ The same missionary claimed that they had a “natural indolence,” “racial sloth,” they vegetated “with a lack of feelings of dignity, in the absence of all yearnings for improvement, because the indigene by natural inclination wants to remain in his primitive state.”⁷⁹

According to the missionaries, the Indians’ apathy, mixed with their resistance to change, laid at the heart of other key inadequacies. One of these deficiencies was their supposed lack of religious sentiment, a topic that I will examine at length in chapter 6. Tramecourt also linked the Indians’ minimal educational achievements with their indifference. In 1917 he explained that the indigenous children were “elusive by nature and ignorant” and had an “innate apathy and indifference” towards education.⁸⁰ In 1922 he blamed the region’s high illiteracy rate on the Indians, who “are by nature rebellious to civilization and education, they are apathetic and inconstant...”⁸¹ The same mixture of indifference and active resistance that Tramecourt criticized was mentioned as an explanation for what the missionaries perceived as the Indians’ economic backwardness. In 1925 González argued that the Nasa from northern Tierradentro “view progress and their own wellbeing with repulsion; they do not accept any indication to improve their wretched state; the poverty, the regrettable dilapidated state of their churches they

⁷⁷ Nicasio Buitrago, “Tierradentro,” *Revista de Misiones* 11, no. 120 (1935): 228-229.

⁷⁸ “dejados los indios a su natural iniciativa son incapaces de todo progreso, de querer el mejoramiento de su condición... los indios ni a empujones entran por el camino de la civilización.” González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 125.

⁷⁹ “natural indolencia,” “pereza racial,” “en la carencia de sentimientos de dignidad, en la ausencia de todo anhelo de superación, ya que el indígena por natural inclinación quiere permanecer en su estado primitivo.” González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 124.

⁸⁰ AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 2, f. 70v.

⁸¹ AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 3, ff. 132v.

see with a maddening indifference.”⁸² The Indian, González was convinced, is “naturally bounded by routine, [and] lacks ambition, that ambition of personal improvement.”⁸³ That was the reason why, González argued, in Tierradentro “you can see nothing but the wretched huts from four hundred years ago, there has been no step taken in agriculture,”⁸⁴ and why “their huts remain the same as the conquistadors found them.”⁸⁵

Given the Vincentians’ views that obstacles for progress were inherent to the Indians, it is not surprising that many of them considered that the best way to overcome these problems was facilitating contacts between the Nasa and non-indigenous people (white and *mestizo*), especially via the latter’s settlement in Tierradentro. González was the Vincentian who laid out most explicitly why contact with non-Indians was desirable. He explained that “the white race is an essential element of civilization. In America, where there are no whites there is no civilization or progress.”⁸⁶ Whites had a “natural” eagerness to produce wealth, which they used to improve their living conditions and educate their children.⁸⁷ For González the contact between Indians and whites should ideally lead to *mestizaje* which, he explained, “is necessary for the material and moral progress of this land.”⁸⁸ Other missionaries were not explicit as to whether they expected that the Indians’ contact with whites would lead to *mestizaje* or some other outcome,

⁸² “miran con repulsión el progreso y su propio bienestar; no admiten indicación para mejorar su mísero estado; la pobreza, la miseria lamentable en que se hallan sus iglesias las miran con una indiferencia desesperante.” David González, “Misión de Tierradentro,” *Revista de Misiones*, no. 6 (1925): 217.

⁸³ “de natural rutinario, [y] carece de ambición, esa ambición de mejoramiento personal.” González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 102.

⁸⁴ “no se ven por todas partes sino los míseros bohíos de hace 400 años, no se da un paso en la agricultura.” González, “Misión de Tierradentro,” 217.

⁸⁵ “siguen los bohíos como los encontraron los conquistadores.” González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 125.

⁸⁶ “la raza blanca es esencial elemento de civilización. En la América, en donde no está el blanco no hay civilización ni progreso.” González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 124.

⁸⁷ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 125.

⁸⁸ “El Mestizaje es necesario para el progreso material y moral de esta tierra.” González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 127.

but still favored such interaction. For example, Tramecourt considered it essential that white “civilized” families settle on the indigenous lands.⁸⁹

There were, however, several serious obstacles to such non-indigenous colonization. The Nasa Indians, according to the missionaries, were fierce and bellicose, cherished their isolation, and hated whites. Ideas about the Nasa Indians’ ferocity had become widespread during the nineteenth century, in connection to these Indians’ active participation in the civil wars that continually shook Colombia during that period (chapter 2).⁹⁰ Missionary González explained that the Nasa had a “bellicose and cruel spirit” as a result of their Carib origin.⁹¹ Tramecourt in 1933 explained that the Indians were “hostile” and “bellicose.”⁹²

Moreover, the missionaries claimed that because the Indians allegedly hated whites,⁹³ they frequently directed their aggressive tendencies toward the latter. González considered that this aversion had originated during the period of Conquest, and had been passed from generation to generation until the present. This hatred, argued González, explained the Indians’ participation in the Independence wars, which the Nasa had seen as another chance to fight the “Spaniards.” In the republican period, González claimed, the Indians had showed their “ancestral hatred” against whites whenever given the chance, through “arson, robbery and destruction.”⁹⁴

⁸⁹ AGN/AA2/MEN, legajo 137, carpeta 2, ff. 244.

⁹⁰ Pumarada, “Nasa Politics in Nineteenth Century Colombia,” 116-117.

⁹¹ “espíritu belicoso y cruel.” González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 28. González described the Indians of Calderas and Lame as “malicious and mocking.” “maliciosos y burlones.” He also explained that when the Nasa had participated in the civil wars the Indians had “looked like wild beasts more than men.” “más bien parecían fieras que hombres...” Ibid, 43, 103. This priest argued that *mestizaje* was the only solution for the Nasa Indians’ “hostile spirit,” since “only the crossing, the mixing of conquering blood will make the Paeces [Nasa] a restrained people...” “...solamente el cruzamiento, la mezcla de sangre conquistadora hara de los Paeces un pueblo morigerado.” Ibid, 55.

⁹² AGN/AA2/MEN, legajo 137, carpeta 2, ff. 244.

⁹³ Buitrago explained that they “always retain a latent rancor” towards whites, while Tramecourt asserted that they professed an “ancestral aversion” toward whites. Buitrago, “Tierradentro,” 228. AGN/AA2/MEN, legajo 137, carpeta 2, f. 244.

⁹⁴ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 55-56.

Missionaries also criticized the Indians' desire to remain isolated from non-indigenous people. Tramecourt explained that the Indians "considered themselves [...] as isolated entities" from the nation, and thus the missionaries had to go to great lengths to teach them how to "live in society."⁹⁵ Buitrago condemned the Indians' desire to remain cut off from "the civilized world." He explained that "the ideal of their [the Indians'] happiness is to live alone in the woods, far from any contact with the civilized world," and many of them still "live fortified in their mountains, from where, only forced by necessity, they get out to the markets..."⁹⁶ Durou, adopting a less hostile tone, wrote that "these combative Indians almost always have a content look, they do not worry about what happens in the rest of the world or Colombia. They live in their small secluded and lonely houses in the mountain..."⁹⁷

The missionaries considered that many of these (reprehensible) traits remained in place because the Indians had retained control over their *resguardos*. For example, González was convinced that in the eighteenth century what he called the "law of *resguardos*" (referring to the period when the Spanish Crown granted the Nasa their *resguardos*) had "paralyzed everything. With it the Paeces [Nasa] considered themselves, and were considered, as absolute owners of an immensity of land and they were left to their own initiative."⁹⁸ Hence, since the colonial period

⁹⁵ "Se consideran...como entidades aparte..." AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 2, ff. 19v. "vivir en sociedad," AGN/AA2/MEN, legajo 137, carpeta 2, f. 244.

⁹⁶ "el ideal de su dicha está en vivir solos en los montes, lejos del contacto con el mundo civilizado", "viven encastillados en sus montañas, de donde, solamente obligados por la necesidad, salen a los mercados..." Buitrago, "Tierradentro," 228.

⁹⁷ "Ces braves Indiens ont à peu près toujours l'air content, gai; ils ne se préoccupent pas de ce qui se passe dans le reste du monde, pas même de ce qui se passe en Colombie. Ils vivent dans leur petite maison, retirée seule dans la montagne..." Louis Durou, "Nataga. Mission Indienne. Lettre de M. Durou, prêtre de la Mission, à M. Boulanger, à Saint-Walfroy," *Annales de la Congrégation de la Mission* 74 (1909): 134.

⁹⁸ "lo paralizó todo. Con ella los Paeces se consideraron, y se les tuvo, como dueños absolutos de una inmensidad de tierra y se les dejó a su sola iniciativa." González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 81. More criticisms against *resguardos* in pages 123-124.

“Tierradentro’s doors have been... closed to the wide and free entrance of the white race...”⁹⁹ Tramecourt had a similar interpretation, arguing that one of the obstacles to “civilizing” Tierradentro was “the ancestral aversion that the indigenous race professes towards the whites; and since the Indians have shut themselves up in their *resguardos*, they do not allow any civilized family to settle on their lands.”¹⁰⁰

In sum, Vincentians believed that to “civilize” Tierradentro it was necessary to open the region to white settlers, which not only would change the region’s economy but also would improve the inhabitants’ religiosity and interest in education. The main obstacles for these projects were the Indians’ hostility to whites, their control over their *resguardos*, and their desire (and ability) to remain isolated.

In line with these ideas, the missionaries focused a good deal of their energy in promoting urbanization, fostering economic transformations by introducing new economic activities, and building roads. They also endeavored to weaken the *resguardo* system, as we will see in detail in chapter 5.

3.3.2 Urbanization, New Economic Activities, and Road-Building

One of the Vincentians’ clearest achievements in Tierradentro was the transformation of Inzá and Belalcázar into urban centers. This interest in urbanization emerged not only from the

⁹⁹ “las puertas de Tierradentro han estado... cerradas para una amplia y libre entrada de la raza blanca...” Ibid, 60-61. In 1925 González deplored the fact that the “white race” could not enter Tierradentro in a “tranquil and safe manner,” because the Indians had the “tenacious determination of not allowing the white race to settle in their *resguardos*.” “empeño tenaz en no permitir que en sus *resguardos* se radique la raza blanca.” González, “Misión de Tierradentro,” 217.

¹⁰⁰ “la aversión ancestral que la raza indígena profesa a los blancos; y como están los indios encastillados en sus *resguardos* de propiedad, no permiten a ninguna familia civilizada que se establezca en sus tierras.” AGN/AA2/MEN, legajo 137, carpeta 2, f. 244.

mandate of the Missions' Agreement to foment the creation of population centers, but also from the widely held idea that cities were the necessary centers of civilization.¹⁰¹ González explained that Monsignor Larquère had given Inzá and Belalcázar "the shape of civilized towns." In Belalcázar he had erected two buildings and two pools for the village's water, as well as installing electricity and a mill.¹⁰² In 1955 Quintero praised the missionaries for the "modern" aspect of the town of Belalcázar, headquarters of the Apostolic Prefecture. There, Quintero explained, all modern conveniences could be found: magnificent buildings (the church, the Prefecture, the municipal house), secondary educational institutions (*Escuela Normal de Señoritas, Escuela Agrícola, Escuela Vocacional*), excellent locales for the elementary schools, as well as electricity, running water, and roads connecting it with Popayán and the Department of Huila.¹⁰³ In the case of Inzá, it was missionary Tramecourt who had drawn the town's new layout after a fire burned a significant portion of the village, and who obtained money to begin the reconstruction. In Inzá Tramecourt also supervised the construction of a new church and of a pair of two-story buildings (one for parsonage, and the other for the Daughters of Charity's house).¹⁰⁴ The missionaries' infrastructural achievements outside of Inzá and Belalcázar were more modest, limited usually to promoting the construction or mending of a church (or chapel) and a school in each *parcialidad*, and sometimes also in some subdivisions (*veredas*) within the larger *parcialidades*.¹⁰⁵

Another core goal for the Vincentians was transforming the region's economy from one mainly devoted to subsistence to a cash- and commerce-oriented one. Introducing new

¹⁰¹ Langer, *Expecting Pears from an Elm Tree*, 79.

¹⁰² González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 248.

¹⁰³ Quintero, *Territorio ignoto*, 89.

¹⁰⁴ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 212.

¹⁰⁵ Larquère, "Informe del Prefecto Apostólico," 20. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 226-232.

productive activities and promoting the construction of roads was part of this plan (as was weakening the *resguardos*). Turning Tierradentro into a wealth-producing area was crucial to missionary David González, who in 1960 reflected back on his labor in Tierradentro, explaining that “one of my endeavors was to open fields for work and to teach how to create national wealth.”¹⁰⁶ Other Vincentians shared this vision.

Among the new crops that the missionaries promoted were wheat, coffee, and apples. They stimulated wheat cultivation from early on,¹⁰⁷ and by 1934 they had imported three hydraulic wheat mills from Europe and were trying to bring two more.¹⁰⁸ Later on González started a campaign to encourage coffee and apple cultivation, and in 1937 Larquère requested a coffee husker from the United States.¹⁰⁹ González also encouraged cattle raising. He explained that with the farm he had created in Minas he had provided a good example of how to create a good “*finquita*” (little farm), and also had created enthusiasm for “*ganado de selección*” (good cattle stock). Additionally, he claimed that after he had started working in the La Colorada farm, other whites had followed his example and bought land to develop pastures for cattle.¹¹⁰ He claimed to have had some success with the Indians too: following his example a few had enclosed plots, and some had even created pastures and introduced cattle.¹¹¹

The Vincentians also devoted themselves to developing roads that would effectively connect Tierradentro to the rest of the country. When the Vincentians had first arrived there were

¹⁰⁶ Naranjo, “Apuntes para una historia de la Congregación de la Misión en Colombia. Nátaga, Tierradentro,” 66. “Fue también uno de mis empeños abrir campos para el trabajo y enseñar a crear riqueza nacional.”

¹⁰⁷ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 260. AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, ff. 19-19v.

¹⁰⁸ Consejo Nacional de la Obra de la Propagación de la Fe, “Prefectura Apostólica de Tierradentro,” 106.

¹⁰⁹ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 194. API, untitled folder. (Carta de The Bahmann Iron Works Co. a Emilio Larquère. Cincinnati, 18 diciembre 1936. Carta del secretario de The Bahmann Iron Works Co. al Banco Francés Italiano de Bogotá. Cincinnati, 4 febrero 1937. Carta del secretario de The Bahmann Iron Works Co. a Carlo Pagnament & Cía. Cincinnati, 4 febrero 1937).

¹¹⁰ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 198, 275.

¹¹¹ Ibid, 194.

three bridle paths that, crossing the region's high Andean plateaus from East to West, connected it with Popayán (Cauca) on one end, and La Plata (Huila) on the other.¹¹² These dirt roads reached heights in excess of twelve thousand feet (3600 msnm), featuring steep slopes that made for a slow grueling ascent and a dangerous descent through narrow passages. They were practically impassable during the rainy season, and posed a great challenge to any regular communication between Tierradentro and the rest of the country.¹¹³

Beginning in 1905 the central government had expressed great interest in building a road connecting La Plata (in Huila) and Cali (in Valle del Cauca). This road would cross Tierradentro from North to South, following the course of the Páez River and thus avoiding the Central Cordillera's heights. In 1911 the road's construction was put under the central government's direct sponsorship when it was declared a "national road."¹¹⁴ The roadwork, however, only took off during the 1920s, and it was not finished until almost two decades later, in the late 1940s.¹¹⁵

According to the missionaries, their cooperation was instrumental in completing this, the first motor road in Tierradentro. Vincentian writings attributed to González's efforts the construction of the road's section that connected Belalcázar and Toribío, for which the priest not only drew up the plan but also hired and directed the gangs, as well as obtained funding (both from the government and from private sources, including his own inheritance).¹¹⁶ Pastor Santos,

¹¹² Rappaport, "Territory and Tradition," 60. Carlos Vernaza Diago, "Informe que el Gobernador del Departamento del Cauca rinde al Poder Ejecutivo sobre la visita oficial que este practicó en la región de Tierradentro," *Revista de Misiones* 2, no. 18 (1926): 268-269. Segundo E. Bernal Villa, "Aspectos de la cultura Páez: mitología y cuentos de la parcialidad de Calderas, Tierradentro," *Revista Colombiana de Antropología* 1, no. 1 (1953): 281-282.

¹¹³ Vernaza, "Informe que el Gobernador del Departamento del Cauca," 268-269. "Tierradentro III," *Revista de Misiones*, no. 4 (1925): 150. Genaro Díaz, *Tierradentro: evangelización y civilización* (Bogotá: Imprenta de San Bernardo, 1924), 35-36. José Pérez de Barradas, *Colombia de norte a sur*, 2 vols., vol. 1 (Madrid: Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, 1943), 111-112.

¹¹⁴ "Tierradentro III," 152. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 131.

¹¹⁵ Vernaza, "Informe que el Gobernador del Departamento del Cauca," 269. "Tierradentro III," 152. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 308.

¹¹⁶ González explained that in one occasion he had had to use his personal influence with a national politician to re-incorporate the road from Cali to La Plata into the government's "Plan de Obras Públicas," from where it had been

another Vincentian, took it upon himself to draw up and direct the construction of another section of this road, that of La Florida.¹¹⁷ The Vincentians also promoted the construction of smaller internal roads.¹¹⁸ In the 1940s these roads provided an incentive to carry out, for the first time, the effective division of a few *resguardos* in the region (chapter 5).

In contrast with their active interest in promoting economic transformations in the region, the Vincentians showed little concern in advancing any moral reform among the Indians.

3.3.3 Morality and Public Health in Tierradentro

The Conservative-led national project that the Regeneration inaugurated in the late 1870s granted the Catholic Church a crucial role in guarding the country's morality. This was no insignificant task since, as recent studies have shown, Colombian elites at the turn of the twentieth century considered that achieving progress was as much a matter of moral and religious uplift as of economic development.¹¹⁹

But in contrast with this national-level rhetoric of moral uplift, moral reform occupied only a secondary role in the Vincentians' civilizing project for Tierradentro. Comments on the Nasa Indians' morality occupy little space in the missionaries' writings. However, when they did

excluded for no valid reason. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 133-137, 308. Consejo Nacional de la Obra de la Propagación de la Fe, "Prefectura Apostólica de Tierradentro," 107. "Prefectura Apostólica de Tierradentro," *El Sembrador* 4, no. 36 (1943): 15.

¹¹⁷ Consejo Nacional de la Obra de la Propagación de la Fe, "Prefectura Apostólica de Tierradentro," 107. "Prefectura Apostólica de Tierradentro," 1943, 15.

¹¹⁸ Pastor Santos, for example, directed the works to open several roads in the municipality of Inzá: one between Topa and El Pedregal, another linking Inzá and Turminá (but this one was never used), a third one from Inzá to Guanacas and Tierras Blancas, and one from San Andrés to Tumbichukue. Consejo Nacional de la Obra de la Propagación de la Fe, "Prefectura Apostólica de Tierradentro," 106. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 228-229.

¹¹⁹ Moreover, poverty was attributed to immoral behavior and not to socio-economic circumstances. Hayley Froyland, "Para el bien comun': Charity, Health, and Moral Order in Bogotá, Colombia, 1850-1936" (PhD diss., University of Virginia, 2002), 297-442. Froyland, "Trabajo, Ahorro, Familia, y Caridad: Poverty and the Catholic Moral Imperative in the Era of 'Order and Progress' in Regeneration Colombia, 1878-1900."

mention the matter it was to praise the Indians and their *cabildos*. In 1926 Larquère reported that the Indians had a good moral behavior, by which he meant that they married and had no illegitimate children. Larquère also explained that the *cabildo* cooperated with the missionaries in advancing moral oversight by reporting any immoral behavior for the missionaries to take care of.¹²⁰ An anonymous writer repeated the same idea eight years later: because the Indians did not tolerate any “insult to morality” there were practically no illegitimate births.¹²¹

It is surprising that the missionaries never mentioned in these reports the existence of the “*amaño*” or trial marriage, which travelers had noted within Nasa communities at least since the 1750s and still existed two centuries later in 1977.¹²² The *amaño* consisted on the couple living together for a period that could last from a few months to a few years, as a way to test each other’s abilities in different realms.¹²³ According to Cuervo, who visited Tierradentro in 1887, if the parties decided they did not want to marry they separated and were free to marry somebody else with no repercussions. If they decided to stay together, then they would marry in a Catholic ceremony.¹²⁴ In the 1950s *amaño* was not universally practiced among Tierradentro Indians, but in *parcialidades* such as Calderas it was very common.¹²⁵

¹²⁰ Larquère, “Informe del Prefecto Apostólico,” 17. In 1918 Tramecourt made similar remarks. Tramecourt, “Misiones de Tierradentro,” 40.

¹²¹ “Tierradentro,” *Revista de Misiones* 10, no. 111 (1934): 349.

¹²² Eugenio del Castillo y Orozco, *Vocabulario Páez-Castellano: catecismo, nociones gramaticales y dos pláticas* (Paris: Maison Neuve i Cia. Libreros Editores, 1877 [1755]), 64-65. Carlos Cuervo Márquez, *Estudios arqueológicos y etnográficos*, 2 ed., vol. 2 (Madrid: América, 1920), 180. Bernal, “Bases para el estudio de la organización social,” 180. BLAA/LRM, MSS 1494, f. 10. ICANH, EDU-0009, 59 (Ilva Perilla P. Estación antropológica de Tierradentro. Informe de Trabajo, Educación 1977. Bogotá, 1977.).

¹²³ Castillo y Orozco, *Vocabulario Páez-Castellano*, 64. Bernal, “Bases para el estudio de la organización social,” 180. Gregorio Hernández de Alba, “Etnología de los Andes del sur de Colombia,” *Revista de la Universidad del Cauca*, no. 5 (1944): 205. Cuervo, *Estudios arqueológicos y etnográficos*, 2: 180. Segundo E. Bernal Villa, “La fiesta de San Juan en Calderas, Tierradentro,” *Revista de Folklore* 2 (1953): 187-188. ICANH, EDU-0009, 59. BLAA/LRM, MSS 1534, f. 1.

¹²⁴ Cuervo, *Estudios arqueológicos y etnográficos*, 2: 180. Hernández, *The Highland Tribes*, 948. Bernal, “Bases para el estudio de la organización social,” 180. BLAA/LRM, MSS 1494, f. 10.

¹²⁵ Bernal, “Bases para el estudio de la organización social,” 180-181.

It is also intriguing that the Vincentians showed no interest in regulating the Indians' sexual practices during this period. In 1934 an anonymous writer, very likely a missionary, reported that during their religious festivals the Indians celebrated all night long, but it was impossible to ban these celebrations because their dances were very moral (they never touched each other) and the festivity developed in a very orderly fashion.¹²⁶ Yet Bernal Villa, an anthropologist who started visiting Tierradentro in the 1950s, reported a very different behavior on these occasions. He explained that once the participants were drunk their conversations focused on sexual topics such as "desires, realities, courtship, pregnancies, childbirths, genitalia, and even public simulations of coitus. Any allusion to sex causes hilarity..." Once the celebration was over, Bernal Villa explained, people slept "in promiscuous groups without distinction of sex or age."¹²⁷ No mention of such behavior can be found in the Vincentians' writings.¹²⁸

The missionaries made some weak attempts to halt *aguardiente*, *chicha* (sugar cane beer), and coca consumption in Tierradentro. There exist reports about isolated sermons against alcoholic drinks and drunkenness in 1907,¹²⁹ 1918,¹³⁰ 1934,¹³¹ 1937,¹³² and 1943,¹³³ but there is

¹²⁶ "Tierradentro," 1934, 349.

¹²⁷ Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 76. Bernal Villa, "La Fiesta de San Juan," 216.

¹²⁸ Interestingly, the missionaries' perception of the Indians' sexual behavior had changed by the late twentieth century. In an unpublished manuscript, Monsignor Jorge García Isaza (Tierradentro's last Apostolic Prefect and first Apostolic Vicar between 1989 and 2003) found a lot to criticize. He considered that Indians enjoyed too much freedom in their sexual relations before marriage. According to him, "sexual games" were pretty common among kids when returning from school using lonely paths. Moreover, the organization of Nasa houses facilitated these developments, since parents and children shared the same bedroom thus leading to a "natural education" without any orientation. Jorge García Isaza, "Apuntes para una historia de Tierradentro," (Santa Rosa de Cabal: Escuela Apostólica).

¹²⁹ Guillermo Rojas, "Colombie. Tierradentro. Lettre de M. Guillaume Rojas, prêtre de la Mission, à M. A. Fiat, Supérieur Général," *Annales de la Congrégation de la Mission* 73 (1908): 110-111.

¹³⁰ Tramecourt, "Misiones de Tierradentro," 40.

¹³¹ "Tierradentro," 1934, 349.

¹³² API, untitled folder. (Carta de Moseñor Larquère al sacerdote Péhau, 1937).

¹³³ API, Correspondencia de Moseñor Emilio Larquère. (Carta del Nuncio Apostólico a Monseñor Larquère. Bogotá, 2 febrero 1944).

no evidence that the Vincentians ever took any action against these practices. Moreover, heavy liquor drinking was ever-present in all the religious festivals whose celebration the Vincentians constantly promoted (see chapter 6).¹³⁴

Efforts to halt coca chewing were equally half-hearted. Missionary David González reported that after the government had issued a decree banning *coca* in the 1940s,¹³⁵ he had started his own campaign against this “vice.” His campaign did not last. He explained that the authorities did not back him, and hence he had to stop because he was “becoming hideous to the people.” González himself reported that after his failed campaign he had continued to include a ration of *coca* when paying his indigenous laborers.¹³⁶ In the end, González was not willing to chance the community’s disfavor in order to curb coca consumption.

Unlike moral reform, the missionaries showed more sustained efforts at providing healthcare and charity services, especially in the villages of Inzá and Belalcázar. Charity was one of the realms (together with education and frontier missions) where, according to the Concordat of 1887, religious orders were expected to play a crucial role as the state’s companions in promoting progress. The religious orders undertook the task with enthusiasm. For example, between the 1870s and the 1930s religious orders ran most of Bogotá’s charitable institutions, including hospitals, orphanages, shelters for homeless people, and soup kitchens.¹³⁷

In Tierradentro these tasks were mainly entrusted to the Daughters of Charity, who in 1934 administered two drugstores, two dispensaries, and two brand-new hospitals, one of each in either town.¹³⁸ They also ran orphanages.¹³⁹ Additionally, González mentioned that the income

¹³⁴ Bernal, “Religious Life of the Paez,” 78.

¹³⁵ On the government campaign against coca, see: Pineda, “La reivindicación del indio,” 236-238.

¹³⁶ González, *Los paezes, o, genocidio*, 299.

¹³⁷ Froyland, “Para el bien comun,” 299, 308, 370, 393, 416, 450-462.

¹³⁸ Consejo Nacional de la Obra de la Propagación de la Fe, “Prefectura Apostólica de Tierradentro,” 106.

the missionaries generated by raising cattle had been used in part to establish a “Gota de Leche” (Drop of Milk) in Belalcázar. This institution, first created in France in the 1890s, was dedicated to prevent infant mortality by providing both nourishment to children in their first year of life and instruction on pre- and post-natal care to mothers.¹⁴⁰ It is impossible to assess the effective impact of these programs or the degree to which they impacted indigenous populations rather than non-indigenous settlers, since missionaries provided no such information on their reports and there are no studies on the matter.

The Missions’ Agreement put still one more, crucial task in the missionaries’ hands: organizing and managing the public elementary schools for males in the indigenous regions.¹⁴¹ Formal education was one of the areas where the Vincentians were the most influential in Tierradentro, since they administered most of the public schools in the region from 1905 until 2003.¹⁴² And yet no studies exist of the education system that these missionaries put in place.¹⁴³

3.4 SCHOOLING THE NASA INDIANS

Outside of the mission territories, the Constitution of 1886 and the Concordat of 1887 also had granted the Catholic Church significant influence over education. This institution supervised the

¹³⁹ Naranjo, “Apuntes para una historia de la Congregación de la Misión en Colombia. Nátaga, Tierradentro,” 50.

¹⁴⁰ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 275. For a short analysis on the “Gota de Leche” in Colombia, see: Froyland, “Para el bien comun,” 430-431.

¹⁴¹ This provision was reaffirmed in Decree 491 of 1904. Aline Helg, *La educación en Colombia, 1918-1957: una historia social, económica y política*, 2 ed. (Bogotá: Universidad Pedagógica Nacional, Plaza & Janés Editores Colombia, 2001), 186.

¹⁴² Rappaport, *Intercultural Utopias*, 123, 129.

¹⁴³ Rappaport analyzes the alternative school systems that indigenous activists started to develop in the 1970s, but remains silent on how schooling worked before this period. Rappaport *Intercultural Utopias*, 115-151. Jimeno analyzes the system in the 1970s and 1980s. Jimeno Santoyo, “Cauca: las armas de lo sagrado,” 195-208.

programs for public schools at all levels, while several religious orders devoted to running several secondary-level institutions and, after the 1930s, also a few private universities.¹⁴⁴

In the mission territories, by law the priests had significant autonomy from the government when organizing elementary education. Each Mission Chief was in charge of controlling and directing all aspects of the school system. He was directly supervised by the Apostolic Nuncio, who had to send annual reports to both Colombia's government and the Holy See.¹⁴⁵ In these territories the Mission Chief could serve himself as National Education Inspector in the region, or appoint a different missionary to the position. This inspector had a wide range of attributions, including appointing, transferring, supervising and laying teachers off; deciding what schools to close and open; and distributing the salaries and teaching materials sent by the government.¹⁴⁶

The Ministry of Public Instruction (renamed Ministry of National Education in 1923) identified the mission territories where schools had been effectively created with the label of "*territorios nacionales escolares*" (national school territories).¹⁴⁷ In 1904 there were eight of them, and by 1951, through division of old ones and creation of new ones, their number had increased to fourteen.¹⁴⁸

In Tierradentro, the Vincentians were granted greater control over local education than the law stipulated, as they ran all public elementary schools, whether for females or males, as

¹⁴⁴ Apart from the mission territories, the church ran primary schools only in departments where it had widespread popular support, such as Antioquia and Boyacá. Helg, *La educación en Colombia*, 75-76, 164, 296.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, 186.

¹⁴⁶ ICANH, EDU-0009, 3-4.

¹⁴⁷ Colombia. Ministerio de Educación Nacional, *Memoria del Ministro de Educación Alfonso Araújo al Congreso Nacional, 1939* (Bogotá: Imprenta del Estado Mayor General, 1939), 28-29.

¹⁴⁸ Colombia. Ministerio de Instrucción Pública, *Informe que el Ministro de Instrucción Pública presenta al Congreso de Colombia en sus sesiones ordinarias de 1904* (Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional, 1904), vi-vii. Colombia. Ministerio de Educación Nacional, *Memoria del Ministro de Educación Nacional, 1951* (Bogotá: Editorial Iqueima, 1951), 17.

well as the few secondary education institutions created there after the 1950s. Starting in the 1930s a few schools were created outside of the missionaries' purview in Tierradentro. However, the great majority of the region's schools remained under the Vincentians' control until 2003.¹⁴⁹

Although the government gave the missionaries significant powers, in Tierradentro the indigenous communities had the ability to influence some of the schools' features. For instance, beginning in 1910, responding to a government request,¹⁵⁰ the Vincentians began to try to introduce agriculture as an additional school subject. They faced, however, stern opposition from indigenous parents from the start. In 1922 Tramecourt reported that the parents argued that their children had no need to cultivate in schools, when they could do it in their family's plot.¹⁵¹ These continued complaints prevented the missionaries from implementing the subject for decades.¹⁵²

The Indians also could influence the selection of the teachers. In 1937 Vitoncó's *cabildo* complained about the local teacher and requested a different one; the missionaries complied.¹⁵³ In Calderas, González recalled, when the missionaries appointed a teacher from western Colombia (not from Cauca or Huila as they normally did), the *cabildo* presented several complaints and the missionaries changed her. In the same *parcialidad* the *cabildo* expelled a teacher that had been well-liked, after she married and her non-indigenous husband requested a plot from the *cabildo* (Calderas was one of the *parcialidades* that most fiercely prevented the

¹⁴⁹ The *Consejo Regional Indígena del Cauca* (CRIC), an indigenous organization, is now in charge of public education in Tierradentro. In the 1970s the CRIC had started founding primary schools autonomous from the missionaries. Rappaport, *Intercultural Utopias*, 123, 129, 294 n. 5.

¹⁵⁰ In 1909 the Minister of Public Instruction sent a circular indicating that female students should be taught crafts, and male students agriculture. AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 1, ff. 19-19v. AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 1, ff. 21-24. Colombia. Ministerio de Instrucción Pública., *Informe del Ministro de Instrucción Pública al Congreso Nacional de 1911* (Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional, 1911), 7.

¹⁵¹ AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 3, ff. 132-133. Similar complaints in 1912: AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 1, ff. 74-75v, 80-82.

¹⁵² AGN/AA2/MEN, legajo 9, Caja 1, Carpeta 2, ff. 466-466v.

¹⁵³ AGN/AA2/MEN, legajo 140, carpeta 2, ff. 301-302, 303.

settlement of outsiders in their lands).¹⁵⁴ The missionaries could refuse to comply with these requests, but this seems to have occurred only in rare occasions.¹⁵⁵

The indigenous communities participated in other ways. In 1915 Tramecourt reported that the Vincentians had been appointing Indians to serve as local school inspectors and commissioners. These officials were under the authority of the *cabildo*'s governor and had to make sure that the schools ran smoothly.¹⁵⁶ The *cabildos* and communities also provided construction materials and communal work for building and up keeping the school facilities.¹⁵⁷

Besides the communities' support, Tierradentro's schools had access to a variety of funding sources. The most important one was the subsidy from the national government, which by a 1904 law had committed to pay the teachers' salaries as well as to provide the school buildings and educational materials for all mission territories.¹⁵⁸ In Tierradentro the missionaries and the municipal governments also provided important resources. While the missionaries were not legally obligated to supply any funds, there is evidence that in Tierradentro they sometimes did, especially by opening private schools when the public ones were not sufficient to meet the

¹⁵⁴ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 175, 176-177.

¹⁵⁵ For example, in 1920 the missionaries closed Wila's school after the *cabildo* rejected the newly-appointed teacher and demanded instead that the missionaries appointed a specific teacher (whom the missionaries considered not competent). The missionaries justified this measure explaining that they had already met once the *cabildo*'s previous request to change the teacher. AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 3, ff. 64-64v.

¹⁵⁶ AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 1, ff. 138-140. AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 2, ff. 167-169v. In 1923 Tramecourt explained that not all schools had these officials, only those where "suitable individuals" could be found (although the missionary did not explain what made any specific individual thus "suitable"). AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 3, ff. 180-180v, 183-183v. In 1942 anthropologist Arcila Vélez reported that there was an indigenous school "monitor" in Wila, but did not explain what his functions were. Arcila, *Los indígenas Páez de Tierradentro*, 46. In the early 1930s Monsignor Lunardi made a short visit to Tierradentro, and reported seeing Turminá's governor walking around the village's square every morning to make sure no child was skipping school. Pérez, *Colombia de norte a sur*, 1: 39.

¹⁵⁷ Guillermo Rojas, "Misiones de Tierradentro," *Revista de la Instrucción Pública del Cauca* (1907), 542. Colombia. Ministerio de Instrucción Pública, *Memoria del Ministro de Instrucción Pública al Congreso de 1912* (Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional, 1912), 12. Colombia. Ministerio de Instrucción Pública, *Memoria del Ministro de Instrucción Pública presentada al Congreso de 1920* (Bogotá: Imprenta de La Luz, 1920), 21. Emilio Larquère, "Inspección de Instrucción Pública de Tierradentro," in *Memoria del Ministro de Instrucción Pública al Congreso de 1912*, ed. Colombia. Ministerio de Instrucción Pública. (Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional, 1912), 15.

¹⁵⁸ Helg, *La educación en Colombia*, 186.

demand, or by paying the teachers' salaries when the government failed to do it on time.¹⁵⁹ The local municipalities and *cabildos* also contributed resources. Both the municipalities of Inzá and Belalcázar made modest monetary contributions, which were dedicated by law to building and fixing the schools and to provide furniture.¹⁶⁰

The missionaries' arrival had an immediate impact on the number of schools. In 1904, a year before the Vincentians' arrival, there existed four or five elementary schools, some of them private, with a little over a hundred students.¹⁶¹ During their first year the Vincentians opened fourteen public schools,¹⁶² and the number grew more or less steadily year by year until it had reached 31 schools with 1611 students in 1951.¹⁶³

Until 1935 all the schools that existed in the region were under missionary supervision. That year, however, Cauca's departmental assembly started to create a few public schools in important population centers in Tierradentro.¹⁶⁴ These were directly supervised by departmental

¹⁵⁹ Díaz, *Tierradentro: evangelización y civilización*, 28. AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 1, f. 202. AGN/AA2/MEN, legajo 9, Caja 1, Carpeta 2, ff. 466-466v. AGN/AA2/MEN, legajo 78, carpeta 1, ff. 102-105.

¹⁶⁰ Rojas, "Misiones de Tierradentro," 542. Colombia. Ministerio de Instrucción Pública, *Memoria del Ministro de Instrucción Pública presentada al Congreso de 1920*, 21. In 1923 the missionaries explained that the municipal councils allocated between 100 and 150 pesos annually towards these goals. AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 3, ff. 180-180v, 183-183v.

¹⁶¹ The sources do not agree on the exact number of schools and students. For example, in the same volume González mentions first four schools with 155 students, and then two schools with 100 students. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 210, 254. "Prefectura Apostólica de Tierradentro," 1934, 104. "Prefectura Apostólica de Tierradentro," 1943, 13.

¹⁶² Colombia. Ministerio de Instrucción Pública, *Memoria del Ministro de Instrucción Pública presentada al Congreso de 1918* (Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional, 1918), 50.

¹⁶³ Colombia. Ministerio de Educación Nacional, *Memoria del Ministro de Educación Nacional, 1951*, 17. Along with public schools, the missionaries also opened private establishments on occasion, whose expenses they financed. Their number ranged between one and ten, but there were many years where none was opened. The missionaries decided to open these establishments, paying the teachers' salaries from their pocket, when the population's demand for schools could not be met by the official, government-financed schools. Private schools reached a peak in the late 1930s, but by 1954 there was only one. AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 1, f. 202. AGN/AA2/MEN, legajo 9, Caja 1, Carpeta 2, ff. 466-466v. AGN/AA2/MEN, legajo 78, carpeta 1, ff. 102-105. Colombia. Ministerio de Instrucción Pública, *Memoria del Ministro de Instrucción Pública presentada al Congreso de 1919* (Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional, 1919), 233. Colombia. Ministerio de Educación Nacional, *Memoria del Ministro de Educación Nacional, 1951*, cuadro No. 2.

¹⁶⁴ In 1935 they created two schools, one in Inzá and another in Belalcázar. AGC, Copiador de Telegramas de la Gobernación, de octubre a diciembre de 1935 y de enero a abril de 1936, f. 258. These were boys schools. AGC, Telegramas desde 20 enero 1936 hasta 31 octubre 1936, f. 73, 88, 100. In 1936 the assembly created another two

officials and not by the missionaries, thus ending the latter's monopoly over education in the territory. By the early 1940s a mixed system was in place, in which the missionaries ran the vast majority of the schools, while the Department was in charge of a few ones located in some urban centers.¹⁶⁵

Indigenous responses to the missionary-run schools were mixed. In 1912 the Minister of Public Instruction reported that in Tierradentro many *cabildos* were showing great enthusiasm for schools.¹⁶⁶ That same year Larquère and Tramecourt explained that students were attending, municipal authorities were showing support, and several indigenous communities continued to build school houses as a first step to request a school from the missionaries.¹⁶⁷ Yet in many places the missionaries mentioned the Indians' lack of interest as the reason for closing schools.¹⁶⁸ The indigenous upheaval known as the *Quintinada*, which shook Cauca and neighboring departments during the mid-1910s (see chapter 4) reduced school attendance in a few *parcialidades*, especially in Yaquivá, San Andrés, and Inzá.¹⁶⁹ However, in 1920 Tramecourt reported that Yaquivá was asking the missionaries insistently to open a school

schools in Yaquivá and Mosoco. AGC, Telegramas desde 20 enero 1936 hasta 31 octubre 1936, f. 96-97, 327. One of these schools was for girls and the other one was alternated. Cauca's officials mentioned another school in Vitoncó, but they never said when it was created. AGC, Telegramas desde 20 enero 1936 hasta 31 octubre 1936, f. 182.

¹⁶⁵ Gregorio Hernández de Alba, *Tierradentro. Exposición en el Museo Arqueológico Nacional* (Bogotá: Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 1942). AGN/AA2/MEN, legajo 78, carpeta 1, ff. 102-105. It seems that the Vincentians did not officially accept this system until 1954, when Monsignor Vallejo signed a contract with the Department of Cauca to open a number of Department-run schools. "La educación en Tierradentro," *Revista de Misiones* 54, no. 590 (1979): 179.

¹⁶⁶ Colombia. *Memoria del Ministro de Instrucción Pública al Congreso de 1912*, 12.

¹⁶⁷ Larquère, "Inspección de Instrucción Pública de Tierradentro," 13. Tramecourt provided similar reports that year. AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 1, ff. 80-82. AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 1, ff. 108-108v. AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 1, ff. 138-140. In 1920 Avirama was requesting a school. AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 2, ff. 221-221v.

¹⁶⁸ AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 1, ff. 62-63v. AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 2, ff. 167-169v. AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 3, ff. 132-133. AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 3, ff. 180-180v, 183-183v.

¹⁶⁹ AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 2, ff. 70-71. AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 2, ff. 128-129. AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 2, ff. 135-136.

there.¹⁷⁰ Only on one occasion did the missionaries claim that open hostility (whose cause they did not discuss) was the reason for closing a school, in Cohetando in 1920.¹⁷¹

3.4.1 The Schools' Impact

Although the schools' numeric expansion was impressive, their effective results were very limited, especially in relation to literacy and Spanish proficiency. The missionaries never provided information about these two variables for the region, which makes any precise the assessment of the schools' impact on these realms impossible. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that both rates remained low. For instance, in 1923 missionary Tramecourt accepted the Municipal Council of Inzá's accusations that illiteracy was still very high in Tierradentro.¹⁷² In 1936 a government official that visited Tierradentro strongly criticized the missionaries because, he claimed, not even 5 per cent of the population knew how to write their names.¹⁷³ In 1944 the lawyer in charge of parceling out several *resguardos* in the municipality of Inzá (see chapter 5) explained that very few of the Indians that had presented petitions knew how to sign their names.¹⁷⁴ In 1945 the *cabildos* of Wila and Vitoncó sent a *memorial* to Colombia's President denouncing that in the municipality of Páez only one percent of the male Indians knew how to sign, and no indigenous women knew how to sign their name or how to speak Spanish.¹⁷⁵

The missionaries' success in generalizing the use of Spanish was also limited. According to missionary González, in the 1920s there were at least six *parcialidades* where adult Indians

¹⁷⁰ AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 2, ff. 221-221v.

¹⁷¹ AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 2, ff. 167-169v.

¹⁷² AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 3, ff. 132v.

¹⁷³ "Impresiones de Tierradentro por Roberto Liévano, enviado especial del Mtrio. De Industrias" *El Cauca*, 15 mayo 1936, p. 8.

¹⁷⁴ AGN/MI/AI, caja 261, carpeta 2474, ff. 40-43.

¹⁷⁵ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 301-303.

did not understand much Spanish.¹⁷⁶ Three decades later, in the 1950s, González estimated that among three quarters of Tierradentro's population, males understood only a little bit of Spanish while women had no knowledge of that language at all. The rest of the Indians knew Spanish and used it to interact with the missionaries, government authorities, and traders. However, they also continued to use Nasa Yuwe on a regular basis.¹⁷⁷

It is likely that these poor results responded in large part to the fact that only a small part of the population had access to the schools. It is hard to find reliable information about what percentage of the population actually registered in the schools. The statistics the missionaries presented in their yearly reports usually included enrollment and attendance numbers, but omitted any reference to the rest of the school-aged population. In 1923, however, Tierradentro's Education Inspector estimated that the children enrolled in schools amounted at most to 10% of all school-aged children.¹⁷⁸ In 1931 these numbers had increased considerably. Tramecourt explained that 1582 children had been attending school that year. He possessed no definitive numbers on how many school-aged children existed in the region, but he estimated that they were approximated four thousand. That is, by 1931 perhaps 40 percent of the region's school-aged children were attending school.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁶ Wila, Vitoncó, Chinas, Suin, Lame, and San José. Ibid, 271.

¹⁷⁷ The first group he estimated in 21,000 individuals. The remaining 15,000 people (González estimated Tierradentro's population in 36,000) González described as "orgullosos de su patria, ambiciosos de cultura," but did not clarify whether they were indigenous or not, and whether they spoke Nasa Yuwe. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 256. In 1963 a government official noted that in *parcialidades* such as Togoima and Tóez the Indians spoke both, Spanish and Nasa Yuwe. AGN/MI/AI, caja 182, carpeta 1518, f. 42. AGN/MI/AI, caja 182, carpeta 1519, f. 2.

¹⁷⁸ AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 3, ff. 180-180v, 183-183v. In that year the attendance added up to 706 children. Colombia. Ministerio de Instrucción y Salubridad Públicas, *Monografía de la educación pública en Colombia y estadísticas de los institutos docentes en el año de 1923* (Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional, 1924), 35-50.

¹⁷⁹ AGN/AA2/MEN, legajo 72, carpeta 3, ff. 550-551v. In 1933 he informed that 1750 children attended school, and estimated, again, that there were 4 thousand children between the ages 6 and 14 in Tierradentro. That would mean that almost 44% of the local school-aged children were attending school. AGN/AA2/MEN, legajo 137, carpeta 2, ff. 243-244.

Such figures might lead one to greatly overestimate school enrollment among indigenous children. I have found only one document in which the missionaries provided attendance numbers detailed according to ethno-racial labels. In 1933 Tramecourt reported that of the 1750 children that were attending school that year, only 600 were indigenous.¹⁸⁰ That amounted to 34 per cent, in a region where still in the 1950s 80 per cent of the population was indigenous.¹⁸¹ Tramecourt also explained that half of the twenty two schools that existed in 1933 were attended by “*mestizos*” who spoke only Spanish, in another four schools Spanish and Nasa Yuwe were spoken (although the missionary did not clarify whether the children were bilingual or not, and whether they were indigenous or not). Only seven schools (32%) were attended by children that spoke exclusively Nasa Yuwe (and therefore must have been indigenous).¹⁸² In a 1921 report a missionary noted that registration was the best in villages such as Inzá, Belalcázar, El Pedregal, and Turminá.¹⁸³ All of them were areas where the non-indigenous inhabitants concentrated. In sum, indigenous children were a minority among the region’s elementary school students.

Moreover, the indigenous children attended school only for a short period. In 1954 Bernal Villa noted that in San Andrés the indigenous children attended irregularly and never for more than two years.¹⁸⁴ In 1960 Lino Rampón, a Salesian priest visiting Tierradentro, also remarked that most indigenous children did not spend more than two years in school.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁰ AGN/AA2/MEN, legajo 137, carpeta 2, ff. 243-244.

¹⁸¹ Bernal Villa, “Aspectos de la cultura Páez,” 285. In 1943 an envoy from the national government that visited Tierradentro provided a similar estimation of the ethnic distribution of the region’s population, with whites and *mestizos* amounting to one fifth of the total. Indians added to less than the remaining 80 per cent, since he stated that there were also *morenos* but did not estimate their numbers. AGN/MI/AI, Caja 185, Carpeta 1553, f. 162.

¹⁸² AGN/AA2/MEN, legajo 137, carpeta 2, ff. 243-244.

¹⁸³ Colombia. Ministerio de Instrucción Pública, *Memoria del Ministro de Instrucción Pública presentada al Congreso de 1921* (Bogotá: Imprenta de La Luz, 1921), 21.

¹⁸⁴ Bernal Villa, “Economía de los Páez,” 361.

¹⁸⁵ AGN/MI/AI, caja 269, carpeta 2563, f. 1. Sevilla noted the same phenomenon in Tumbichukue in 1975. Sevilla, *La pobreza de los excluidos*, 87.

The missionaries constantly remarked on the Indians' low attendance, and over and over again they blamed it on the Indians "innate" apathy and indifference towards education.¹⁸⁶ In 1922 Tramecourt accepted, when replying to a *memorial* sent by Inzá's Municipal Council, that illiteracy was significant in Tierradentro. To explain this, he asserted: "let's not forget that the population is mostly indigenous, Páez [Nasa Yuwe] speaking, that the Indians are by nature rebellious to civilization and education, that they are apathetic and inconstant, that is the reason for their lack of interest and the constant struggle that we need to sustain for them to send their children to school."¹⁸⁷ Nine years later the same missionary stressed that the Indians' indifference was the reason why an estimated 1800 indigenous children failed to register in school.¹⁸⁸

Only on rare occasions did the Vincentians recognize that other factors, besides indifference, could explain this behavior. In 1920 a missionary explained that many indigenous parents did not send their children because they could not present them decently dressed.¹⁸⁹ In 1922 and 1926 the same missionary attributed reduced attendance in certain schools to the impact of flu and dysentery epidemics, as well as to poverty and hunger.¹⁹⁰

It was these difficult material conditions, not the Indians' indifference, which other observers identified as the cause for the schools' limited impact among the Indians. In 1954

¹⁸⁶ AGN/AA2/MEN, legajo 72, carpeta 3, f. 519. AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 2, ff. 70-71. AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 3, ff. 132-133.

¹⁸⁷ AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 3, ff. 132v. "no hemos de olvidar que la población es en su mayor parte indígena, de idioma páez, que los indígenas son por naturaleza rebeldes a la civilización y a la educación, que son apáticos e inconstantes de ahí su desinterés y la lucha continua que se debe sostener para que manden a sus niños a las escuelas."

¹⁸⁸ AGN/AA2/MEN, legajo 72, carpeta 3, f. 519.

¹⁸⁹ AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 2, ff. 204-205v.

¹⁹⁰ Colombia. Ministerio de Instrucción Pública, *Memoria del Ministro de Instrucción Pública presentada al Congreso de 1922*, vol. 1 (Bogotá: Casa Editorial de La Cruzada, 1923), 17. Colombia. Ministerio de Instrucción y Salubridad Públicas, *Memoria del Ministro de Instrucción y Salubridad Públicas al Congreso de 1926* (Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional, 1926), 113.

anthropologist Bernal Villa reported that in San Andrés attending the school was difficult because of the great distance that separated the Indians' dwellings from the school, and also because the roads were in extremely bad shape.¹⁹¹

In some cases, low attendance also responded to the indigenous parents' notions about appropriate gender roles. The indigenous parents in some *parcialidades*¹⁹² refused to send their daughters to school. In 1920 Tramecourt attributed this resistance to the fact that the indigenous parents did not want their daughters to learn Spanish so that they would have no contact with the "white race."¹⁹³ The anthropologists that started to visit the area in the late 1930s confirmed this tendency. Some of them identified the same concerns as did the missionaries, that is, that learning Spanish would facilitate indigenous women interacting with non-indigenous men.¹⁹⁴ Others claimed it responded to the Indians' prejudice that women had no use for reading and writing.¹⁹⁵ In 1944, however, Hernández de Alba attributed this attitude to the fact that schools were fighting against the Indians' language and traditions, and the parents had the idea that girls should "maintain their people's traditions."¹⁹⁶

The schools' impact was disappointing even among the children that managed to attend. In 1937 an official from the Ministry of National Education visited the region and remarked that the students had no intellectual development.¹⁹⁷ In 1954 anthropologist Bernal Villa reported that

¹⁹¹ Bernal Villa, "Economía de los Páez," 361.

¹⁹² In the 1910s and 1920s these *parcialidades* were: Wila, Vitoncó, Mosoco, Calderas, Chinas, and Lame. AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, ff. 11-12. AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 1, ff. 14-15. AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, ff. 42-42v. AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 1, ff. 126-127. In the 1950s the *parcialidades* were Calderas, Santa Rosa, Togoima, Chinas, Suin, Lame, and San José. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 256.

¹⁹³ AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 2, ff. 204-205v. He repeated the same complaint a year later. In 1921: AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 3, ff. 36-37v. A similar report from 1912: AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 1, ff. 74-75v. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 256.

¹⁹⁴ Arcila, *Los indígenas Páez de Tierradentro*, 46.

¹⁹⁵ Bernal Villa, "Economía de los Páez," 361. Quintero, *Territorio ignoto*, 56.

¹⁹⁶ Hernández, "Etnología de los Andes del sur," 204.

¹⁹⁷ AGN/AA2/MEN, legajo 78, carpeta 1, ff. 102-105.

in San Andrés the students' "progression" (*aprovechamiento*) was minimal.¹⁹⁸ Decades later the landscape had changed little. Anthropologist Sevilla reported that in 1975 students in the school of Tumbichukue only learned how to sign their name, did not understand Spanish, and very few passed the course at the end of the school year.¹⁹⁹ Although in a very oblique manner, in the 1950s missionary David González recognized that schools had a limited impact even on the minority of indigenous children that had actually attended them. He explained that:

The Indian children, the purely Indian ones, after attending school for many years learn some Spanish, they can even converse, read, write, count; they are put at the rhythm of a civilized and Christian life.

Then they return to their wilderness, to their mountains, and abandon themselves to the repugnant vice of coca, to drunkenness, they allow themselves to forget what they had learned, they return to their elders' life and customs.²⁰⁰

Unlike González, most missionaries never commented on the problems children faced to advance even if they did enroll. Other observers, however, denounced serious deficiencies in the school system. In 1937 an official from the National Ministry of Education visited the region and reported that the teaching methods were the same as in the colonial period: they favored memorization and repetition and emphasized useless knowledge. Additionally, the official remarked that the teachers did not have the minimum knowledge expected from a sixth grade

¹⁹⁸ Bernal Villa, "Economía de los Páez," 361.

¹⁹⁹ Sevilla, *La pobreza de los excluidos*, 87-91.

²⁰⁰ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 125. "Los niños indígenas, los netamente indígenas, después de concurrir varios años a la escuela, algo aprenden de castellano, hasta conversar, leer, escribir, contar; se les pone al ritmo de una vida civilizada y cristiana.

Después se van a sus montes, a sus breñas, se entregan al repugnante vicio de la coca, a la embriaguez, dejan olvidar lo que aprendieron, vuelven a la vida y costumbres de sus mayores."

graduate, and the school buildings were absolutely inadequate.²⁰¹ In 1954 anthropologist Bernal Villa reported that in the school of San Andrés there were no learning materials and all the subjects were taught in Spanish, even though many of the children spoke only Nasa Yuwe.²⁰² I have found no evidence that the missionaries ever acknowledged that there were problems related to method, contents, and teachers' training. On the few occasions they referred to the teachers' credentials, it was to stress that they were adequate for the job.²⁰³

The missionaries never referred in detail to the methods used in the local schools. However, most of the teachers had only a very basic education level. In fact, most of Tierradentro's teachers were young women²⁰⁴ who lacked any official teacher degree.²⁰⁵ The only exceptions where the schools of Inzá and Belalcázar, run by the Daughters of Charity;²⁰⁶ and the schools in the villages where the *lauritas* established themselves starting in the 1940s.²⁰⁷ Meanwhile, there is no evidence that any of these teachers, including the nuns, received any special language or other training to prepare them to work among indigenous children,²⁰⁸ many of whom knew no Spanish when starting school.²⁰⁹ Moreover, there is no evidence that the

²⁰¹ AGN/AA2/MEN, legajo 78, carpeta 1, ff. 102-105.

²⁰² Bernal Villa, "Economía de los Páez," 361.

²⁰³ AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 2, ff. 2-3v. AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 3, ff. 132-133. AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 3, ff. 180-180v, 183-183v.

²⁰⁴ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 218-219, 277. Rojas, "Misiones de Tierradentro," 545. Colombia, *Monografía de la educación pública en Colombia y estadísticas de los institutos docentes en el año de 1923*, 38-39. Colombia, *Memoria del Ministro de Instrucción y Salubridad Pública al Congreso de 1925. Anexos*. (Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional, 1925), 57.

²⁰⁵ Colombia, *Monografía de la educación pública en Colombia y estadísticas de los institutos docentes en el año de 1923*, 38. Colombia. Ministerio de Educación Nacional, *Memoria del Ministro de Educación Nacional, 1951*, 18.

²⁰⁶ They established themselves in 1917 in Belalcázar, and in 1924 in Inzá. Larquère, "Informe del Prefecto Apostólico," 20.

²⁰⁷ BLAA/LRM, MSS1343. "Notas de viaje," 38. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 178, 302.

²⁰⁸ In fact, the features the missionaries emphasized as desirable besides a very basic education were patience, kindness, dedication, good moral conduct, and piety. AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 2, ff. 2-3v. AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 3, ff. 132-133. AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 3, ff. 180-180v, 183-183v.

²⁰⁹ AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 2, ff. 70-71. AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 3, ff. 180-180v, 183-183v.

missionaries recruited local Indians as teachers²¹⁰ or as teachers' assistants in the classroom.²¹¹ This is hardly surprising, given that very few Indians had access to schools with more than three grades.

Even if an indigenous child managed to overcome all these obstacles, it was unlikely that she could continue her education beyond the third grade. In Tierradentro, most indigenous children had access to "rural schools" only. The main difference between rural and urban schools was the number of grades available and the number of effective school days. First, urban schools offered six grades compared to three in rural ones. Second, urban schools were dedicated to either girls or boys, while in rural schools boys and girls alternated every other day, thus reducing effective school days in half as compared to their urban counterparts.²¹²

The great majority of Tierradentro's schools were classified as rural. In 1923 only five were urban while the other twelve were rural.²¹³ In 1951 the total number of schools had increased to 31, but urban schools were only six and encompassed 16% of the students.²¹⁴ These urban schools concentrated in the villages of Inzá and Belalcázar,²¹⁵ the two main non-indigenous centers. This meant that, although non-indigenous children were a minority of the total population, they had access to better education than the local Indians. In this way, the missionaries created a system that in practice favored non-indigenous inhabitants.

²¹⁰ I have found only one reference to an indigenous teacher. In 1954 Bernal reported that there was a private school in Mosoco in charge of an indigenous male teacher. Bernal Villa, "Economía de los Páez," 316.

²¹¹ Starting in 1972 non-indigenous teachers had indigenous bilingual assistants, called "*billigües*". ICANH, EDU-0009. Jimeno, "Cauca, las armas de lo sagrado," 204-205.

²¹² Helg, *La educación en Colombia*, 48.

²¹³ Colombia. Ministerio de Instrucción Pública, *Monografía de la educación pública en Colombia y estadísticas de los institutos docentes en el año de 1923*, 35.

²¹⁴ Colombia. Ministerio de Educación Nacional, *Memoria del Ministro de Educación Nacional, 1951*, 17.

²¹⁵ In 1923 only Inzá and Belalcázar had urban schools. Colombia. Ministerio de Instrucción Pública, *Monografía de la educación pública en Colombia y estadísticas de los institutos docentes en el año de 1923*, 35.

Secondary education in turn was never a realistic option for most indigenous children. Just like in all mission territories up until the 1930s, in Tierradentro there were no secondary education institutions.²¹⁶ The first attempts to create one date from 1943,²¹⁷ but no stable institutions appeared until the early 1950s.²¹⁸ Before this only a few children from the region were able to continue their education in the *Escuela Normal* (normal school) in Popayán and in the *colegio* of Nátaga (Huila), this last one run by the Daughters of Charity.²¹⁹

Most of the children that could access these very limited opportunities were white or *mestizo*, a trend that remained in place even after secondary schools were created in Tierradentro.²²⁰ In 1959 an envoy from the International Labor Office explained that in order to be admitted to Tierradentro's single secondary school, the Normal School in Belalcázar, children needed to complete up to fifth grade, but schools in the *resguardos* reached only the third grade.²²¹ A year later the Salesian priest Lino Rampón noted the same trend,²²² and in the 1970s, anthropologist Ilva Perilla explained that in Tierradentro the vast majority of the students enrolled in secondary education were not Indians.²²³

²¹⁶ Helg, *La educación en Colombia*, 187.

²¹⁷ That year Law 114 of 1943 created a boarding school for Indians in the municipality of Páez. Balcázar, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 231-233.

²¹⁸ Another attempt was the *Escuela Vocacional Agrícola* (Vocational School of Agriculture), which functioned between 1954 and 1956. The only institution that lasted more than a few years was the *Escuela Normal Rural de Señoritas* (Rural Normal School for Señoritas, currently known as *Escuela Normal Superior de Tierradentro*), founded in 1953 and geared towards training female teachers. Edith María Valencia Lucumí, *Protagonismo histórico y cultural de la Escuela Norma Superior de Tierradentro "Enrique Vallejo"* (Popayán, Colombia: Ministerio del Interior, Nasa Kiwe Corporación para la reconstrucción de la cuenca del río Páez y zonas aledañas). In the 1950s there existed a *Escuela-hogar para campesinas* (School-Home for Female Peasants) in Guanacas, where the government provided fifty scholarships. It was created in 1951.

²¹⁹ Colombia. Ministerio de Instrucción y Salubridad Públicas., *Memoria del Ministro de Instrucción y Salubridad Públicas al Congreso de 1925*, 20. AGN/AA2/MEN, legajo 9, Caja 1, Carpeta 2, ff. 466-466v.

²²⁰ Colombia. Ministerio de Instrucción y Salubridad Públicas., *Memoria del Ministro de Instrucción y Salubridad Públicas al Congreso de 1925. Anexos*, 20. AGN/AA2/MEN, legajo 9, Caja 1, Carpeta 2, ff. 466-466v.

²²¹ International Labour Office, *Informe al gobierno de Colombia sobre el problema indígena en el departamento del Cauca. Encuesta preliminar a la aportación eventual de asistencia técnica dentro del marco del Programa andino* (Geneva: OIT, 1959), 22.

²²² AGN/MI/AI, caja 269, carpeta 2563, f. 1.

²²³ ICANH, EDU-0009, 66-67.

In sum, the combination of poor teaching methods, harsh material conditions, missionary prejudice, and indigenous resistance meant that by the 1950s, almost half a century after the missionaries opened their first schools, the majority of the indigenous population remained illiterate and continued to use Nasa Yuwe on a regular basis.

3.5 CONCLUSION

The missions that Catholic orders established across several indigenous regions during the first half of the twentieth century, including Tierradentro, enjoyed strong support from the Conservative administrations that controlled Colombia until 1930. This, however, did not mean that in Tierradentro the Vincentians could simply impose their will. In fact, the mission's configuration depended to an important degree on the local Indians' response. On some occasions the Indians could thwart missionary plans, as when one *parcialidad* after another rejected efforts to build a missionary residency in their midst. As a result the Vincentians had to content themselves with residencies in the non-indigenous population centers, at least until the 1920s. On other occasions, in contrast, it was the Indians' enthusiasm that affected missionary actions. For instance, indigenous communities' demand for the celebration of saints' festivals led the Vincentians to concentrate their evangelizing activities around these events.

In the 1920s the Vincentians' position in the area strengthened as a result of the mission's transformation into an Apostolic Prefecture, which entailed greater support from the Vatican. This allowed them to open a permanent residence at the heart of the indigenous area, and to advance much more forcefully their "civilizing" agenda.

This agenda was rooted in an extremely negative view of the indigenous communities of Tierradentro. The missionaries identified a series of innate deficiencies that, in their view, made the Indians unfit for civilization. These included their apathy, their resistance to change, their hatred towards non-indigenous people, and their desire to remain isolated from the rest of the Colombian society. In the missionaries' view, the fact that the Indians had retained control over their *resguardos* had only strengthened these execrable traits.

To solve this host of problems they advocated, first and foremost, increasing contacts between these Indians and white and *mestizo* populations. The missionaries hence focused their attention on facilitating penetration by building roads, and on making the region more attractive by introducing new economic activities. A key feature of the missionaries' agenda, as I will analyze in chapter 5, was weakening the *resguardos*.

Interestingly, the Vincentians showed no special interest in reforming the indigenous communities' moral behavior, trusting instead that *cabildos* would police their communities. As I will discuss in following chapters, the missionaries relied on the intermediation of *cabildos* in several other realms as well.

One of the key functions that the national government had to entrust missionaries in the mission territories was establishing and running the elementary school system. The Vincentians devoted many resources to this task, but these schools did not become the mass acculturation mechanism that government authorities had expected. There were several reasons for this. First, only a small portion of the indigenous population had access to them. Second, both the teachers and the methods they used were extremely inadequate, and hence a significant percentage of the indigenous children who actually attended nevertheless failed to learn to read and write, or to

become proficient in Spanish. Finally, the system favored the access of non-indigenous children, even though they were a minority of the population.

The fact that the majority of the Indians were illiterate and spoke almost no Spanish, however, did not deter them from actively participating in the partisan politics that characterized republican Colombia.

4.0 POLITICS IN EARLY-TWENTIETH-CENTURY TIERRADENTRO, 1900-1950

Starting in the late 1930s, the first generation of Colombian social scientists focused their attention on the problems faced by the indigenous populations that survived in the country's outlying areas. These scholars argued that one of the roots of these problems was the state's lack of interest in these populations, and its subsequent decision to abandon them to the Catholic missionaries' tutelage.¹ While this assessment was not totally inaccurate (after all, Catholic missions were very powerful in the indigenous areas) it is not true that the Colombian state simply withdrew from these regions. In this chapter I focus on one realm where the influence of the state was key in shaping the dynamics in Tierradentro: politics.

I begin by examining how Tierradentro's Indians integrated themselves into Colombia's two dominant political parties from early in the mid-nineteenth century, and the impact that the Vincentians' Conservatization agenda had on the region's twentieth-century political configuration. Then I analyze how these Indians' participated in Colombian electoral politics through clientelistic networks, and how the cases of the indigenous leaders José Pío Collo and Manuel Quintín Lame illustrate the openings and the constraints that this participation presented to these indigenous communities.

¹ François Correa Rubio, "La modernidad del pensamiento indigenista y el Instituto Nacional Indigenista de Colombia," *Maguaré* 21 (2007): 27 and passim.

4.1 PARTISAN AFFILIATION IN TIERRADENTRO, 1903-1950

Many generations of historians have remarked the very particular character of the bi-partisan system that dominated Colombian politics well into the twentieth century. Starting in the late 1840s ascription to the Conservative or the Liberal party quickly permeated all social and geographical groups in Colombia, and with time party affiliation became intricately woven into personal and communal identities and was inherited generation after generation.² These affiliations did not follow any easily identifiable socio-economic or regional lines,³ and some authors have argued that the two-party system's success relied precisely on its ability to express a myriad of different local and regional tensions.⁴ At any rate, Colombia's political landscape was crisscrossed by these intense partisan politics, and Tierradentro was not an exception.

4.1.1 *Indios Rojos and Indios Godos*

Partisan affiliations among the Indians of Tierradentro were one of the civil wars' multiple legacies. The 1860-1862 conflict was a turning point in this respect, when the alliance with the Liberal leader Tomás Cipriano de Mosquera turned into a long-lasting ascription of the majority of the Nasa Indians to the Liberal party.⁵ Mosquera became influential among indigenous

² Pierre Gilhodès, "Raíz, auge y decadencia del bipartidismo colombiano," in *Democracia, etnicidad y violencia política en los países andinos* (Lima: Instituto Francés de Estudios Andinos, Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1993), 22-28. Steven L. Taylor, *Voting Amid Violence: Electoral Democracy in Colombia* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2009), 59-80.

³ Safford and Palacios, *Colombia: Fragmented Land*, 250. Frank Safford, Francisco Leal, and José Escorcia, "Primera conferencia. Formación de los partidos políticos durante la primera mitad del siglo XIX," in *Aspectos polémicos de la historia colombiana del siglo XIX: memoria de un seminario* (Bogotá: Fondo Cultural Cafetero, 1983).

⁴ Safford and Palacios, *Colombia: Fragmented Land*, 151-156.

⁵ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 329. Mosquera's family had had a historical connection with the Nasa Indians, especially those of Vitoncó, who had been their *mitayos* (temporary workers) since the seventeenth century, and

communities not only in Tierradentro, but across Cauca, because in 1859 he had pressured Cauca's Assembly to pass a law that contained unprecedented protective measures for *resguardos*.⁶

In spite of Mosquera's clout not all of the Nasa Indians joined the Liberal side. As early as the 1870s the Conservative party gained support from some Nasa communities, as well as from the Guainás dynasty.⁷ This schism had major consequences for Tierradentro during the Thousand Days War, when the confrontation between Conservative and Liberal Indians took alarming proportions that protracted the war here longer than in the rest of the country.⁸

By the time Colombian elites agreed to disavow armed confrontation as a legitimate means for political struggle, in the first decade of the twentieth century, the Nasa Indians had already created stable links with the two parties, and through them with the larger Colombian political system. By 1910 elections had displaced civil wars as the main stage for partisan competition throughout Colombia, and Tierradentro Indians embraced the new situation with enthusiasm.

In the first half of the twentieth century the Indians from the *parcialidad* of Calderas (*calderunos*) were the most conspicuous Conservative Indians in Tierradentro. It is not clear when or for what reason the *calderunos* became "*godos*" (Conservatives). Trying to explain this peculiar political affiliation anthropologist Bernal Villa wondered whether it had to do with the

who until the 1930s continued to send work gangs for short periods to the Mosquera family's *haciendas*. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 160. Sevilla, "Estudios antropológicos sobre Tierradentro," 70-74. Henman, *Mama Coca*, 278. As a result, Mosquera successfully recruited Nasa soldiers to fight for his cause in 1860-1862, and they proved instrumental in his final victory. Pumarada, "Nasa Politics in Nineteenth Century Colombia," 141-145, 153-156.

⁶ Pumarada, "Nasa Politics in Nineteenth Century Colombia," 156-159. Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 73.

⁷ Pumarada, "Nasa Politics in Nineteenth Century Colombia," 154-156. Arboleda, *Diccionario biográfico y genealógico*, 193. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 100.

⁸ Campo, *Montoneras, deserciones e insubordinaciones*, 173, 206-208, 253. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 330.

hostility of *calderunos* toward their Liberal indigenous neighbors, whom they derogatorily called “*rojos*” (reds, the color associated with the Liberal party).⁹

Just like the Indians, Tierradentro’s fewer white, *mestizo*, and black settlers were well integrated into the party system. Tierradentro’s first black inhabitants had been sent as slaves by their Popayán masters to exploit the salt deposits around Pueblito (modern Belalcázar) in the eighteenth century. From this initial settlement, afro-descendants (known as *morenos*) spread following the banks of the El Salado Creek, and in the early twentieth century they also moved into Itaibe and Araujo, in southern Tierradentro.¹⁰ Most of these *morenos*, just like the great majority of the black population in Cauca, were loyal to the Liberal party.¹¹ In southern Tierradentro whites and *mestizos* concentrated around Inzá, El Pedregal, and Topa. Some of them descended from families that had been there since colonial times, but most had arrived with the cinchona bark boom of the 1870s.¹² In the twentieth century more whites and *mestizos* moved into Belalcázar (southern Tierradentro) and Mosoco (northwestern Tierradentro). White and *mestizo* settlers’ loyalties were more divided than those of *morenos*. While Inzá, El Pedregal and Topa became Conservative strongholds,¹³ the non-indigenous inhabitants of Belalcázar and Mosoco were mostly Liberals.¹⁴ Thus in Tierradentro partisan loyalties crossed ethno-racial lines, an element that some indigenous leaders were able to use to build a multi-ethnic political following, as I examine later.

⁹ Bernal Villa, “La fiesta de San Juan,” 191.

¹⁰ Sevilla, “Estudios antropológicos sobre Tierradentro,” 17-18.

¹¹ Sanders, *Contentious Republicans*, 43-55. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 104, 355. Axel Alejandro Rojas Martínez, *Si no fuera por los quince negros. Memoria colectiva de la gente negra de Tierradentro* (Cali: Editorial Universidad del Cauca, 2004), 69.

¹² González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 203.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 320, 349.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 319-320, 341, 347. Sevilla, “Estudios antropológicos sobre Tierradentro,” 14.

Geographically, the great majority of Tierradentro's Conservative votes concentrated in the Municipality of Inzá, where *godos* were numerous enough to consistently carry the elections until the early 1930s. Liberals were a very significant minority in Inzá, but the Municipality of Páez was where *rojos* truly dominated. Conservatives had but a few votes there.¹⁵

4.1.2 The Vincentians' Political Agenda: Conservatization

Besides the agenda that I examined in the previous chapter, the Vincentians undertook an additional task in Tierradentro: promoting Conservatism among the mostly Liberal local population.¹⁶ Unlike public health, moralization, urbanization, and economic transformation, this effort at changing the regions' political outlook was not one of the missionaries' official tasks, as it was not mentioned either in the Missions' Agreements or in the Concordat.¹⁷ From the existing evidence it remains unclear whether Conservatization was at any point a centralized and coordinated Vincentian policy towards Tierradentro, or rather the result of individual missionaries' political interests. Nonetheless, it was generalized and constant enough as to have constituted one of the missionaries' key activities in the region.

None of the existing histories of the Vincentians in Colombia openly addresses the topic of the priests' political sympathies or activism,¹⁸ but in all likelihood most members of the

¹⁵ See tables 5 to 8.

¹⁶ In a 1986 book Sevilla shortly noted this policy of Conservatization. Sevilla, *La pobreza de los excluidos*, 54.

¹⁷ The Montfort Missionaries in the Intendancy of Meta developed similar anti-Liberal proselytizing. Rausch, "Church-State Relations," 59-66.

¹⁸ However, the personal preferences of these histories' authors surface in the very few occasions that they mentioned Liberals and Conservatives, as it was usually to condemn the former and praise the latter. Amaya, "La Provincia Vicenciana de Colombia," 83, 95-96. Naranjo equated being conservative with being a Catholic. Naranjo, "Apuntes para una historia de la Congregación de la Misión en Colombia. Nátaga, Tierradentro," 65.

Congregation shared the anti-Liberal views that characterized the bulk of the foreign and national Catholic clergy in Colombia during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹⁹

In Colombia, the Catholic Church developed tight connections with the Conservative party not only because of the former's anti-Liberal leanings, but also as a result of the stellar role that the (Conservative) Regeneration had granted the Church as its partner in running the country. Successive Conservative administrations continued to consolidate this alliance during the first three decades of the twentieth century. This was precisely the political context of the Missions' Agreement that brought the Vincentians into Tierradentro.

Nevertheless, the Colombian Church's position towards both Liberalism and the priests' political activism was not monolithic, not even among its higher ranks. While some sectors advocated reconciliation with Catholic Liberals (although remaining very skeptic about Liberal ideas), others claimed that Liberalism and Catholicism were incompatible. Moreover, controversy arose many a time over whether priests should openly participate in politics or rather maintain neutrality. Although from 1914 onward the most visible sector of the ecclesiastical hierarchy became actively involved with the Conservative party, to the degree of playing a central role in selecting its presidential candidates, dissenting voices persisted.²⁰ Political activism was even more controversial in the case of priests belonging to religious orders, since the great majority of these organizations were foreign, as was a significant portion of their

¹⁹ Ricardo Arias, *El episcopado colombiano. Intransigencia y laicidad (1850-2000)* (Bogotá: Ediciones Uniandes, Instituto Colombiano de Antropología e Historia, 2003).

²⁰ Ibid., 53-185. Safford and Palacios, *Colombia: Fragmented Land*, 247, 286. Palacios, *Between Legitimacy and Violence*, 71-74.

personnel.²¹ Different sectors claimed that such priests had no right to participate in national politics.²²

The controversial character of priests' involvement in politics, together with the fact that Conservatization was not part of their official mandate, could explain why the Vincentians working in Tierradentro hardly ever mentioned any political activism on their part in the periodical reports that they submitted to the Colombian authorities. Indeed, these priests made occasional assertions that they did not meddle with politics.²³ But in fact, Tierradentro's missionaries, both Colombian and foreign, went beyond personally sympathizing with the Conservative party to actively favor its interests. For instance, there is fragmentary evidence that the Vincentians preferred to appoint individuals with Conservative credentials as teachers in the public schools they ran.²⁴

Moreover, some missionaries tried different ways to convince their mostly Liberal flock to switch to the Conservative camp. They could use mass as a platform to oppose Liberalism and favor Conservatism. For example, in 1905 the Costa Rican missionary Rojas chastised the

²¹ I have found no detailed study on the national origin of the priests and nuns belonging to these orders. However, the fragmentary statistics presented in a 1934 collection of reports about frontier missions suggests that foreigners still constituted the majority of the personnel. Consejo Nacional de la Obra de la Propagación de la Fe, *La obra de las misiones católicas en Colombia* (Bogotá: Imprenta de la Luz, 1934). Colombian orders started to appear in the mid-1910s, but they remained a small minority. Two of them were the famous female congregation known as *Misioneras de la Madre Laura* (Missionaries of Mother Laura) founded in 1914, and the first male Colombian missionary institute called *Seminario Javeriano de Yarumal*, founded in 1927. Triana, *Legislación indígena nacional*, 42. Gálvez, *Por obligación de conciencia*, 91-93, 118-121.

²² "La intervención del clero extranjero en la política." *El Espectador*, 25 julio 1916, p. 1. Liévano, Roberto "Las Misiones." *El Espectador*, 5 noviembre 1921, p. 3. "El clero extranjero." *El Espectador*, 24 julio 1922, p. 3.

²³ Two examples: ACM/CG, Boîte 276, Province Colombie, Préfecture Apostolique de Tierradentro, 1916-1946 (Carta de Emile Larquère al Superior General. Inzá, 4 mayo 1938). González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 189.

²⁴ In 1937 Larquère explained to another priest that he had not appointed the sister of Ricaurte Hurtado as a teacher because they were a Liberal family. API, Correspondencia de Monseñor Emilio Larquère. (Carta de Monseñor Larquère al sacerdote Péhau, 1937).

inhabitants of Cohetando for following the Liberal party.²⁵ Apparently, Rojas' stance did not lead to confrontations with the local inhabitants. However, this strategy could be very controversial. In 1922, during a very competitive Presidential campaign,²⁶ the newly-arrived Colombian priest Marco Tulio Botero used his preaching during mass to campaign for the Conservative candidate. The local inhabitants showed their rejection to this activism in several ways, such as cutting the mane of the priest's horse after one of his politically-oriented sermons, and vacating a public square where they had gathered to hear his mass in another occasion. In the end, the general reaction was so negative that Botero had to leave Tierradentro only a few months after arriving.²⁷

Other priests were more cautious, at least on the surface. The Colombian David González, for example, claimed that he never mentioned politics in his preaching, or even in his conversations with the locals.²⁸ It might be true that he was more cautious about the content of his sermons, but he did get involved in politics. González himself recounted how in 1925 he convinced the very few Conservatives from the mostly Liberal *parcialidad* of Avirama to vote, together with a few more Conservatives that he had rallied from other areas of Tierradentro. This infuriated the Liberals, one of whom whipped the *aviramas* when they were heading back to their homes. These actions outraged the entire community of Avirama, which then converted in mass to the Conservative party.²⁹

²⁵ Many decades after Rojas, in the 1980s, Naranjo also criticized people in Cohetando for being Liberals. Naranjo, "Apuntes para una historia de la Congregación de la Misión en Colombia. Nátaga, Tierradentro," 41, 57. González also made such criticisms. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 287.

²⁶ Eduardo Posada Carbó, "Limits of Power: Elections Under the Conservative Hegemony in Colombia, 1886-1930," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 77, no. 2 (1997): 263-264.

²⁷ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 225.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 189.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 183-184, 332.

According to one priest, in the 1920s some local Liberals were concerned that the missionaries' influence was having very real effects in the balance of local political forces. In 1922 the French priest Louis Tramecourt sent a note to the (Conservative) Minister of Education to defend the Vincentians' management of public education against some criticisms. Tramecourt argued that these accusations responded in reality to the local Liberals' perception that the missionaries were to blame for their party's defeat in the presidential elections in the municipality of Inzá, as well as for the increase of Conservative voters in the municipality of Páez.³⁰ Interestingly, in this missive the priest did not deny the accusations.

From the 1930s to the 1950s tensions in Colombia between the Church and the Liberal party heightened, first in the context of the Liberals' return to political power (from 1930 to 1946), and afterwards because of the Conservative administrations' efforts to suppress their political opponents and reverse some of the reforms the Liberals had put in place to reduce the Church's power in the public sphere.

During those years Liberal politicians from Tierradentro and beyond continuously accused the missionaries not only of sporting anti-Liberal attitudes, but of acting on them.³¹ In 1936 a Caucan Liberal newspaper accused French Vincentian André Dufranc of advancing the cause of Conservatism in Tierradentro, even though he was a foreigner.³² That same year a government official accused the Vincentians of denying acceptance in the hospital they ran to a

³⁰ AGN/AA2/MIP, legajo 5, carpeta 3, f. 132. The 1922 elections were very competitive. Posada, "Limits of Power," 263-264.

³¹ API, Correspondencia de Monseñor Emilio Larquère. (Carta de Monseñor Larquère al sacerdote Péhau, 1937). ("Circular de la Junta Liberal de Inzá." Inzá, 25 abril 1936) (Copia de un telegrama de Ricaurte Hurtado, Alcalde de Inzá al Gobernador de Popayán, s.f.). API, Untitled Folder. (Nota de Enrique Acero Primentel, Secretario General del Ministerio de Gobierno a Monseñor Larquère. Bogotá, 22 octubre 1945). (Nota del Encargado de Negocios de la Nunciatura Apostólica a Monseñor Larquère. Bogotá, 26 octubre 1945).

³² "De Inzá" *El Cauca*, 5 mayo 1933, pp. 2, 4.

local because he rejected their request to abjure Liberalism.³³ In 1937 the *Junta Liberal* (Liberal Board) of Inzá accused the Catholic Action group that the Vincentians had organized in Tierradentro of supporting the Conservative party and opposing the Liberal government.³⁴ That same year Inzá's Liberal municipal mayor accused the missionaries of opposing the Liberal government.³⁵ In 1945 Inzá's Liberal municipal mayor and other locals accused the priest Jesús María Carmona of attacking both Liberalism and the government in meetings and in his sermons, and of being a Conservative leader (implying that he gathered votes for that party).³⁶

While the missionaries did not hide their Conservative sympathies, they consistently denied that they were actively engaging in politics or attacking the local Liberals.³⁷ However, there is evidence that, at least on some occasions, the missionaries openly adopted a harshly anti-Liberal stance. In 1938 Tierradentro's French Apostolic Prefect Emile Larquère sent a letter to the Congregation's Superior General where he explained, among other things, the cause for the marked drop in confessions and communions that his last reports had shown. The Prefect explained that this responded to a "serious problem of conscience" facing the missionaries. They, Larquère claimed, could not administer these sacraments to their Liberal parishioners, who amounted to three quarters of their flock. The reason was that right after the ceremony these

³³ "Impresiones de Tierradentro por Roberto Liévano, enviado especial del Mtrio. De Industrias" *El Cauca*, 15 mayo 1936, p. 8. API, Correspondencia de Monseñor Emilio Larquère. (Expediente para desmentir acusaciones hechas por el Sr. Liévano sobre abusos hacia liberales por David González. 5 junio 1936).

³⁴ API, Correspondencia de Monseñor Emilio Larquère. (Carta de Monseñor Larquère al sacerdote Péhau, 1937). ("Circular de la Junta Liberal de Inzá." Inzá, 25 abril 1936)

³⁵ API, Correspondencia de Monseñor Emilio Larquère. (Copia de un telegrama de Ricaurte Hurtado, Alcalde de Inzá al Gobernador de Popayán, s.f.)

³⁶ API, Untitled Folder. (Nota de Enrique Acero Primentel, Secretario General del Ministerio de Ministerio de Gobierno a Monseñor Larquère. Bogotá, 22 octubre 1945). (Nota del Encargado de Negocios de la Nunciatura Apostólica a Monseñor Larquère. Bogotá, 26 octubre 1945).

³⁷ API, Correspondencia de Monseñor Emilio Larquère. (Expediente para desmentir acusaciones hechas por el Sr. Liévano sobre abusos hacia liberales por David González. 5 junio 1936). API, Untitled Folder. (Carta del Prefecto Apostólico de Tierradentro al Juez Municipal del Distrito de Inzá. Inzá, 29 mayo 1936) (Declaración de Eustorgio Caldón ante el Juzgado Municipal de Inzá. Inzá, 30 mayo 1936) (Memorial de varios vecinos al Nuncio Apostólico, protestando por cargos contra el sacerdote Cardona. Inzá, 4 noviembre 1945). "Los lazaristas en Tierradentro" *El Cauca*, 12 junio 1936, p. 4. "Lo que dice el Prefecto Apostólico de Tierradentro" *El Cauca*, 12 junio 1936, p. 6.

parishioners would go straight to the voting polls to elect the “enemies of the Church,” that is, Liberal politicians who demanded that the government end all subsidies for the Catholic missions and who favored “laws that go against the Church, [as well as] the atheistic Constitution, the civil marriage, divorce.” Larquère praised the solution that the Bishop of neighboring Garzón had implemented: denying absolution to his Liberal parishioners, males and females, unless they signed a profession of faith including a promise to abandon Liberalism. From the letter it is unclear whether Larquère had put in place that same measure in Tierradentro, but it is clear that he and the other priests were limiting the Liberals’ access to confession and communion. After this long reflection Larquère finished his missive with the surprising assertion that “I and my missionaries do not get involved in politics.”³⁸

Larquère’s reflections suggest that in some situations the Vincentians equated the defense of the Church with opposing the Liberal party, thus blurring in practice the boundaries between politics and religion. As David González saw it, the Indians who voted in 1949 for the Conservative candidate were voting “for God and the fatherland.”³⁹ These Vincentians were aligning themselves with the most extreme faction of the Colombian church at the time, a faction whose leaders claimed that Liberalism was inherently sinful and encouraged parish clergy to threaten Liberal followers with damnation.⁴⁰

Perhaps we should not be surprised, then, that the missionaries actively supported the brutal repression against the Liberals unleashed in Tierradentro beginning in the late 1940s,

³⁸ “grave problema de conciencia,” “enemigos de la Iglesia,” “leyes que van contra la Iglesia, la Constitución atea, el matrimonio civil, el divorcio...” “Yo y mis misioneros no nos mezclamos en política...” ACM/CG, Boîte 276, Province Colombie, Préfecture Apostolique de Tierradentro, 1916-1946 (Carta de Emile Larquère al Superior General. Inzá, 4 mayo 1938).

³⁹ “por Dios y la patria.” González, *Los paces, o, genocidio*, 333.

⁴⁰ Christopher Abel, “Protestant Missions in a Catholic State: Colombia in the 1940s and 1950s,” in *Christian Missionaries and the State in the Third World*, ed. Holger Bernt Hansen and Michael Twaddle (Oxford and Athens: James Currey and Ohio University Press, 2002), 272, 277.

when Conservatives regained the country's presidency.⁴¹ In 2003 an elderly *moreno* from El Salado remembered that the Vincentian Felipe Arévalo presided over a ceremony, which the *moreno* called the “*protesta*” (protest) in which followers of the Liberal party kneeled in front of an image of Christ and promised to stop being Liberal and turn into Conservative.⁴² This memory captures the missionaries' part in the forced Conservatization that Conservative authorities imposed on a great number of local Liberals, sometimes by brutal means, during these troubled years.⁴³

4.2 ELECTIONS IN TIERRADENTRO

Missionary David González, who lived in Tierradentro from the 1920s to the 1950s, left a testimony of the intensity of electoral politics in Tierradentro. In a book probably written in the 1950s, he compared election time in the municipality of Páez to “simulated battles” where outsiders agitated the indigenous masses, who in turn marched in the morning of Election Day to the sounds of drums behind red flags, hailing the Liberal Party and booing the “*godos*” (Conservatives).⁴⁴

The book in which González included this passage is one of the most widely used sources for Tierradentro's history. However, his several mentions of the Indians' electoral participation have failed to prompt any research on the topic. In fact, Colombian Indians' involvement in electoral politics has been largely overlooked in the academic literature. This omission is hardly

⁴¹ Rappaport, “Las misiones protestantes y la resistencia,” 114-115.

⁴² Rojas, *Si no fuera por los quince negros*, 72.

⁴³ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 344. Not all missionary participated. David González, for example, criticized the municipal authorities' brutality.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 331.

surprising; as Posada Carbó has stressed, Colombian historiography more broadly has neglected the study of democratic institutions and actors, focusing instead on political violence. This “defeatist interpretation,” as Posada Carbó called it, has translated into the undervaluation of the role that democratic practices have played in Colombian political history.⁴⁵

In the last two decades Posada Carbó has led a serious revision, arguing that electoral practices cannot be so easily dismissed, especially because elections have been practiced almost continually since Colombia’s independence. Furthermore, he convincingly asserts that while fraud, manipulation and coercion did exist, elections were more competitive and inclusive than previously assumed and, moreover, had as central a role in the struggle for power as did armed conflict.⁴⁶

Given how recent this scholarly turn is, it is not surprising that historical research on indigenous electoral participation in Colombia remains almost inexistent. While a systematic analysis of the topic for indigenous groups besides the Nasa is beyond the scope of my dissertation, there is evidence that some were actively involved. Thus, by 1922 the Sáliva Indians from Casanare had been voting for some time, as had been Indians from Caquetá by 1932.⁴⁷ Only future research will establish whether electoral participation was common among Colombia’s multiple indigenous groups, and under what conditions it occurred. What is clear is that while electoral laws changed significantly between 1853 and 1936, they never explicitly excluded the Indians from the electorate.

⁴⁵ Eduardo Posada Carbó, *La nación soñada: violencia, liberalismo y democracia en Colombia* (Bogotá: Grupo Editorial Norma, 2006), 47-93, 149-187.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 149-187.

⁴⁷ In 1922 the Mayor of Orocué asked the Minister of Government whether the Sáliva Indians could vote like they had done in earlier elections. AGN/MG/S4/E, vol. 16, f. 559. In 1932 the Chief of the Amazonas Frontier told the Apostolic Prefect of Caquetá that “most of the Indians know how to read and write, that many have abandoned the cusma and that many are forced to vote in the polls during time of elections...” Bonilla, *Siervos de dios y amos de indios*, 276. AGN/MG/S4/E, vol. 12, f. 155v.

4.2.1 Electoral Laws and Indigenous Citizens

Between 1853 and 1886 there were no legal barriers to indigenous communities' participation in elections, at least in the Gran Cauca. Colombia's 1853 Constitution had established universal male suffrage, and after the sovereign states were created (and given the ability by the 1863 Constitution to establish their own voting policies), Cauca's constitutions continued to foster universal male voting.⁴⁸

In contrast, the centralist Constitution of 1886 established a more restrictive two-tier system. Universal male suffrage applied in the local elections for municipal councilors (at the district level) and *diputados* (who sat in the departmental assemblies). But literacy and property requirements limited participation in elections for representatives to the lower chamber (known as *representantes*), and for the qualified electors who, in turn, voted for the President until 1910. (The departmental *diputados* elected the Senators).⁴⁹

Recently, Posada Carbó has challenged the dominant interpretation that the 1886 electoral reforms effectively curbed popular participation, countering that popular sectors continued to engage actively in two ways. First, universal male suffrage was still in place for local elections of municipal councilors and departmental *diputados*. These local contests were especially important for political parties in opposition, which sometimes abstained from entering presidential elections but consistently participated in the local ones. After all, local elected officials had significant influence on the conformation of electoral juries. Second, restrictions for national elections not only were overlooked on occasion, but they also were slowly overcome as

⁴⁸ Alonso Valencia Llano, "La Experiencia Federal en el Estado Soberano del Cauca," *Historia y Espacio*, no. 30 (2008): 9.

⁴⁹ Posada, "Limits of Power," 257. Eduardo Posada Carbó, "Fraude al sufragio: la reforma electoral en Colombia, 1830-1930," in *Legitimidad, representación y alternancia en España y América Latina: las reformas electorales (1880-1930)*, ed. Carlos Malamud (México D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2000), 217-218.

median incomes increased and the Colombian peso depreciated with the passing of time. As a result, Colombian elections maintained a significant level of popular participation even after 1886. According to Posada Carbó, this sustained participation explains why the broadening of the franchise did not become a significant issue of debate up until the 1930s.⁵⁰

Additional reforms were passed in 1910 and 1936. In 1910 the Colombian Congress established direct presidential elections, reduced income and property requirements for qualified electors, and removed the executive's right to appoint electoral juries.⁵¹ In 1936 universal male suffrage for elections across the board was re-established.⁵² Truly universal suffrage was put in place only in 1957, when women had their right to vote recognized. During all these decades Tierradentro Indians participated enthusiastically in the electoral contests.

4.2.2 Elections in Tierradentro

It is not clear when Tierradentro Indians started to vote. The Guambiano Indians, neighbors to the Nasa of the western slopes, were voting as early as the 1850s.⁵³ The earliest reference that I have found of Nasa Indians participating in elections involves those of the western slopes, specifically the Pitayó Indians, who in 1869 were being encouraged by a government official to vote in the Presidential elections.⁵⁴ It is possible that at least some Tierradentro Indians voted during these years, even though there were no stable government officials in the area before the 1880s, since they could have easily crossed the cordillera into Silvia or another western slope

⁵⁰ Posada, "Limits of Power," 258-259. Posada, "Fraude al sufragio," 217-218, 227-228.

⁵¹ Posada, "Limits of Power," 257.

⁵² Bushnell, *The Making of Modern Colombia*, 189-190. According to Posada Carbó, these reforms' goal was not to expand the electorate, but to combat fraud. Posada, "Fraude al sufragio," 218. Posada, *La nación soñada*, 157.

⁵³ Sanders, "Pertener a la gran familia granadina," 32.

⁵⁴ Cross, *Report on the Collecting of Seeds*, 15, 35-36.

village to cast their votes. By the time Tierradentro's municipality was created in 1886, elections were being held in the area, although it is unclear how broad participation was.⁵⁵ González claimed that in Tierradentro the 1910 electoral reforms had considerably increased the Indians' participation.⁵⁶

González, in the derogatory tone that he assumed whenever writing about the Indians, attributed the intense electioneering among the Nasa not to their ability to derive any practical benefit from it (since politicians never kept political campaign promises), but to the fact that they shared the Colombian blood, which "lives out of political enthusiasm." In the specific case of Calderas, he explained that the Indians' fervor responded to their identification with the sheer barbarity and aggressiveness of politics.⁵⁷ Hence for González, indigenous voters were in the grip of irrational passions.

But González himself reported episodes showing that the Indians were more educated voters than he was willing to concede. For example, he noted that *calderunos* used their knowledge of Spanish not to interact with whites (which they were not interested in doing) but to communicate with Inzá's Conservative "chiefs," who provided them with "political flyers" that they "read, and even study."⁵⁸ Additionally, in the 1950s Bernal Villa explained that *calderunos*' loyalty was not unconditional, for they would not vote if Inzá's Conservative chiefs did not give them first their "ration" of meat, *chicha*, and *aguardiente*. "Ration and vote form an indissoluble unity" explained Bernal Villa.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ The Mayor reported in 1888 that "suspicious men" were buying votes in the Pueblito taverns (and also offering to buy any guns available). ACC/AM, Paq. 177, Legajo 3, s.n.f. (Inzá, 8 mayo 1888). In 1897 Cauca's governor had to send a group of police officers to maintain order during the elections. ACC/AM, paq. 243, legajo 20, s.n.f. (7 diciembre 1897).

⁵⁶ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 331.

⁵⁷ "vive del entusiasmo político." González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 131, 175.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 176.

⁵⁹ Bernal, "La fiesta de San Juan en Calderas," 191.

Calderas's loyalty to the Conservative party brought further advantages besides immediate material rewards. For one, partisan ties to higher authorities were probably one of the main factors in their ability to prevent government interference in their *resguardo*. In 1925 González explained that collecting taxes in Calderas took a great deal of courage and the joint action of several tax collectors. He also explained that not many months before his writing, the authorities had decided to capture an Indian from Calderas who had failed to pay his taxes, but when they arrived at the village almost two hundred Indians confronted them with machetes in hand.⁶⁰ Just six years later the French traveler Wavrin witnessed another such clash between fiscal agents and Calderas's Indians, when a tax collector and two police officers tried to visit Calderas and were forced to return to Inzá empty handed and scared, after the Indians had confronted them on the outskirts of their village, armed with axes and other weapons.⁶¹ There are no reports that the Indians suffered any repercussions for these actions. González strongly criticized what he saw as the *calderunos*' improper sense of entitlement, which led them to believe that they "had a right to everything," but had no obligation to pay any slaughter taxes or respect the state's monopoly on *aguardiente* by abstaining from distilling it.⁶²

It is very likely that the authorities (who were overwhelmingly Conservative until the 1930s) accepted Calderas's prerogatives because it was such an important Conservative stronghold. As I explain in the following section, when the Liberals came to power nationally in 1930 they attempted to regain control over Calderas, but they were largely unsuccessful. Cauca's Liberal governor in 1944 expressed his frustration by marking Calderas as one of the two Tierradentro *resguardos* that should be divided first, because of its "manifest resistance to the

⁶⁰ González, "Misión de Tierradentro," 218.

⁶¹ Marquis de Wavrin, *Chez les Indiens de Colombie* (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1988), 132.

⁶² González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 176.

departmental authorities.”⁶³ This measure, however, was never put into effect (chapter 5), and Calderas retained its prerogatives into the 1950s.⁶⁴

The Conservative *calderunos* were not the only ones that could maneuver in the arena of party alliances. According to González, in the late 1920s Mosoco’s local government official, supported by Belalcázar’s authorities, promised the Indians that if they switched to the Conservative party, Páez’s Municipal Council would not only nullify the agreement to create a non-indigenous settlement zone inside their *resguardo*, but also would stop the division of the *resguardo*. Department-level officials became involved and, enticed by the idea of bringing into the Conservative camp such a considerable number of voters, they sent an engineer and a lawyer to stop the Municipal Council from passing the settlement area agreement. The council yielded to the pressure to some degree, and the area was reduced from sixty to twenty five hectares. The Indians celebrated and hailed the Conservative party, and the politicians left triumphant. However, González concluded in a bitter tone, when the elections came, Mosoco Indians voted again for the Liberal party.⁶⁵

While we have less information about other cases, it is clear that *calderunos* and *mosoqueños* were not the only Indians who engaged in this type of political bargaining. In 1936 a newspaper reported that many Indians in Mosoco but also in Wila were threatening to abstain from voting if they were not exempted from taxes.⁶⁶ We do not know the outcome of this episode, but it is clear that the Indians considered their votes valuable enough for negotiation.

⁶³ Santacruz, “Proceso de extinción de las parcialidades,” 115. AGN/MI/AI, Caja 185, Carpeta 1553, ff. 114-116.

⁶⁴ In 1953 Bernal Villa confirmed that tax collectors risked their lives if they tried to reach that *parcialidad*. Bernal, “La fiesta de San Juan en Calderas,” 198.

⁶⁵ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 128-129.

⁶⁶ “De Tierradentro” *Occidente Colombiano*, 6 septiembre 1936, p. 1, 2, 6.

Tierradentro's indigenous votes were in fact important in the local and national arena. González explained that politicians from Popayán “never forget that Tierradentro is a great electoral front, the Indians receive visits from the governors, the candidates for Congress and the Assembly...”⁶⁷ As noted above, recent studies have found that Colombia's elections were much more competitive than previously thought, and not even a candidate backed by the government had a safe ticket to victory.⁶⁸ In this contested environment the votes from Tierradentro could make a great difference. According to González, those votes were especially important for the Liberal party because, coupled with those from other Liberal areas in Cauca (Santander, Buenos Aires, Puerto Tejada, and Corinto) they could ensure the Liberals' triumph in the election of Cauca's *diputados* and national representatives.⁶⁹ This intense electioneering opened roads for some indigenous leaders to consolidate political power, just like civil wars had done for a previous generation.

4.2.3 José Pío Collo: a Nasa Liberal *Caudillo*

In April of 1938 Cauca's Governor sent two telegrams to the Mayor of Páez asking him to inform the Indian José Pío Collo that he had been elected as *diputado* to Cauca's *Asamblea Departamental*. Collo, who had run for the electoral circuit of Silvia not as the main candidate but as the second substitute, had to take the position because the primary candidate had excused himself from serving, and the first substitute had recently died.⁷⁰ In this way José Pío Collo became one of the first Indians in Cauca (and perhaps the first one) to occupy an elected position

⁶⁷ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 131-132.

⁶⁸ Posada, “Limits of Power,” 262.

⁶⁹ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 331.

⁷⁰ AGC, Telegramas desde noviembre 25 1937 a julio 27 1938, ff. 327, 347, 354. *Anales de la Asamblea [del Cauca]*, 10 mayo and 12 mayo 1938. “El diputado indígena”, *El Liberal*, 4 mayo 1938, 3.

at such a high level. It is therefore surprising that in the literature on Tierradentro he has received little more than passing mentions, and those only for his role in quelling the 1910s uprising known as the *Quintinada*. Although Collo's ascent to Cauca's assembly was accidental to a degree (after all, he was the second substitute), it also reflected the outstanding political network that he had been building within the municipality of Páez at least since the Thousand Days War. José Pío Collo was not only a central protagonist of many key events in the region, but he is a prime example of how indigenous leaders used partisan loyalties to gain political influence and connect with the larger Colombian society.

The earliest mentions that I have found of Pío Collo date to his participation in the Thousand Days War (1899-1903) as a Liberal colonel.⁷¹ Unlike Francisco Guainás, who stood out during this conflict due to his rank as General and his command of an indigenous battalion, there are no hints that Collo's performance was especially notable, and his rank did not distinguish him from the several other Nasa lieutenants, captains, colonels, and commanders.⁷² Instead, Pío Collo would distinguish himself for the political career that he created once the war was over.

Pío Collo's clout was rooted in his own *parcialidad*, Belalcázar. This *parcialidad* had gained some prominence in 1907, when its village, known as Pueblito, was renamed Belalcázar and became the capital of the newly-erected Municipality of Páez.⁷³ Collo was governor of the *cabildo* in 1904,⁷⁴ and he continued to cultivate close connections with this council after his term

⁷¹ Campo, *Montoneras, deserciones e insubordinaciones*, 178, 250.

⁷² Ibid., 171-180, 220, 250. The written record left behind by many of these Nasa military *caudillos* is very small, while there exists a wealth of information in primary sources about Collo.

⁷³ "Decreto Presidencial 1510 del 13 de diciembre de 1907" *Diario Oficial* 20 diciembre 1907.

⁷⁴ "Gobernadores del resguardo de Belalcázar" *El Enjambre* 10, 9 agosto 2008, p. 14. (Belalcázar, Cauca) <http://gcollo.comunidadcoomeva.com/blog/uploads/EL-ENJAMBRE-10.pdf>

was over.⁷⁵ But Collo was not like other typical *cabildo* members: his influence extended well beyond his own *parcialidad*.

This indigenous leader had connections with other Nasa *parcialidades* both in Tierradentro and across the cordillera. Like other *caciques* without *cacicazgo*, including the Guainás dynasty, Collo spoke Spanish and was literate. This probably helped in building relations with other *parcialidades*, since he could be of service in legal procedures. For example, in 1911 the *resguardo* titles of Avirama, Togoima, Belalcázar and San José were notarized at Collo's request,⁷⁶ as were additional documents related to the *resguardo* of Avirama in 1914.⁷⁷

Collo's relationship with other indigenous *parcialidades* was not limited to furthering their legal interests. In 1932 Indians from Tálaga and Cohetando supported an uprising that he led,⁷⁸ as did Indians of Belalcázar, Avirama, and Tóez in a 1950 rebellion.⁷⁹ Collo also had some influence over Nasa *resguardos* on the western slopes. For instance, Indians from Pitayó and Tacueyó joined him in the 1950 rebellion as well.⁸⁰ I have no information on how exactly he built these linkages. However, it is possible that in the case of some *resguardos* in Tierradentro he used the historical connections between them. For example, Avirama and Togoima, just like Collo's Belalcázar, had formed part of the colonial *resguardo* of Togoima. In other cases, such

⁷⁵ For example, in 1910 he defended the authority of Belalcázar's *cabildo* to adjudicate its *resguardo* plots without interference from the Vicentian missionaries. ACC/AM, paquete 371, legajo 44, s.n.f. (Inzá, 14 octubre 1910). ACC/AM, paq. 359, legajo 44, s.n.f. (Belalcázar, 24 octubre 1910). In 1913 this *cabildo* granted him a three-year contract to exploit the salt deposits of the river Negro de Narváez, in 1920 he represented the same *cabildo* in the process of handing over Belalcázar's settlement area to the municipality. ANI/P 1913, escritura 26, ff. 62-65. ANI/P 1920, escritura 51, ff. 210-213v. In 1923 Collo helped Belalcázar's indigenous council in collecting testimonies to defend the *parcialidad*'s land rights against the local *morenos*' claims. Collo also commanded José V. Rengifo to formalize some documents related with this conflict in 1940. ACC/NS, 1940, vol. 2, escritura 66, ff. 712v-720v, 722-722v.

⁷⁶ ACC/NS, 1911, vol. 1, escritura 61, ff. 238v-242v. ACC/NS, 1911, vol. 1, escritura 62, ff. 242-245v.

⁷⁷ ACC/NS, 1914, vol. 1, escritura 48, f. 345v-348v.

⁷⁸ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 314-322.

⁷⁹ People from Cohetando also involved in this rebellion, and, according to González, were harshly punished. Ibid., 122, 154.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 348.

as San José, Tálaga, Cohetando, and Tóez (in Tierradentro), and Pitayó and Tacueyó (western slopes), Collo probably appealed to their shared allegiance to the Liberal party.⁸¹ In 1932 Cauca's Governor explained in a telegram to the Ministry of Government that Collo exercised a "cacicazgo among Indians from some regions of Tierradentro."⁸² It is unlikely that the governor used the word *cacicazgo* here to liken Collo to colonial indigenous *caciques*, but rather to signal his role as an influential political boss (a more common use of the word *cacique* in Colombia). It is nonetheless significant that the governor recognized Collo's influence.

Collo's alliances transcended the indigenous communities to include *morenos*. For example, in 1932 Collo rallied support for his uprising not only from Indians but also from *morenos* from El Salado and Símbola.⁸³ According to González, *morenos* and *mestizos* comprised a significant number of Collo's followers in the 1950 rebellion.⁸⁴ In a 2002 interview a *moreno* from El Salado remembered that Pío Collo and the *moreno* leader Andrés Lucumí collaborated with each other.⁸⁵ I have been unable to find details on how this alliance formed, but it seems likely that party loyalty played a central role, since Tierradentro's black population had been traditionally Liberal.⁸⁶

Liberal partisanship was also a key element in Collo's clientelistic connections with white politicians in Tierradentro and beyond. Thus Collo allied on several occasions with Efraín Liévano, who the Vincentian missionaries characterized as the "main red *gamonal*" in

⁸¹ Ibid., 133-134. Campo, *Montoneras, deserciones e insubordinaciones*, 168, 184-185, 207-208.

⁸² AGN/MG/S1, vol. 1024, f. 449.

⁸³ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 314-322.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 122, 154.

⁸⁵ Rojas, *Si no fuera por los quince negros*, 55-56.

⁸⁶ This does not mean that Collo always sided with the *morenos*. For example, in 1923 Collo was opposing their claims that they possessed legal titles to their lands in the Belalcázar area. ACC/NS, 1940, vol. 2, escritura 66, ff. 712v-720v, 722-722v. See also Rojas, *Si no fuera por los quince negros*, 55-56. This conflict continued still in the late 1940s. BLAA/LRM, MSS1344, 12.

Tierradentro.⁸⁷ In the 1930s (and probably even before) Collo also had close relationships with Liberal leaders in Popayán. In 1932 González claimed that Collo had visited Cauca's Liberal Governor and other Liberal leaders in Popayán.⁸⁸

Although Collo's networks extended beyond the municipality of Páez to the rest of Tierradentro and the western slopes, his main area of action was the municipality of Páez.⁸⁹ There he held an exceptional number of public positions. In 1909 Collo was substitute municipal councilor;⁹⁰ in 1910 the mayor's second substitute,⁹¹ later the mayor,⁹² and a slaughter and *aguardiente* tax collector.⁹³ In 1930 he was a member of Páez's electoral jury,⁹⁴ in 1933 Vicepresident of the Municipal Council,⁹⁵ and in 1934 the town hall's clerk⁹⁶ as well as member of the electoral jury.⁹⁷

A Liberal Indian such as Collo was able to occupy all these offices even when Conservatives held power at the national level (1876-1930) because, as I already pointed out, Liberals had dominated local politics in the Municipality of Páez continuously since its creation in 1907. Not surprisingly, Collo's clout increased when Liberals regained national power during the Liberal Republic (1930-1946). For example, in 1933 Belalcázar's telegraphist was worried that Collo's disfavor was going to cost the telegraphist his position.⁹⁸ One missionary reported

⁸⁷ ACM/CG, Caja 497, Maison Tierradentro (Missions), 1905-1912, s.n.f. (Pueblito, 13 noviembre 1905). AGN/MG/S4/V, vol. 39, ff. 197-197v. ACC/AM, paquete 371, legajo 44, s.n.f. (Inzá, 14 octubre 1910).

⁸⁸ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 319.

⁸⁹ I have found no indication that Collo had any direct influence over the other municipality of Tierradentro, Inzá.

⁹⁰ ACC/AM, paq. 366, legajo 58, s.n.f.

⁹¹ ACC/AM, paq. 366, legajo 58, s.n.f. (Silvia, 18 diciembre 1909).

⁹² ACC/AM, paq. 359, legajo 44, s.n.f. (Belalcázar, 24 octubre 1910)

⁹³ ACC/AM, paq. 366, legajo 55, s.n.f. (Popayán, 27 julio 1909). ACC/AM, paq. 366, legajo 55, s.n.f. (Belalcázar, 8 noviembre 1909).

⁹⁴ AGN/MG/S4/E, vol. 28, ff. 196-196v.

⁹⁵ AGC, Copiador de Oficios de la Secretaría de Gobierno # 2503 a 3401, de 1933 (25 septiembre-22 diciembre), f. 240.

⁹⁶ AGC, Copiador de Telegramas de la Secretaría de Gobierno del año 1934, f. 45

⁹⁷ AGN/MG/S4/E, vol. 59, f. 508.

⁹⁸ AGC, Copiador de Oficios de la Gobernación del Departamento del Cauca de los años 1933, f. 353

that in 1932 the mayor of Páez had informed him that Cauca's governor had ordered the mayor to "act in everything in accordance with the Colonel [Collo]."99

This exceptional political career, together with the Liberal party's control of the national government in the 1930s, explains Collo's inclusion in the 1938 list of *diputado* candidates that I mentioned at the beginning of this section. However, once his *diputado* term was over Collo never again occupied a departmental or national office. Thus his taking office in 1938 (having been listed as second substitute) appears more a happenstance than a sustained progression of his political career from the municipal to the departmental level. Collo's influence in the ensuing years remained bounded to the Municipality of Páez.

This Nasa leader used Liberalism as more than just a tool to build political power. Collo did not follow on the steps of the Guainás dynasty, which used partisanship (Conservative in their case) as a way to link with the non-indigenous world, but followed other criteria to build internal alliances and build their regional power base, as I explained in chapter 2. Collo's alliances outside, but also inside the indigenous world, seem to have been based primarily on shared Liberal affiliation. Moreover, all evidence suggests that he embraced not only the Liberal idiom, but also its political agenda.

In fact, Collo was involved in some of the most important episodes in Tierradentro's twentieth-century political history, opportunities that he seems to have used to further the Liberal party's agenda and his own influence by attacking some of the most conspicuous local representatives of the Conservative party: the Vincentian missionaries, the *parcialidad* of Calderas, and a brutally repressive Conservative municipal mayor. Additionally, in 1916-1917 Collo was essential in quelling the indigenous rebellion known as the *Quintinada*. This rebellion,

⁹⁹ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 319.

and especially the political agenda of its leader Manuel Quintín Lame, is the subject of the next section. Here I want to stress that while the motives for Collo's opposition to Quintín Lame remain unclear,¹⁰⁰ the *Quintinada* was an open challenge to the partisan model in which Collo was so intensely invested and, moreover, Quintín Lame was a self-identified Conservative.

As I already mentioned, the 1930 victory of the Liberal party in the Presidential elections boosted Collo's influence. In turn, in 1932 Collo attempted to use his own influence to consolidate Liberal control in Tierradentro. This episode was known as the *Collada*, a period of unrest that extended for close to six months, during which Collo targeted two Conservative pockets successively: first Calderas (in February), then the priests and nuns in Belalcázar (in June). On both occasions Collo and his allies, who included Cauca's governor and Páez's mayor, accused the *calderunos* and the Vincentians of colluding to organize a rebellion against the government.¹⁰¹ The missionaries retorted, however, that all was part of the Liberal government's persecution against the Church.¹⁰² In the end, after the village of Belalcázar had been put under state of siege twice and an armed confrontation between Conservatives and Liberals was averted, no weapons were found in possession either of the priests or the *calderunos*.¹⁰³ In spite of the missionaries' and the Minister of Foreign Relations' complaints, once calm returned there were no repercussions for Collo and his allies.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ One motive could have been *resguardos*. In the 1930s Collo expressed his support for dividing *resguardos*, so maybe already in the 1910s he opposed Lame's defense of *resguardos* and *cabildos*. BLAA/LRM, MSS3000. AGN/B, vol. 75, f. 207.

¹⁰¹ AGN/MG/S1, vol. 1024, ff. 443-444. AGN/MG/S1, vol. 1060, ff. 375-377. Missionary González only mentioned explicitly persecution against the church as a reason for the Collada, but in a dialogue that the supposedly had with one *moreno* he mentions that *morenos* they were searching for weapons. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 322. Some sources also mention the *calderunos*' failure to pay *aguardiente* and slaughter taxes. AGN/MG/S1, vol. 1060, ff. 375-377. AGN/MG/S1, vol. 1060, ff. 371-374.

¹⁰² González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 121, 174-175, 313.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 320.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 313-322. AGN/MG/S1, vol. 1060, ff. 375-377. In February of 1933 Cauca's governor dismissed the missionaries' continued complaints, claiming that they had been trying to portray an insignificant episode as if it had been a serious clash. AGN/MG/S1, vol. 1060, ff. 375-377. AGN/MG/S1, vol. 1024, f. 449. AGN/MG/S1, vol. 1060,

Whether the conflict in fact reflected rumors or rebellion or an anti-church plot, what is clear is that Collo's actions were not isolated or arbitrary. They were part of a larger Liberal strategy to gain control of the national Chamber of Representatives and the Senate (still mostly Conservative) in the 1932 mid-period elections. With this goal in mind, Liberal politicians throughout Colombia set out to intimidate Conservative voters in the departments where Conservatives' majority was slight.¹⁰⁵

Pío Collo was again in the center of events in 1950, when the horrors of *La Violencia* started to hit Tierradentro: only this time Collo was opposing the government, which had returned to Conservative control in 1946. In 1949 the Conservative government had appointed a mayor in Páez who initiated a brutal campaign to repress Liberals and conservatize the area. The inhabitants of Belalcázar petitioned Cauca's governor several times to remove the mayor, but these efforts were unsuccessful. According to missionary González, who was in Belalcázar at the time and wrote the only known account of the episode, on the 28th of January, 1950, a coalition of Liberals, Communists, and Protestants attempted to murder the mayor and his supporters. Pío Collo was one of the leaders of the revolt, which was brutally repressed by the military.¹⁰⁶ In the wake of this revolt the army entered the region many times, targeting especially the *moreno* regions of El Salado and Símbola and the *resguardos* of Wila and San José. During these

ff. 378. Other rumors of unrest appeared in October of 1933. AGC, Copiador de Telegramas de la Gobernación de abril a diciembre del año 1933-1934, f. 320.

¹⁰⁵ Pierre Gilhodès, "Agrarian Struggles in Colombia," in *Agrarian Problems and Peasant Movements in Latin America*, ed. Rodolfo Stavenhagen (New York: Anchor Books, 1970), 414-415. Bushnell's interpretation of this period is slightly different. He argues that the transition to Liberal administration inspired scattered outbreaks of violence in several departments. Some of them started when Liberals tried to settle old grudges, others to take revenge, and yet others because local Conservatives resisted handing over power. Eventually, the wave of violence was brought under control. Bushnell, *The Making of Modern Colombia*, 182-183.

¹⁰⁶ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 334-370.

incursions many inhabitants were raped and murdered. According to anthropologist Sutti Reissig Ortiz, who visited Tierradentro in 1960, calm returned to the area only in 1959.¹⁰⁷

For almost five decades Collo had used his Liberal ties to build a successful political career and used his influence in Tierradentro to advance his party's agenda. He had taken full advantage of the opportunities that participation in the nineteenth-century civil wars and the electoral contests of the twentieth century had opened for the Nasa Indians. Collo's route, however, precluded the possibility of advancing an agenda that would bring together all of Tierradentro Indians, since they were divided along party lines. The Nasa Indian Manuel Quintín Lame, whose trajectory crossed Collo's in the late 1910s, tried to develop a different path through the political arena.

4.3 MANUEL QUINTÍN LAME: PARTISAN POLITICS, ELECTIONS, AND “RACE WAR”

For a decade starting in 1910 the Department of Cauca was the stage of the first large-scale politico-military movement organized along lines of indigenous solidarity and outside of traditional partisan loyalties in republican Colombia. Known as the “*Quintinada*” in honor of its leader, Manuel Quintín Lame, it was a regional movement focused on defending indigenous lands and opposing discrimination. The movement quickly gained national notoriety,¹⁰⁸ and by 1914 had rallied significant support among Indians not only from Cauca, but also from the neighboring departments of Huila, Tolima, and Nariño. Within three years, however, Lame and

¹⁰⁷ Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 146-147. Ortiz, *Uncertainties in Peasant Farming*, 33. Henman, *Mama Coca*, 290-291.

¹⁰⁸ Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 113-114.

the movement's other leaders had been captured, and by 1921 the *Quintinada* had been crushed. In 1922, a year after regaining his freedom, Lame shifted his theater of operations from Cauca to the Department of Tolima, where he continued to organize indigenous communities until his death in 1967.

Quintín Lame not only became the most famous indigenous leader in Colombia between the 1920s and the 1940s, but the activism that he promoted transcended the indigenous world and greatly impacted the development of the Colombian Left: he and two of his closest indigenous collaborators, José Gonzalo Sánchez and Eutiquio Timoté, joined the Socialist Party in the 1920s, and in the 1930s Sánchez and Timoté became central figures in the national Communist Party.¹⁰⁹ Lame was also a very forceful and original thinker, whose copious writings have inspired several scholarly works.¹¹⁰

Lame's ideas influenced the indigenous movement that emerged in the 1970s. When the CRIC (*Consejo Regional Indígena del Cauca*) was formed in 1971 in the Department of Cauca, the organization explicitly adopted Quintín Lame's agenda of indigenous lands' defense and cultural revival.¹¹¹ In the ensuing years the CRIC became one of the most important indigenous organizations in Colombia, and Lame the most famous Colombian indigenous leader.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ Mónica Lucía Espinosa Arango, *La civilización montés. La visión india y el trasegar de Manuel Quintín Lame en Colombia* (Bogotá: Ediciones Uniandes, 2009), 163-167.

¹¹⁰ Recent literature on the subject is too extensive to present an exhaustive list. Good examples are: Fernando Romero Loaiza, *Manuel Quintín Lame Chantre: el indígena ilustrado, el pensador indigenista* (Pereira, Colombia: Editorial Papiro, Universidad Tecnológica de Pereira, Consejo Regional Indígena del Cauca (CRIC), 2006). Gonzalo Castillo Cárdenas, *Liberation Theology from Below: the Life and Thought of Manuel Quintín Lame* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1987).

¹¹¹ Troyan, "Ethnic Identity and State Formation," 221. María Teresa Findji, "From Resistance to Social Movement: the Indigenous Authorities Movement in Colombia," in *The Making of Social Movements in Latin America: Identity, Strategy, and Democracy*, ed. Arturo Escobar and Sonia E. Álvarez (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992), 113-118. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 148-149. Quintín Lame also had significant influence on the indigenous movements that emerged in Tolima in the 1970s. Espinosa, *La civilización montés*, 31, 195-196.

¹¹² Findji, "From Resistance to Social Movement," 113-116.

In what follows I will concentrate mostly on the decade of the *Quintinada*, when Lame dedicated the greatest part of his efforts to organize the Indians from Cauca, including those of Tierradentro. The *Quintinada* has been extensively studied, but here I emphasize two elements that have remained marginal in the existing scholarship. First, Lame's electoral goals and their centrality in the indigenous leader's agenda. Second, the tension that existed between Lame's substantive agenda, focused on transcending partisan divisions among the Indians, and his efforts to insert this movement into a political system that recognized ascription to a political party as the only legitimate way to advance grievances and access political power. The case of Lame thus shows how well integrated Caucan Indians were into partisan politics, and the leverage that they could gain from this, but also the limitations that partisanship imposed on efforts to advance ethnically-justified demands.

4.3.1 The *Quintinada*, 1910-1917

Lame was a Nasa Indian, but he did not live in a *resguardo* or speak Nasa Yuwe. He had been born in the early 1880s in a community near Popayán to a family that had left Tierradentro two generations before.¹¹³ His family was part of the growing number of Cauca's Indians that had lost access to *resguardos* due to the population's natural growth and, more importantly, to outsiders' encroachment on indigenous lands. These Indians had become *terrazgueros* (or *terrajeros*) on *haciendas* that had been carved out of former *resguardos*. They were allowed to cultivate a plot and use other areas of the *haciendas* for grazing cattle and other purposes, in exchange for *terraje*, a rent consisting in several days of unpaid labor per week on the *hacienda*

¹¹³ Diego Castrillón Arboleda, *El indio Quintín Lame* (Bogotá: Tercer Mundo, 1973), 17-23. Castillo, *Liberation Theology from Below*, 30-31.

owner's lands.¹¹⁴ In the early 1900s the coffee boom and the Caucan elites' efforts to expand cattle *haciendas* in the cordillera translated into greater pressure on indigenous lands. As a result *terrazgueros*' plots were gradually reduced, their access to different areas of the *hacienda* lands curtailed, and *terraje* increased. Popayán's elite also targeted *resguardo* lands.¹¹⁵

Just like other "*caciques* without *cacicazgos*" of his era, including the Guainás dynasty and José Pío Collo, Lame had military experience and was literate. He had joined the Conservative side during the Thousand Days War, obtaining the rank of Second Sergeant.¹¹⁶ Lame never attended school but learned to read and write and became familiar with Colombia's legal system, especially with Law 89 of 1890.¹¹⁷ He quickly put this knowledge to the service of other *terrazgueros*, writing letters and petitions to defend their lands.¹¹⁸

By 1910 Lame was leading a multi-ethnic movement of Nasa, Guambiano, and Coconuco *terrazgueros* that had stopped paying *terraje* and were challenging the non-indigenous *hacienda* owners' property rights on the grounds that the lands had been stolen from the Indians.¹¹⁹

In 1914 the movement greatly increased its reach, enlisting the support of several indigenous communities in Tierradentro and the neighboring departments of Huila, Tolima, and Nariño.¹²⁰ In these areas many Indians had retained access to *resguardos*, but they were facing

¹¹⁴ Castillo, *Liberation Theology from Below*, 22-23.

¹¹⁵ Castrillón, *El indio Quintín Lame*, 69-73. Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 88-89. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 102-113.

¹¹⁶ Castillo, *Liberation Theology from Below*, 31, 47. Rueda, "Quintín Lame y el movimiento indígena," 189. Castrillón, *El indio Quintín Lame*, 45-46.

¹¹⁷ There are multiple stories on how Quintín Lame learned all this. Manuel Quintín Lame, *Los pensamientos del indio que se educó dentro de las selvas colombianas* (Cali: Editorial Universidad del Cauca, Universidad del Valle, 2004), 172. Rueda, "Quintín Lame y el movimiento indígena," 191.

¹¹⁸ Lame, *Los pensamientos del indio*, 189. Gonzalo Castillo Cárdenas, "Manuel Quintín Lame: luchador e intelectual indígena del siglo XX," in *Los pensamientos del indio que se educó dentro de las selvas colombianas*, ed. Manuel Quintín Lame (Cali: Editorial Universidad del Cauca, Universidad del Valle, 2004), 17.

¹¹⁹ Rueda, "Quintín Lame y el movimiento indígena," 191. Castillo, "Manuel Quintín Lame," 21. Espinosa, *La civilización montés*, 120-121.

¹²⁰ Rueda, "Quintín Lame y el movimiento indígena," 192. Castillo, *Liberation Theology from Below*, 32-33. Castrillón, *El indio Quintín Lame*, 101-115.

serious pressures to divide them. As a consequence Lame's goals expanded to include the defense of *resguardos* and *cabildos*. Additionally, the movement denounced the Indians' subjection to strong cultural and racial discrimination and attempted to reaffirm indigenous cultural values.¹²¹ It remains unclear whether one of the *Quintinada*'s goals was to expel all non-indigenous people from disputed lands, or at least those from Tierradentro, which became the movement's geographic core in 1914. However, his detractors certainly accused Lame of planning just that.¹²²

Although the *Quintinada* had a larger geographic reach, between 1914 and 1917 Tierradentro became its epicenter.¹²³ It was there that the movement reached a turning point on November 12, 1916, when a violent confrontation ensued between Lame and some of his followers, on one side, and the non-indigenous inhabitants of Inzá, on the other.¹²⁴ This clash resulted in several wounded on both sides and the death of some of Lame's followers.¹²⁵ News

¹²¹ Castillo, *Liberation Theology from Below*, 32-33, 52-55. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 115. Espinosa, *La civilización montés*, 120-121.

¹²² Echoing the words of a high official of Cauca's *Gobernación*, Castrillón asserted in 1973 that Lame and his followers intended to create in Tierradentro an autonomous unit of some sort, which they called a "*república chiquita*" (small republic) to confront the "big republic" of the whites that had usurped the Indians' lands. Hence in Tierradentro non-indigenous settlers would have to leave and return the lands to the Indians. Castrillón, *El indio Quintín Lame*, 110-115, 128. Other historians have accepted and repeated this explanation. Rueda, "Quintín Lame y el movimiento indígena," 192. Marta Herrera Ángel, "Lame, Manuel Quintín," in *Gran Enciclopedia de Colombia*, ed. Jorge Orlando Melo (Bogotá: Círculo de Lectores, 1991), 315. Mónica Lucía Espinosa Arango, "Manuel Quintín Lame (1883-1967)," in *Pensamiento colombiano del siglo XX*, ed. Santiago Castro Gómez, et al. (Bogotá: Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, 2007), 409. Renán Vega Cantor, *Gente muy rebelde. 2. Indígenas, campesinos y protestas agrarias* (Bogotá: Ediciones Pensamiento Crítico, 2002), 77. I find this claim highly questionable, not only because Castrillón was echoing the explanation of the *Secretario de Gobierno* from Cauca, who fiercely opposed Lame, but also because Lame and his followers always rejected these accusations. For example: AGN/MG/S4/V, vol. 131, ff. 216-218.

¹²³ Castrillón, *El indio Quintín Lame*, 110-115.

¹²⁴ Not surprisingly, versions on the circumstances leading to the clash were contradictory and contested, with some blaming the unjustified and hasty actions by the authorities of Inzá, and others the Indians' violent threats. AGN/MG/S4/V, vol. 104, ff. 261-262v; vol. 107, f. 137; vol. 112, ff. 401-401v. Laurentino Quintana, "Seguimos pidiendo justicia" *Opiniones*, 29 noviembre 1916.

¹²⁵ These numbers varied from source to source. 5 Indians dead and 15 people wounded. AGN/MG/S4/V, vol. 104, ff. 274-278. 5 Indians dead and 20 people wounded. AGN/MG/S4/V, vol. 104, ff. 280-282. 4 Indians dead and 9 people wounded. AGN/MG/S4/V, vol. 104, ff. 283-286. 7 Indians dead, 17 people wounded (7 Indians, 10 "defenders"). *Unión Conservadora*, 24 noviembre 1916. 10 Indians dead, 6 whites wounded, and unknown number

of this latest clash quickly reached Bogotá and prompted the central government to send national troops to capture the indigenous leaders and end the mobilization. As I already mentioned, José Pío Collo became a key actor in this governmental response. Lame was captured on May 10, 1917 and remained in prison for the next four years.¹²⁶ Surprisingly enough there exists very little information on how exactly the indigenous movement was disbanded after the leaders' capture.¹²⁷

Even though this connection has not been explored in the literature, it is likely that some Tierradentro followers turned to the Socialist Party, just like Lame and other important leaders of the *Quintinada* did in the 1920s.¹²⁸ Lame and his associate José Gonzalo Sánchez continued to support indigenous struggle for land in Tierradentro during the 1920s, especially in the case of the *parcialidades* of La Laguna and Topa (in the municipality of Inzá), who were enmeshed in a battle to keep their *resguardos* (chapter 5).¹²⁹

Released in August of 1921, Lame left Cauca about a year later and moved to the southern area of the Department of Tolima, which became his main theater of operations. There he initiated the movement known as *Lamismo*¹³⁰ or “the Tolima campaign,”¹³¹ whose goal was

of Indians also wounded. Alejo Valenzuela, “Legítima defensa. Lo del indio Lame” *Unión Conservadora* 22 diciembre 1916.

¹²⁶ Convicted for “*hurto, asonada, fuerza y violencia*” (theft, riot, force and violence). Castrillón, *El indio Quintín Lame*, 185-198, 208-209.

¹²⁷ Vega provides some short considerations. Vega, *Gente muy rebelde*, 84-87. In 1922 an Indian from Puracé that had supported Lame denounced that government officials forced them to sign legal documents promising to never communicate with him again. Ibid., 84. In 1924 Quintín Lame denounced the violent means used by the army, helped by the Vincentian missionaries, to chase him and his followers in Tierradentro. Mario Ibero. “La crueldad de los misioneros españoles en Tierradentro y su cruda hostilidad al clero nacional.” *El Espectador*, 12 julio 1924, 1. González reported that “...en el alzamiento de Quintín Lame, cuando Vitoncó entró de lleno con sus mejores jefes en refuerzo del revoltoso, los blancos se desquitaban, dieron muerte a muchos vitoncoes y a sus principales jefes Yajimbos y Quimboas, hechos prisioneros, los llevaron a morir en las cárceles en castigo de su osadía.” González, *Los paezes, o, genocidio*, 163.

¹²⁸ For a discussion of Lame’s and other indigenous leaders’ connections with the Socialist Party see ch. 5.

¹²⁹ Espinosa, *La civilización montés*, 156. Vega, *Gente muy rebelde*, 87.

¹³⁰ Espinosa, *La civilización montés*, 151-200.

¹³¹ Castillo, *Liberation Theology from Below*, 35-38.

to legally restore the *resguardos* of Ortega and Chaparral, divided since the nineteenth century. The movement obtained important victories in the 1930s, but starting in the 1940s became the target of fierce repression that continued after Lame's death in 1967.¹³²

4.3.2 Subverting Party Lines, Furthering Elections

The most detailed studies of the *Quintinada* have documented how government authorities' and regional elites' reactions to the movement were hardly homogeneous or consistent through time. These responses included violent repression, persecution, and the jailing of activists (Lame was apprehended several times); but also defending the movement in the press, publishing some of Lame's manifestos, refusing to chase the indigenous activists, meeting and negotiating with the indigenous leaders, and campaigning to get Lame out of jail.¹³³ No scholar, however, has analyzed these variations systematically nor has proposed a comprehensive explanation.¹³⁴ Attempting such task is beyond the scope of this dissertation. However, I want to emphasize that, as Castrillón has argued, one important element shaping responses to the *Quintinada* was electoral calculation.

As some scholars have noted, the height of the *Quintinada* in 1916 and 1917 coincided with a fierce campaign for the 1917 *diputado* elections in Cauca. This election's results were seen by all parties as key for the 1918 presidential election, especially because the Caucan politician Guillermo Valencia's chances of emerging as a strong candidate were tied to his

¹³² Espinosa, *La civilización montés*, 151-200.

¹³³ Ibid., 120-129. Castrillón, *El indio Quintín Lame*, 83-198.

¹³⁴ Castrillón, for example, attributed the changing policies of Cauca's *Gobernación* mostly to the different governors' personalities. Castrillón, *El indio Quintín Lame*, 125-126, 155-156, 176. Espinosa documented all these variations, but offered no explanation and claimed instead that regional elites gradually criminalized and depoliticized the movement. Espinosa, *La civilización montés*, 120-129.

performance in this election. Both Valencia and the other prospective presidential candidate, Marco Fidel Suárez, were Conservative. But Suárez was the Conservative party's official candidate, while Valencia was running under the "Republican" banner, a coalition of Conservatives and Liberals.¹³⁵

While none of the major parties endorsed Lame's substantive program, nor did they uniformly or consistently reject Lame and his movement. In fact, as Castrillón has stressed, electoral calculations played a crucial role in whether Conservative, Republican, and Liberal regional leaders decided to defend or attack Lame and his movement, and the arguments they used to that end.¹³⁶ Meanwhile, political parties were not the only ones with an electoral agenda in 1916 and 1917. Lame had a plan of his own.

The extensive literature on the *Quintinada* has very clearly shown how the movement, with its emphasis on retaining communal property and its insistence that the Indians had preferential rights to the land as the original owners, threatened the root of the property system that Colombian elites had been struggling to impose since Independence. Scholars, however, have paid less attention to how the *Quintinada* attempted to subvert the political system that had emerged since the 1840s, which was based on the notion that ascription to one of the major parties was the only legitimate way to advance grievances and foster political mobilization.

¹³⁵ Castrillón, *El indio Quintín Lame*, 179-180.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 118-120, 144-148, 155, 167-169, 180. Espinosa also documented the varied reactions to the *Quintinada* in Popayán's press, but unlike Castrillón she failed to mention any clear connection with the ongoing elections. Espinosa, *La civilización montés*, 123-128. The only political group that unambiguously sided with Quintín Lame (and which, for some reason, has been largely ignored in the literature) was the coalition of Liberals, Socialists, and Anarchists grouped around the newspaper *El Cauca Liberal*. "Manuel Quintín Lame", *El Cauca Liberal*, 2 junio 1916, 3-4. AGN/MG/S4/V, vol. 107, ff. 92-94. "Manuel Quintín Lame" *El Cauca Liberal*, 9 junio 1916, 2. "Exposición de Manuel Quintín Lame," *El Cauca Liberal*, 9 junio 1916, 2-3. "Arenga de Manuel Quintín a las divisiones que tomaron parte en develar la sangrienta revolución indígena." *El Cauca Liberal*, 30 junio 1916, 2. "Cero y van cuatro" *El Cauca Liberal*, 5 y 6 agosto 1916. This initial support was probably one of the reasons why in the 1920s Lame allied with the Socialist party. Espinosa, *La civilización montés*, 163-167.

Lame's movement sought to subvert Colombia's partisan system in at least two ways. The first one has been well explored in the literature: during the *Quintinada* and beyond Lame's program did not focus on a partisan agenda (in stark contrast with the case of Pío Collo), but on the Indians' rights.¹³⁷ The second way, however, has been largely overlooked: the *Quintinada* endeavored to overcome the partisan loyalties that divided the Indians on the ground.

Although the available evidence on how Lame built this movement remains very fragmentary, it nonetheless demonstrates that Lame and his collaborators made significant efforts to enlist Indians from all political strands. Lame had been Conservative since the Thousand Days War, and he did enlist Conservative Indians like those from the village of Ortega in Cauca.¹³⁸ But he also gained backing from Liberal Indians. In Tierradentro, for example, he associated with Rosalino Yajimbo, an Indian from Vitoncó who had fought in the Thousand Days War on the Liberal side and had considerable influence in the area. This alliance gained Lame a sizeable following.¹³⁹ However, not all Nasa Liberals sided with Lame. The most conspicuous example is José Pío Collo, who had in fact fought side by side with Yajimbo in the Thousand Days War. As we have seen, Collo became one of Lame's most important rivals.¹⁴⁰

Lame's efforts to overcome partisan divisions did not mean, however, that he rejected electoral politics as a means to further his agenda. On the contrary, one of his long-lasting goals was finding ways to turn elections into a tool to transcend precisely the partisanship on which the Colombian electoral and political system was rooted. Like many other Caucan Indians, Lame was no stranger to electoral politics. According to his own testimony, after the Thousand Days

¹³⁷ Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 115. Castrillón, *El indio Quintín Lame*, 128.

¹³⁸ Castrillón, *El indio Quintín Lame*, 179-183. "La captura de un malhechor" *Unión Conservadora*, 21 mayo 1917.

¹³⁹ Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 218. Castrillón, *El indio Quintín Lame*, 101.

¹⁴⁰ Collo himself captured Yajimbo in May of 1917. AGN/MG/S4/V, vol. 112, ff. 394-396v. AGN/MG/S4/V, vol. 113, ff. 485-487. "La captura de un malhechor" *Unión Conservadora*, 21 mayo 1917.

War he had mobilized a significant number of votes for the Conservative party, enough that the Conservative Caucan politician Miguel Arroyo Díez had sent him a thank you letter for his efforts in supporting Arroyo's senatorial candidacy.¹⁴¹ During the *Quintinada* Lame put this experience to good use.

Elections played a more central and sustained role in Lame's political ethos than the current scholarship has recognized. Lame's electoral plans did not respond simply to his movement's accidental coincidence with the 1917 and 1918 electoral campaigns. As Castrillón has noted, in 1916 and 1917 Lame had two very clear electoral objectives of his own. The first one was to support the election of Marco Fidel Suárez against Guillermo Valencia in the 1918 Presidential contest. This preference responded to the fact that the indigenous leader had personal gratitude towards Suárez and an equally personal grudge against Valencia.¹⁴² The election occurred when Lame was already in jail, but many of his followers still voted for Suárez.¹⁴³ Lame's second goal was more radical: to secure the election of indigenous candidates (himself included) and then use their positions to further the movement's program.¹⁴⁴ However,

¹⁴¹ AGN/MG/S4/V, vol. 107, f. 83. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 114.

¹⁴² Castrillón, *El indio Quintín Lame*, 180. Quintín Lame had met Suárez when he visited Bogotá in 1914 and Suárez was the Minister of Foreign Relations. In that occasion Suárez gave Lame access to the National Archives to look for some colonial *resguardo* titles, and when Lame was imprisoned in 1915 Suárez sent him an encouraging letter. Lame, *Los pensamientos del indio*, 188-189. In contrast Guillermo Valencia had been one of Lame's most active detractors; and the Indian singled him out in many of his writings, accusing Valencia among other things of trying to get him deported. Espinosa, *La civilización montés*, 125. Lame, *Los pensamientos del indio*, 152-153, 173, 186.

¹⁴³ Castrillón, *El indio Quintín Lame*, 180. In his treatise Lame explains how he rejected multiple calls by Guillermo Valencia to secure the support of Quintín Lame's followers. Lame, *Los pensamientos del indio*, 178-179, 186. Quintín Lame also opposed Valencia's presidential candidacy in 1930. Espinosa, *La civilización montés*, 167. The role that Lame's enmity with Valencia played in the Indian's alliances should not be underestimated. In 1930 this was probably one of the reasons (besides his alienation from the left and his fervent Catholicism) why he sought an alliance with the Conservative party, since the Liberals had initially offered to support Valencia (in the end they supported a Liberal candidate instead.)

<http://www.banrepcultural.org/blaavirtual/biografias/valeguil.htm>

¹⁴⁴ Castrillón, *El indio Quintín Lame*, 132-134, 182. Additional evidence that Castrillón did not referenced suggests that Lame was more invested in achieving this goal than Castrillón indicated. "Manuel Quintín Lame", *El Cauca Liberal*, 2 junio 1916, 3-4. Alejo Valenzuela, "Legítima defensa. Lo del indio Lame" *Unión Conservadora*, 22 diciembre 1916, s.n.p.

his 1917 capture and long imprisonment shattered Lame's immediate possibilities of achieving this objective.

While Castrillón's 1973 account does not mention any significant electoral involvement for Lame after the *Quintinada*,¹⁴⁵ Espinosa's more recent study shows that during the 1920s and 1930s Lame returned actively to electoral politics. According to Espinosa, after moving to Tolima the indigenous leader advanced two strategies, sometimes simultaneously. The first one (largely unsuccessful) was transforming his movement into a kind of indigenous political party;¹⁴⁶ the second one was looking for short-term alliances with the political party he considered more willing to support his agenda at a specific point in time.¹⁴⁷

Espinosa, however, made no reference to Lame's active electoral agenda during the *Quintinada*,¹⁴⁸ and hence failed to note that Lame had first tried building short-term alliances with different parties during the 1910s. The continuity into the 1930s of the electoral agenda that Lame developed during the *Quintinada* is also shown by another element Espinosa overlooked: Lame's efforts in the 1920s and 1930s to advocate for the election of Indians to legislative bodies such as Congress, departmental assemblies, and municipal councils.¹⁴⁹ In fact, the indigenous leader expressed this aspiration repeatedly. In 1921, just after being released, Lame stated that he intended to elect an indigenous representative to the lower chamber.¹⁵⁰ Again in 1924 he

¹⁴⁵ Castrillón, *El indio Quintín Lame*, 211-258.

¹⁴⁶ Espinosa, *La civilización montés*, 137, 148, 159-160.

¹⁴⁷ Lame allied with the Socialist party in the 1920s, but when this party transformed into the Communist Party in the 1930s Lame broke up with it. During those years he also tried an unsuccessful rapprochement with the Conservatives. Ibid., 163-170. In the 1920s Lame also had contacts with the Liberal party. In 1922 the Liberal leader Benjamín Herrera provided Lame with a letter for a reporter in *El Espectador* to interview Lame and publish his complaints. Castrillón, *El indio Quintín Lame*, 248. In the later days of his life Lame condemned both the Liberal and the Conservative parties for persecuting him and the indigenous communities. Castillo, "Manuel Quintín Lame," 30.

¹⁴⁸ Espinosa, *La civilización montés*, 120-133.

¹⁴⁹ Espinosa only mentioned the *lamistas'* efforts in 1924 to elect an indigenous representative. Ibid., 156.

¹⁵⁰ "Los indígenas de Tierradentro piden representación en el Congreso." *El Espectador*, 13 diciembre 1921, p. 1

explained to a reporter that he had a large indigenous following, and with it he hoped to elect a Congress representative.¹⁵¹ A few days after this interview Lame spoke before the national *Consejo de Estado*, presenting himself as the representative of all Colombia's indigenous "tribes," and asking for the election of an Indian as a Congress representative.¹⁵² The Council told him that they would consider his proposal, but we have no evidence that they ever did. Finally, in 1939 he repeated again that Indians needed their own representatives in the Senate, lower chamber, departmental assemblies, and municipal councils, for this was the only way to prevent the passage of unjust laws that would impose the division of indigenous communal lands.¹⁵³

In sum, the electoral agenda that first emerged during the *Quintinada* retained a central role in Lame's political program for the rest of his life. However, Lame's attempts at using electoral politics to advance his substantive goals were largely unsuccessful, and his hope that he or one of his indigenous collaborators would be elected to one of Colombia's governing bodies was never fulfilled. This was at least partially the result of Lame's failure to solve one of the most central tensions in his program: how to advance an agenda that openly subverted partisanship within a political system where parties provided the only legitimate channel to political power.

¹⁵¹ "De Girardot." *El Tiempo*, 23 junio 1924, p. 4.

¹⁵² This election would be done by the Indians using a separate ballot box, in the same way clergymen casted their votes. "Los indígenas quieren tener un congresista. Quintín Lame hizo una exposición ante el Congreso de Estado." *El Espectador*, 29 julio 1924, 1. Apparently in 1924 the *lamistas* tried really seriously to participate in the elections. Espinosa, *La civilización montés*, 156-159.

¹⁵³ Manuel Quintín Lame, "The Thoughts of the Indian Educated in the Colombian Forests," in *Liberation Theology from Below: the Life and Thought of Manuel Quintín Lame*, ed. Gonzalo Castillo Cárdenas (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1987), 114.

4.3.3 The *Quintinada* and Race War

The criminalization of the *Quintinada* gradually closed the few political doors that had been opened for Lame. By 1917 the tepid support that the Republican press had granted the Indian quickly evaporated.¹⁵⁴ Articles in the Republican, Conservative, and Liberal press concentrated on blaming their opponents for having organized, supported, or profited from the movement in pursuit of electoral interests. Once Lame was captured in May 1917, even the Liberals (who had been trying to gain his support until then) applauded the action.¹⁵⁵ With Lame thus out of the electoral game, the interpretation that Cauca (Conservative) officials had favored since 1915 — that the movement was a “race war” (*guerra de razas*)— became dominant.¹⁵⁶

Conservative politicians were using this label in much the same way that Colombian white elites had in the early years of the Republic, as Marixa Lasso has shown: that is, to expunge the expression of ethno-racial grievances from the sphere of legitimate politics. Such labeling not only located these grievances in the realm of revolt and sedition, but also inverted notions of victimization.¹⁵⁷ Thus in 1910s Cauca the Indians were portrayed not as the victims of land encroachment but as agents of racial hatred, while white settlers appeared as victims of racial hate instead of as land grabbers.¹⁵⁸

Moreover, those denouncing the movement as a “race war” portrayed its very real subversion of partisan lines as proof of its inherent illegitimacy. A Conservative columnist,

¹⁵⁴ Relentlessly singled out by the Conservative press as the force behind Quintín Lame’s actions, Republicans took a defensive stance and returned to ridiculing the indigenous leader. Castrillón, *El indio Quintín Lame*, 167-168.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 192-198.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 114, 138. AGN/MG/S4/V, vol. 108, ff. 314-321. AGN/MG/S4/V, vol. 107, ff. 69-71, 92-94. AGN/MG/S4/V, vol. 131, ff. 289-292. Castrillón adopted this interpretation and called the *Quintinada* a “racist movement” (*movimiento racista*). Castrillón, *El indio Quintín Lame*, 128.

¹⁵⁷ Marixa Lasso, “Race War and Nation in Caribbean Gran Colombia, Cartagena, 1810–1832,” *American Historical Review* 111, no. 2 (2006): 353-359.

¹⁵⁸ See for example: AGN/MG/S4/V, vol. 108, ff. 314-321.

writing one month after the fateful 1916 confrontation in Inzá, explained that the Indians' protests had no "political motivations," as was shown by the author's and other local Conservatives' unwillingness to side with Lame's followers, who the article claimed (inaccurately) were mostly Conservative. Thus, the columnist explained that, not only he had not defended the Indians when they entered Inzá in mid-November, but a prestigious local Conservative leader had even fired his revolver against them.¹⁵⁹ That is, for this columnist motivations were "political" only if they followed partisan lines. This writer never explained what the Indians' motivations could be, if not political, but other government officials and local politicians did. For instance, in February of 1916 Cauca's governor argued that the movement "did not have a political nature but rather hostility against the whites."¹⁶⁰ Terming the movement a "race war" further delegitimized the effort to build a bipartisan indigenous movement.¹⁶¹

In the end, it can be argued that Lame's efforts to find allies for his cause across the political spectrum became one of his main weaknesses, opening him to the criticism that he was fickle or even dishonest. Even the anthropologist and *indigenista* Hernández de Alba, otherwise a great supporter of the indigenous leader, stressed in 1958 that Lame's influence had declined "especially because of his political changes that had discredited him, in which he has shifted

¹⁵⁹ "Si el debate hubiera mezclado motivos políticos, tal vez fuera yo de los primeros que formaba en la defensa de los indios porque casi todos ellos son de filiación conservadora. Ni el señor don Cruz Ordóñez, prestigioso Jefe conservador del Cauca hubiera estado tan listo a disparar su revólver en la lucha de ese día, ni hubiera recibido la herida que comprobó su valiente actuación en defensa de la población." Alejo Valenzuela, "Legítima defensa. Lo del indio Lame" *Unión Conservadora*, 22 diciembre 1916, s.n.p.

¹⁶⁰ AGN/MG/S4/V, vol. 107, ff. 70. "...los movimientos no tienen carácter político sino de hostilidad contra los blancos..."

¹⁶¹ The label continued to be applied to the *Lamismo* in Tolima, and even Quintín Lame adopted it in a 1958 interview. Espinosa, *La civilización montés*, 160, 176, 196.

from revolutionary boss to Communist, Socialist, and Liberal sympathizer, and now Conservative and clerical chief.”¹⁶²

Lame’s electoral project, just like the rest of his political ideas, attempted to create alliances between indigenous groups based on their shared Indianness, and also tried to overcome the partisan loyalties that had divided them since the nineteenth century. However, this presented insurmountable challenges when he tried to legitimize his movement in the larger Colombian context, where parties provided the only legitimate channel to political power.

4.4 CONCLUSION

In Colombia, nineteenth-century civil wars not only opened opportunities for military careers, but also integrated Tierradentro into national clientelistic networks organized along partisan lines. In the 1860s some Tierradentro Indians forged a key alliance with the Caucan politician Tomás Cipriano de Mosquera, and through him with the Liberal party. However, the Conservative party was also successful in gaining loyal supporters in the area even before the Thousand Days War. In this way, long before the central government managed to gain a significant level of administrative control over Tierradentro, both political parties had effectively enlisted these Indians into their ranks.

After 1903 the parties’ strong military competition gave way to very intense confrontations in the electoral arena. Popular participation in local elections continued to be extensive even after the 1886 electoral reforms, and gained greater weight after the 1910

¹⁶² Quoted in Espinosa, *La civilización montés*, 190. “Manuel Quintín Lame, el viejo jefe indígena, ha venido bastante a menos especialmente por sus cambios políticos que lo han desacreditado, en los cuales ha pasado de jefe revolucionario a simpatizante del comunismo, del socialismo, del liberalismo y ahora a jefe conservador y clerical.”

reforms. It is very likely that the intensity of partisan competition led to an early integration into the electorate of indigenous populations all around Colombia: certainly it did so here.

In Tierradentro the Indians used partisan ties to advance their own agendas, sometimes very successfully. Partisan considerations also shaped the Vincentians' agenda. These missionaries consistently, and at some points quite openly, strove to strengthen the Conservative party in a region that was mostly Liberal.

Elections, like civil wars before, offered opportunities for some Nasa Indians to gain great political influence. José Pío Collo, an example of a second type of Nasa *cacique* without *cacicazgo*, provides an example of a very successful political career built around partisan activism. Like the Guainás dynasty, Collo built great political influence over an area wider than a single *parcialidad*: in his case the Municipality of Páez, although he had some connections with *parcialidades* in the Western slopes as well. Unlike Guainás, Collo was fully invested in partisan politics, and used ascription to the Liberal party to create a multi-ethnic political base that included Indians, *morenos*, *mestizos*, and whites. Such loyalty paid well for Collo, who became the first indigenous *diputado* in Cauca's *Asamblea Departamental* in 1938. The flipside of using Liberalism as a way to create inter-ethnic connections was that it precluded the possibility of advancing an agenda that would bring together all of Tierradentro Indians, who after all had been divided along party lines since the nineteenth century.

Party politics were also key, but in a very different way, for the third type of *cacique* without *cacicazgo*: Manuel Quintín Lame. Just like Francisco Guainás and Pío Collo, Lame initiated his political career participating in the nineteenth-century civil wars. However, the political base that he built for the *Quintinada* was very different from Collo's (Liberalism shared across ethnic lines) or Guainás's (loyalty to colonial *cacicazgos*). Articulating an agenda that

focused on problems shared by indigenous populations across Colombia, Quintín Lame created a movement that brought together Indians from different groups and locations. Essential to this pan-indigenous movement was an effort to subvert the partisan divisions that crisscrossed the indigenous communities.

However, Quintín Lame's challenge to partisan politics did not entail a rejection to the electoral system. On the contrary, one of his central goals was to secure the election of indigenous representatives at the national and local levels. It is, therefore, a strange irony that many years after the *Quintinada* it was Pío Collo, one of Quintín Lame's most serious enemies, who became the first such elected representative in 1938.

Moreover, Quintín Lame's electoral aspirations, together with the centrality of political parties within the Colombian political system, meant that while Quintín Lame was actively trying to subvert that system, he could not avoid engaging it. It can be argued that the crux of the *Quintinada* (and of *Lamismo* after this) was the need to find a way to articulate ethnically-oriented demands with a political system that identified parties as the only legitimate channel for advancing grievances.

The *Quintinada* was the first time Quintín Lame faced such a challenge, and he failed to overcome it. In the end his detractors succeeded in labeling the movement a "race war," thus expunging it from the realm of legitimate politics. On the other hand, Quintín Lame's ability to bring together indigenous communities across partisan lines indicates that these communities were not merely the parties' puppets, but that some indigenous actors could and would ignore partisan divisions under some circumstances.

5.0 RESGUARDOS IN TIERRADENTRO, 1900-1940S

In 1943 an official from the National Ministry of Economy sent a report back to the Ministry explaining that the continued existence of *resguardos* was taking the greatest toll on the Department of Cauca, even though this was not the department with the largest number of *resguardos*. Gutiérrez claimed that while in neighboring Nariño there were twice as many *resguardos* as in Cauca (one hundred and fifty, respectively), in Cauca they occupied larger extensions of land, and 90% of this land remained “unproductive.”¹ Clearly, a significant number of indigenous communal lands, both in Cauca and beyond, had survived the nineteenth-century onslaught that the Colombian government had unleashed against them. However, we still know little on how this outcome came about. Most studies about the Colombian *resguardos* have focused on the colonial period,² when this institution first emerged. Scholars interested in the republican era have concentrated on the nineteenth century, when the Colombian government advanced an aggressive dissolution program that affected most of the national territory at one time or another.³ Only a few investigations have examined the early twentieth century, and they

¹ AGN/MI/AI, Caja 185, Carpeta 1553, f. 155.

² Some important studies include: Bohórquez, *El resguardo en la Nueva Granada*. González, *El resguardo en el Nuevo Reino de Granada*. Camilo García Jimeno, *Conflicto, sociedad y estado colonial en el resguardo de Chiquiza, 1756-1801*, Colección Prometeo (Bogotá: Universidad de Los Andes, Facultad de Ciencias Sociales-CESO, Departamento de Historia, 2008). Friede’s pioneer study, published in 1944, focused on the colonial period and the nineteenth century. The book remains a classic. Juan Friede, *El indio en la lucha por la tierra. Historia de los resguardos del macizo colombiano*. (Bogotá: La Chispa, 1972).

³ Curry, “The Disappearance of the Resguardos.” Elías Castro Blanco, *La extinción de los resguardos indígenas de Colombaima y Paquilo en Ambalema en el siglo XIX* (Bogotá: CRIT, Notaría de Ambalema, 1999). Roicer Alberto

have tended to focus on the legislation that national and departmental governments passed, but say little about his legislation's effects on the ground.⁴ For the specific case of Tierradentro, a number of studies have referred in passing to some of the strategies that anti-*resguardo* sectors advanced in the early twentieth century, and the responses indigenous communities elaborated; these writings, however, do not provide a systematic examination of either processes or outcomes.⁵

In this chapter I unravel the interplay of factors that, on the one hand, facilitated a gradual encroachment on Tierradentro's *resguardos*, but on the other hand prevented their generalized dissolution into individually-held properties. These factors included national- and regional-level legislation about *resguardos* and public land; the varying willingness and ability of national, departmental, municipal, and *cabildo* authorities to implement those laws on the ground; the indigenous communities' resources; the existence of other local or outside actors supporting or opposing different measures; and the viability of extralegal actions.

This chapter moves chronologically through the first half of the twentieth century. I show that early on encroachment existed, but it did not present a generalized threat to the regions' *resguardos*. This started to change in the 1920s, as greater legal powers given municipal authorities coincided with a consolidation of the Vincentian mission to empower anti-*resguardo* sectors in Tierradentro. But while the results reduced *resguardos*' territorial extent, they did not amount to full dismemberment. In the 1940s attacks against *resguardos* received a strong boost

Flórez Bolívar, "Indígenas y ciudadanía. El problema de los resguardos en el Estado Soberano de Bolívar, 1863-1875," *Historia y Sociedad*, no. 16 (2009). Sergio Paolo Solano de las Aguas and Roicer Flórez Bolívar, "Resguardos indígenas, ganadería y conflictos sociales en el Bolívar Grande, 1850 -1875," *Historia Crítica* 34 (2007).

⁴ García, *Legislación indigenista de Colombia*. Triana, *Legislación indígena nacional*.

⁵ Sevilla Casas, *La pobreza de los excluidos*, 42-44, 97-104. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 101-104, 109-112, 142-144. For the case of Cauca in general: Santacruz, "Proceso de extinción de las parcialidades." Troyan, "Ethnic Identity and State Formation," 37-79. Troyan analyzes *resguardo* dissolution in Cauca during the 1930s and 1940s, but she focuses mostly on the arguments that sectors for or against the breakup presented.

when both the national and the departmental authorities decided to target Tierradentro, and effective division finally started. In this new context, however, indigenous communities found supporters among new academic and political sectors, including *indigenistas*, professional anthropologists, and leftist parties. Ultimately, the national government's push managed to dissolve only a small fraction of the region's *resguardos*. That is, in Tierradentro the pressure to divide communal lands was never strong enough to overcome the Indians' and their allies' resistance, and most *resguardos* managed to survive until today. In 1991 a new constitution guaranteed, for the first time since Independence, *resguardos*' inalienability.

5.1 TIERRADENTRO'S *RESGUARDOS* UNDER CONSERVATIVE HEGEMONY, 1903-1920S

As I explained in chapter 1, the Regeneration developed a two-fold indigenous policy: Catholic missions for "savage" Indians, and for the "civilized" ones the temporary protection of *resguardos* and *cabildos*. After the Thousand Days War, however, these two branches followed divergent paths. While indigenous missions flourished with the Conservative regime's backing, politicians' support for the protective measures enacted in Law 89 of 1890 started to erode. In 1905 the government passed a law that, claiming to maintain Law 89's defense of indigenous rights, in practice attacked them. This law legalized previous *de facto* expropriations of indigenous lands, thus invalidating Law 89's disposition that any private appropriation of *resguardo* lands was illegal and could not be defended on any grounds. It also placed *resguardos*

under direct municipal jurisdiction. Historians have identified this law as the most violent attack against indigenous communities in all of Colombia's independent history up to that moment.⁶

In Cauca the 1905 law coincided with a momentous transformation of the larger social and economic context. Between 1904 and 1910 the State of Cauca, until then Colombia's largest, was divided into many smaller departments, including Cauca, Chocó, Nariño, Caldas, Putumayo, Caquetá, Amazonas, Vaupés, and part of Valle del Cauca. As a consequence, Popayán's elites lost control over 95% of their former territory and, more importantly, over their historical sources of wealth and status in Chocó, Nariño, and Valle del Cauca. This drastic territorial reduction also entailed demographic changes. In the new Department of Cauca non-whites formed the great majority of the population, some 87%.⁷ The wealthy families that decided to remain in Popayán instead of following their business to the new administrative centers turned their attention to the Central Cordillera, a mostly indigenous region. There cattle *haciendas* began to expand at the expense of the *haciendas'* tenant farmers or *terrazgueros* (whose plots were reduced and rents in labor increased as a consequence), threatening too the *resguardos* closest to Popayán. Nevertheless, according to Findji and Rojas the anti-*resguardo* push led by Popayán's elites had limited effects, due to the Indians' resistance and the elites' ability to direct some of their investments to other areas of the country.⁸ In Cauca, the dual impact of the 1905 law and these transformations sparked the *Quintinada*, Colombia's first large-scale politico-military movement organized along lines of indigenous solidarity and outside of traditional partisan loyalties, as analyzed in the previous chapter.

⁶ Triana, *Legislación indígena nacional*, 33-34. Santacruz, "Proceso de extinción de las parcialidades," 26-27. Balcázar, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 171-173.

⁷ Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 112. Diego Castrillón Arboleda, *De la colonia al subdesarrollo* (Popayán: Editorial Universidad, 1970), 15-16.

⁸ Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 88-89. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 102-113. Castrillón Arboleda, *El indio Quintín Lame*, 69-73. Troyan, "Ethnic Identity and State Formation," 16.

It remains unclear whether the 1905 law had any specific effects on Tierradentro's *resguardos*. In the early twentieth century, the main threats to the region's indigenous landholding came from claims that large sections of their land were public lands (*baldío*), not lawful *resguardos* as the Indians claimed; and from outsiders' ability to illegally obtain grants to *resguardo* plots from the *cabildos*.

5.1.1 *Baldíos and Resguardos in Tierradentro*

During the cinchona bark boom that enveloped Tierradentro in the late nineteenth century (see chapter 2), claims that *resguardos* were usurping public land (*baldío*) became an important strategy for outsiders to gain access to quinine-rich forests.⁹ In the twentieth century, however, the main purpose of claims that Tierradentro lands were *baldío* was not to gain access to extractive resources, but rather to appropriate lands for productive activities. According to several laws passed since 1874, putting public land to some economic use, such as agriculture or cattle grazing, immediately conferred to that settler (referred to as *colono*) legal ownership rights, even if he lacked legal titles.¹⁰

During the early twentieth century, local non-*resguardo* landowners, organized around the Municipality of Inzá and backed by Cauca's *gobernación* argued that the Indians' alleged usurpation of *baldíos* was a serious matter, enabling *cabildos* to wrongly prevent peasant settlement or harass non-indigenous landholders. The overall result, these critics argued, was that

⁹ Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 109-112.

¹⁰ Catherine LeGrand, *Frontier Expansion and Peasant Protest in Colombia, 1850-1936* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986), 13-15. Absalón Machado Cartagena, *Ensayos para la historia de la política de tierras en Colombia. De la colonia a la creación del Frente Nacional* (Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 2009), 96-97.

the region's fertile land remained idle.¹¹ In 1923 Inzá's Council denounced this as an "assault on public wealth, for it impedes colonization and the exploitation of mineral and vegetable products, and the establishment of crops in that region depriving [...] colonos of their legal rights."¹²

Inzá's municipal council and Cauca's *gobernación* repeatedly urged the central government to clearly demarcate *baldíos* from *resguardos*,¹³ but there is no evidence that such an operation was ever undertaken.¹⁴ This might have been at least in part because Tierradentro stretched over 4000 km² of mountainous terrain, 90% of which still in 1944 belonged to *resguardos*.¹⁵ Therefore, any attempt to survey the region would have entailed a considerable investment from the departmental or the national government.

Lack of strong central government backing on this matter, however, did not stop efforts to appropriate indigenous lands. It seems that colonization of the *resguardos* closer to Inzá, especially El Pedregal de Topa (commonly known as Topa and La Laguna) and Turminá, started as soon as the Thousand Days War ended in 1903.¹⁶ *Colonos* could just settle in a piece of land that they claimed was *baldío*, and hope that no indigenous community would oppose them. This is, apparently, what had happened in southern Tierradentro before Manuel Quintín Lame started

¹¹ AGN/B vol. 41, ff. 113-119. AGN/B vol. 44, ff. 389-390. AGN/B, vol. 55, ff. 240-242v. AGN/B, vol. 71, ff. 20-20v. Vernaza, "Informe que el Gobernador del Departamento del Cauca," 270. AGN/MG/S4/V, vol. 175, ff. 176-177. AGN/MI/AI, Caja 185, Carpeta 1553, ff. 111-112.

¹² "atentado contra la riqueza pública, puesto que impide la colonización y la explotación de los productos minerales y vegetales y el establecimiento de cultivos en esa región privando a [...] colonos del derecho que la ley les concede." AGN/B, vol. 55, f. 242.

¹³ AGN/B, vol. 44, ff. 389-390. AGN/B vol. 48, f. 151. AGN/B, vol. 55, ff. 240-242v. AGN/MG/S4/V, vol. 175, ff. 176-177. AGN/B, vol. 62, ff. 58-59. AGN/B, vol. 63, ff. 416-417. AGN/B, vol. 71, ff. 20-20v. AGN/B, vol. 74, ff. 254-255. AGN/MI/AI, Caja 185, Carpeta 1553, f. 186.

¹⁴ In 1921 the Minister of Agriculture and Commerce informed the Cauca's governor that a budget line had been created to execute the demarcations that Law 60 of 1916 established, and hence he could go ahead and establish a contract to demarcate the District of Inzá's *resguardos*. There exists no evidence that the task was effectively undertaken. AGN/B, vol. 48, f. 151.

¹⁵ Sevilla, "Estudios antropológicos sobre Tierradentro," 6.

¹⁶ ANI/P 1921-1922, vol. 1, escritura 11, f. 37. ANI/P 1921-1922, vol. 1, escritura 12, ff. 65-66. AGN/B, vol. 55, ff. 240-242v. AGN/MI/AI, Caja 185, Carpeta 1553, ff. 165-166.

his activities there in the mid-1910s (see chapter 4).¹⁷ In other cases they could try to appropriate lands that *resguardo* Indians were already cultivating, as according to 1919 accusations was happening in a region called Yarumal.¹⁸ Settlers could also target regions that the indigenous *cabildos* had declared to be *baldío*. This happened with Coscuro in 1937, until then considered part of San Andrés;¹⁹ and in 1934 when Topa declared Alto de Copeal and other disputed areas *baldío*.²⁰ It remains unclear what the legal basis (or extralegal prompts) for these *cabildo* actions were.

Outsiders could also appeal to the judicial system to establish whether a specific tract of land was *baldío*. In 1919 several individuals established a lawsuit against the *resguardo* of Topa and La Laguna over a large piece of land called Yarumal.²¹ A few years later, in 1934, the community of Topa (which had just legally separated from La Laguna) renounced claims to Alto de Copeal, but neighboring La Laguna resisted the measure. At this point an unknown party presented a suit and obtained a ruling that declared the area *baldío*.²²

These outsiders, however, were not large landowners but peasant settlers, and hence most of them lacked the resources to mount a systematic attack on indigenous landholdings.²³ And while municipal authorities consistently supported outsiders in their efforts to privatize indigenous lands, they too commanded only limited resources: because *resguardos* occupied

¹⁷ AGN/B, vol. 55, ff. 240-242v.

¹⁸ AGN/B, vol. 57, f. 446v.

¹⁹ BLAA/LRM, MSS1343, 30-31.

²⁰ AGN/MI/AI, Caja 185, Carpeta 1553, f. 165.

²¹ AGN/B, vol. 57, ff. 445-445v.

²² AGN/MI/AI, Caja 185, Carpeta 1553, ff. 165-166.

²³ Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 98. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 142. Still in the mid-1970s there were but few large estates in Tierradentro. Ibid, 149.

most of the land and were free from property taxes, Tierradentro's municipalities did not have access to the most significant of local governments' source of income.²⁴

Nonetheless, municipal officials favored anti-*resguardo* actions when possible: indeed some of them were *resguardo* intruders themselves. For example, according to accusations in 1922, Inzá's mayor was harassing Indians into testifying that certain *resguardo* sections targeted by a lawsuit were *baldíos*, while also violently expelling the Indians occupying the disputed plots. Moreover, this mayor was himself one of the parties involved in the lawsuit.²⁵

All these actions had a massive impact in Topa. In 1939 its *cabildo* explained that half of the territory recognized in its title had been taken away as *baldío*.²⁶ It seems that Topa was especially vulnerable because its colonial title established in one section that the *resguardo* had an extension of one league around, but in another section explained that the actual boundaries exceeded the league to compensate for some sections that were unusable.²⁷ In 1951 a lawyer explained that, years before, a judge had ruled that Topa's extension was limited to one league, excluding as *baldíos* sections that title's boundary description included.²⁸ Other *resguardos*, however, were better able to use their titles to limit intrusions, as happened in 1936 when a judge ruled in favor of the community of Ricaurte and against a group of outsiders.²⁹

Indigenous communities also used lawsuits to try and secure their property. Topa and La Laguna took this course in 1919, with active support and supervision from indigenous leader Quintín Lame.³⁰ In 1936 Ricaurte also initiated a lawsuit.³¹

²⁴ Quintero, *Territorio ignoto*, 109.

²⁵ AGN/B, vol. 57, f. 445v. AGN/B, vol. 50, f. 493.

²⁶ AGN/MI/AI, caja 269, carpeta 2554, ff. 83-83v.

²⁷ Quintero, *Territorio ignoto*, 112-114.

²⁸ AGN/MI/AI, caja 269, carpeta 2554, f. 19.

²⁹ "De Tierradentro" *Occidente Colombiano*, 6 septiembre 1936, p. 1, 2, 6.

³⁰ AGN/B, vol. 55, ff. 240-242v. AGN/B, vol. 50, f. 493. AGN/B, vol. 57, ff. 444-449v.

³¹ "De Tierradentro" *Occidente Colombiano*, 6 septiembre 1936, p. 1, 2, 6.

Other *parcialidades* tried to prevent dispossession by adding information in legal documents. In 1941 the *cabildos* of Mosoco, Lame, and Vitoncó created a deed to clarify what the exact boundaries among their *resguardos* were. At the end of the document they emphasized that, since these *resguardos* adjoined each other, there had never existed any public lands between them. Moreover, the *cabildos* claimed that they had exercised continued possession even over the uncultivated lands, either by grazing animals there or by providing maintenance to the stones that marked their boundaries.³²

5.1.2 Grants Inside *Resguardos*

Outsiders also gained access to plots where *cabildo* jurisdiction had never been in question, using means with barely a veneer of legality. It is important to note that the community as a whole owned the *resguardo*; all the *cabildo* did was grant usufruct rights (called an *adjudicación*) to particular indigenous families over specific plots.³³ *Cabildos* also had the authority to rent unused lands to outsiders. In an effort to secure the Indians' effective possession, Law 89 of 1890 had established measures to prevent some of the most common methods outsiders used to obtain *resguardo* plots.³⁴ Hence it banned any individual Indian from selling, mortgaging, or leasing any section of the *resguardo*, not even to sell a plot's *mejoras* (improvements).³⁵ (These *mejoras* could be infrastructure or permanent crops like coffee that

³² ACC/NS, 1941, vol. 2, escritura 116, ff. 917v-918.

³³ Bernal, "Economía de los Páez," 335.

³⁴ According to Bernal Villa and Ortiz, sales among the Indians were also common and, even though illegal, did not face strong opposition. Bernal, "Economía de los Páez," 336. Ortiz, *Uncertainties in Peasant Farming*, 97.

³⁵ Balcázar, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 93-94.

increased the land's value).³⁶ The law also centralized in the *cabildo* all powers to lease unused plots to outsiders, and limited these leases to a maximum of three years.³⁷

There were, however, ways to circumvent the law. One of them was legalizing the sale of a parcel to an outsider by recognizing the buyer as a member of the *parcialidad*. This had happened in Topa, where by 1951 there were several outsiders in possession of properties inside the *resguardo*.³⁸ This practice was also common in San Andrés in the 1960s.³⁹

Outsiders could also try to substantiate their claim to a plot by creating a bill of sale and then getting it notarized and registered. For example, in 1951 a lawyer visiting Topa reported that one of the local Indians had sold his plot to a white person, who then convinced the *cabildo* to recognize him as part of the *parcialidad* and grant him the plot's usufruct officially. This individual then sold the property to another outsider and registered the bill of sale in the local notary.⁴⁰

Introducing *mejoras* was another way of securing long-term possession. According to the law, even if the owner of a property possessed a title, he had to pay for any *mejoras* introduced by squatters before he could expel them.⁴¹ For example, in Topa successive *cabildos* had been unable to expropriate an outsider who had registered a plot's bill of sale, both because of the difficulty of initiating judicial procedures and because they lacked the necessary money to pay for the expensive *mejoras* the outsider had introduced, including a house, an aqueduct, fencing

³⁶ LeGrand, *Frontier Expansion and Peasant Protest*, 266.

³⁷ Balcázar, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 93-94.

³⁸ AGN/MI/AI, caja 269, carpeta 2554, f. 20.

³⁹ Ortiz, *Uncertainties in Peasant Farming*, 97.

⁴⁰ AGN/MI/AI, caja 269, carpeta 2554, f. 20.

⁴¹ This provision appeared in an 1874 law, and was ratified in 1917. Machado, *Ensayos para la historia de la política*, 101, 154-155.

around the property, and permanent crops like coffee.⁴² *Mejoras* could also be used to gain permanent possession of plots that *cabildos* had originally leased.⁴³

Obtaining a plot in this fashion might be less threatening for an indigenous community than *baldío* claims, since the newcomers usually recognized the *cabildo*'s authority by participating (or at least pledging to participate) in the communal work that *parcialidad* members had to fulfill from time to time.⁴⁴ On some occasions obtaining such a commitment could be a strategy to consolidate control over a disputed piece of land. This was the case when Ricaurte's *cabildo* demanded that an outsider, settled on a plot whose status was unclear, fulfilled his share of communal work.⁴⁵ Similarly, in the 1940s the *cabildo* of La Laguna was trying to force Indians settled on disputed lands to participate in communal work.⁴⁶

To avoid these usurpations, *cabildos* could also try to modify the existing grants or allocate tracts until then unused. For example, in 1940 an Indian from Wila was clearing a field that had not been granted to him, with the clear intention of selling it to an outsider who was already trying to fence a neighboring area. To evade starting a judicial action, the *cabildo* decided to instead grant both plots to two Indians from the community.⁴⁷ The same *cabildo* had tried a similar move several years before, when missionary González took possession of La Colorada. When the *cabildo* realized the priest's intentions they granted the area to an Indian. In this case, however, the Indian in question was unable to expel González.⁴⁸

⁴² AGN/MI/AI, caja 269, carpeta 2554, f. 20.

⁴³ Sevilla, *La pobreza de los excluidos*, 44.

⁴⁴ This happened in Topa and San Andrés. AGN/MI/AI, caja 269, carpeta 2554, f. 20. Ortiz, *Uncertainties in Peasant Farming*, 97.

⁴⁵ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 271.

⁴⁶ In 1943 a lawyer visiting Tierradentro explained that the Indians from La Laguna who had moved to the areas considered *baldíos* were free of *cabildo* appointments and communal work, but the *cabildo* was trying to make them participate. AGN/MI/AI, Caja 185, Carpeta 1553, ff. 165-166.

⁴⁷ Escritura 127 de 15 octubre 1940. ACC/NS, 1940, vol. 2, ff. 1056-1064.

⁴⁸ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 195-198.

In Calderas the Indians took even more decisive measures. They not only prevented any outsider from leasing plots, but even forbade *parcialidad* members to marry non-Indians, since that would give that outsider access to *resguardo* lands.⁴⁹

In sum, during the first two decades of the twentieth century some outsiders gained access to indigenous land in Tierradentro by using a mixture of legal and illegal methods, and with significant support from local, non-indigenous municipal authorities. The central government, however, failed to facilitate the process by demarcating once and for all indigenous from public lands, as local and departmental authorities had repeatedly demanded. Hence the encroachment impacted only particular plots and individuals, and did not lead to massive indigenous expropriation. Moreover, those seeking land did not challenge the Indians' legal right to their lands in general. While outsiders continued to make *baldío* claims and seek *cabildo* grants, in the 1920s more serious threats to indigenous landholding in Tierradentro emerged.

5.2 ATTACKING RESGUARDOS IN THE 1920S

In Colombia the 1920s were years of economic prosperity and socio-cultural transformation. After World War I the country's economic, socio-cultural and political landscape changed rapidly and in ways that affected indigenous communities. Economically, the 1920s witnessed a coffee bonanza that increased demand for land and expanded the internal market. Greater demand for foodstuffs and the expansion of the transport network brought a considerable appreciation of rural land values and heightened pressure over lands, especially those considered

⁴⁹ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 207. Bernal, "Bases para el estudio de la organización social," 182. Bernal, "Economía de los Páez," 337.

baldíos. Hence conflicts between smallholders and large landowners increased significantly in these years, as did disputes over *resguardo* lands.⁵⁰

Heftier public revenues also provided the government with the ability to expand its reach in society. One of the realms where this change was strongly felt was agricultural policy. During these years both Liberals and Conservatives agreed that promoting industrialization would be the government's new economic priority, and to achieve it politicians directed agrarian policy towards stimulating food production for the internal market. When confronted with the reality that foodstuff supply still lagged well behind demand, politicians from both parties concluded that the root of what they considered Colombia's "agricultural backwardness" were the large estates (*latifundios*), which were repeatedly described as "underutilized, inefficient and resistant to innovation."⁵¹ In an effort to stimulate economic growth, the government endeavored, first, to promote settlement of frontier areas; and second, to recover and open to colonization public lands that large landowners had appropriated fraudulently in previous years.⁵² These policies had a significant impact on Tierradentro's *resguardos*.

5.2.1 Agrarian Policies in the 1920s

As LeGrand has argued, starting in the 1850s Colombian frontier areas had been the stage of ongoing struggles between peasant settlers (who opened new lands for cultivation) and land entrepreneurs (interested in appropriating the same lands once the settlers had made them valuable). Since 1874 the national government had sided with the peasant settlers in this struggle,

⁵⁰ LeGrand, *Frontier Expansion and Peasant Protest*, 92-94.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 97.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 89-103.

passing laws that established that settlers who cultivated public lands (referred to as *colonos*) acquired legal rights to their plots even if they did not have legal titles. But these legal dispositions did little to help *colonos* on the ground for two reasons. First, the central government had very limited effective power in frontier areas. Second, the alliance between local authorities and large landowners against *colonos* ensured that the latter had but a slim chance to defend their land. In consequence, *colonos* were routinely dispossessed and, because landlords were in urgent need of labor, usually became tenant farmers on the same *haciendas* that had expropriated them.⁵³

In the 1920s an increase in public revenues and the government's interest in promoting agricultural production led to a reorientation of agrarian policy towards defending small producers more effectively in their struggles against large landowners. This pro-*colono* policy, as LeGrand has called it, consisted in promoting the colonization of *baldíos*, providing small settlers with greater legal protection against land entrepreneurs, and changing the criteria for proof of property to counter the murky methods that *latifundistas* had used to amass their large estates.⁵⁴

A systematic study of these pro-*colono* policies' effect on indigenous communities has yet to be written. However, it is clear that some of the measures devised to favor *colonos* directly undermined *resguardos*. In 1926 the Colombian Supreme Court rendered the decision that all land in the country would be presumed public (*baldío*) unless proven otherwise, and that the only legal proof of ownership was possession of an original title issued by public officials. This disqualified a wide array of deeds previously accepted, such as wills, bills of sale, or court decisions proving possession of the land for thirty years. LeGrand argues that the purpose behind

⁵³ Ibid., 14-15, 87.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 89-103.

this ruling was to discourage large landowners from illegally grabbing public lands.⁵⁵ However, the effect on indigenous communities with *resguardos* was potentially devastating. Most of these communities had lost their colonial titles and to secure their land they had followed the guidelines in Law 89 of 1890 and created deeds proving that the *parcialidad* had possessed their *resguardos* for thirty years or more. The 1926 ruling threatened to render these documents invalid, placing indigenous *resguardos* in a vastly more precarious position than before.⁵⁶ In the next section I examine how *resguardo* detractors used the 1926 Supreme Court decision to mount a strong assault on the titles of Tierradentro's indigenous communities.

There were other notions originally developed to defend *colonos* that were also used to attack *resguardos*. This was the case with the anti-*latifundio* sentiment that flourished among the populace and the official circles in the 1920s and 1930s, and that *resguardo* detractors sought to use against indigenous communities in Tierradentro by accusing them of illegally keeping large tracts of unused land, just like other *latifundistas* did.⁵⁷

The land policy changes coincided with the creation in 1921 of the Apostolic Prefecture in Tierradentro, which strengthened the mission and made greater financial and human resources available for its activities (chapter 3). Convinced that the Indians' communal ownership obstructed Tierradentro's progress, the missionaries used some of the new resources to support new efforts against *resguardos*. In this way they became crucial allies to the municipal authorities, who shared the goal of ending *resguardos* but commanded considerably fewer resources.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 99-100.

⁵⁶ Triana, *Legislación indígena nacional*, 39.

⁵⁷ Troyan, "Ethnic Identity and State Formation," 48. "Impresiones de Tierradentro por Roberto Liévano, enviado especial del Mtrio. De Industrias" *El Cauca*, 15 mayo 1936, 1. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 299.

5.2.2 Challenging *Resguardo* Titles in Tierradentro

The claim that a significant portion of the land *parcialidades* identified as part of their *resguardos* were in reality *baldíos* had been a common argument for individuals and officials trying to gain access to those lands since the nineteenth century. As we saw at the beginning of this chapter, this strategy had effectively allowed some individuals to gain land ownership and legalize it, but it had not led to the Indians' massive dispossession. Starting in the 1920s, however, the strategy of differentiating between *resguardos* and public lands was transformed into a formula with generalized applicability in Tierradentro, as new legal interpretations dismissed important aspects of the Indians' titles.

This challenge to indigenous landholding progressed in two interrelated steps. The first was the assertion that some of the titles Indians possessed were invalid. After Law 89 of 1890 an indigenous community could hold two different types of *resguardo* titles. The first included the original colonial-era deeds or their more recent legalized transcriptions but, as table 9 shows, in Tierradentro several communities did not have such documents. The second type of title was the product of a law that the State of Cauca had passed in 1873, mandating that when the colonial title had gone missing, a *parcialidad* could substantiate its right in two ways. The first one was presenting a judicial sentence proving their possession. The other one was demonstrating that the community had possessed its *resguardo* lands for at least thirty years without any person disputing their right. For this the indigenous community had to collect sworn testimony from five well-qualified witnesses. The Indians could legalize and register the resulting document, and use it as proof of their right.⁵⁸ This disposition became national policy when the Colombian

⁵⁸ It is article 16. Balcázar, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 75-76.

legislature included it in Law 89 of 1890⁵⁹ and, as table 9 shows, in the twentieth century many communities from Tierradentro had obtained these witness-based titles. It was these titles that came under fire in the late 1920s.

At some point in the 1920s an interpretation started to circulate in Tierradentro that the *resguardo* titles indigenous communities had created following Law 89 of 1890's provisions were not valid. Missionary David González, who had arrived to Tierradentro in 1922, not only adopted this idea but also profited from it. In his memoirs he related how in the 1920s he gained access to a plot covered with tall timber trees in the banks of the Páez River, called La Colorada. The plot was located in lands that up to then had belonged to the *resguardo* of Wila. González explained that before taking possession of the land he decided to examine the *resguardo* title that Wila's captain kept. When he saw that it was a 1913 document containing witnesses' statements González became convinced that he had no reason for concern and started clearing the land in spite of the Indians' complaints.⁶⁰ The priest provided no explanation as to why he came to this conclusion. However, it is likely that he had in mind the 1926 Supreme Court decision that had disqualified as legitimate proof of ownership a variety of deeds, including court decisions indicating possession of the land for thirty years—like the title Wila's captain showed González.⁶¹

Other sources confirm the new skepticism officials brought to witness-based titles in this era. In 1931 Cauca's Treasury Secretary (*Secretario de Hacienda*) explained to the Minister of Industry that many *parcialidades* in Tierradentro and in the municipality of Jambaló did not have “ancient titles” (*títulos antiguos*), that is, the colonial-era ones, and those they had created

⁵⁹ It is article 12. Ibid., 95-96.

⁶⁰ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 194-195.

⁶¹ LeGrand, *Frontier Expansion and Peasant Protest*, 99-100.

following Law 89 of 1890 were not valid, since the five witnesses they had presented were themselves *resguardo* Indians who therefore lacked objectivity.⁶²

As I will explain later, the 1936 Land Act annulled the Supreme Court ruling of 1926, reestablishing the validity of deeds showing possession for at least thirty years as proof of property rights. However, the idea that witness-based titles were invalid continued to undermine some *parcialidades*' rights well after 1936. In 1940 a member of China's *cabildo* reported in a letter to the Ministry of Industry that missionary González had informed the Indians that "the titles created by means of five witnesses do not prevail over the ancient [colonial] ones." The Indian explained that if this was true, the community would support the division of their *resguardo*, since they feared otherwise they would lose a section of it that was in dispute with neighboring Avirama.⁶³

Similar interpretations empowered individuals seeking to access *resguardo* lands years after 1936. For example, in 1942 three *colonos*, two of whom had participated in constant conflicts over land with the indigenous communities,⁶⁴ wrote a letter to anthropologist Hernández de Alba trying to gain his support for convincing the central government to declare Wila's *resguardo* a *baldío*. To further their plea they explained that Wila's title was only "imaginary," for this *parcialidad*, as so many others across Tierradentro, lacking their colonial title had resorted to "shyster lawyers" to create a title that allowed it to monopolize large tracts of land.⁶⁵

⁶² AGN/B, vol. 74, f. 254.

⁶³ "títulos creados por cinco declaraciones no prevalecen ante los antiguos." AGN/MI/AI, caja 218, carpeta 2046, f. 15. AGN/MI/AI, caja 218, carpeta 2046, f. 1.

⁶⁴ Jorge Quijano and Rafael Quintero. ACC/NS, 1940, vol. 2, ff. 1057-1061v. BLAA/LRM, MSS 1343, f. 59, 63. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 186, 198, 301-303.

⁶⁵ "imaginario," "tinterillos." BLAA/LRM, MSS2296, carpeta 3, ff. 247-248.

Once *resguardo* detractors had dismissed witness-based titles, the second step in the challenge to indigenous landholding came into play. It consisted in claiming that, because according to colonial law *resguardos* were limited to a radius of one league, all land beyond this league was necessarily *baldío* and free for the taking. This interpretation lacked any legal basis for, as I explained in chapter 2, *resguardos* in colonial New Granada varied greatly in extension. Missionary González claimed it had been Adriano Muñoz, a member of Popayán's elite opposed to *resguardos*,⁶⁶ who had "proved" this matter. The missionary, however, did not explain how Muñoz did this.⁶⁷ González became one of this theory's most ardent defenders. According to his own memoirs, he had started to disseminate it enthusiastically by the late 1920s.⁶⁸ In 1948 the priest explained the logic behind the idea to anthropologist Hernández de Alba, who was visiting the region. While in Wila, Hernández de Alba noticed a large rock in front of the church and asked González about its meaning. The priest explained that similarly placed rocks could be found in several of Tierradentro's indigenous communities. He then drew a parallel with what he had read in the colonial title for Pedregal de Topa, where the Spanish authorities specified the *resguardo* would extend one league around its center, and placed a large rock to mark that spot. Hernández de Alba then reported that González "is familiar with the document containing El Pedregal's demarcation and believes the same happened in other indigenous *resguardos* (this demarcation). But the documents have not been found."⁶⁹ The lack of supporting documentation, however, hadn't stopped González from acting on his theory, for Hernández de Alba further

⁶⁶ Adriano Muñoz had been president of Popayán's Board of Commerce (*Cámara de Comercio*) in 1925, and in 1920 he owned a piece of land in the areas that Topa's *parcialidad* claimed as part of their *resguardo*. AGN/B, vol. 63, ff. 416-417. AGN/B, vol. 58, ff. 286v-287.

⁶⁷ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 310.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 129, 164.

⁶⁹ "Él conoce el documento de la demarcación de El Pedregal y cree que esto mismo haya ocurrido en otros *resguardos* indígenas (esta demarcación). Pero los documentos no aparecen." BLAA/LRM, MSS1343, f. 61.

reported that the priest had used this and other arguments to persuade the Indians from Wila that a tract of land known as Irlanda did not belong to them.⁷⁰

Legal or not, González used this interpretation to promote the colonization of the lands he had thus “discovered” to be *baldío*. The priest explained proudly that his own example had encouraged other outsiders to establish themselves in these lands. In this way

Rafael Quintero bought Narciso Muse’s stubble fields and turned them into pastures, cleared forest in “El Ratón” and transformed it into a pasture; Rafael Martínez turned away from mines and Sunday fights to go to the riverbanks of the Páez, he cleared them and covered them with grass and cattle; Germiniano Medina put to work gangs of laborers on the plains of the left bank, built bridge and house; his hacienda is called “Dublín”; Antonio Lozada accepted a stubble field, turned it into a pasture and without any fear started to clear forest.⁷¹

Other sources agreed that González played a crucial role in stimulating colonization in northern Tierradentro. For example, in a letter three *colonos* wrote to anthropologist Hernández de Alba in 1942, they mentioned that González had even drawn a map showing all the areas of Wila that were uncultivated and hence (he claimed) open to colonization.⁷² Local Indians opposed to the priest’s actions also recognized his leading role. In a 1945 *memorial* Indians from Wila denounced González not only as the greatest land usurper in Tierradentro, but also as the reason behind the arrival of outsiders who had appropriated almost four hundred hectares of *resguardo* lands.⁷³

⁷⁰ BLAA/LRM, MSS1343, f. 61.

⁷¹ “Rafael Quintero compró los rastrojos de Narciso Muse y los convirtió en dehesas, derribó montaña en “El Ratón” y la convirtió en potrero; Rafael Martínez dejó las minas y las peleas domingueras, para irse a las vegas del Páez, las limpió y las cubrió de pasto y ganado; Germiniano Medina cuadró peonadas en las vegas de la margen izquierda del río, hizo puente y casa; su hacienda se llama “Dublín;” Antonio Lozada aceptó un rastrojo, lo convirtió en potrero y sin temor alguno estableció trabajos en la selva.” González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 198.

⁷² BLAA/LRM, MSS2296, carpeta 3, f. 248.

⁷³ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 302-303.

Colonos were not the only ones to embrace the one-league-radius notion. Just like had happened with the claim that witness-based titles were invalid, some government officials adopted this one too. For example, González related that in one occasion a lawyer from Popayán was sent to settle a dispute over the possession of a plot in Mosoco. One of the contenders said the *cabildo* had granted him the plot, while the other claimed the land was *baldío* and he had been occupying it as *colono*. To solve the conflict both contenders and the lawyer met in Mosoco and from there set out to visit the disputed plot. However, after walking for some time and being informed that the parcel was still far, the lawyer decided that the lands were clearly outside of the one-league radius and hence the indigenous *cabildo* had no jurisdiction there.⁷⁴

In sum, this reinterpretation of *resguardo* titles' applicability provided *baldío* claims with an unprecedented reach: it created a standardized blueprint that applied in principle to any *resguardo*, in Tierradentro and beyond. Moreover, local authorities and *resguardo* encroachers could put this formula to use without depending on departmental or national resources.

5.2.3 Anti-Resguardo Legislation in the 1920s

Pro-*colono* policies were not the only threat to indigenous communities' landholding. In the 1920s legislation dealing with Indians followed the path initiated in 1905 towards weakening their communities' rights and speeding communal lands' privatization. Between 1919 and 1921 successive laws mandated the immediate parceling of all *resguardos*, shifted the power to start the division process from the (indigenous-run) *cabildos* to the (non-indigenous) Departmental Assemblies, made opposition to the division process illegal and punishable and, finally, created a

⁷⁴ Ibid., 129, 310.

parallel, expedited path to privatization, consisting of declaring certain *resguardos* (initially those with less than thirty families) nonexistent or “extinct.”⁷⁵ As a consequence of this last provision a two-pronged strategy to attack *resguardos* emerged: division for some, extinction for others. While as we shall see these laws had no immediate impact in Tierradentro, in the 1940s, two decades after extinction was first enacted, the national government did apply a modified version to dissolve some of Tierradentro’s *resguardos*.

Cauca’s authorities backed these efforts to finish off *resguardos*,⁷⁶ passing two decrees in 1922 that established strict deadlines and presenting lists of the *resguardos* that had to request division.⁷⁷ While these measures affected a number of *resguardos* in Cauca,⁷⁸ in Tierradentro they had little impact. Passive resistance by *cabildos* seems to have been the key. In 1923 Inzá’s municipal council complained that *resguardos* remained undisturbed because *cabildos* refused to create the censuses necessary for division.⁷⁹

Similarly across Colombia, *resguardos* refused to disappear. By 1927 it was clear that the provisions the national government had passed between 1919 and 1921 mandating *resguardo* parceling had not worked, since only a handful of indigenous communities had gone through with the process. In consequence, the national Congress passed a law in 1927 that took the power

⁷⁵ Law 104 of 1919, Law 32 of 1920, Law 38 of 1921. Balcázar, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 171-173, 179-184, 189-191, 192-193.

⁷⁶ For almost twenty years after Decree 74 of 1898, Cauca’s authorities had passed only a few new decrees related to indigenous communities, and while they had regulated *cabildo* elections and some *cabildo* functions, none had openly attacked indigenous lands. Ordenanza 47 of 1898. Decree 162 of 1920, decree 357 of 1920. Ibid., 166-167, 184-189. Law 32 of 1920 explained that Law 104 of 1919 would not apply in the Departments of Cauca and Caldas during four years, but this measure was cancelled in Law 38 of 1921. Ibid., 183, 191, 192.

⁷⁷ Ordenanza 10 of 1922, decree 178 of 1922. Ibid., 193-199. In 1926 Cauca’s governor decreed that the *parcialidades* of Topa and La Laguna, in the municipality of Inzá, would share one *cabildo* instead of each having its own. According to Santacruz, this was an attempt to curb the strong opposition that both *parcialidades* had presented against their communal land’s dismemberment. Santacruz, “Proceso de extinción de las parcialidades,” 105. Decree 452 of 1926. Balcázar, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 204-205.

⁷⁸ For example, between 1922 and 1930 several *resguardos* in the municipality of Popayán were divided: Puelenje, Julumito, Pueblillo, Yanaconas, and Santa Bárbara. Gerardo Cabrera Moreno, *El problema indígena del Cauca, un problema nacional* (Bogotá: Instituto Indigenista de Colombia, 1944), 17.

⁷⁹ AGN/MG/S4/V, vol. 175, ff. 176-177.

to execute the division away from *cabildos* and entrusted it to *comisiones partidoras* (dividing commissions) financed by the national treasury and appointed by each Department's governor.⁸⁰ While this measure was not applied in Tierradentro in the 1920s and 1930s, in the 1940s a modified version of these commissions did execute the dissolution of a few of Tierradentro's *resguardos*.

In 1926, however, Cauca passed one piece of legislation that outsiders were able to make effective in Tierradentro. It was a decree establishing new guidelines for segregating settlement areas (*áreas de población*) within *resguardos*, and, importantly, abolishing an article from Decree 74 of 1898 that had vested *cabildos* with veto power over these areas.⁸¹ This measure had a significant impact on Tierradentro: over the next decade, settlement areas became the main tool to weaken the indigenous communities' territorial control.

5.2.4 Settlement Areas in Tierradentro

The creation of settlement areas within *resguardos* had long been resisted in Tierradentro. Starting in the early-nineteenth century different laws had given municipal councils the power to segregate 10 to 70 hectares from a *resguardo*, where the councils could sell plots as a way to promote the emergence of a population center.⁸² Yet by 1926 only two of these areas had been created in Tierradentro. The first one, demarcated in 1910 within Guanacas, corresponded to the

⁸⁰ Law 19 of 1927. Balcázar, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 206-213. The only specific region this law mentioned was Tierradentro, establishing that one of these commissions had to be formed to parcel out the *resguardos* in this area. There exists no evidence that a *comisión partidora* for Tierradentro formed at the time, even though Cauca's *gobernación* did create similar commissions for other regions in the 1930s. Santacruz, "Proceso de extinción de las parcialidades," 106-113.

⁸¹ Decree 435 of 1926. Balcázar, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 201-204. Another, less important decree is: decree 331 of 1926. *Ibid.*, 199-201.

⁸² Art. 3 of Law of March 6, 1832; art. 4 of Decree of April 9, 1832; art. 10 of Law of June 23, 1843; art. 13 of Law 90 of 1859; art. 15 of Law 89 of 1890; art. 47 of Cauca's Decree 74 of 1898; art. 12 of Cauca's Decree 178 of 1922. *Ibid.*, 36, 39, 54, 62, 96, 126, 196.

location where the village of Inzá had started to form. In 1920 a second settlement area corresponding with the village of Belalcázar was segregated from the homonymous *resguardo* (see table 10).

After the 1926 Caucan decree stripped *cabildos* of the veto power they had enjoyed over these segregations since 1898, the creation of settlement areas became a key strategy to weaken *resguardos* in Tierradentro. The region's (non-indigenous) municipal councils got down to business enthusiastically, and just two months after the decree had passed Inzá's council approved the creation of four new settlement areas. Six months after this, Páez's council created three. By the decree's third year these municipal councils had segregated, at least on paper, a total of ten areas: four in Inzá⁸³ and six in Páez⁸⁴ (see table 10). According to González, in a few cases like Tóez and Mosoco the settlement areas were never made effective.⁸⁵ Nonetheless, these areas successfully created pockets of non-indigenous inhabitants with legal access to land in Tierradentro.⁸⁶

The Vincentians not only supported actively these actions,⁸⁷ but one of them even became the main force behind the segregation of a settlement area in Wila. In his memoirs, missionary González explained that after identifying a large tract of land in that *resguardo* that seemed well suited for a population center, he allied with a non-indigenous *colono* and maneuvered to get him appointed to Páez's municipal council. Together they opposed the location that had been first proposed for Wila's settlement area, and managed to change it to the

⁸³ To the list I present in table 10 Sevilla adds Topa. Sevilla, *La pobreza de los excluidos*, 43.

⁸⁴ González and Sevilla add Cohetando to the list I present in table 10. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 128. Sevilla, *La pobreza de los excluidos*, 43.

⁸⁵ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 128, 187.

⁸⁶ Bernal, "Economía de los Páez," 335. Ortiz, *Uncertainties in Peasant Farming*, 32.

⁸⁷ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 128. Sevilla, *La pobreza de los excluidos*, 43.

tract they favored.⁸⁸ González took it upon himself to develop the area, which he renamed Irlanda. The priest hired an engineer to design the future village, introduced cattle, and encouraged colonization. There he obtained some properties for himself and in time opened a missionary residency.⁸⁹

Indigenous *parcialidades* often sought to oppose settlement areas.⁹⁰ In San Andrés indigenous resistance was expressed in the stoning of the newcomers' houses, as well as restricting their use of the cemetery and the church. According to Ortiz, these strategies delayed the settlement area's effective development until 1940.⁹¹ In Mosoco, as I discussed in chapter 4, the Indians' promises that they would become Conservative voters convinced local and regional authorities to reduce the settlement area's extension considerably.⁹² In Togoima, Tálaga, and Wila the Indians appealed in the courts, unsuccessfully, against the agreements that had created their respective areas.⁹³ In Wila, moreover, the *cabildo* refused to sign the delimitation bill and even gained support from non-indigenous individuals that opposed missionary González's efforts to shift the area from the village of Wila to Irlanda. After their legal efforts had failed, Wila's Indians continued to obstruct the activities of Irlanda's settlers.⁹⁴ In 1939 Turminá petitioned the

⁸⁸ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 186-188. BLAA/LRM, MSS1343, ff. 58-59.

⁸⁹ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 185-192. BLAA/LRM, MSS1343, ff. 59-60.

⁹⁰ Bernal, "Economía de los Páez," 294. "Prefectura de Tierradentro. Una entrevista," *Revista de Misiones* 2, no. 15 (1926): 99.

⁹¹ Ortiz, *Uncertainties in Peasant Farming*, 34-35.

⁹² González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 128-129.

⁹³ Juan B. Negret, "Sentencia en la demanda de nulidad del Acuerdo número 8 de 1927, emanado del Concejo de Páez, sobre demarcación del área de población de Togoima," *Anales del Tribunal Administrativo del Cauca* 5, no. 19 (1933). Jaime Bonilla Plata, "Sentencia en el juicio de nulidad de la Resolución número 4 de 28 de agosto de 1927, del Concejo de Páez, sobre demarcación del área de población de Tálaga," *Anales del Tribunal Administrativo del Cauca* 5, no. 19 (1933). Juan B. Negret, "Sentencia en el juicio de nulidad de la Resolución número 6 de 18 de agosto de 1927, del Concejo Municipal de Belalcázar, sobre demarcación del área de población de Huila," *Anales del Tribunal Administrativo del Cauca* 5, no. 19 (1933).

⁹⁴ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 128-129, 186-191. BLAA/LRM, MSS1343, ff. 58-59.

central government, although unsuccessfully, to pass a decree shifting control over its settlement area from the municipal council to the indigenous *cabildo*.⁹⁵

The new settlement areas and the extralegal “defining downward” of *resguardo* territorial reach gave municipal authorities and outsiders new power to encroach on indigenous landholding. Moreover, these measures were potentially applicable to all *resguardos* and not just to particular plots. The combined effect of these two measures was the strongest in Wila, thanks to missionary González’s personal interests there. However, the 1920s push did not result in *de facto* dissolution or massive dispossession, because *resguardo* rights remained in place (even when over a smaller compass). In contrast, in the 1940s Tierradentro *resguardos* would face complete dissolution for the first time. By then, however, Tierradentro’s indigenous communities had also found new outside allies for their struggle.

5.3 ANTHROPOLOGISTS AND INDIGENISTAS IN DEFENSE OF RESGUARDOS, 1930-1946

At the end of 1928 the Great Depression reached Colombia and brought the prosperity of the 1920s to an abrupt halt. The depression played a role in a major political shift, as financial scandals and disputes over how to deal with foreign debt and concessions fractured the Conservative party. In the 1930 presidential election two candidates split the Conservative vote, giving an unexpected victory to their Liberal opponent.⁹⁶ In this way Liberals returned to power after almost five decades of Conservative control. The Liberals’ indigenous policy diverged little

⁹⁵ AGN/MI/AI, caja 183, carpeta 1528, ff. 85-86.

⁹⁶ Safford and Palacios, *Colombia: Fragmented Land*, 275-276. Helg, *La educación en Colombia*, 135-136.

from their Conservative predecessors', but their agenda for modernizing the country created a cultural, educational, and political apparatus that new sectors would utilize to challenge not just government policies towards indigenous populations, but also the presumptions that undergirded them.

5.3.1 The Liberal Republic

Although with differences of degree and emphasis, the four Liberal administrations that led Colombia in the following sixteen years set out to implement a broad (if moderate) program of economic and socio-cultural reform under the banner that the country needed to “modernize” itself. By the time the Liberals gained power, Colombian society had been transforming at a rapid pace for over a decade. Economic diversification and urbanization meant the emergence of new social sectors, including agricultural and urban proletariats and urban middle sectors. These groups had access to new ideas, new spaces of sociability, new gender roles, new political (leftist) parties, and even a variety of religious orientations.⁹⁷ This burst increased dissatisfaction with the status quo, and challenged the tight grip that the Church had been trying to keep over Colombia’s culture and intellectual life since the Regeneration.⁹⁸

The Conservative regimes of the 1920s had made some attempts at coping with these changes, but their Liberal successors were willing to go farther for two reasons. First, they wanted to counter the growing influence that leftist movements had been gaining among the urban and rural laboring classes. Second, they believed economic modernization would remain

⁹⁷ Safford and Palacios, *Colombia: Fragmented Land*, 301. Ricardo Arias, “Estado laico y catolicismo integral en Colombia: la reforma religiosa de López Pumarejo,” *Historia Crítica* 19 (2000): 72.

⁹⁸ Arias, “Estado laico y catolicismo integral,” 89. Arias, *El episcopado colombiano*, 84-99.

out of reach if society did not modernize as well. Liberal elites made stronger state interventionism their main tool of reform. In the economic realm new state action promoted industrialization and coffee exports, overhauled the tax system, reformed financial institutions, and improved infrastructure.⁹⁹ In the social and political realms Liberal politicians intended to transform the state into the arbiter of social conflict by granting greater rights to workers (especially urban)¹⁰⁰ and to women.¹⁰¹

As part of a comprehensive program to promote secularization,¹⁰² Liberal administrations focused on developing a new nationalistic discourse and supporting professional social sciences. The new academic professionals would soon challenge the three core elements of national Indian policy: missionary authority, derogatory conceptions of the Indians, and state pursuit of *resguardo* dismemberment. While these intellectual and academic challenges had very limited impact on the Liberal administrations' indigenous policies (except for a short period in Cauca), their long-term significance cannot be overstated. They were among the key drivers of the gradual shift in indigenous policies that started after 1958 during the National Front period.

5.3.2 The First Generation of Colombian Anthropologists

A crucial component of the ongoing Liberal effort to reduce the Church's influence on society was to develop a source of social cohesion alternative to the Catholic religion and the Hispanic heritage that the Conservatives had endorsed as the nation's bedrock.¹⁰³ To this exaltation of the

⁹⁹ Safford and Palacios, *Colombia: Fragmented Land*, 288-290.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 292-296.

¹⁰¹ Helg, *La educación en Colombia*, 178-180. Arias, *El episcopado colombiano*, 86-95.

¹⁰² Arias, *El episcopado colombiano*, 127-133.

¹⁰³ Oscar Blanco Mejía, "Fe y nación en Colombia. La Regeneración y el proyecto de una nación católica, 1885-1920" (Master's thesis, Universidad Industria de Santander, 2009), 27, 222-255.

country's European roots the Liberals opposed a vindication of the *autóctono* (native) origins of the nation, that is, Colombia's alleged pre-Columbian origin.¹⁰⁴

The Liberal regime's efforts to uncover this past translated in an unprecedented support for archaeological and anthropological research,¹⁰⁵ as well as the emergence of college-level courses on social sciences.¹⁰⁶ These two factors, together with the arrival, a few years later, of many European scholars expelled from their homelands by the Second World War,¹⁰⁷ coalesced to produce the first generation of professional anthropologists in Colombia.

The *Instituto Etnológico Nacional* (National Ethnologic Institute), created in 1941, grouped the new professionals and consolidated both anthropology and archaeology as serious academic disciplines in Colombia. Under the direction of the French scholar Paul Rivet, this institution studied material culture, language and physical anthropology; and its teachers and students were some of the first Colombian scholars to publish research on contemporary indigenous communities in line with social science theories and methods.¹⁰⁸ Tierradentro was one of the regions that first attracted these new scholars' attention, since it combined

¹⁰⁴ Catalina Muñoz, "To Colombianize Colombia: Cultural Politics, Modernization and Nationalism in Colombia, 1930-1946" (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2009), 191-251. Marcela Echeverri, "Nacionalismo y arqueología: la construcción del pasado indígena en Colombia (1939-1948)," in *Arqueología al desnudo. Reflexiones sobre la práctica disciplinaria*, ed. Cristóbal Gnecco and Emilio Piazzini (Cali: Editorial Universidad del Cauca, 2003), 137.

¹⁰⁵ Jimena Perry, *Caminos de la antropología en Colombia: Gregorio Hernández de Alba* (Bogotá Universidad de los Andes, 2006), 16, 21-22. Muñoz, "To Colombianize Colombia," 191-251. Echeverri, "Nacionalismo y arqueología," 137.

¹⁰⁶ Perry, *Caminos de la antropología en Colombia*, 16, 21-22. Pineda, "La reivindicación del indio," 230-231. Ruben Sierra Mejía, "Política y cultura durante la República Liberal," in *Republica liberal: sociedad y cultura*, ed. Ruben Sierra Mejía (Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 2008). Jaime Eduardo Jaramillo Jiménez, "La Escuela Normal Superior: un semillero de las ciencias humanas y sociales," in *Republica liberal: sociedad y cultura*, ed. Ruben Sierra Mejía (Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 2008). Palacios, *Between Legitimacy and Violence*, 109-110.

¹⁰⁷ Troyan, "Gregorio Hernández de Alba," 96.

¹⁰⁸ Perry, *Caminos de la antropología en Colombia*, 41. Pineda, "La reivindicación del indio," 231, 234-235. Palacios, *Between Legitimacy and Violence*, 110.

monumental archaeological remains (subterranean tombs) with the continued presence of significant indigenous populations.¹⁰⁹

Although small, this group of professional anthropologists started to challenge some of the assumptions that had guided Colombian indigenous policies. Through academic publications, newspaper articles, and public conferences these anthropologists strove, first, to dislodge the idea that the Indians had been slowly dying out, highlighting instead that they remained a significant component of modern Colombian society. Second, they stressed that the Indians were not cultureless savages, but possessed diverse and rich traditions and languages deserving academic study.¹¹⁰ Tierradentro was one of the areas where anthropologists first tested this new approach, and, as I discuss in chapter 6, their research radically transformed the understanding of Nasa culture.

Professional anthropologists also called into question the qualifications of the different sectors on whose knowledge and advice the government had relied on until then to develop its indigenous policies. These included a variety of bureaucrats but especially the Catholic missionaries, who had become the preferred intermediaries between indigenous communities and the state since the nineteenth century. The anthropologists claimed that, armed with the tools of the social sciences, only they could present research based on reason and logic, and more importantly, on empirical evidence collected through direct observation. These, the anthropologists claimed, were truly objective studies, and the only ones that would offer a scientific base to develop public policy.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ Muñoz, "To Colombianize Colombia," 205-206.

¹¹⁰ Correa, "La modernidad del pensamiento indigenista," 24-36. J. León Helguera, *Indigenismo in Colombia: a Facet of the National Identity Search, 1821-1973* (Buffalo: SUNY Council on International Studies, 1974), 14.

¹¹¹ Correa, "La modernidad del pensamiento indigenista," 23-37. Troyan, "The Intersection of Politics and Religion," 113. Some of these arguments are presented here: Luis Duque Gómez, "Réplicas y aclaraciones al

Field research not only advanced their professional careers, but also put them in direct contact with the deep socio-economic problems that indigenous communities faced. Inspired by the *indigenismo* that was flourishing at the time in Mexico and Peru, they decided to take an activist stance. In 1943 they organized in the *Instituto Indigenista de Colombia*, an institution that brought professional social scientists together with other intellectuals, in particular a group that had been trying since the 1930s to reorient indigenous policy in Cauca.¹¹²

5.3.3 Caucan *Indigenistas*

Indigenismo was a manifold cultural, social, and political movement that spread throughout Latin America during the first decades of the twentieth century. Although *indigenistas* were a heterogeneous group, they all opposed the inveterate exploitation of indigenous peoples that characterized Latin American societies, and advocated for measures to end it.¹¹³ While Colombian *indigenismo* never reached the extent of its Mexican and Peruvian counterparts, it was nonetheless very influential in making indigenous cultures more visible and defending the Indians' right to their communal lands.¹¹⁴

Director del Departamento de Tierras," in *El Instituto Indigenista de Colombia y la parcelación de los resguardos*, ed. Luis Duque Gómez, et al. (Bogotá: Ediciones de Divulgación Indigenista, 1944). On the influence of missionaries over public policy, especially in the late nineteenth century, see: Pérez, "Representaciones y prácticas sobre las tribus errantes," 11-17.

¹¹² Perry, *Caminos de la antropología en Colombia*, 41. Pineda, "La reivindicación del indio," 231, 234-235.

¹¹³ Jorge Coronado, *The Andes Imagined: Indigenismo, Society, and Modernity* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009), 5-9. Alan Knight, "Racism, Revolution and Indigenism: Mexico 1910-1940," in *The Idea of Race in Latin America, 1870-1940*, ed. Richard Graham, et al. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990), 80-82.

¹¹⁴ Brett Bodley Troyan, "Re-imagining the "Indian" and the State: Indigenismo in Colombia, 1926-1947," *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies* 33, no. 65 (2008).

While several authors have studied Colombian *indigenistas*, they have overlooked the fact that the first group originated in Cauca, not in Bogotá.¹¹⁵ In the early 1930s a new intellectual group formed in Popayán under the leadership of Antonio García Nossa, a distinguished scholar and activist who was at the time a professor at the University of Cauca. This group coalesced around the *Centro de Estudios Marxistas* (Center for Marxist Studies), and studied both the classics of Marxism and the ideologues of *indigenismo* in Mexico, Peru, and Ecuador.¹¹⁶

These intellectuals were especially concerned with the “*problema agrario*” (agrarian problem), that is, the extreme concentration of rural property and the increasing dispossession of smallholders, which they believed was at the core of Latin American underdevelopment. They were also interested in the situation of the indigenous groups for, in their view, one of the solutions for agrarian problems was securing the indigenous communities’ access to their *resguardos*.¹¹⁷ This was, of course, precisely opposite from the consensus shared by Liberals, Conservatives, and missionaries by the 1920s that *resguardos* were a barrier to modern progress.¹¹⁸

Using the ties they had with the University of Cauca as professors and students, these *indigenistas* also advanced pioneering academic studies among several indigenous communities. García Nossa put a novel emphasis on field research, and between 1933 and 1937 he led different groups of students to analyze Nasa and Guambiano communities in Cauca, as well as

¹¹⁵ For example: Troyan, “Re-imagining the “Indian” and the State.” Perry, *Caminos de la antropología en Colombia*. Pineda mentioned it in passing. Roberto Pineda Camacho, “Cuando los indios se vuelven comunistas (1910-1950),” in *Republica liberal: sociedad y cultura*, ed. Ruben Sierra Mejía (Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 2008), 217.

¹¹⁶ Pineda, “La reivindicación del indio,” 223-229. Pineda, “Cuando los indios se vuelven comunistas,” 217-219. García, “El indigenismo en Colombia,” 227-228. Troyan, “Re-imagining the “Indian” and the State,” 97-104.

¹¹⁷ Pineda, “La reivindicación del indio,” 223-229. Pineda, “Cuando los indios se vuelven comunistas,” 217-219. García, “El indigenismo en Colombia,” 227-228. Troyan, “Re-imagining the “Indian” and the State,” 97-104.

¹¹⁸ Troyan, “Ethnic Identity and State Formation,” 45.

other indigenous groups in the neighboring Department of Caldas. These students focused on the Indians' working and living conditions and on proposing practical measures to improve them.¹¹⁹ Members of this group also collaborated for a short period with a Caucan governor who sought to strengthen the *resguardo* system.

In 1935 Cauca became the only region of the country where *indigenismo* gained official backing during the first half of the twentieth century. That year Alfredo Navia became Cauca's governor and started to seek collaboration from *indigenistas*, especially Guillermo Cabrera Moreno, to reform the department's indigenous policies. Navia put Cabrera Moreno in charge of the newly-created *Departamento de Negocios Indígenas* (Office of Indigenous Affairs), a section within Cauca's *gobernación* entrusted with the task of studying the situation of the indigenous communities and proposing legal reforms to the regime of *resguardos*.¹²⁰

Although this bureau did not concern itself exclusively with *resguardos*,¹²¹ according to García Nossa it was in this realm where its key contribution lay. For the first time in all of Colombia's independent history, public policy explicitly shifted away from privatizing and dividing the *resguardos* and towards, in García Nossa's words, "consolidating and equipping them."¹²²

The Office of Indigenous Affairs, however, did not survive after Navia left office in 1937, which seems to suggest there existed a direct connection between Navia's personal

¹¹⁹ Some of these studies became theses and were later published. García, "El indigenismo en Colombia," 226-227.

¹²⁰ Santacruz, "Proceso de extinción de las parcialidades," 111-112. Cabrera, *El problema indígena del Cauca*, 2-5.

¹²¹ In 1944 Cabrera argued that during the short life of this *Departamento*, he managed to improve the conditions of the *terrazgueros* (reducing the *terraje* that they had to serve), solved border conflicts between several *resguardos*, and participated in the drafting of two decrees from the *Gobernación* whose goal was to solve the problem that in some *resguardos* land was not enough for all of its members. Cabrera, *El problema indígena del Cauca*, 8-10.

¹²² García, "El indigenismo en Colombia," 226.

sympathies and the creation of this dependency.¹²³ After Navia, Cauca's *gobernación* resumed its role as a major force pushing for *resguardo* division. *Indigenistas* would not enjoy similar official backing for decades after this, but they continued to challenge official policies and, in Cauca, allied with political activists seeking to mobilize the indigenous communities, as I will discuss at the end of this chapter.

5.3.4 Colombian *Indigenismo* in the 1940s

By the 1940s another important group of *indigenistas* had formed in Bogotá around the various institutions that were promoting the social sciences' professionalization. In 1943 *indigenistas* from the Popayán and Bogotá groups, joined by other Colombian intellectuals, founded the *Instituto Indigenista de Colombia*. The new organization not only promoted the study of the Indians' cultural and socio-economic problems, but also sought a radical transformation of the methods that the state had so far applied to attempt these communities' incorporation.¹²⁴

Indigenistas became ardent advocates of indigenous *resguardos* and wielded several arguments to defend them. First, they presented *resguardo* survival as a key measure to contain the expansion of *latifundios*. They argued that dismembering the communal lands would benefit large landholders the most, allowing them not only to expand their holdings but to gain field hands (*terrazgueros*) for their *haciendas*. Indeed, *indigenistas* contended that in other areas of the country *latifundios* had already originated out of the division of *resguardos*. Second, while public officials claimed that parceling out *resguardos* was the best way to help the indigenous

¹²³ Navia was also the governor who established the first Department-run schools in Tierradentro, in clear confrontation with the Vincentian missionaries. API, Correspondencia de Monseñor Emilio Larquère. (Carta de Monseñor Larquère al sacerdote Péhau, comentando acusación del Alcalde de Inzá contra misioneros. 1937).

¹²⁴ Perry, *Caminos de la antropología en Colombia*, 48-49. Pineda, "La reivindicación del indio," 232-234, 238.

communities, *indigenistas* retorted that those measures would only intensify the Indians' deracination and would throw them into misery and servitude, hence increasing social and political unrest. Finally, *indigenistas* insisted that communal lands were not anachronistic survivals but rather invaluable examples of cooperative institutions, which had to be protected and at the same time carefully modified to make them compatible with the modern economic system.¹²⁵

The *Instituto Indigenista*'s explicit goal was to function as an advisory organization for the government. But while some of its members held official positions during the Liberal Republic, the institution itself failed to obtain official support and remained a private organization running on the members' personal funds.¹²⁶

A clear example of the *indigenistas*' failure to gain official backing was the government's decision to pass a decree creating a *comisión partidora* (dividing commission) for the *resguardos* of Tierradentro in 1944, and its unwillingness to recant even after the *indigenistas* had voiced their strong opposition.¹²⁷

In spite of official indifference, *indigenistas* used newspaper articles and public conferences to project the indigenous communities' problems into national consciousness, and to denounce the official authorities' abuses against these populations. The ideas these intellectuals put forth had a significant impact on the public discussion about Colombia's indigenous communities. In the case of Tierradentro, the officials in charge of executing *resguardo* divisions in the 1940s considered the *indigenistas*' arguments important enough as to refute them in their

¹²⁵ Many of the arguments for and against *resguardo* division can be found here: Duque, *El Instituto Indigenista de Colombia*.

¹²⁶ Pineda, "La reivindicación del indio," 234-235, 241. Muñoz, "To Colombianize Colombia," 56-71, 244-246.

¹²⁷ Pineda, "La reivindicación del indio," 235-236. Duque, *El Instituto Indigenista de Colombia*.

reports,¹²⁸ and some Caucan newspapers published detailed explanations of these ideas.¹²⁹ Moreover, a few of these *indigenistas* actively participated in efforts by leftist groups to organize indigenous opposition to *resguardo* dismemberment in Tierradentro and other indigenous areas.

When Conservatives returned to power in 1946 the *Instituto Indigenista*'s members had to disperse in the face of strong official persecution. Only in 1958 did a modified *Instituto Indigenista* become an official advisory committee of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock's Section of Indigenous Affairs.¹³⁰

5.4 INDIGENOUS POLICIES IN THE LIBERAL REPUBLIC, 1930-1946

Liberal administrations continued the 1920s pro-*colono* policies only for a few more years, and after 1936 shifted to favoring large estate owners. Throughout, attacks against *resguardos* continued unabated.

5.4.1 Agrarian and Indigenous Policies During the Liberal Republic

The agrarian unrest that had been brewing in the Colombian countryside since the 1920s finally exploded in the 1930s, in the context of a wave of colonization fostered by the world economic crisis and the Liberal administrations' support for the movement of people back to the countryside. This colonization wave developed under novel circumstances. For this time *colonos*

¹²⁸ AGN/MI/AI, Caja 185, Carpeta 1553, f. 156, 172, 174, 182.

¹²⁹ Alfonso Valencia Correa, "Los grandes problemas del Cauca. Los resguardos indígenas" *Futuro*, 17 septiembre 1949, 11.

¹³⁰ Helguera, *Indigenismo in Colombia*, 13-14. Correa, "La modernidad del pensamiento indigenista," 48-49.

and tenant farmers enjoyed effective support from the central government (for the first time since the 1850s), and in consequence they refused to relocate to remote areas. Instead they occupied well-situated public lands and sections of large properties that, they claimed, had been usurped from the national domain and therefore were in reality *baldíos*.¹³¹ Land invasions reached such a large scale during these years that LeGrand described them as “a popular agrarian reform in the making.”¹³²

However, by 1936 conflicts between *colonos* and land entrepreneurs had reached a stalemate, with neither sector able to force the other to give up. Moreover, *colono* political influence had started to decline,¹³³ while landlords were increasing their ability to influence national policy.¹³⁴ In this context the government’s agrarian policy changed drastically.

During the Liberal Republic’s first six years agrarian policy had followed the guidelines established since the 1920s, supporting small producers over large landowners. Approved in 1936, the Land Act (Law 200 of 1936) represented a radical shift from the government’s previous pro-*colono* stance. On the one hand, this law contained some measures favoring *colonos* and also established the concept that property had a social function, that is, that possession of land was only legitimate if it was used for agriculture or grazing livestock. On the other hand, its pro-*latifundista* provisions were much more influential, and the law clearly took the landlord’s side in relation to conflicts over public land. Importantly, the Land Act nullified the 1926 Supreme Court decision, and instead considered proof of property not only the original title, but also a chain of deeds (sales, wills, and court documents) proving possession for at least

¹³¹ LeGrand, *Frontier Expansion and Peasant Protest*, 109-146.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 119.

¹³³ Due to their leaders’ cooptation, internal dissensions, and the resurgence of industrial production that made urban workers a more attractive political base for leftist political organizers. *Ibid.*, 146-147.

¹³⁴ They unified across partisan lines, created new organizations, and effectively used anti-communist ideas to gain support from both upper and middle classes. *Ibid.*, 147-148.

thirty years. In this way the law legitimized the large estates that squatters-turned-*colonos* had been targeting as usurpers of public land.¹³⁵

The effects of this policy reorientation on indigenous *resguardos* have yet to be fully studied. It is clear, however, that while after 1936 *latifundio* rights tended to be secured, those of *resguardos* were not.¹³⁶

Liberal administrations did not deviate from the anti-*resguardo* direction that their Conservative predecessors had set up since 1905 and had confirmed with the legislation passed between 1919 and 1927. Hence a 1931 law endeavored to secure additional funding for division by permitting interested *parcialidades* to pay for the procedure. More importantly, in 1940 a decree transferred the authority to appoint *comisiones partidoras* (dividing commissions) from departmental governors to the Ministry of National Economy, and granted the same ministry power to decide when a *resguardo* would cease to exist.¹³⁷ This last provision had momentous consequences for Tierradentro.

In Cauca, after the short truce that Navia's administration had enacted, the push against *resguardos* regained momentum and by 1938 the *gobernación* resumed its decrees mandating the division of certain *resguardos* and appointing commissions to parcel them out, none of them in Tierradentro.¹³⁸ In 1941 Cauca's *gobernación* passed a decree extending for another ten years the almost-due deadline that Law 89 of 1890 had established to complete the procedures leading to the division of the *resguardos*, alleging that there were no legal provisions on how to proceed

¹³⁵ Ibid., 146-161.

¹³⁶ García, *Legislación indigenista de Colombia*, 47.

¹³⁷ Law 111 of 1931, decree 1421 of 1940. Balcázar, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 214-216, 226-230.

¹³⁸ They were Pancitará in La Vega and Chapa in El Tambo. Santacruz, "Proceso de extinción de las parcialidades," 112.

once this deadline had passed.¹³⁹ In spite of the laws and decrees that pressured the indigenous communities to send the documentation necessary to initiate the division proceedings, by 1943 only a third of all indigenous *parcialidades* in Cauca had complied.¹⁴⁰

Because Tierradentro remained a hard-to-reach area with little commercial production, Cauca's *gobernación* and the national government were unwilling to allocate resources to advance *resguardo* division here. This factor proved a major deterrent. The case of Belalcázar illustrates the difficulties that dividing a *resguardo* without external resources entailed, even for a community that supported the measure. In 1930 Belalcázar's *cabildo* had addressed a letter to the Senate requesting the allocation of funds to parcel out their *resguardo*.¹⁴¹ In 1938 Belalcázar's indigenous leader Pío Collo (see chapter 4) coauthored a letter to Colombia's president in which, among other things, he explained that the *parcialidad* of Belalcázar had presented of its own initiative a judicial action to advance the parceling of its *resguardo*. But even though the court had found in its favor, the community had been unable to further the process because it lacked funds to pay for a surveyor to make the required map of the *resguardo*.¹⁴² Seven years later, in 1943, a lawyer from the Ministry of National Economy who visited Tierradentro reported that in Belalcázar the Indians had paid from their pockets for an engineer to complete the *resguardo*'s survey and start the parceling out, but the employee left before the process was completed and the Indians had been unable to obtain even a copy of what

¹³⁹ The 1941 decree was passed only seven days before Law 89 of 1890's deadline. The division procedures included: forming the *parcialidad*'s census, approving it, and dividing the *resguardo*. Balcázar, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 230-231. Findji and Rojas connected the 1941 decree and an almost identical one passed in 1951 with a change in the national government's policy towards indigenous populations towards a less-confrontational strategy. I have found no evidence supporting this interpretation. Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 98.

¹⁴⁰ Santacruz, "Proceso de extinción de las parcialidades," 113.

¹⁴¹ AGN/B, vol. 75, f. 207.

¹⁴² BLAA/LRM, MSS 3000, f. 2.

had been done.¹⁴³ In the 1940s, however, new economic perspectives for the region translated into greater material support from the central government for division.

5.4.2 The Push to “Extinguish” Tierradentro’s *Resguardos*, 1944-1951

Inzá’s municipal council¹⁴⁴ and the Vincentians¹⁴⁵ had been pressing for dismemberment for decades. In the 1940s they gained a new ally: Cauca’s *gobernación*. This office had supported division for decades, but its priority had been *resguardos* closer to Popayán than Tierradentro. Moreover, Tierradentro not only had held little economic interest but a wall of high mountains and bad roads had made communication with the rest of Cauca difficult.

In the 1940s, however, road building promised to improve Tierradentro’s economic perspectives rapidly. By that time the central government, with great support from the Vincentians from Tierradentro,¹⁴⁶ was about to finish a motor road connecting the departments of Huila and Valle del Cauca.¹⁴⁷ This road crossed Tierradentro from north to south, following the course of the Páez river. Tierradentro’s communication with the rest of Cauca, in contrast, still depended on three bridle paths¹⁴⁸ that reached heights in excess of twelve thousand feet

¹⁴³ AGN/MI/AI, Caja 185, Carpeta 1553, f. 175.

¹⁴⁴ Examples of communications from Inzá’s municipal council include: AGN/B, vol. 69, f. 4. AGN/B, vol. 71, ff. 20-20v. “El municipio de Inzá pide que la Asamblea lo apoye” *El Liberal*, 11 mayo 1938, 2. AGN/MI/AI, caja 183, carpeta 1528, ff. 17-18. AGN/MI/AI, caja 183, carpeta 1528, ff. 11-12. AGN/MI/AI, caja 261, carpeta 2474, f. 14. AGN/MI/AI, caja 261, carpeta 2474, ff. 61-62.

¹⁴⁵ AGN/B, vol. 71, f. 302. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 128.

¹⁴⁶ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 133-137, 308. AGN/MI/AI, Caja 185, Carpeta 1553, f. 163. Consejo Nacional de la Obra de la Propagación de la Fe, “Prefectura Apostólica de Tierradentro,” 107. “Prefectura Apostólica de Tierradentro,” 1943, 15.

¹⁴⁷ “Tierradentro III,” 152. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 131, 308. Vernaza, “Informe que el Gobernador del Departamento del Cauca,” 269.

¹⁴⁸ Two of them, the colonial road of Guanacas (built in 1628) and that of Las Delicias crossed the homonymous high plateaus into southern Tierradentro (Inzá, El Pedregal, and Topa). In time the road of Las Delicias, built in the late nineteenth century, substituted that of Guanacas. The third road connected Popayán with northern Tierradentro (Mosoco and Belalcázar), by way of the plateau of Moras. Rappaport, “Territory and Tradition,” 60. Guido Barona Becerra, “Por el camino de Guanacas,” in *Caminos reales de Colombia*, ed. Pilar Moreno Ángel, Jorge Orlando

(3600 msnm) in the high plateaus and were impassable during the rainy season.¹⁴⁹ Interested in gaining access to markets in Huila and Valle del Cauca through Tierradentro,¹⁵⁰ in the 1940s officials from the Department of Cauca made plans to build at least one motor road between Popayán and Inzá.¹⁵¹

In 1944 both the supporters and the detractors of Tierradentro's *resguardos* identified these road-building plans as the principal motivation behind renewed efforts to finish off those *resguardos*.¹⁵² In 1944 Cauca's governor explained that completing a specific section of this road would not be "rational" if *resguardos*, especially those of Tierradentro, were not parceled out. He explained that a road connecting unproductive properties isolated from all commercial networks, as were *resguardos*, would not benefit the Caucan economy nor the department's economic relations with neighboring Huila. What was needed was to turn those lands into "plots that can be exploited and freely traded."¹⁵³

The path that finally led to *resguardo* division in Tierradentro did not involve major changes in the existing laws, but a set of administrative measures that simplified and quickened *resguardo* dismemberment. The office within the Ministry of National Economy in charge of coordinating *resguardo* policy, called Department of Lands (*Departamento de Tierras*), devised the new procedure, which was applied for the first time in 1943 in Caldas and Nariño. The Department of Lands' director explained the new procedure to Cauca's governor the following year. After noting that the existing legislation made it practically impossible to parcel out a

Melo González, and Mariano Useche Losada (Bogotá: Fondo Fen-Colombia, 1995). Vernaza, "Informe que el Gobernador del Departamento del Cauca," 268-269. Bernal Villa, "Aspectos de la cultura Páez," 281-282.

¹⁴⁹ Vernaza, "Informe que el Gobernador del Departamento del Cauca," 268-269. "Tierradentro III," 150. Díaz, *Tierradentro: evangelización y civilización*, 35-36. Pérez, *Colombia de norte a sur*, 111-112.

¹⁵⁰ Duque et al., *El Instituto Indigenista de Colombia*, 3.

¹⁵¹ AGN/MI/AI, Caja 185, Carpeta 1553, ff. 111-112, 164.

¹⁵² AGN/MI/AI, Caja 185, Carpeta 1553, ff. 96-97. Duque et al., *El Instituto Indigenista de Colombia*, 3, 27-28. García, *Legislación indigenista de Colombia*, 47-48.

¹⁵³ "racional," "parcelas laborables y de libre transacción." AGN/MI/AI, Caja 185, Carpeta 1553, ff. 111-112.

resguardo, he pointed out that when *resguardos* lacked titles or held deficient ones his department could resort instead to declaring them nonexistent or “extinct.” This simple declaration turned a *resguardo* into *baldío*, and the indigenous *parciales* into peasant settlers with the right to receive an individual property title from the government for their cultivated plots. After publishing this resolution the Ministry of National Economy would appoint a *comisión partidora* to grant the Indians, free of charge, titles for those parcels they used for farming or grazing cattle, along with an adjacent plot of the same extension if uncultivated lands were thus available.¹⁵⁴ In 1943 the Ministry applied this formula to four *resguardos*, one in Caldas and three in Nariño.¹⁵⁵ In time this became the Ministry’s official policy towards *resguardos* having deficient or nonexistent titles.¹⁵⁶

The procedure was first applied to Tierradentro in early 1944, when the Ministry passed successively resolutions dissolving Turminá, Tálaga, Guanacas, and Cohetando;¹⁵⁷ and again in 1951 to liquidate Topa and La Laguna.¹⁵⁸ This anti-*resguardo* offensive also affected the Department of Nariño, where in 1946 several *resguardos* were dismantled.¹⁵⁹

In the case of Tierradentro, the new economic possibilities that road building potentially offered stimulated the national and departmental government to secure effective execution of the Ministry’s resolutions. Hence Cauca’s representative in Congress managed, first, to secure an

¹⁵⁴ AGN/MI/AI, Caja 185, Carpeta 1553, f. 104-105.

¹⁵⁵ San Lorenzo in Caldas; and in Nariño: Tangua, Pandiaco, and Catambuco. AGN/MI/AI, caja 183, carpeta 1528, ff. 48-49. On the case of San Lorenzo, see: Nancy P. Appelbaum, *Muddied Waters: Race, Region, and Local History in Colombia, 1846-1948* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), 184-205.

¹⁵⁶ García, *Legislación indigenista de Colombia*, 47.

¹⁵⁷ Inzá’s municipal council added Topa to this list, but I have found no additional evidence to support this assertion. AGN/MI/AI, caja 261, carpeta 2474, ff. 61-62. Santacruz, “Proceso de extinción de las parcialidades,” 115. Troyan, “Ethnic Identity and State Formation,” 65-69.

¹⁵⁸ Santacruz, “Proceso de extinción de las parcialidades,” 118. Troyan, “Ethnic Identity and State Formation,” 71-77. Another two of Tierradentro’s *resguardos* had been dissolved by the 1970s: Araújo and Calderas. Sevilla, *La pobreza de los excluidos*, 103.

¹⁵⁹ Roberto Pineda Camacho, “Estado y pueblos indígenas en el siglo XX. La política indigenista entre 1886 y 1991,” *Revista Credencial Historia* 146(2002), <http://lablaa.org/blaavirtual/revistas/credencial/febrero2002/estado.htm>.

allotment in the 1944 national budget for the partition of Tierradentro's *resguardos* and, second, to pass a national decree setting up a *comisión partidora* geared specifically to parcel out those *resguardos* that had been or would be declared nonexistent in Tierradentro.¹⁶⁰ This and another national decree passed in 1945¹⁶¹ guaranteed an unprecedented financial support from the national government to carry out the partition, and made a significant difference in the authorities' ability to enforce those measures.

Cauca's departmental authorities supported the Ministry of Economy's new policy, but only to a degree. The main disagreement emerged over whether the plots the Indians obtained through the division process required further legal protection. In 1943 and 1944 both the governor and the Departmental Assembly asked the national authorities to ban the sale or mortgage of those plots for a period between ten and twenty years.¹⁶² Officials from the Ministry, however, claimed such measures were unnecessary, because the Indians' "traditional" attachment to the land would keep them from selling their parcels.¹⁶³ Departmental authorities apparently carried the day. In 1948 Hernández de Alba reported that in Tierradentro lots given to the Indians could not be alienated for ten years.¹⁶⁴ The reasons that led departmental authorities to push for measures that would prevent the rapid commercialization of these lands remain unclear. While these officials clearly supported *resguardo* dissolution, it is possible that they

¹⁶⁰ Decree 918 of 1944. Santacruz, "Proceso de extinción de las parcialidades," 113-114. Balcázar, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 233-235. Other, less important laws are: Law 114 of 1943 (creating a boarding school for Indians in Tierradentro), Law 123 of 1943 (authorizing the Colombian government to sign the convention that created the *Instituto Indigenistas Interamericano* and committing to create a national indigenist institute to advance research on the surviving indigenous cultures). Belalcázar, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 231-233. Triana, *Legislación indígena nacional*, 49.

¹⁶¹ Decree 809 of 1945. Balcázar, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 236-237.

¹⁶² AGN/MI/AI, Caja 185, Carpeta 1553, ff. 119-121. AGN/MI/AI, Caja 185, Carpeta 1553, f. 114-116. AGN/MI/AI, caja 261, carpeta 2474, ff. 19-20. AGN/MI/AI, caja 261, carpeta 2474, ff. 21-22. A similar suggestion had appeared on a local newspaper in 1938. "El problema indígena" *El Liberal*, 21 abril 1938, 3.

¹⁶³ AGN/MI/AI, Caja 185, Carpeta 1553, f. 171. AGN/MI/AI, Caja 185, Carpeta 1553, f. 106. AGN/MI/AI, caja 261, carpeta 2474, f. 23. AGN/MI/AI, Caja 185, Carpeta 1553, f. 166.

¹⁶⁴ BLAA/LRM, MSS1343, f. 10. Quintero, *Territorio ignoto*, 30.

were also concerned with preventing, first, former *resguardos* from becoming private *latifundios*, and second, the social unrest that massive dispossession could create. These were precisely the arguments that *indigenistas* and other sectors had voiced to oppose *resguardo* dismemberment. It is also likely that departmental officials pushed for these limited protective measures as a way to maintain the indigenous communities' political loyalty.

By 1953 six *resguardos* had been declared extinct in Tierradentro. However, only four of them were effectively dissolved: Turminá, Guanacas, Topa, and La Laguna.¹⁶⁵ All four were close to the village of Inzá, the main center of non-indigenous influence in the region, and had prime conditions for growing coffee.¹⁶⁶ Moreover, all of them had been under strong outsider pressure since the early twentieth century.¹⁶⁷ It is hence likely that local interest in advancing division played a key role.

The fact that these four *resguardos* were effectively dissolved did not mean that the entirety of their land was officially allotted to their indigenous inhabitants. In fact, the distribution of plots was never completed, at least in part because the *comisión partidora* was transferred from Tierradentro to another Caucan municipality in 1953. This *comisión* eventually dissolved. In 1959 Inzá's municipal authorities complained that, before leaving, the *comisión* had allotted only parts of the extinct *resguardos* of Turminá, Guanacas, La Laguna, and Topa.¹⁶⁸ Despite (or because of) this halting process, and despite the departmental policies that claimed to add further protection, we know that several indigenous families ended up dispossessed in this

¹⁶⁵ Santacruz, "Proceso de extinción de las parcialidades," 115, 118, 122. Sevilla, *La pobreza de los excluidos*, 103. Troyan, "Ethnic Identity and State Formation," 71-77. In the mid-1980s Guanacas was seeking legal recognition of its reconstitution as *resguardo*. Jimeno and Triana, "El estado y la política indigenista," 101.

¹⁶⁶ Sevilla, *La pobreza de los excluidos*, 103.

¹⁶⁷ Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 143-144.

¹⁶⁸ Troyan, "Ethnic Identity and State Formation," 169-170, 177-178.

process.¹⁶⁹ We also know that at least in one case, Turminá, armed resistance halted the division.¹⁷⁰ More broadly, across Tierradentro, in the face of all-out attack on *resguardos* the 1940s and 1950s, indigenous communities looked for new allies outside of their communities.

5.4.3 Indigenous *Militantes*: the Peasant Leagues in Tierradentro

Indigenous communities in Tierradentro had confronted threats of *resguardo* dissolution with a variety of strategies, such as demanding communal work from outsiders settled in disputed plots, rearranging *cabildo* land grants, banning plot leases to outsiders, resorting to judicial action, creating and registering *resguardo* titles and demarcations, taking advantage of partisan competition, and physically preventing outsider access to indigenous lands. These were, however, measures that for the most part did not entail coordination between communities or *cabildos*. Instead, each community focused on solving the specific issues that affected it directly.

The *Quintinada* (1914-1917) was the first attempt to overcome this fragmentation by creating a united indigenous front that included communities facing similar threats in many departments (chapter 4). Even after this movement was quelled, coordinated effort to repeal anti-*resguardo* laws persisted. In 1922 several *parcialidades* from Cauca, including some from Tierradentro, petitioned the national legislative chambers to modify Law 89 of 1890 to reduce the maximum extension of settlement areas, as well as to change the procedures for delimiting them.¹⁷¹ They also requested that the deadline for the division of their *resguardos* be extended.

¹⁶⁹ Sevilla, *La pobreza de los excluidos*, 44-45. ICANH, IND-014, 9.

¹⁷⁰ Arcila, “Impresiones de una excursión a Tierradentro,” 662.

¹⁷¹ They requested that settlement areas should not include more than 50 hectares, petitioned that in order to delimit them the municipalities had to follow an expropriation trial, and that the *parcialidades* in whose *resguardos* these areas were established had to receive compensation. Santacruz, “Proceso de extinción de las parcialidades,” 102.

In the end none of these changes were approved.¹⁷² A few years later several *parcialidades*, presented a legal action in the Supreme Court against all four main national laws approved between 1905 and 1921 affecting *resguardos*, arguing that they were unconstitutional. In 1925, however, the court passed a sentence denying this petition.¹⁷³ It seems that these efforts continued into the 1930s. In 1939 the *cabildos* of Topa and Turminá sent letters to the Ministry of Economy requesting, among other things, that the government repeal the 1927 law that entrusted the division process to *comisiones partidoras*, and pass a new law that would guarantee the *resguardos*' undisturbed survival.¹⁷⁴ The similarities in these letters' writing and timing suggest that they were part of a larger action.

Alongside this push for legislative changes, new efforts towards indigenous political mobilization began in the 1920s. Tied to leftist groups, these endeavors imbued land conflict with new political significance, and fostered coordination not only among indigenous communities but also with other social sectors. A Colombian labor movement had emerged in the 1920s, especially among railroad, port, river transport, and enclave workers, who in collaboration with emerging leftist organizations began to form trade unions and to stage strikes. While it was not the main focus of their activities, some leftist groups made efforts to build a rural base among peasants and Indians.¹⁷⁵ No systematic study exists about these activities, but Espinosa had shown that during these years the indigenous leader Manuel Quintín Lame and two of his indigenous associates, José Gonzalo Sánchez and Eutiquio Timoté, allied with the Socialist Party (founded in 1919, transformed into the Socialist Revolutionary Party in 1926). The Socialists' interest in supporting indigenous activism was such that in 1925 Lame was

¹⁷² Ibid., 102.

¹⁷³ Triana, *Legislación indígena nacional*, 38.

¹⁷⁴ AGN/MI/AI, caja 183, carpeta 1528, ff. 90-90v. AGN/MI/AI, caja 269, carpeta 2554, ff. 83-83v.

¹⁷⁵ LeGrand, *Frontier Expansion and Peasant Protest*, 104-106.

elected Vice-president of the *Segundo Congreso Obrero Nacional* (Second National Workers' Congress). Moreover, one of this party's main goals was to secure access to land for rural populations, including Indians.¹⁷⁶ It is not known, however, whether the Socialists attempted to organize among the Tierradentro Indians during these early years.

The Liberal administrations that ruled Colombia starting in 1930 not only legalized the labor movement and passed several labor reforms, but also gave it strong government backing. Moreover, the government fostered an alliance between different political groups as a way to strengthen these labor organizations. This was especially the case with President Alfonso López Pumarejo (1934-1938, 1942-1945), who depended on the labor movement's endorsement to remain in power. Under these new circumstances the movement grew at an unprecedented pace.¹⁷⁷ Just as with anthropologists and *indigenistas*, government-sponsored leftist organizations came to challenge official indigenous policies, especially *resguardo* dismemberment and missionary power.

One of the groups that participated in this organization effort was the *Partido Comunista Colombiano* (PCC, Colombian Communist Party), founded in 1930. A history of this party's efforts to organize Colombia's indigenous communities has yet to be written. However, we know that the PCC adopted political programs that placed in the forefront problems affecting indigenous populations, such as *terraje* payment and *latifundio* expansion, and also advocated for the indigenous communities' rights to self-determination. The inclusion of two Cauca indigenous leaders, José Gonzalo Sánchez and Eutiquio Timoté—longtime allies of Quintín Lame—within the party's Central Committee signals the centrality of indigenous concerns in its

¹⁷⁶ Espinosa, *La civilización montés*, 163-165. LeGrand, *Frontier Expansion and Peasant Protest*, 105. Pineda, "Cuando los indios se vuelven comunistas," 210.

¹⁷⁷ Miguel Urrutia, *The Development of the Colombian Labor Movement* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969), 113-126, 169-186.

agenda. Moreover, Eutiquio Timoté ran as the party's presidential candidate in the 1934 election.¹⁷⁸

The role of José Gonzalo Sánchez is worth pausing to examine, for it reveals unheralded connections between the struggles over *resguardos* detailed above, PCC activism in Cauca, and the development of the PCC's indigenous agenda at the national level. Sánchez, not himself Nasa, but a Coconuco Indian from the neighboring *resguardo* of Totoró, was a key figure in all three. He started his political activism during the *Quintinada*, but gained significant political salience later on as a Communist activist (indeed, he would travel to Moscow himself). Surprisingly, there exists no sustained research about Sánchez. A full portrait of his life and work falls outside the scope of this dissertation. But even from the brief facts established, it is clear that ruling elites' depiction of Communists as outside agitators *vis a vis* indigenous communities was flatly inaccurate. Sánchez had been actively involved in the struggles of Tierradentro's indigenous communities continuously since the *Quintinada*. In fact, he had participated in several of the lawsuits and actions to change national indigenous laws that I have mentioned throughout this chapter. He was also founding member of the PCC, member of its central committee, and head of most of the rural labor federations the party organized in Cauca between the 1930s and the 1950s.¹⁷⁹ Under his leadership, in the 1930s and 1940s the PCC gained influence among Tierradentro Indians.

¹⁷⁸ Pineda, "La reivindicación del indio," 214-219. Pineda, "Cuando los indios se vuelven comunistas," 204. Espinosa, *La civilización montés*, 166-167. José Gonzalo Sánchez was in fact the first General Secretary of the Communist Party, and also the head of the *Federación Nacional Campesina e Indígena*. Pineda, "La reivindicación del indio," 216. "Resolución General de la Cuarta Conferencia Departamental Indígena y Campesina del Cauca." (AGN/MI/AI, Caja 185, Carpeta 1553, ff. 73-74). In contrast with Sánchez and Timoté, Quintín Lame did not join the Communist Party. Instead he tried to advance the interests of Ortega's Indians (in Tolima) by seeking alliances with the Conservative Party. Espinosa, *La civilización montés*, 167.

¹⁷⁹ Espinosa, *La civilización montés*, 163-167. Héctor Mondragón, *La organización campesina en un ambiente de terror* (Instituto Latinoamericano de Servicios Legales Alternativos, 2002), 28. Diego Jaramillo Salgado, "El

Starting in 1932 the PCC allied with *indigenistas* working in Cauca, specifically García Nossa and Cabrera Moreno,¹⁸⁰ to organize “Peasant Leagues” (*Ligas Campesinas*) in some indigenous communities in Cauca, especially among Nasa and Guambiano Indians.¹⁸¹ The Peasant Leagues (sometimes also called *Ligas Indígenas*) were one of two types of rural organization that the Communist Party supported in this region, the other being Agrarian Unions (*Sindicatos Agrarios*). The unions targeted working conditions among *hacienda* workers (many of them indigenous), while the leagues focused on land ownership problems and hence targeted *resguardo* Indians.¹⁸²

The PCC was also active in indigenous areas in the Departments of Huila, Tolima, and Magdalena,¹⁸³ but it was the most successful in Cauca, where 68% of all its 25 “indigenous cells” were located in 1935.¹⁸⁴ According to missionary González, the first Communist organizers, one of them José Gonzalo Sánchez’s brother (named Manuel Tránsito Sánchez)¹⁸⁵ reached Tierradentro in 1934.¹⁸⁶

The effect that Communist activism had on the Indians’ struggles in Tierradentro has not been studied in-depth. Rappaport has dismissed its impact, asserting that these organizations

socialismo en el Cauca, 1920-1948,” in *Satanización del socialismo y del comunismo en Colombia, 1930-1953* (Popayán: Editorial Universidad del Cauca, 2007), 292. Troyan, “Ethnic Identity and State Formation,” 18.

¹⁸⁰ García, “El indigenismo en Colombia,” 226-227. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 294.

¹⁸¹ Juan Carlos Villamizar, “Antonio García Nossa (1912-1982),” in *Pensamiento colombiano del siglo XX*, ed. Santiago Castro Gómez, et al. (Bogotá: Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, 2007), 36.

¹⁸² Rappaport, “Territory and Tradition,” 289-293. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 144-145.

¹⁸³ Espinosa, *La civilización montés*, 144. Gilhodès, “Agrarian Struggles in Colombia,” 414. For the case of *Ligas Indígenas* among the Arhuaco Indians from the Sierra Nevada of Santa Marta (Magdalena), see: Friede, *La explotación indígena en Colombia*, 122-134. Pineda, “Cuando los indios se vuelven comunistas,” 198-201, 206-208.

¹⁸⁴ The party had 17 such cells in Cauca, comprising 150 Indians. Each cell usually had a dozen of members. Pineda, “Cuando los indios se vuelven comunistas,” 205, 208. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 144. Medófilo Medina, *Historia del Partido Comunista de Colombia*, 2 vols., vol. 1 (Bogotá: Centro de Estudios e Investigaciones Sociales, 1980), 229.

¹⁸⁵ Luz Ángela Núñez Espinel, “Quintín Lame: mil batallas contra el olvido,” *Anuario Colombiano de Historia Social y de la Cultura* 35 (2008): 110. Henman, *Mama Coca*, 287.

¹⁸⁶ They were Alfonso Paz and Manuel Tránsito Sánchez. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 293. Henman, *Mama Coca*, 287. The Communist Party also sent Gilberto Vieira to Cauca to organize the indigenous communities since 1933. Vieira worked in Tierradentro among other regions. Jaramillo, “El socialismo en el Cauca,” 300.

tended to have greater support among indigenous *terrazgueros* than *resguardo* Indians, and that they disappeared rapidly under the harsh repression that local authorities unleashed in the mid-1930s.¹⁸⁷ But in fact, Communist activism in Cauca and in Tierradentro continued after the mid-1930s. For instance, in 1937 the party created the Departmental Federation of Indians and Peasants of Cauca (*Federación Departamental Indígena y Campesina del Cauca*), led by the ubiquitous José Gonzalo Sánchez, to group together the region's organizations.¹⁸⁸ This was one of the first organizations to express opposition to the government's extinction of *resguardos* in Tierradentro in 1944.¹⁸⁹ In the 1940s Cauca was one of the regions where the Communist Party maintained significant influence, thanks to its success in mobilizing the indigenous population. In fact, in the 1940s the main five Communist Committees in Cauca were all located in indigenous regions, including one in Belalcázar, Tierradentro.¹⁹⁰

In the early 1940s Manuel Tránsito Sánchez (José Gonzalo's brother) established himself in the *resguardo* of San José to promote the indigenous leagues, which became especially strong in Vitoncó, Wila, and San José.¹⁹¹ After the national government initiated the extinction of *resguardos* in Tierradentro in 1944, the Communists intensified their activities and sent a high ranking member, Víctor Julio Merchán, to the region.¹⁹² While Merchán visited most of

¹⁸⁷ Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 144-145. Rappaport, "Territory and Tradition," 289-293. Jaramillo, "El socialismo en el Cauca," 292.

¹⁸⁸ Jaramillo, "El socialismo en el Cauca," 292. This organization appears with other names, including: *Federación Regional Indígena y Campesina del Oriente del Cauca*, *Federación Departamental Campesina e Indígena*, and *Federación Indígena del Cauca*. AGN/MI/AI, Caja 185, Carpeta 1553, f. 71. Jaramillo, "El socialismo en el Cauca," 292, 304. <http://www.rebelion.org/noticia.php?id=76387>

¹⁸⁹ AGN/MI/AI, Caja 185, Carpeta 1553, ff. 71-74, 79-79v.

¹⁹⁰ They were in: Tacueyó, Totoró, Jambaló, Belalcázar, and Novirao. Jaramillo, "El socialismo en el Cauca," 304.

¹⁹¹ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 293. Henman, *Mama Coca*, 286-287.

¹⁹² González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 293. Henman, *Mama Coca*, 286-287. On Merchán, see: Carlos Arango Z, "Victor J. Merchán. Cincuenta años repartiendo tierras y usted tiene solo un pedacito," in *Forjadores de la revolución colombiana* (Bogotá: 1983).

According to González, there were some rumors that President López Pumarejo himself had sent Merchán, who at the time was a national deputy for Cundinamarca, to Tierradentro. Even though López Pumarejo supported the labor movement in general, it is unlikely that he backed this specific campaign against *resguardo* dismemberment. In fact,

Tierradentro,¹⁹³ it seems that he was especially successful in Wila, where some of the local indigenous Communists were elected to the *cabildo* in 1945.¹⁹⁴

Communist activists openly antagonized the Vincentians, whom they correctly identified as a driving force behind *resguardo* dismemberment in Tierradentro. Under Communist leadership Indians from Wila and Vitoncó wrote a *memorial* in 1945 to the President demanding the Vincentians' banishment, on the grounds that they were despoiling the Indians of their land and preventing them from receiving an adequate education. In response the government sent an investigative commission (its findings, unfortunately, are not known).¹⁹⁵ Nonetheless, Communists continued to denounce the missionaries, especially González, as exploiters of the Indians.¹⁹⁶

In spite of the uncertain results of the Indians' appeals to the government, in Wila Communist organizing led to a dramatic shift in the balance of power between the indigenous community and missionary González. In June of 1945 the Indians burned the residences of the missionaries and the nuns, as well as the school. After this the nuns installed themselves in Tóez, while González abandoned Wila and took up permanent residency in Irlanda, a settlement area he had helped create.¹⁹⁷ This was a crucial reversal not only because Wila was the only house the Vincentians had managed to establish within the indigenous area, but also because González had systematically attacked this *resguardo* since a missionary house was first created there in the 1920s.

López signed a decree in 1945 providing additional funds for Tierradentro's *comisión partidora*. González, *Los paces, o, genocidio*, 294. Balcázar, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 236-237.

¹⁹³ AGN/MI/AI, caja 261, carpeta 2474, ff. 48-51.

¹⁹⁴ González, *Los paces, o, genocidio*, 300.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., 301-310.

¹⁹⁶ Jaramillo, "El socialismo en el Cauca," 304.

¹⁹⁷ González, *Los paces, o, genocidio*, 310-313.

Besides this episode in Wila, Communist organizing imbued the Indians' conflicts with a new political significance, and connected the indigenous communities with other social sectors. For example, in 1944 the Construction Union of Popayán pronounced itself against *resguardo* dismemberment.¹⁹⁸ Moreover, the Communist press constantly publicized the Indians' grievances.¹⁹⁹

By 1946 the Liberals had been in power for sixteen years. In spite of its hegemony, divisions within the Liberal party had grown to alarming levels, with the party's establishment on one side and on the other side a rapidly-growing left-leaning popular movement led by Liberal middle-class lawyer Jorge Eliécer Gaitán. This fracture meant that in the 1946 presidential election, much as had happened to the Conservatives in 1930, two candidates split the Liberal vote and Mariano Ospina Pérez won the presidency back for the Conservatives.²⁰⁰

This political shift stripped from government support the labor movement and threw it into disarray.²⁰¹ Under strong official repression, after 1950 leftist-related labor organizations practically disappeared. The PCC went into clandestinity and the government murdered several of its members, including José Gonzalo Sánchez in 1952.²⁰² The fate of indigenous activists in Tierradentro in the 1950s is not known.²⁰³ During the 1950s Colombia was enveloped in political chaos. Tierradentro's *resguardos* would survive this new storm as well, despite its human cost.

¹⁹⁸ *Sindicato de la Construcción de Popayán*. AGN/MI/AI, Caja 185, Carpeta 1553, f. 77.

¹⁹⁹ Two Communist newspapers in Cauca were: *La Voz del Pueblo* and *El Demócrata*. Jaramillo, "El socialismo en el Cauca," 301. Gerardo Parra B., "El Directorio de Inzá defiende al Alcalde Satizábal" *El Liberal*, 20 marzo 1945.

²⁰⁰ Bushnell, *The Making of Modern Colombia*, 196-200.

²⁰¹ Urrutia, *The Development of the Colombian Labor Movement*, 192-198.

²⁰² Mauricio Archila Neira, "Protestas sociales en Colombia 1946-1958" *Historia Crítica* (1995): 69.

²⁰³ Missionary González claimed that there had been some Communists collaborating in the uprising that, as I explain in the following section, shook the municipality of Páez in 1950. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 349-350.

5.5 INDIGENOUS POLICY DURING *LA VIOLENCIA* AND BEYOND, 1948-1980S

The twelve year period from 1946 to 1958 saw Colombia descend into a profound socio-political crisis. The Conservatives' return to power in 1946, just like the Liberals' in 1930, led to outbreaks of violence in rural areas where each party's local followers struggled to retain or gain a hold of political power. But unlike in 1930, in 1946 violence did not wane after a few months. The situation worsened in 1948 when the Liberal presidential candidate Jorge Eliécer Gaitán was murdered, unleashing a massive riot in Bogotá and insurrections in several rural areas. That same year president Mariano Ospina Pérez led a self-coup d'état, closing the Congress. The crisis persisted and five years later, in 1953, the military led another coup against Ospina Pérez's successor, Conservative president Laureano Gómez. Led by General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla, the army stayed in power for five years until 1958.²⁰⁴

5.5.1 *La Violencia*

National political instability both responded to and fed *la Violencia*, the intense convulsion that enveloped mostly rural Colombia between 1946 and 1958, in some areas extending into the 1960s. This conflict's main theaters shifted over time, from the coffee axis to frontier regions to coffee-producing Quindío. Most of its fatal victims were non-combatants targeted by police, neighbors, and even paid assassins. *La Violencia* continues to defy an overall explanation, for it was one of the longest conflicts in Latin American history and it encompassed many regional

²⁰⁴ Palacios, *Between Legitimacy and Violence*, 94, 139-153. Bushnell, *The Making of Modern Colombia*, 201-222.

and temporal variations. By the time it was declared officially over in 1964, it had left behind between 100,000 and 300,000 persons dead and two million displaced.²⁰⁵

La Violencia affected Tierradentro, especially the municipality of Páez.²⁰⁶ While there are no in-depth studies about this topic, there is abundant evidence that significant numbers of indigenous and non-indigenous individuals were killed or escaped to other areas, and several indigenous villages were burnt to the ground.²⁰⁷ Calm started to return to Tierradentro only in 1959.²⁰⁸

While *la Violencia* was wreaking havoc across Colombia, attacks on *resguardos* from the legislative front paused. Between the 1920s and the mid-1940s there had been an almost continuous flood of laws and decrees targeting *resguardos*. In contrast, only one such decree was passed between 1946 and 1958. In 1951 Cauca's governor extended for another ten years (as had been done already back in 1941) the deadline that Law 89 of 1890 had established for the division of *resguardos*, arguing that this would ensure the ordered administration of the *resguardos* still existing until their division could be completed.²⁰⁹

This legislative pause, however, did not stop actions against *resguardos* in Tierradentro. As I already mentioned, in 1951 Topa and La Laguna were declared extinct, and over the following two years the *comisión partidora* continued the parceling process of these *resguardos* as well as the ones previously dissolved. After 1953 extinctions stopped in the region for over a

²⁰⁵ Safford and Palacios, *Colombia: Fragmented Land*, 345-354. Palacios, *Between Legitimacy and Violence*, 135-169. W. John Green, *Gaitanismo, Left Liberalism, and Popular Mobilization in Colombia* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003), 261-269. Christopher Michael Cardona, "Politicians, Soldiers, and Cops: Colombia's "La Violencia" in Comparative Perspective" (PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2008), 18-20.

²⁰⁶ Troyan, "Ethnic Identity and State Formation," 96. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 334-370. Ortiz, *Uncertainties in Peasant Farming*, 33.

²⁰⁷ Ortiz, *Uncertainties in Peasant Farming*, 27, 33. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 334-370. Troyan, "Ethnic Identity and State Formation," 90-93, 155, 180-181. Rojas, *Si no fuera por los quince negros*, 70-73. Rappaport, "Territory and Tradition," 295. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 146-148. Quintero, *Territorio Ignoto*, 63.

²⁰⁸ Troyan, "Ethnic Identity and State Formation," 90.

²⁰⁹ Decree 38 of 1951. Balcázar Pardo, *Disposiciones sobre Indígenas*, 238-245.

decade. Meanwhile, *la Violencia* was forcing numerous Indians out of their *resguardos*, thus facilitating *de facto* encroachment by outsiders.²¹⁰ While the combined consequences of these developments have not yet been studied, it is clear they were complex. For instance, as a result of armed repression in their original Tolima, in 1953 a group of non-indigenous Communist peasants settled in a section of the *resguardo* of Araújo, which they named Riochiquito.²¹¹ This settlement survived for about twelve years until a massive offensive by the Colombian army dismantled it in 1965. Research on Riochiquito is still in its infancy²¹² but, as Triana noted, its presence in Tierradentro was crucial in triggering an important shift in the national legislation about *resguardos* in 1958.²¹³

The legacies of *la Violencia* in Tierradentro, thus, included displaced populations, destroyed villages, and land encroachment—but also new alliances to preserve the *resguardos* and the communities they anchored.

5.5.2 Indigenous Policies During the National Front, 1958-1980s

In 1958 Rojas Pinilla's unpopular dictatorship ended and a new civilian Conservative president was elected. He ruled under a new political arrangement known as the National Front (*Frente Nacional*). This formal agreement established that the Liberal and Conservative parties would divide access to political power evenly, alternating in the presidency and sharing all government

²¹⁰ AGN/MI/AI, caja 182, carpeta 1518, f. 42.

²¹¹ Riochiquito was one of three Communist *autodefensas*. Their detractors called them “*repúblicas independientes*” or independent republics. They had emerged in the late 1940s in rural regions where the Communist party had successfully helped peasants regain access to land. Harassed by local Conservatives and anti-Communist Liberals, these communities organized themselves into armed defensive guerrillas and withdrew to more removed and inaccessible areas. LeGrand, *Frontier Expansion and Peasant Protest*, 163.

²¹² This is a pioneer study: Robert Karl, “State Formation and the Origins of Colombia’s Contemporary Conflict: Tierradentro, 1958-66,” (Paper presented to the Comisión Fulbright de Colombia, 2007). Troyan also refers to this case. Troyan, “Ethnic Identity and State Formation,” 128-144.

²¹³ Triana, *Legislación indígena nacional*, 52-53.

elective and appointive positions equally. Initially set to end in 1974, parts of the system continued to operate until 1986. The National Front years witnessed significant economic growth, even as lack of free political competition alienated growing sectors of the population and timid structural reforms failed to reduce inequality.²¹⁴

By the time the National Front was born violence had receded to isolated pockets, one of them Riochiquito, which the government targeted with a varied mixture of coercive and constructive methods.²¹⁵ In Tierradentro, the leaders of Riochiquito, in an effort to gain local support, had enacted a political program that included the defense of indigenous lands and *cabildos*. This propelled some Cauca politicians who were trying to end on-the-ground support for Riochiquito to push for the passing of a new national *resguardo* law. One of these politicians presented Law 81 of 1958 explicitly as a middle point between those demanding *resguardo* division at all costs and those demanding their absolute protection. This law established that settlement areas could be expanded and that *resguardos* without proper titles would still be considered *baldíos*, but at the same time made it harder to divide those *resguardos* whose titles had been legally recognized. Moreover, it proposed ways to integrate the indigenous population that did not depend on dismantling their communal properties. Measures to incorporate indigenous groups into the national economy included granting them access to credit and other resources to grow crops and raise cattle on their lands, communal or otherwise.²¹⁶

In line with Law 81, national policy from the 1960s to the 1980s sought indigenous integration, yet in practice enabled the survival of communal lands in areas where indigenous communities remained numerous and organized. The government created new institutions to deal

²¹⁴ Bushnell, *The Making of Modern Colombia*, 222-225. Safford and Palacios, *Colombia: Fragmented Land*, 301-332.

²¹⁵ Palacios, *Between Legitimacy and Violence*, 165-166. Karl, "State Formation and the Origins."

²¹⁶ Triana, *Legislación indígena nacional*, 53-57, 280-286. Troyan, "Ethnic Identity and State Formation," 159-165.

with indigenous populations and began to devote new resources to “integrate” them into the nation, that is, to gradually transform them into modern peasants.²¹⁷ While missions continued to function in indigenous areas, it was now state agencies, rather than religious groups, who were presumed to be the proper primary guides of economic and cultural change. National policy continued to support *resguardo* dissolution, but it paired this with laws that banned the sale or mortgage of the divided land, and with state programs that sought to provide economic and cultural resources to help the Indians transition to undifferentiated peasants.²¹⁸ In this new context two more *resguardos* were declared extinct in Tierradentro in 1970, but only one of them was effectively dissolved.²¹⁹

Indeed by 1970, the balance of forces had started to change in favor of *resguardos*. In 1971 Colombia’s first self-identified indigenous organization emerged, precisely here in Cauca: the CRIC. This organization revived Quintín Lame’s demands for an end to indigenous exploitation and the defense of indigenous lands. They pushed for the strengthening of *resguardos* and the reincorporation of properties that had been part of *resguardos*. While the CRIC had its main support base among the indigenous populations of the western slopes, it became very influential in Tierradentro. This indigenous movement was able to advance its goals even though in the 1970s and 1980s Colombia was in the middle of a brutal civil war, as it is still to this day.²²⁰

²¹⁷ Jimeno and Triana, “El estado y la política indigenista,” 70-135.

²¹⁸ Triana, *Legislación indígena nacional*, 61-68. José María Rojas, “Ocupación y recuperación de los territorios indígenas en Colombia,” *Análisis Político* 41 (2000): 83. Jimeno and Triana, “El estado y la política indigenista,” 70-135.

²¹⁹ They were Calderas and Araújo. Calderas was never fully dissolved. Jimeno and Triana, “El estado y la política indigenista,” 74, 98, 100, 116.

²²⁰ Sevilla, *La pobreza de los excluidos*, 45. Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 148-153. Donna Lee Van Cott, *The Friendly Liquidation of the Past: the Politics of Diversity in Latin America*, Pitt Latin American series (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000), 39-47, 56.

It was this type of indigenous pressure that two decades after the founding of the CRIC led to the constitutional declaration of *resguardos* to be inalienable and secured indigenous communities' autonomy within these territories. In fact, the Constitution of 1991 granted indigenous communities unprecedented rights.²²¹ As this chapter hopes to have shown, that recognition was not a legislative gift from above but rather the culmination of nearly a century of complex struggles, in Tierradentro and beyond, that had fused local and national engagements, and judicial and political efforts, throughout.

5.6 CONCLUSION

By the mid-1950s outsiders had been encroaching on Tierradentro's indigenous lands for several decades. This push, however, had not succeeded in finishing off *resguardos* for good. In fact, most *resguardos* survived even after the national government took the lead in dividing the region's indigenous lands, starting in 1944.

There were a number of features that made dividing these *resguardos* especially challenging. First was the difficult topography of the region, characterized by high mountains and deep river valleys, which made the land surveyors' chores especially grueling. Second was the region's relative isolation due to the deficient roads that connected it internally and with Huila, Valle del Cauca, and the rest of Cauca. Finally, unlike anywhere else in the country, a large number of *resguardos* concentrated in Tierradentro, and they occupied an almost continuous area. Moreover, these communities had maintained strong *cabildos*, most of which

²²¹ Van Cott, *The Friendly Liquidation*, 83-88.

systematically opposed division. These factors meant that forcing a comprehensive parceling out would have demanded considerable resources, well beyond what the local municipal councils and even the Vincentians could command. And, clearly, beyond what the national government was willing to allocate for the task, even after 1944.

The absence of formal *resguardo* division did not prevent outsiders from encroaching on the indigenous lands. Before the 1920s newcomers appropriated plots on the grounds that they were public land, or by convincing *cabildos* either to grant them usufruct over a parcel or to lease them a plot.

These methods, however, did not lead to massive indigenous expropriation or to a generalized challenge to *resguardo* rights, for a number of reasons. First were the limited resources encroachers had access to. They enjoyed significant support from municipal authorities, but these officials' powers and resources were very limited. Cauca's *gobernación* favored *resguardo* division, but those of Tierradentro were not its priority and therefore it provided no resources to help municipal authorities. Second was the fact that Law 89 of 1890 and Cauca's Decree 74 of 1898 were still fully in place, and they vested indigenous *cabildos* with full powers to initiate the division, which none did in Tierradentro. Third was the indigenous communities' ability to counter some of these actions using a wide variety of strategies. Therefore, the land expropriations that occurred before the 1920s were localized instances, which got resolved on a case-to-case basis, depending on the particular abilities and resources of individual owners and particular indigenous communities. These expropriation methods continued to be used beyond the 1950s, but in the 1920s other, more damaging strategies emerged.

Two developments in the 1920s strengthened the position of the local sectors that, within Tierradentro, were pushing for *resguardo* dismemberment. The Vincentian mission gained more resources, which it used to promote its anti-*resguardo* agenda, and new legal measures gave municipal authorities more leverage against *resguardos*.

The first one of these measures related, paradoxically, to the national government's efforts to favor peasant settlers in their growing conflicts with large landowners. In this context a Supreme Court decision invalidated any document but the original title as proof of ownership over a piece of land. In Tierradentro, the missionaries and their allies used this ruling to claim that the titles *resguardos* held were invalid. But they did not stop there. Instead they argued, this time with no legal basis, that in the absence of valid titles it had to be assumed that *resguardos* extended only one league around, while the rest of the land was public and hence open for the taking. This formula effectively undermined some communities' confidence in their titles' validity, empowered people interested in penetrating indigenous lands, and was applied by government officials, missionaries, and particular individuals to dispossess indigenous communities.

The second measure that undermined Tierradentro *resguardos* in the 1920s was a 1926 decree from Cauca's governor that stripped *cabildos* of their veto power against the settlement areas that municipal councils could segregate from *resguardos* and open them for non-indigenous settlement. Municipal councils embraced this new power and created several settlement areas across the region.

In Tierradentro, settlement areas and challenges to *resguardo* titles combined in the 1920s to take land encroachment to new levels, and effectively reduced the *resguardos'* territorial reach. The Vincentians played a crucial role in ensuring the measures' application on

the ground. In fact Wila, the *resguardo* that missionary David González targeted personally, was the most affected by these actions. Nonetheless, this push did not amount to *de facto* dismemberment, since in Tierradentro *resguardos* remained functional units even in the cases where their territorial reach had shrunk.

Official anti-*resguardo* policies did not relent when Liberals regained the national presidency in 1930. It was under their watch that the first of Tierradentro's *resguardos* were effectively dissolved, as a result of road-building projects that by the 1940s promised to turn Tierradentro into a strategic connection between Cauca and its neighboring departments. In this context the national and departmental governments backed not only with laws, but also, for the first time, with resources, the division of some of the region's *resguardos*.

Dissolution was facilitated because the Ministry of Economy had devised an expedited process that consisted in declaring *resguardos* with deficient or inexistent titles to be "extinct." This action turned a *resguardo* into public land and gave its *parciales* the status of peasant settlers. Between 1944 and 1951 the national government declared six of Tierradentro *resguardos* extinct, and created a *comisión partidora* to carry out these resolutions.

During those years, however, the indigenous communities from Tierradentro found new allies against *resguardo* dismemberment. Ironically, these allies had emerged from the Liberal administrations' efforts to create new political and academic institutions as a way to modernize the country. Within these institutions emerged groups that systematically challenged the government's anti-*resguardo* policies. These sectors included the first generation of *indigenistas* and professional anthropologists, as well as leftist parties, especially the Communist Party of Colombia.

These groups' efforts to defend indigenous landholding did not gain official backing, but their actions had significant impacts. First, they systematically challenged, for the first time, several of the ideas that had sustained the government's policies. Second, using newspapers, academic publications, and public conferences, they projected the indigenous communities' problems into national and international consciousness. Finally, in Cauca *indigenistas* joined Communist activists to promote the indigenous communities' mobilization via Peasant Leagues. In Tierradentro several of these organizations developed during the 1930s and 1940s. Linking indigenous struggles with Communist activism imbued the former with new political salience, and created linkages not only with other indigenous communities but also with other working-class sectors. In sum, the activities of *indigenistas*, anthropologists, and Communist activists opened new strategies for indigenous communities precisely when the legal assault on communal landholding was strongest. This is especially clear in the case of Wila, a *parcialidad* that in 1945 managed to expel missionary González from its midst.

By the 1960s only four of the six *resguardos* that had been declared extinct had effectively dissolved. Those four were close to Inzá, had the best conditions to grow coffee, and had been under intense outside pressure since the early 1900s. That is, parceling occurred only in the cases in which the national government's interest coincided with the priorities of the non-indigenous local elites.

In 1970 one more *resguardo* was effectively extinguished in Tierradentro. This occurred, however, in a new context. During the late 1950s concerns about leftist activism in Tierradentro had spurred Caucan politicians to push for national laws that continued to advocate for *resguardo* dissolution, but also sought to provide economic and cultural resources that would foster the Indians' transition into modern peasants in a gradual manner. That is, dissolving

resguardos was no longer considered the only measure to integrate indigenous populations into the nation, and missionaries were no longer considered that process's only moral guides.

In the 1970s emerging indigenous movements, rooted in Cauca's Nasa communities, rejected dismemberment altogether and advocated instead for the *resguardos*' strengthening and expansion. When Colombia passed a new Constitution in 1991 it secured, for the first time since Independence, the Indians' inalienable right to their communal lands.

6.0 THE NASA INDIANS' CULTURE: CATHOLICISM AND NON-CATHOLICISM IN TIERRADENTRO, 1905-1950

As we have seen in previous chapters, the Vincentians were actively involved in many aspects of Tierradentro's life, from partisan and electoral politics to efforts at integrating the region into Colombia's domestic market to attempts to dissolve the indigenous communities' cultural and territorial base. Religion, however, was the reason they had arrived to Tierradentro in the first place. What was the Vincentians' religious agenda, then?

When I started my research I expected to find a wealth of information in missionary sources about the cultural exchange that occurred between the Vincentians and the Nasa Indians. To my surprise, those sources were utterly silent about any of the Indians' distinct cultural traits. The farthest most Vincentian reports went was referring to "picturesque" local practices integrated within the Indians' Catholic celebrations, such as presenting a glass of *chicha* to baby Jesus on Christmas Eve, or the offering of agricultural products during All Souls' Day.¹ The only exception that I have found was missionary David González, who in two of his writings referred to the Indians' traditions about a character called Juan Tama, and in one of his pieces made short

¹ Two examples: Larquère, "Notes sur la Préfecture Apostolique," 940. Yon de Olaeta, "La fiesta de navidad entre los indios 'paeces'," *Revista de Misiones* 11, no. 120 (1935).

comments about the Nasa shamans.² But even González dedicated nothing more than a few pages of his otherwise extensive published and unpublished production to these topics.

These omissions would lead any reader to assume that the Nasa Indians were truly at the verge of complete cultural and religious assimilation. Surprisingly, the professional anthropologists that started to study Tierradentro's Indians in the 1940s and 1950s found exactly the opposite. They uncovered an autochthonous Nasa culture that was highly complex and sophisticated.

These Indians, the anthropologists claimed, believed in a variety of spirits and forces that could harm human beings by sending diseases. The anthropologists offered different Nasa Yuwe words to name these spirits, but they did agree on their Spanish translation. The main ones were: “*duende*” (goblin), “*arco iris*” or “*arco*” (rainbow), and “*luciérnaga*” (firefly).³ The dead relatives' souls were another cause of disease. One anthropologist claimed it was these souls the Indians feared the most.⁴ Disease was also linked with *pijaos*, which the Indians identified with buried bones or any other archaeological remains, and *ptans* or “impurity.”⁵ Attacks from the evil shamans⁶ or “sorcerers” were also a major cause of disease.⁷

² González, “Misión de Tierradentro,” 216-217. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 61-62, 162-163, 290-291, 298.

³ The goblin was *Kl'iumb* for Hernández de Alba, *Glyomp* for Nachtigall, and *Kallumb* for Bernal Villa. The rainbow was *Etskituns* for Hernández de Alba, *Tus* for Nachtigall, and *Kitús* or *Kituns* for Bernal Villa. Hernández de Alba provided no name in Nasa Yuwe for the firefly, but for Nachtigall it was *Ech*, and *Echi* for Bernal Villa. Hernández, “Etnología de los Andes del sur,” 211, 213-214. Nachtigall, “Shamanismo entre los indios Paeces,” 230. Segundo E. Bernal Villa, “Medicina y magia entre los Paeces,” *Revista Colombiana de Antropología* 2, no. 2 (1954): 236-237. Bernal, “Religious Life of the Paez,” 89-93, 119. Bernal, “Aspectos de la cultura Páez,” 287. Hernández de Alba added *mokokoy* and *pitsuala* to the list.

⁴ Hernández, “Etnología de los Andes del sur,” 214. Bernal, “Religious Life of the Paez,” 129, 141.

⁵ Bernal, “Religious Life of the Paez,” 83, 85, 93-94, 115-116, 119-120. Bernal, “Medicina y magia entre los Paeces,” 228-232, 234. Hernández, “Etnología de los Andes del sur,” 210. Nachtigall, “Shamanismo entre los indios Paeces,” 235.

⁶ Nachtigall called them *ñiy*, and Bernal Villa *nasa jihi*. Nachtigall, “Shamanismo entre los indios Paeces.” Bernal, “Religious Life of the Paez.”

⁷ Bernal, “Medicina y magia entre los Paeces,” 235-236. Nachtigall, “Shamanismo entre los indios Paeces,” 224-225, 230. Bernal, “Aspectos de la cultura Páez,” 287-288. Bernal, “Religious Life of the Paez,” 90-92, 119, 141.

Anthropologists also described multiple rituals among the Nasa, most of which they interpreted as efforts to protect from the threats I already outlined, or to cure themselves once disease had struck. To perform these protective or healing rituals the Indians frequently required help from the good shamans or *thê'walas*.⁸ Mid-twentieth century anthropologists devoted significant portions of their writings to unraveling the shamans' training process, as well as their multifaceted diagnosing and curing techniques.⁹

The *thê'walas* depended both for learning and for healing on the help of a supernatural being called "*trueno*" in Spanish (thunder).¹⁰ One of the anthropologists claimed *trueno* was the most important supernatural being for the Nasa,¹¹ and that some of the other supernatural beings the Indians believed in were his sons. The most important of these sons was Juan Tama, but others like Llibán, Juan Chiracol, and Pedro Dimaes had also been famous *caciques* and shamans. Some of the rituals the anthropologists documented included offerings to *trueno* or Juan Tama.¹²

It is unclear how accurate these anthropologists' descriptions and interpretations were, and whether the practices and ideas they identified represented recent developments or had been in place for years or decades. There is one aspect, however, where their interpretations about the

⁸ *Thê'wala* was not the term mid-twentieth century anthropologists used. Nachtigall referred to them as *téyu*, and Bernal Villa as *té eu*. Through the years other names in Nasa Yuwe have been offered for shamans. Here I adopt the one Rappaport used in her book *Intercultural Utopias*. Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez." Nachtigall, "Shamanismo entre los indios Paeces."

⁹ Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 119-154. Bernal, "Medicina y magia entre los Paeces." Nachtigall, "Shamanismo entre los indios Paeces."

¹⁰ Bernal Villa claimed that "*duende*" not only made people ill, but also helped shamans in their curing. Bernal, "Medicina y magia entre los Paeces," 246-248. Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 89-90.

¹¹ Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 95-99.

¹² *Ibid.*, 99-106, 111-113. Nachtigall also mentioned *trueno*'s sons as famous *caciques* and shamans, but did not specify who they were. Nachtigall, "Shamanismo entre los indios Paeces," 240-241. Hernández de Alba did not mention *trueno* or any other of his sons but Juan Tama, who he claimed was a "*héroe civilizador*" (culture hero). Hernández, "Etnología de los Andes del sur," 212.

Nasa Indians' culture were clearly wrong: they dismissed Catholicism as a mere veneer covering the "authentic" indigenous culture.

An episode from 1920s Vitoncó illustrates how deeply the Indians cared about Catholicism and about having a priest present for certain important occasions. In 1926 the hostile attitude of the Indians from the community of Vitoncó had forced missionary González to move away from that village, where he had resided for four years. In spite of these hostilities, when Holy Week was nearing these Indians asked missionary González to visit their village to celebrate the special event. As the missionary refused, the Indians decided to appeal to several *thê'walas*, who performed a number of rituals to ensure González's visit for the important celebration.¹³ González himself reported this episode in his memoirs, and explained that at some point he did visit Vitoncó. (We have no way of knowing whether the Indians interpreted his return as the shamans' success). This episode encapsulates the complex ways in which Catholicism and non-Catholic traditions enmeshed in the Nasa Indians' culture.

In this chapter I trace how missionaries' and Indians' actions shaped and sustained this arrangement. In the first section I briefly examine the history of colonial missions in the region. Limitations in the existing literature prevent us from tracing the complexities that must have characterized this intercultural exchange. Nonetheless, reading the few existing accounts against the grain I suggest that in Tierradentro the Indians adopted certain Catholic practices in a context of religious and political autonomy, integrating them into a culture that maintained multiple non-Catholic elements. Moreover, while conflicts between the Indians and the missionaries existed, by the nineteenth century the missionaries considered the Indians already Catholic. In the second section I turn to the evangelizing efforts that Vincentians inaugurated in 1905, examining why, in

¹³ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 288-289.

spite of the vitality of the Indians' non-Catholic traditions, the missionaries' religious agenda focused on modifying and strengthening the Indians' Catholic practices, rather than on extirpation or conversion. I also examine the crucial role that *cabildos* and other indigenous officials played in the religious activities that missionaries supposedly supervised. In the third section I evaluate the strengths and limitations of mid-twentieth-century anthropologists' writings, which are by far the best sources to reconstruct what the ritual life of the Nasa Indians was like at the time. In the final section I show that accommodation between traditions of Catholic and non-Catholic origin characterized mid-twentieth century Nasa culture, and that customs traditionally decoupled as either Catholic or native were in practice tightly woven together into the fabric of Nasa ritual life.

6.1 CATHOLIC EVANGELIZATION BEFORE THE VINCENTIANS, 1613-1905

In 1905 the Vincentians were arriving to a region where Catholic missionaries had established uninterrupted presence since 1682.¹⁴ In spite of this protracted contact, there exist only a handful of books and articles on the colonial evangelization of Tierradentro's Indians, and most of these studies use missionary González's pioneering treatise as their major source. The first part of González's book was mostly an unsystematic ecclesiastical history of Tierradentro, in which he used the parochial books to establish which missionaries had served there and when, describe

¹⁴ See Table 3. The first missionaries arrived in 1613 but left in 1640. Ezequiel Uricoechea, "Introducción," in *Vocabulario Páez-Castellano: catecismo, nociones gramaticales y dos pláticas*, ed. Eugenio del Castillo y Orozco (Paris: Maison Neuve i Cia. Libreros Editores, 1877), ix. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 58, 64-73, 79-100, 160. Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 31-35. Manuel Rodríguez, *El Marañón y Amazonas* (Madrid: Imprenta de Antonio Gonzalez de Reyes, 1684), 78. Luis Carlos Mantilla Ruiz, "Las misiones entre los indios páez de la Gobernación de Neiva," in *Los franciscanos en Colombia, 1600-1700* (Bogotá: Editorial Kelly, 1987). Gregorio Arcila Robledo, "Misiones franciscanas de los páez," in *Las misiones franciscanas en Colombia: estudio documental* (Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional, 1950).

some of their achievements, and detail the evolution of the region's parochial division. This work, however, omitted almost any reference to the Indian's culture. The only hints he provided about the transformations they underwent were rather superficial remarks as to when the Indians had adopted certain Catholic practices. Nevertheless, González's book remains the most detailed work on the history of the region's missions, and has been widely used by scholarly and non-academic writers.

In stark contrast with González, subsequent writers were keenly interested in the Indians' history, but their contributions were modest because they added almost no new primary sources to their accounts.¹⁵ Given the scarcity of published primary sources¹⁶ and the fact that existing studies have added only a few unpublished documents, it is not possible for me to reconstruct the details of religious practice and change in the colonial era. Nonetheless, reading the available primary and secondary sources carefully and sometimes against the grain offers hints that colonial evangelization in Tierradentro involved accommodation and resistance from both the Indians and the missionaries.

¹⁵ Bernal Villa based his dissertation's chapter about Tierradentro's colonial evangelization on González, the few existing published primary sources, and one single additional unpublished archival document. Bernal, "Religious Life of the Páez," 30-53, 183-184. After this dissertation no scholar took up again the topic until the 1980s, when anthropologist Joanne Rappaport analyzed one colonial and one early-republican religious movement led by Nasa Indians. While she uncovered valuable primary sources, her study centered on the movements and considered the larger evangelization process only marginally. Rappaport, "El mesianismo y las transformaciones." Also in the 1980s anthropologist Myriam Jimeno Santoyo published an article on the history of the missions in Tierradentro. Unlike its predecessors, Jimeno's work extended into the late twentieth century. For the colonial period, nonetheless, she relied on González, Bernal Villa, and Rappaport, adding no new primary sources. Jimeno, "Cauca: las armas de lo sagrado," 163-175.

¹⁶ They are: Rodríguez, *El Marañón y Amazonas*. Castillo y Orozco, *Vocabulario Páez-Castellano*.

6.1.1 Colonial Evangelization

Catholicism started to make significant inroads in Tierradentro only by the early eighteenth century, when the Franciscans and especially their successors, the secular priests, began to convince indigenous adults to baptize both themselves and their children. Moreover, by the first decades of the eighteenth century secular priests started to introduce the sacraments of confirmation, matrimony, and last rites.¹⁷ In the case of baptism, priestly sources claimed that it was already universal by the early twentieth century.¹⁸ Although providing little evidence, González claimed that by the late seventeenth century the Indians had already adopted the festivals in honor of Catholic saints that characterized Nasa religiosity in the twentieth century.¹⁹ Eighteenth-century priests did encourage these celebrations, but it remains unclear how exactly they were organized.²⁰

Trying to understand these transformations scholars have favored two main explanations. Some have depicted them as the result of the missionaries' top-down imposition.²¹ Others have seen them as part of an indigenous bottom-up strategy to fool their oppressors into thinking they were complying (while in reality they were resisting).²² Although the existing evidence is too scant to trace the exact way these changes came about, current comparative literature suggests

¹⁷ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 64-73, 79-96.

¹⁸ "Colombie. Nataga et Tierradentro," *Annales de la Congrégation de la Mission* 71 (1906): 91.

¹⁹ In his whole book González mentioned only one case for the colonial period. It was a celebration in Tóez in 1693. The description, however, is too sketchy to determine whether this festival's organization was similar to the one Vincentians and anthropologists documented in the twentieth century, as missionary González claimed. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 74-75, 77. Bernal, "La fiesta de San Juan," 220. González devoted a full chapter to these celebrations, but most of it referred to the twentieth century (even though he failed to explain it). González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 74-78.

²⁰ Missionary Castillo y Orozco explained in the 1750s that for twenty years he had been celebrating the Holy Week in the village of Vitoncó, where he convened all the Indians from his parish. Castillo, *Vocabulario Páez-Castellano*, 57.

²¹ Hernández, "Etnología de los Andes del sur," 213.

²² Rappaport, "El mesianismo y las transformaciones," 383, 393, 408. Jimeno, "Cauca: las armas de lo sagrado," 168-172, 210.

that intercultural exchange is much more complex than mere imposition or resistance (even by deception).

At a minimum, there is evidence that forced imposition was not the tone of the missionaries' evangelizing efforts among the Nasa. First, the missionaries lacked the means to unilaterally impose their agenda. They were few (usually one or two taking care of the whole region at any given time),²³ they stayed generally for short periods and, according to González, many were old and had a very deficient education.²⁴ Second, these evangelizing efforts were developing at a time when, as I explained in chapter 2, Tierradentro had gained significant political autonomy from colonial authorities.²⁵ Hence the Indians adopted baptism and the other sacraments in a context of great autonomy and little external oversight. As I will show later, the Nasa from Tierradentro retained significant religious autonomy even after the Vincentians founded their mission in 1905.

Emphasizing imposition or deceit, the existing literature has paid little attention to the reasons the Indians might have had to accept the priests' teachings voluntarily. However, a careful reading reveals some factors that could have facilitated their reception of Catholicism. First, some priests were willing to support the Indians' struggle to secure their lands. For example, in the 1660s the Jesuit Juan de Rivera demarcated the *resguardo* of Togoima with the Guyumús *caciques'* support, while in the early eighteenth century priests Juan del Río and Cristóbal Morriones y Moreno supported the Togoima Indians' side in litigation against Spanish

²³ At least some of the secular priests were accompanied by several relatives. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 68, 79. In the mid-1700s priest Eugenio del Castillo explained that he alone was in charge of a little over two thousand Indians in the parish of Tálaga. Castillo, *Vocabulario Páez-Castellano*, 84.

²⁴ See Table 3. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 60.

²⁵ Moreover, these authorities seem to have provided the missionaries with armed support only on occasion. For example, when in 1713 the priest Salvador de Salamanca pursued the forced concentration of the Indians from the left margin of the Páez River in the village of Schitoques (modern Ricaurte). González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 146-147. González, "Misión de Tierradentro," 220-221.

landowners over possession of Itaiibe.²⁶ These examples also show that missionaries cannot be portrayed as mere agents of colonial control,²⁷ for some of them sometimes sided with the Indians.

Second, Catholicism could prove a useful tool to legitimize and strengthen the *caciques'* territorial and political claims before Spanish authorities. For example, in the 1708 *resguardo* title for Vitoncó the *encomendero* granting the title stressed the local *cacique's* interest in advancing Catholicism, asserting that in the village of Vitoncó priest Matías Villarroel already had a house, while a spot for building a chapel had also been selected.²⁸ This suggests that religious compliance could have played an important role in legitimizing indigenous claims.

Moreover, material and political limitations meant that to advance their agenda colonial priests had to win the local Indians' good will at least to some degree. Although fragmentary, there is evidence that some missionaries allied with Tierradentro *caciques*. For example, in the early eighteenth century priest Salvador Salamanca built Togoima's church next to the local *cacique's* house, which suggests that some kind of understanding existed between these two characters.²⁹ Also, in 1721 a disposition from Popayán's bishop showed that seeking the *caciques'* support was a recognized evangelization strategy. That year during a pastoral visit to Tierradentro the bishop ordered the region's missionaries to treat "very well the principal Indians," so that these Indians would "attract" the "minor" ones.³⁰

Besides the priests' alliances with some *caciques*, there were two other factors that might have facilitated the adoption of specific practices. The first one was that Indians had the ability to

²⁶ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 140-142, 152. González, "Misión de Tierradentro," 219.

²⁷ Jimeno, "Cauca: las armas de lo sagrado," 161-165.

²⁸ AGN/MI/AI, caja 182, carpeta 1526, f. 12v. Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 103, 176-177. According to some oral traditions Matías Villarroel was Juan Tama's secretary. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 73, 166. Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 103-104.

²⁹ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 152. Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 47.

³⁰ "muy bien a los indios principales," "atraigan," "menores." González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 87.

organize and officiate in some of the new ceremonies. In the case of baptism, at some point indigenous individuals started to perform a simplified version of the ritual. For example, during a pastoral visit to Tierradentro in 1756 Popayán's bishop attested that some indigenous parents were putting "the water in case of need" to their newborns.³¹ Here the bishop was in all likelihood referring to the church-approved practice of allowing any Christian to apply the "aguas del socorro" (waters of relief) to a newborn who was in imminent peril of death.³² In Tierradentro indigenous individuals continued to administer baptisms after the eighteenth century. González, who had access to the local ecclesiastical archives, asserted (without naming his sources) that colonial missionaries in the region had managed to train from within their indigenous flock "people suitable for dispensing baptism in a valid manner."³³ In 1936 German geographer Georg Bürg visited Tierradentro and reported that in places far from the permanent missionary houses the Indians took care of baptism themselves (although he did not explain how).³⁴ Anthropologist Hernández de Alba, who started visiting Tierradentro around the same time as Bürg, explained that in the region's villages the local indigenous sacristan performed a baptism with water four or five days after a child was born, while baptism with oil by the priest happened at a later time in the church.³⁵

³¹ "el agua en caso de necesidad." González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 89.

³² This practice had been established in the Third Council of Lima (1582-1583). Miguel Raúl López Breard, "Creencias populares del Nordeste: "poras", "anuncios" y "alma en pena"," in *Primer Encuentro sobre Antroposemiótica de la Muerte y el Morir: dialogismo(s) transdisciplinar(es)*. Programa y Resúmenes (Misiones, Argentina: Universidad Nacional de Misiones, Facultad de Humanidades y Ciencias Sociales, 2011), 9.

³³ "personas que podían suministrar el bautismo válidamente." González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 74. In 2002 the "aguas del socorro" still existed among the inhabitants of the Manabí province in Ecuador. Marcelo Naranjo Villavicencio, ed. *La cultura popular en el Ecuador. Tomo IX. Manabí* (Cuenca: Centro Interamericano de Artesanías y Artes Populares, 2002), 52. In the 1980s Godoy claimed that in a rural community in Paraguay giving the "aguas del socorro" was a syncretistic practice, although the local inhabitants claimed to be Catholic. María Godoy Ziógas, *Familia rural y productividad femenina. Un caso típico: la comunidad de Recoleta, en el distrito de Acahay* (Asunción: IICA, 1982), 22.

³⁴ Georg Bürg, "Beitrag zur Ethnographie Südkolumbiens auf Grund eigener Forschungen," *Ibero-Amerikanisches Archiv* 11, no. 3 (1937): 342.

³⁵ Hernández, "Etnología de los Andes del sur," 203.

Indians also controlled some aspects of the saints' festivals. Details on these celebrations are scant, but in 1693 a priest recorded that indigenous officials had paid him the needed alms, and that the Indians had elected the officials that would be in charge of next year's celebration.³⁶ In the 1950s the Indians were still largely in charge of these festivals, as I examine later in this chapter. Additionally, colonial priests relied on the *cabildos* to gather the Indians inside the church when they visited each community.³⁷

The second element that could have facilitated the new practices' adoption was that some of them seem to have resembled or overlapped with rituals the Indians already performed. This could have been the case with the use of water during baptism, since washing and bathing were essential components of several Nasa rituals. In the case of the saints' festivals, in the 1890s French merchant Douay stressed that the missionaries had made these celebrations "coincide" (although he failed to explain exactly in what way) with the Indians' pre-Conquest ones.³⁸ In the 1950s anthropologist Bernal Villa stressed that the saints' festivals had retained the same features as the Indians' previous festivities: processions, dancing, alcohol drinking, and sexual relations.³⁹ Anthropologists in the 1940s and 1950s would emphasize these similarities to downplay the impact of Catholicism, claiming that it had barely scratched the surface of Nasa pre-Columbian culture. Bernal Villa also asserted that some of the saints' festivals the Indians adopted most enthusiastically coincided with important dates in the Indians' agricultural calendar. Hence Saint John's, Saint Peter's and Saint Paul's celebrations occurred when the

³⁶ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 77-78.

³⁷ Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 42, 52.

³⁸ "coincider." Douay, "Contribution a l'Américanisme," 757.

³⁹ Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 159, 108-110, 166.

corncobs were sprouting, while the festival of the Immaculate Conception happened when grains were in abundance.⁴⁰

Their adoption of some Catholic practices did not mean that Tierradentro Indians were accepting the missionaries' agenda fully or meekly. In the mid-eighteenth century priest Eugenio del Castillo y Orozco, who spent almost three decades in the region, complained that the Indians refused to congregate themselves around the villages that civil and ecclesiastical authorities had erected in each *parcialidad*, partly because they had "a natural aversion against learning the Christian doctrine."⁴¹ Moreover, Castillo y Orozco denounced that even those Indians who claimed to accept Catholicism had nothing but an "empty observance" and forgot the priest's teachings very easily. He also lamented that the Indians "obeyed [the priest] only when they wanted to," resisting his demands to attend mass and hear his doctrinal lectures on a regular basis. Once they even ignored his order to congregate in a village to welcome a Bishop.⁴² Meanwhile some Indians were not only indifferent but openly hostile towards the missionaries. Castillo y Orozco and his brother, who also served as missionary in Tierradentro, claimed that each had been victim of separate murder attempts.⁴³

The missionaries' relations with *caciques* could also turn tense. In the 1750s priest Castillo y Orozco explained that many a time he had endangered his life attempting, without much success, to put an end to the Indians' "*bailes*" (celebrations). With these actions Castillo y Orozco was antagonizing the *caciques*, in whose honor the *bailes* were held.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Bernal, "La fiesta de San Juan," 220. Bernal Villa also claimed that the Indians used religious festivals celebrated at different points in the year to name the months of the year. Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 55.

⁴¹ "natural aversión a aprender la doctrina cristiana." Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 39.

⁴² "vana observancia", "obedecían [al sacerdote] cuando querían." Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 41-42, 51-52.

⁴³ Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 41.

⁴⁴ Castillo, *Vocabulario Páez-Castellano*, 85.

Nasa-led religious movements that sprouted in Tierradentro in 1706-1707, 1727, and 1833 provide further confirmation that relations between the missionaries and the Indians were not free of conflict. For one thing, Nasa Indians led all three, and two of them (we have no significant information for 1727) recruited Indians exclusively. That is, they explicitly excluded Catholic priests. For another thing, priests denounced the movements as heretical.⁴⁵

Moreover, these events demonstrate that when confronted with what they saw as dangerous heresies, colonial authorities were willing to curb Nasa religious autonomy. In the two cases where information is available, colonial officials took swift and decisive action. In 1707 they seized the leader and some of his acolytes, while in 1833 they executed one of the leaders. In both cases these actions successfully quelled the movements.⁴⁶

The documents Spanish authorities produced in the wake of these movements provide an exceptional wealth of information about their participants' views and practices, and show that they encompassed Catholic and non-Catholic elements.⁴⁷ In 1706-1707 Catholic elements included the erection of a chapel containing symbols like a cross and saints' images, where a Nasa leader celebrated a ceremony similar to a Catholic mass while also asking the Indians to repeat Catholic prayers in Spanish and catechism lessons, and to confess. In 1833 the Indians appropriated the church in the village of Suin and likened indigenous children to saints by taking them in procession and placing them in niches located in the church's walls. Non-Catholic elements have been harder to interpret, but using colonial sources about other indigenous

⁴⁵ Rappaport, "El mesianismo y las transformaciones." González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 148, 167-168.

⁴⁶ Rappaport, "El mesianismo y las transformaciones." González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 148, 167-168.

⁴⁷ Scholars disagree on the relative importance of Catholic and non-Catholic elements. Anthropologist Rappaport has argued that Catholicism was nothing but a superficial layer that the Indians adopted in order to hide their true agenda, which identified exclusively with their pre-Columbian culture. Others, however, have suggested that the movements expressed a deeper mixture of religious traditions, mixture that characterized Nasa culture at the time. An example of the first position is: Rappaport "El mesianismo y las transformaciones," 383, 393-394, 408. An example of the second position is: Hernández, *The Highland Tribes of Southern*, 955. Castillo, *Liberation Theology from Below*, 24-25.

populations in Colombia and the Andean region, as well as information about modern Nasa culture, anthropologist Rappaport has tried to unravel their meaning. The main elements she identified include, for the 1706-1707 movement, notions about the destruction of the world by a burning sun, landslides as supernatural signs, and the sacred character of lonely and hard-to-reach places. For the 1833 movement non-Catholic elements included thunder-like sounds signaling the presence of a divinity and the ritual drinking of *chicha* and *guarapo*.⁴⁸ Importantly, in both cases the supernatural characters spoke Nasa Yuwe.

These movements also illustrate that the ongoing exchange between missionaries and Indians was resulting not in the erasure of the Indians' particular culture, but rather in a culture where Catholicism and the Indians' other beliefs intermingled.

6.1.2 Catholicism and Non-Catholicism in Nineteenth-Century Tierradentro

Apart from the Nasa-led movements, there is very little information on the Indians' relations with missionaries between the late eighteenth and the early twentieth centuries. These interactions could not have been free of conflict, as the emergence of the aforementioned movements illustrates. On the other hand, a few reports from the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries suggest that hostility towards the priests, at least in its more open manifestations (such as murder attempts), was a thing of the past.⁴⁹ Moreover, it must have been

⁴⁸ Rappaport identified additional elements that she considered part of a pre-Columbian tradition, but I found that many of them had very little empirical evidence to support them. See: Rappaport "El mesianismo y las transformaciones."

⁴⁹ In 1890 a priest that visited the region around Pueblito (current Belalcázar) commented that the Indians revered the priest and had a very simple faith. Alejandro Rada and Ángel Córdoba M. "Informe de los comisionados enviada a los pueblos de Tierradentro". *Registro Oficial* 26 febrero 1890, 125-126. In 1905 the Vincentian priest Emilio Larquère made a short visit to the region and reported that the Indians had been very welcoming. Emilio Larquère,

during this period when some Catholic practices and ideas gained universal acceptance among the Indians, especially baptism.⁵⁰

During the nineteenth century opinions on the religious status of the Nasa Indians were divided and even contradictory. The very few mentions priests made stated curtly that the Indians were Catholic, even though their faith was “very simple.”⁵¹ In contrast, other outsiders that visited the region during the same period stressed that the Indians had retained several of their former beliefs in spite of the missionaries’ efforts, and one of them even asserted that the missionaries had utterly failed to convert the Indians.⁵²

The available sources, especially on the side of the priests, are too scant and short to allow any in-depth analysis of the cultural changes that the Nasa Indians were undergoing. However, the coexistence of assertions so contradictory about their religion suggests a society where, on the one hand, enough non-Catholic practices and beliefs were present that some observers construed them as proof that the Indians were not fully (or even partially) converted; and on the other hand sufficient Catholic practices and ideas had been adopted that the priests could claim the Indians for Christendom. I propose that by the time the Vincentians arrived in Tierradentro in 1905 at least some aspects of the Nasa culture could be considered “popular Catholicism” according to Michael P. Carroll’s definition. That is, the Nasa had some rituals and beliefs that, first, were organized around supernatural beings legitimized by the Catholic church,

“Lettre de M. E. Larquère, prêtre de la Mission, á M. A. Fiat, Supérieur Général,” *Annales de la Congrégation de la Mission* 71 (1906): 94-99.

⁵⁰ In 1906 a Vincentian periodical explained that the Indians from Tierradentro were all baptized. “Colombie. Nataga et Tierradentro,” 91.

⁵¹ Rada and Córdoba, “Informe de los comisionados enviada a los pueblos de Tierradentro,” 125-126. In 1905 Popayán’s Archbishop said that all the Indians in Tierradentro were Catholic. ACM/CG, Boîte 497, Province Colombie, Maison Tierradentro (missions), 1905-1912. (Carta del Arzobispo de Popayán, Manuel José, al Sr. Fiat, Superior General de la Congregación de la Misión. Popayán, 29 enero 1905).

⁵² Douay, “Contribution a l’Américanisme,” 757. Henri Pittier de Fábrega, “Ethnographic and Linguistic Notes on the Paez Indians of Tierra Adentro, Cauca, Colombia,” *Memoires of the American Anthropological and Ethnographical Societies* 1, no. 1 (1907): 324. Cuervo, *Estudios arqueológicos y etnográficos*, 2: 191-192.

and second, were openly and publicly endorsed by the local Catholic clergy.⁵³ Popular Catholicism, nonetheless, was but one part of the larger Nasa culture.

The merchants and travelers that quinine exploitation had attracted to Tierradentro in the nineteenth century recorded bits and pieces of the Nasa Indians' non-Catholic practices. These descriptions not only were fragmentary, but also were wrapped around layers of prejudice and scorn, and therefore provide no sense of the Nasa worldview's complexities. These complexities remained uncharted until professional anthropologists began the rigorous study of this culture in the 1940s and 1950s, as I discuss later in this chapter.

Nonetheless, these merchants did document the existence of particular practices and beliefs among the Nasa Indians. A few notions that colonial sources had reported seem to have disappeared by the nineteenth century, since these later sources made no reference to them. One of these notions was the Indians' belief in a deity identified with the sun and called *Itaqui*.⁵⁴ The other one referred to a deity called *Guequiáu*, whom had given the Indians their laws.⁵⁵ It seems, however, that *Itaqui*'s and *Guequiáu*'s fates were not identical. By the 1950s the former had been definitely forgotten, but anthropologists claimed *Guequiáu*'s attributes, if not his name, still existed in figures like Juan Tama and Llibán.⁵⁶

Colonial and nineteenth-century sources reported other cultural practices and ideas that apparently survived into the mid-twentieth century and beyond. One of them was that rivers, high plateaus (*páramos*), caves, and lakes were dangerous places because spirits or supernatural

⁵³ Michael P. Carroll, *Madonnas that Maim: Popular Catholicism in Italy since the Fifteenth Century* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 9-12.

⁵⁴ Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 54, 110.

⁵⁵ Castillo, *Vocabulario Páez-Castellano*, 52-53.

⁵⁶ Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 111.

beings, including snakes, resided there.⁵⁷ These sources also reported notions about humans having more than one soul,⁵⁸ women being impure while giving birth,⁵⁹ special burial ceremonies,⁶⁰ and the existence of numerous supernatural beings.⁶¹

The existence of these non-Catholic traditions did not prevent nineteenth-century priests from claiming that the Nasa had been successfully converted and were, in fact, universally Catholic. This view responded, in all likelihood, to the very visible presence of the Nasa “popular Catholicism” mentioned above. The Vincentians would share the conviction that the Nasa had been successfully converted long ago, and it would guide their religious agenda.

6.2 VINCENTIAN EVANGELIZATION IN TIERRADENTRO, 1905-1950

Just like their nineteenth century predecessors, the Vincentians that arrived after 1905 believed that the Nasa Indians were already Catholic.⁶² Although, as I mentioned before, not everybody shared this conviction, the Vincentians had sound reasons for their opinion. After all, these Indians had indeed embraced for some time ideas and practices that the missionaries regarded as quintessentially Catholic. For example, missionary González explained that the Indians’ Catholicism, legacy of the colonial missionaries’ efforts, could be seen in the Indians’ ideas about heaven, their need for baptism, and their celebration of religious festivals honoring each

⁵⁷ Castillo, *Vocabulario Páez-Castellano*, 48-49. Douay, “Contribution a l’Américanisme,” 759. Cuervo, *Estudios arqueológicos y etnográficos*, 1: 22-23, 55-56.

⁵⁸ Castillo, *Vocabulario Páez-Castellano*, 38.

⁵⁹ Cuervo, *Estudios arqueológicos y etnográficos*, 2: 176.

⁶⁰ Cross, *Report by Robert Cross*, 32-33.

⁶¹ Cross, *Report by Robert Cross*, 33. Castillo, *Vocabulario Páez-Castellano*, 38, 48. Cuervo, *Estudios arqueológicos y etnográficos*, 1: 24.

⁶² For example: ACM/CG, Boîte 276, Province Colombie, Visiteur, 1948. (Carta de Martiniano Trujillo, sobre Tierradentro. Bogotá, 22 agosto 1948).

village's patron saint.⁶³ Additionally, there exists some evidence that the Indians self-identified as Christians,⁶⁴ an element that would have supported Vincentians' views about the Indians' religious status.

Moreover, in spite of assertions from other outsiders that the Indians had maintained several non-Catholic traditions, Vincentian writings did not identify any serious religious threats to the Indians' Catholicism in Tierradentro. On a few occasions they mentioned the existence of "superstitions" (without describing them),⁶⁵ but they presented them more as inadequate practices arising from lack of clerical supervision than as significant religious challenges.⁶⁶ And, most certainly, they never linked them with a competing Nasa religion.

Furthermore, "superstitions" were not the missionaries' main frustration with their Nasa flock. The Vincentians worried instead that the Indians lacked "a spirit that would easily incline [them] to religion."⁶⁷ González claimed that the Indians were not interested in religious instruction or in following all the commandments or living according to the church's teachings. He explained that they considered absolutely necessary only three sacraments (baptism, marriage, and the last confession),⁶⁸ but avoided Sunday mass and regular confession.⁶⁹

⁶³ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 74-75, 115. González, "Misión de Tierradentro," 222. Larquère, "Informe del Prefecto Apostólico," 18.

⁶⁴ For example, in some stories that Bernal Villa collected the Nasa identified themselves collectively as "the Christians." Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 179-181. Bernal, "Aspectos de la cultura Páez," 301. Ortiz, who did fieldwork in San Andrés in the early 1960s, explained that the Indians considered themselves Catholic, as did the priests and the non-indigenous settlers that inhabited portions of the *resguardo*. Ortiz, *Uncertainties in Peasant Farming*, 32.

⁶⁵ Larquère, "Lettre de M. E. Larquère," 99. Larquère, "Informe del Prefecto Apostólico," 18. Larquère, "Notes sur la Préfecture Apostolique," 940.

⁶⁶ In 1905 Larquère expressed that superstitions were to be expected in Tierradentro, since "it is impossible that in populations so abandoned there would be no superstitious practices." Larquère, "Lettre de M. E. Larquère," 99. In 1925 David González expressed a similar idea when asserting that lack of priests could lead to superstitions and excesses. González, "Misión de Tierradentro," 222.

⁶⁷ "espíritu que fácilmente se inclina a la religión." González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 60.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 60, 256.

Moreover, they were not solemn enough during religious celebrations.⁷⁰ Tramecourt considered that the main obstacles facing the missionaries were the Indians' apathy, routine, and lack of interest.⁷¹

Just like in the case of superstitions, the Vincentians did not identify any particular cultural notion as the source of the Indians' religious deficiencies (as some anthropologists would do in the 1940s and 1950s). In fact, as I explained at the beginning of this chapter, the Vincentians seldom mentioned any aspect of the Indians' culture at all in their records.

For the missionaries the problem was not one of religious belief but of racial nature, for they attributed the Indians' inadequacies to their innate tendencies. The missionaries believed the Indians lacked the ability to grasp certain important concepts. González implied this deficiency when he argued that the Indians' unruly behavior during mass responded to the fact that, in spite of the priests' prodigious efforts to explain the doctrine, "nobody knows that Jesus Christ is in the mass, nobody knows what the Eucharist is, who the Blessed Sacrament is."⁷² Other priests shared González's opinion that the Indians had serious intellectual limitations. Nicasio Buitrago, for example, explained that the Indians' forehead was "skinny because it harbored no ideas." For Buitrago they were "apathetic by nature," had a "sleepy imagination," and were in a "lethargy that makes them resemble beasts."⁷³ The Vincentians also criticized what they considered the

⁶⁹ Ibid., 173, 77, 256. In 1956 the anthropologist Segundo Bernal Villa explained that in Calderas very few people attended mass even during the religious festivals. Moreover, sometimes even the officials in charge of the celebration failed to attend. Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 74, 76.

⁷⁰ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 283-284. González, "Misión de Tierradentro," 219.

⁷¹ Tramecourt, "Misiones de Tierradentro," 40. ACM/CG, Boîte 276, Province Colombie, Préfecture Apostolique de Tierradentro, 1916-1946. (Carta de Louis Tramecourt, noticias de la misión. Inzá-Belalcázar, 28 julio 1922).

⁷² González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 284.

⁷³ "enjuta porque no alberga una idea," "... letargo que los asemeja a los brutos." Buitrago, "Tierradentro," 228-229.

Indians' natural tendency to isolation and their rejection of all interaction with whites.⁷⁴ González explained that the Indians' desire for isolation (expressed in their dispersed settlement) made it impossible for the few missionaries that worked in the region to maintain regular contact with the majority of their parishioners.⁷⁵ Moreover, González argued that what he labeled the Indians' "hatred" towards whites had kept them from learning the latter's virtues, one of which was "Christian life."⁷⁶ As I explained chapter 3, the missionaries targeted many of these issues as part of their program to "civilize" the Indians.

In sum, the Vincentians never referred to the Indians as pagan or syncretistic, but merely as not-very-pious and not-very-intelligent Catholics. The missionaries' view that the Nasa were already Catholic meant that their religious agenda did not focus on conversion or extirpation. Instead, they aimed at modifying or strengthening certain practices (the saints' festivals), introducing new ones (especially new devotions and devotional associations), and strengthening the physical presence of the Church.

6.2.1 The Vincentians' Religious Agenda

David González left testimony of the Nasa Indians' particular gusto for religious festivals in the early twentieth century. He explained that when asked to attend Sunday mass on a regular basis, the Indians invariably responded that what they preferred from God was to "see him being born, see him dying," that is, explained González, to participate in the Christmas and Holy Week

⁷⁴ In 1935 Buitrago asserted that "it is proven that the Indians everywhere are naturally refractory to civilization, and that is why they hate the cities and the commerce with whites..." "... está probado que los indios en todas partes son naturalmente refractarios a la civilización, y por eso odian las ciudades y el comercio con los blancos." Ibid., 228.

⁷⁵ González, "Misión de Tierradentro," 220-221.

⁷⁶ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 60-61.

celebrations.⁷⁷ González in fact considered that introducing these festivities in Tierradentro had been the colonial missionaries' single greatest religious achievement.⁷⁸ In the 1950s anthropologist Segundo E. Bernal Villa also stressed the importance of these occasions for the Nasa communities, which had no other collective celebrations.⁷⁹

In spite of the centrality that different observers attributed to celebrations linked to the Catholic annual calendar in the Nasa Indians' lives, next to nothing is known about which ones the Indians celebrated and how they were organized before the Vincentians arrived to Tierradentro.⁸⁰ A few sources mention the *ofrenda* (offering), a celebration that took place during All Souls' Day and that included offerings of foodstuff for the souls of the Indians' dead relatives.⁸¹ Other sources mention Saint John's festival.⁸² This suggests that before the Vincentians' arrival the Nasa organized these celebrations out of their own initiative, instead of depending on the priests' rather irregular visits.

It is not known how widespread these celebrations were before the Vincentians arrived, but the missionaries took it upon themselves to establish them in every single *parcialidad*.⁸³

⁷⁷ "...del [sic] Dios le gustan al indio dos cosas, verlo nacer, verlo morir." González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 256, 77. In 1935 Olaeta said a Vincentian that had spent many years in Tierradentro told him the same thing. Olaeta, "La fiesta de navidad entre los indios 'paeces'," 205.

⁷⁸ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 74.

⁷⁹ Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 12.

⁸⁰ In 1953 Bernal Villa claimed that David González had told him that these festivals had been organized in the way the Vincentians first found them since 1689, but neither of them provided further evidence or details. Bernal Villa, "La fiesta de San Juan," 220. The priest Eugenio del Castillo y Orozco, who worked in Tierradentro from 1740-1761, claimed that he had established the annual celebration of Holy Week in Vitoncó. Castillo, *Vocabulario Páez-Castellano*, 57.

⁸¹ Douay, "Contribution a l'Américanisme," 757. Cuervo, *Estudios arqueológicos y etnográficos*, 2: 192.

⁸² Larquère, "Lettre de M. E. Larquère," 97-99.

⁸³ Anthropologist Nina S. de Friedemann noted that organizing similar religious festivals to attract indigenous peoples was a widespread practice in the 1970s among Catholic missionaries working in indigenous frontiers. Nina S. de Friedemann, "Niveles contemporáneos de indigenismo en Colombia," in *Indigenismo y aniquilamiento de indígenas en Colombia*, ed. Juan Friede, Nina S. de Friedemann, and Darío Fajardo (Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Facultad de Ciencias Humanas, Departamento de Antropología, 1975), 60-62. Nina S. de Friedemann, "La Fiesta del Indio en Quibdó: un caso de relaciones interétnicas en Colombia," in *Indigenismo y aniquilamiento de indígenas en Colombia*, ed. Juan Friede, Nina S. de Friedemann, and Darío Fajardo (Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Facultad de Ciencias Humanas, Departamento de Antropología, 1975).

They apparently ran into very little resistance. In 1907, less than two years after starting the mission, priest Guillermo Rojas asserted that all *parcialidades* were already holding these festivities.⁸⁴

The missionaries' promotion was not the only reason why these festivals spread so widely and quickly. As we have seen, some of these celebrations were popular even before the Vincentians arrived.⁸⁵ In fact, the indigenous communities' constant demand for these festivals was probably as important a reason for their success. In 1909 the missionary Louis Durou reported that every time a priest visited a *parcialidad* the Indians requested one such celebration.⁸⁶

The popularity of these festivals among the Indians was probably the reason why the Vincentians decided to organize their most important evangelizing activities around these occasions. According to González, these festivals provided the missionaries with the perfect setting for instructing the flock and administering the sacraments, since the *cabildo* congregated all the people inside the church.⁸⁷ Emphasizing these celebrations might have had an additional goal besides the easy access to all the *parcialidad*'s inhabitants. In 1952 J. M. Otero, a Caucan intellectual, explained that the missionaries strove to celebrate these occasions as grandiosely as possible, so as to impress the senses of the "simple people," hence providing a "powerful help

⁸⁴ Rojas, "Colombie. Tierradentro," 112. The Vincentians claimed that they had revived these celebrations. ACM/CG, David Ortiz's file. "Mr. David Ortiz, 1857-1929."

⁸⁵ Larquère, "Lettre de M. E. Larquère," 97-99.

⁸⁶ Louis Durou, "Nataga. Mission Indienne. Lettre de M. Durou, prêtre de la Mission, á M. Boulanger, á Saint-Walfroy," *Annales de la Congrégation de la Mission* 74 (1909): 133-134.

⁸⁷ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 75. In 1926 Larquère, Tierradentro's first Apostolic Prefect, explained that the first missionaries had dedicated themselves to visit the different *parcialidades*, celebrating the festivals, baptizing, marrying, and visiting the sick. Larquère, "Informe del Prefecto Apostólico," 16.

for the internal faith.”⁸⁸ The Vincentians’ strategy of focusing their evangelizing efforts around these festivals gained backing from the Congregation’s establishment in 1908, when Colombia’s Provincial Visitor agreed that during the missionaries’ visits to each community they could officiate “the masses, vespers and hails [prayers to Mary] that the Indians call ‘festivals’.”⁸⁹

Another component of the missionaries’ activities was to modify some of the Catholic practices their predecessors had introduced. Vincentian reports are not forthcoming on what specific changes they advanced. However, the missionaries did indicate that they could not impose changes but had to enter in careful negotiations with the indigenous communities. In the case of a ceremony known as the *ofrenda*, missionary Emilio Larquère reported in 1925 that they had had to eliminate the “superstitious” elements that the celebration included, although he failed to enumerate those elements. To bring about these changes the missionaries, Larquère explained, had had to act with “patience and good sense so that the feelings of the inhabitants would not be hurt, because the Indian is particularly rancorous and he hardly ever forgives.”⁹⁰ Even though Larquère portrayed it in a negative light, this need to negotiate “patiently” underlines that the Indians retained significant autonomy.

The Vincentians also strove to establish new devotions and devotional groups.⁹¹ By 1912 they had instituted the Association of the Apostolate of Prayer (*Asociación del Apostolado de la*

⁸⁸ “gentes sencillas,” “poderosísima ayuda para la fe interna.” Otero, *Etnología Caucaña*, 57. The Vincentian Nicasio Buitrago referred to the missionaries’ conscious efforts to make religious celebrations as spectacular as possible so as to overcome the Indians’ “natural apathy.” Buitrago, “Tierradentro,” 229.

⁸⁹ “... las misas, vísperas y Salves á que dan los indígenas el nombre de “fiestas”.” ACM/CG, Boîte 497, Maison Tierradentro (Missions), 1905-1912 (“Copie de la leerte du Visiteur au Supérieur de Nátaga.”)

⁹⁰ My translation. “patience et de tact pour ne pas froisser les sentiments des populations, car l’Indien est particulièrement rancunier et pardonne difficilement.” Larquère, “Notes sur la Préfecture Apostolique,” 940. Larquère, “Informe del Prefecto Apostólico,” 18. In 1905 Larquère asserted that modifications had to be made to their saints’ festivals, but he did not describe them. I have found no information on whether any changes were put in place. Larquère, “Lettre de M. E. Larquère,” 99.

⁹¹ In 1933 Luis Tramecourt explained that two of the means the missionaries used to attract the Indians to the “civilized life” were the celebration of religious and patriotic festivals, and also the creation of associations to teach them “how to live in society.” AGN/AA2/MEN, legajo 137, carpeta 2, ff. 243-244.

Oración),⁹² which included school children and adults. In the following years they also spread devotion to the Sacred Heart and the Miraculous Medal, as well as the exercises of the month of Mary and Saint Joseph. In several towns there were home visits with the Sacred Heart and the Miraculous Medal.⁹³ In the late 1930s the missionaries organized local branches of Catholic Action,⁹⁴ and the Daughters of Charity created groups of “Daughters of Mary” among young girls.⁹⁵ It is unclear how successful these associations were, for the missionaries did not include membership information in their reports.

Furthermore, the missionaries endeavored to improve the Church’s physical presence, especially by building, fixing, and furnishing churches and chapels.⁹⁶ The Vincentians also put time and money in providing proper religious ornaments.⁹⁷

As was the case with Catholic priests everywhere else during this period, the Vincentians placed great importance on the number of sacraments (baptisms, confessions, communions, marriages, confirmations, and ecclesiastical burials) they performed every year. In 1926

⁹² An international prayer network in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, founded by a French Jesuit. Henri Ramière, *The Apostleship of Prayer: a Holy League of Christian Hearts United with the Heart of Jesus, to Obtain the Triumph of the Church and the Salvation of Souls* (Baltimore: John Murphy and Co., 1866). “150 años de la obra “El Apostolado de la Oración”, de Henri Ramière” *Religión en Libertad* 5 febrero 2011, (accessed 18 December 2011) <http://www.religionenlibertad.com/articulo.asp?idarticulo=13702>

⁹³ According to Larquère, the Sacred Heart visits served first, to collect contributions and second, as an incentive for families to “fix their conduct” so that they could be visited by the image. Larquère, “Informe del Prefecto Apostólico,” 18-19. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 213, 227. In 1941 Moulet explained that in Itaibe he had celebrated the Sacred Heart feast for the men, and the Miraculous Medal one for the women. Gabriel Moulet, “De nuestros frentes,” *El Sembrador* 2, no. 9 (1941): 15.

⁹⁴ API, Correspondencia de Monseñor Emilio Larquère. (Carta de Monseñor Larquère a Péhau, 1937). ACM/CG, Pastor Santo’s file. (Carta de Pastor Santos al Superior General. Inzá, setiembre 1938).

⁹⁵ ACM/CG, Pastor Santo’s file. (Carta de Pastor Santos al Superior General. Inzá, setiembre 1938).

⁹⁶ According to Larquère, at the time the Vincentians arrived there had been twenty one churches in Tierradentro, but most of them were in extreme disrepair. In 1926 he reported that there were four new churches and three new chapels. Larquère, “Informe del Prefecto Apostólico,” 19. Naranjo, “Apuntes para una historia de la Congregación de la Misión en Colombia. Nátaga, Tierradentro,” 49-50.

⁹⁷ Quintero, *Territorio ignoto*, 50, 99.

Larquère proudly remarked that communions had increased from 500 per year when the Vincentians first arrived to thirty-five thousand annually by 1926.⁹⁸

In all these religious activities the Indians, and especially the indigenous *cabildos*, played a crucial role not only as participants but also as organizers, administrators, and even officiants.

6.2.2 The Indigenous Officials' Religious Connections

As I explained before, Nasa "popular Catholicism" had emerged in a context of great political and religious autonomy, and this continued to be the case even after the Vincentians arrived. In fact, the missionaries exerted only limited control over the organization of many Catholic activities, including the keystone of the missionaries' evangelizing efforts: the saints' festivals.

In fact, priests were not in charge of the festivals' organization. Instead, each year, and for each festival, the *cabildo* entrusted the task to a number of officials (*fiesteros*, *albaceros*, and *mayordomos*) selected specifically for this purpose, who also funded the whole event.⁹⁹ Furthermore, the decision of which specific festival was to be performed belonged not to the priest but to the community, and it was not unusual that the priest arrived without knowing for certain what he was expected to celebrate.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Larquère, "Informe del Prefecto Apostólico," 16, 18.

⁹⁹ Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 67-77. Quintero, *Territorio ignoto*, 56-58. Pérez, *Colombia de norte a sur*, 122-123. Ortiz, *Uncertainties in Peasant Farming*, 78-79, 190.

¹⁰⁰ In 1942 the anthropologist Graciliano Arcila reported that it was the *parcialidad* who decided what celebration the priest had to perform, independently of what the ritual calendar indicated. The priests accepted this "incongruities," explained Arcila, in their desire to spread the gospel. Arcila, *Los indígenas Páez de Tierradentro*, 41. In 1942 Hernández witnessed how the Indians from Calderas decided, once the priest was already in the village, that they wanted to celebrate a different festival. Hernández, *The Highland Tribes of Southern*, 28.

Additionally, these festivities lasted for several days and followed an elaborate script of activities, but the priest participated only in a small portion of them.¹⁰¹ In fact, some observers argued that indigenous participation in the evening and morning masses that the priest presided over was very low. Bernal Villa claimed that in a festival he attended even the *fiestero* and the *albacero* missed the masses, but partook enthusiastically in the remaining activities. It also seems that the priest's ability to punish this behavior was limited. In the same festival Bernal Villa witnessed, the priest reacted by canceling the procession and suggesting the *fiestero* that he save the fireworks for the next day's procession. The official, however, decided to burn the fireworks anyway while the indigenous band played tunes outside the church.¹⁰²

The priest not only had a limited role in the festivities, but some observers claimed his presence was not even indispensable. In the 1940s Hernández de Alba asserted that when the missionary was not available the celebration went on, "the captain of Indians or their governor celebrates the festival, with procession and pasos¹⁰³ and singing from the missal which whoever knows how to, reads."¹⁰⁴ A few years later Quintero explained that in Calderas the Indians would celebrate Easter with equal fervor whether the priest was present or not.¹⁰⁵

However, there is also evidence that on certain occasions the Indians would seek the missionaries' participation eagerly. Quintero asserted that, in contrast with Easter, when

¹⁰¹ Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 68-70. Quintero, *Territorio ignoto*, 56-58. Pérez, *Colombia de norte a sur*, 122-123. Ortiz, *Uncertainties in Peasant Farming*, 78-79, 190. González's description is especially interesting since he places the activities led by the priest (mass, processions, etc.) on center stage, failing to even hint at the numerous activities organized outside of the Church that so many other sources mentioned. González, *Los paezes, o, genocidio*, 74-78, 173.

¹⁰² Bernal, "La fiesta de San Juan," 220-221. Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 50-51.

¹⁰³ *Pasos* are hardwood platforms carrying life-size figures depicting Biblical scenes. Several individuals carried these *pasos* during processions.

¹⁰⁴ "el Capitán de indígenas o su Gobernador hacen la fiesta, con procesión y pasos y canto en el Misal que deletrea el que sabe leer." BLAA/LRM, MSS 1534, f. 1. Hernández, *The Highland Tribes of Southern*, 955.

¹⁰⁵ Quintero, *Territorio ignoto*, 56.

celebrating their patron saint Calderas's Indians did demand the priest's presence.¹⁰⁶ At the beginning of this chapter I mentioned an episode in which the Indians of Vitoncó resorted to rituals by several shamans to try to compel a missionary to visit their village for the Holy Week celebration, even though they had just expelled that same missionary from their village.¹⁰⁷ Clearly, the missionaries were not totally at the Indians' mercy. Moreover, they had the prerogative of confirming the *cabildo*'s selection of the festivals' officials. It is not clear, however, whether the missionaries could reject a candidate.¹⁰⁸

There is evidence that the Indians also exerted significant control over the way mass developed, at least in some communities. On the 1940s anthropologist Arcila claimed that in Calderas "it is captain Guagás who leads the mass. He gives orders to the musicians, he gives the order to kneel when it is consecration time, orders a woman whose child is crying to leave the church." On that occasion Guagás also translated the priest's sermon into Nasa Yuwe for the indigenous audience.¹⁰⁹

Beyond festivals and mass, the indigenous communities also retained a good measure of autonomy in the administration of the local church's goods, which included the church building, a field that the community cultivated collectively for the benefit of the church (the *roza del santo* or field of the saint), and in some cases also cattle.¹¹⁰ There were three indigenous officials directly involved in managing these resources: *capitán*, *síndico* and sacristan. As I mentioned in chapter 2, the priests participated in the selection of these officials. The *síndico* or treasurer

¹⁰⁶ Quintero, *Territorio ignoto*, 56-57.

¹⁰⁷ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 288-289. Ortiz, who did field work in San Andrés in the early 1960s, claimed that in this village the priest's presence during the saints' festivals was essential. Ortiz, *Uncertainties in Peasant Farming*, 32.

¹⁰⁸ Bernal, "La fiesta de San Juan," 214.

¹⁰⁹ "El capitán Guagás es quien manda en la misa. Manda a los músicos, manda a arrodillarse a tiempo de consagrar, manda salir de la iglesia a una madre cuyo niño está llorando." Arcila, *Los indígenas Páez de Tierradentro*, 31, 41.

¹¹⁰ In the case of San Andrés there was an additional plot dedicated to the church, called the "hill of the Virgin," where they grew the grass used to repair the church's thatch roof. Ortiz, *Uncertainties in Peasant Farming*, 93.

administered all the resources. Some of his functions included selling the harvest, caring for the cattle and deciding when to sell it, buying goods for the local school, paying for repairs to the public buildings (such as the church, vicarage, *cabildo* meeting house, and school house), lending money to the local Indians, and keeping the accounting books in order. The *capitán* was in charge of organizing the men that worked on the *roza del santo*, while the sacristan kept the church's keys and collected alms.¹¹¹

Even though nominally the priest had ultimate authority over the administration and use of these resources, in practice the Indians sometimes could successfully defy his dictates. For example, missionary González reported that in the early 1920s the Indians from Vitoncó managed to thwart his efforts at changing the way the *roza del santo*'s harvesting and thrashing worked in Vitoncó. When he ordered the Indians not to take a portion of the harvest for themselves, as was apparently the custom, the Indians simply refused to reap the wheat and rats ate it.¹¹² A similar disagreement over the adequate use of these assets arose in San Andrés in the late 1950s, when the priest chastised the *cabildo* for using the church's cattle to pay for a land-related lawsuit against a white neighbor.¹¹³ In other cases the Indians could altogether deny the priest any oversight. According to Bernal Villa, in the 1950s Calderas's *cabildo*, the *síndico*, and the community at large considered that the *síndico* had to inform only the *cabildo* (but not the priest) about the administration of these resources.¹¹⁴

¹¹¹ Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 65-66. González, *Los paezes, o, genocidio*, 142. BLAA/LRM, MSS 1030, f. 2.

¹¹² González, *Los paezes, o, genocidio*, 284-285.

¹¹³ In response, the priest appointed a new, white treasurer. Additionally, after 1958 the *roza del santo* was not cultivated again nor cattle was raised, since the priest considered that the harvests produced a profit so low that it was not worth the effort. Ortiz, *Uncertainties in Peasant Farming*, 40, 89, 92. González reported that in Ricaurte the community used the church's cattle to finance its dispute for the land of neighboring Itaiibe until 1937, when the church's goods dried out. González, *Los paezes, o, genocidio*, 142.

¹¹⁴ Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 66.

Hernández de Alba claimed that the Indians also controlled the church building and its contents. In his words: “theirs is the church, and theirs the paintings produced by colonial paintbrushes that decorate it, the ornaments and chalices, faithfully guarded by the cabildo they themselves elect, while the missionary priests are something of employees who use the Indians’ stuff the day of the festival and receive payment for the mass...”¹¹⁵

Capitán, *síndico* and sacristan also officiated in Catholic ceremonies. For example, the sacristan applied baptism with water to newborn children, while sometimes acting as acolyte during mass and leading the prayers that followed a marriage.¹¹⁶ *Captain* and *síndico* presided over the saints’ festivals when the priest was not present, and in Calderas the captain was in charge of lifting the veil that protected baby Jesus’ crib at midnight on Christmas Day, an action that represented his birth.¹¹⁷

The *cabildos*’ participation in both organizing the saints’ festivals and managing the church’s assets could generate frictions with the missionaries. But the fact that the indigenous authorities were so willing to get involved confirms that the Indians had already embraced enthusiastically some key elements of Catholicism. A new set of observers in the 1940s and 1950s, however, would see things differently. The professional anthropologists that studied Nasa culture in Tierradentro downplayed the significance of the Nasa Indians’ Catholicism, in an effort to demonstrate that the Indians had maintained an autonomous and authentic indigenous culture.

¹¹⁵ “Suya es la iglesia, y suyos son los cuadros de pincel colonial que la decoran, los ornamentos y los cálices, que guarda muy fielmente el cabildo que ellos mismos eligen, siendo los Padres Misioneros como unos empleados que en el día de la fiesta usan las cosas de ellos en la celebración y reciben el pago por la Misa...” BLAA/LRM, MSS 1534, f. 1.

¹¹⁶ Bernal, “Religious Life of the Paez,” 66. Hernández, “Etnología de los Andes del sur,” 203. BLAA/LRM, MSS 1534, f. 2.

¹¹⁷ Quintero, *Territorio ignoto*, 56.

6.3 THE ANTHROPOLOGISTS' TAKE

Before the late 1940s the sum total of references to the non-Catholic traditions of the Nasa Indians consisted of a few disconnected observations that different visitors recorded about particular burial rites, creation stories, ideas about the afterlife, and beliefs in spirits that inhabited caves, lagoons, and high plateaus.¹¹⁸ Add the missionaries' utter silence on the Indians' non-Catholic ideas, and one might get the overall impression that the Nasa Indians were truly at the verge of complete cultural and religious assimilation. This image was transformed dramatically when, starting in the late 1940s, professional anthropologists turned their attention towards Tierradentro. The complexities of the culture and worldview that they began to uncover continue to inspire ever-subtler studies to this day. Three anthropologists undertook this monumental reinterpretation: Colombians Hernández de Alba and Bernal Villa, and German Horst Nachtigall. Hernández de Alba first visited Tierradentro in the late 1930s and returned on several other occasions. Bernal Villa initiated his visits in the early 1950s, and also returned frequently. In contrast, Nachtigall devoted only four months to his fieldwork in the region, in 1953.

These anthropologists' writings constituted the first systematic studies of the Nasa and covered a wide range of topics, including the region's archaeology. Here I will focus on the reinterpretation of the Nasa Indians' "religion" that they advanced.

¹¹⁸ Cross, *Report by Robert Cross*, 32-33. Douay, "Contribution a l'Américanisme," 759. Cuervo, *Estudios arqueológicos y etnográficos*, 1: 22-24, 29, 55-56. Cuervo, *Estudios arqueológicos y etnográficos*, 2: 176. Marquis de Wavrin, *Chez les Indiens de Colombie* (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1988), 138-140. Bürg, "Beitrag zur Ethnographie Südkolumbiens." Nachtigall, "Shamanismo entre los indios Paeces." Nachtigall, *Tierradentro: archaologie und ethnographie*. Horst Nachtigall, "Tierradentro," *Studia. Revista de la Universidad del Atlántico* 1, no. 10 (1956). Pérez, *Colombia de norte a sur*.

6.3.1 Unearthing a Pre-Columbian Religion

In direct confrontation with missionary interpretations that the Nasa had converted to Catholicism, these three anthropologists endeavored to demonstrate that a fully functional and pre-Columbian Nasa “religion” had survived into the present. For instance, Hernández de Alba, writing in 1944, stressed that the Indians continued to believe in most of the “magical” ideas that they had developed, “in spite of the fact that the missionaries have forced the Indians’ catechization.” In line with this interpretation, he began his section on religion among the Nasa Indians not with Catholicism, but with comments on traditions that he identified as originally Nasa. After a short summary of deities and “culture heroes” reported in colonial sources but no longer remembered or revered, he jumped to those traditions that still survived. He started by presenting the “religious legend” of Juan Tama and his “cult,” for which he relied on the stories missionary González had collected. Then he went on to describe the “magical ideas” that the Indians “still believe[d].” These ideas related to people, situations, animals, and “spiritual and magical forces” that could cause illnesses or otherwise harm the Indians.¹¹⁹ Hernández de Alba addressed the Indians’ ideas about sickness and their shamans’ curing techniques in a separate section, but he clearly connected them with their “religion” by claiming that the Indians attributed diseases to “some spell or bad will from another person.”¹²⁰

Hernández de Alba’s contribution can hardly be overstated. His was the most comprehensive description of Nasa culture yet produced. His analysis, however, was much

¹¹⁹ Hernández, “Etnología de los Andes del sur,” 211-215. “a pesar de que los misioneros han forzado la catequización de ellos,” “héroe civilizador,” “leyenda religiosa,” “culto,” “ideas mágicas,” “siguen creyendo,” “fuerzas mágicas y espirituales.”

¹²⁰ “algún hechizo o mala voluntad de otra persona.” Hernández, “Etnología de los Andes del sur,” 210-211. He used the labels *médico* and *brujo* indifferently when referring to the shamans. In his 1946 translation of this piece Hernández de Alba embedded the section on sickness within the one on religion. Hernández, *The Highland Tribes of Southern*, 955-956.

weaker than his description. Like previous writers, Hernández de Alba presented an inventory of disorganized and isolated traits, without attempting to determine whether they had any effective function or fit within a coherent worldview.

Like Hernández de Alba, Bernal Villa in his 1956 dissertation claimed that an “aboriginal religious tradition”¹²¹ had survived in Tierradentro almost untouched. Hence he devoted three of his dissertation’s five content chapters to describing this religion, and the remaining two chapters, as I discuss in the following section, to showing that Catholicism had been adopted only in a superficial manner.¹²² Bernal Villa had a number of topics in common with Nachtigall, who published an article in 1953 and was more narrowly interested in Nasa shamans. These common topics include the Indians’ notions about the origin of disease; the distinctions they drew between good and evil shamans;¹²³ the shamans’ training process, as well as their diagnosing, curing, and bewitching techniques.¹²⁴ In addition to these, Bernal Villa also referred to practices,¹²⁵ beings,¹²⁶ and other elements¹²⁷ of the Indians’ culture that he considered “supernatural” and hence connected with religion.

Importantly, and in contrast with Hernández de Alba, Nachtigall and Bernal Villa’s minute descriptions for the first time depicted the Indians’ ideas and practices not as isolated

¹²¹ Bernal, “Religious Life of the Paez,” 162.

¹²² Bernal, “Religious Life of the Paez.”

¹²³ Recently anthropologist Hugo Portela has challenged this interpretation that Nasa shamans belonged in two well-differentiated categories, one good, one bad. He argues instead that any shaman could potentially perform good and bad actions. Hugo Portela Guarín, *Cultura de la salud Páez: un saber que perdura, para perdurar* (Popayán: Editorial Universidad del Cauca, 2002), 88.

¹²⁴ Nachtigall, “Shamanismo entre los indios Paeces.” Bernal, “Religious Life of the Paez,” 119-154.

¹²⁵ Burial traditions, restrictions to contact with women during childbirth and menstruation, and animals’ ability of foretelling evil. Bernal, “Religious Life of the Paez,” 81-89.

¹²⁶ Kallumb, Kituns, Echi, Pijaos, Kapish, Lliban, and Juan Tama. Bernal, “Religious Life of the Paez,” 89-106.

¹²⁷ Snakes, stones, and *ptans*. Ibid., 113-118.

remnants, but as components within a very complex culture. These works remained the most comprehensive and thorough record of the Nasa Indians' culture for at least three decades.¹²⁸

Bernal Villa's and Nachtigall's¹²⁹ contribution went beyond starting to uncover the culture's internal coherence. They proposed that many of these practices and ideas were not irrational signs of primitivism, but had a valid and legitimate function: to maintain social order and harmony, and protect the community's values. This functionalist perspective is clearest in their claim that the good and evil shamans' expressed goals of curing or harming in reality functioned to protect their communities against internal tensions and external threats, hence helping in the conservation of the aboriginal culture.¹³⁰

6.3.2 Displacing Nasa Catholicism

The anthropologists' reinterpretation of Nasa culture did not stop at uncovering the complexity of non-Catholic traditions. They also strove to downplay the elements that they perceived as foreign, especially Catholicism. Nachtigall simply ignored these traditions after saying the Indians were "nominally Christian."¹³¹ Hernández de Alba and Bernal Villa did analyze the Indians' Catholic practices, but used three arguments to deny that adopting them had entailed significant cultural transformation. They claimed that, first, these practices were only secondary

¹²⁸ In spite of its importance, Colombian scholars have not used Bernal Villa's dissertation widely. This was probably because it was written in English and never translated into Spanish, and it remained unpublished.

¹²⁹ Nachtigall and Bernal Villa published very similar interpretations at almost the same time. Nachtigall, "Shamanismo entre los indios Paeces." Bernal, "Medicina y magia entre los Paeces." Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez."

¹³⁰ According to Bernal Villa, the *té eus* not only cured diseases, but also could defend against attacks by individuals or groups. The *nasa jihi*, in turn, targeted the "habits of a capitalist society" and "transculturation." Bernal, "Medicina y magia entre los Paeces," 254, 261. He repeated most of these ideas in his dissertation: Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 154, 162. For Nachtigall, the good shamans' function was to support the "social and spiritual unity of this community." Evil shamans maintained equality within the community. Nachtigall, "Shamanismo entre los indios Paeces," 223-224.

¹³¹ Nachtigall, "Shamanismo entre los indios Paeces," 223.

elements within a larger indigenous religion; second, that they had added few, if any, new traits to the indigenous culture; and third, that their function responded to Nasa ideas rather than to Catholic orthodoxy.

Hernández de Alba and Bernal Villa regarded Catholicism as only one component within a larger Nasa “religion,” and a secondary component at that.¹³² Hernández de Alba did not present this idea explicitly, but the lesser importance that he attributed to Catholicism when compared to native traditions was implicit in the way he organized his section on the Indians’ “religion.” He started the section with considerations about the traditions that he considered native, and referred to Catholicism only at the very end. Moreover, he dedicated two and a half times as much space to the former as he did to the latter.¹³³ Bernal Villa’s interpretation changed over time,¹³⁴ but by 1956 he was explicitly arguing that Catholicism played only a secondary role in the Nasa Indians’ “religious life,” in which “pre-Columbian religious practices predominate[d].”¹³⁵

In these anthropologists’ view, Catholicism was not only secondary but had barely introduced any new elements into the Indians’ culture. The only Catholic practices Hernández de Alba reported among the Indians were three religious festivals: the *ofrenda* (offering), Christmas,

¹³² Bürg and Pérez de Barradas had a similar position. In contrast Nachtigall practically ignored the Indians’ Catholic practices focusing instead on their shamans, while Arcila argued that the Nasa had converted and their traditions were only superficial survivals. Bürg, “Beitrag zur Ethnographie Südkolumbiens.” Pérez, *Colombia de norte a sur*. Nachtigall, “Shamanismo entre los indios Paeces.” Nachtigall, “Tierradentro.” Arcila, “Impresiones de una excursión a Tierradentro.”

¹³³ He wrote 105 lines on the native beliefs, and 39 on Catholic practices. Fourteen lines were dedicated to transitioning from the first to the latter. Hernández, “Etnología de los Andes del sur,” 211-215.

¹³⁴ In his early publications (1953 and 1954) he envisioned the Indians’ Catholicism in terms of deficiencies. In one article he stressed that the Indians were “formally Catholic.” “formalmente católicos...” Bernal, “Aspectos de la cultura Páez,” 289. In another one he elaborated more, explaining that they were “religious externally, but not in their conviction; they prefer the form instead of the content.” “son religiosos en lo externo no en la convicción; amigos más de la forma que del fondo.” Bernal, “La fiesta de San Juan,” 220.

¹³⁵ Bernal, “Religious Life of the Páez,” 44-46.

and Holy Week. He claimed that the *ofrenda* blended Nasa “old beliefs and the new religion,”¹³⁶ while the other two the Indians celebrated enthusiastically “mixing their music and some of their ancient rites.”¹³⁷ That is, for Hernández de Alba mixture characterized all of the Indians’ Catholic traditions (or at least the ones he was willing to acknowledge). Moreover, in his view this blend did not signal cultural change, but rather the survival of indigenous beliefs even in the most improbable of places, that is, within Catholic rites. Hence he stressed that the Indians had “defended” as much as possible their traditions, “which they even managed to impose on the missionaries.” These imposed traditions included the *ofrenda*, adding the office of captain to the *cabildo*, and playing their own indigenous music during mass.¹³⁸

In 1956 Bernal Villa also stressed the continuities that he could find between the Indians’ pre-Columbian culture¹³⁹ and their Catholic rites. He focused on the same practices that Hernández de Alba had singled out: what he called the “cult of the soul” (whose main component was the *ofrenda*), and the saints’ festivals (which included among others Christmas and Holy Week). These, Bernal Villa repeated over and over again, the Indians had adopted “enthusiastically” and “rapidly” because they were similar to their pre-Columbian practices.¹⁴⁰ And because these Catholic practices had merely substituted a few equivalent Nasa rituals, Bernal Villa considered that no “radical change” had occurred.¹⁴¹ In this way Bernal Villa, just like Hernández de Alba had done before, denied that the Indians’ Catholic practices had added any novel elements.

¹³⁶ “antiguas creencias y la nueva religión.” Hernández, “Etnología de los Andes del sur,” 162, 215.

¹³⁷ “mezclando su música y algo de sus ritos antiguos.” Ibid., 215.

¹³⁸ “que incluso llegaron a imponer a los misioneros.” Ibid., 162, 198-199.

¹³⁹ There exist no early colonial sources on the Nasa Indians’ customs. What Bernal Villa did was using a mid-eighteenth-century work that mentioned some contemporary customs, and interpreted them as the Indians’ pre-Columbian traditions. Bernal, “Religious Life of the Paez.”

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 7, 16-17, 159.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 7-8, 53, 165-166.

The dismissal of Nasa Catholic practices came full circle when Hernández de Alba and Bernal Villa argued that at least one of them, the *ofrenda*, expressed native beliefs rather than allegiance to Catholic orthodoxy. Thus Hernández de Alba asserted that the ceremony was one of the multiple ways in which the Nasa honored the “spirits of the dead,” whom the Indians feared the most,¹⁴² while Bernal Villa saw it as one component of a larger “cult of the soul” whose goal was to honor the souls of dead relatives, which otherwise would send diseases to the living.¹⁴³

In making the Indians’ Catholicism fit a narrative of continuity with the pre-Columbian past, the anthropologists frankly misrepresented Catholicism, as was most evident in Bernal Villa’s dissertation. In his zeal to prove that embracing Catholicism had not entailed radical change Bernal Villa glossed over several of the Catholic beliefs and practices that he himself had identified among the Indians. These included their belief in a “Catholicized supernatural world” consisting of hell, purgatory, and heaven; their acknowledgement of Christian figures such as God, Jesus, Mary, and the saints; and their espousing of sacraments like baptism, matrimony, and the last rites. All these the anthropologist mentioned in different sections of his dissertation,¹⁴⁴ but unlike with the “cult of the soul” and the saints’ festivals, Bernal Villa offered no explanation as to why the Indians had incorporated them, nor did he show any evidence that the Nasa incorporated these elements more slowly or more reluctantly than they had the two practices he had emphasized. It is probable that, failing to find any pre-Columbian equivalent for all these elements that would support his overall narrative of continuity, he simply excised them from his final analysis.

¹⁴² “espíritus de los muertos,” Hernández, “Etnología de los Andes del sur,” 214.

¹⁴³ Bernal, “Religious Life of the Paez,” 15-16, 59-63, 78-79, 129, 141.

¹⁴⁴ The first two he mentioned in chapter on Catholicism among the Indians. The last one he mentioned only in passing in the chapter dedicated to the history of the Catholic missions in Tierradentro. Ibid., 37, 54, 58, 79.

Bernal Villa downplayed Catholicism not only by denying it any transformative power, but also by drawing an implicit distinction between the Indians' Catholic and non-Catholic practices. As should be remembered, he understood both the Nasa culture and the shamans' activities from a functionalist perspective, as artifacts that helped in maintaining social cohesion and harmony. He systematically analyzed the traditions he considered native through this lens, but he only made a few superficial and isolated remarks on what the Catholic traditions' functions might have been.¹⁴⁵ Moreover, he proposed no function at all for the Catholic priests. That is, for Bernal Villa the Indians' Catholicism was profoundly less functional than their native traditions.

Finally, Bernal Villa strove to mark clear boundaries between Catholicism and the native traditions, by analyzing each one in separate chapters¹⁴⁶ or in separate articles.¹⁴⁷ However, the information he and other observers collected suggests that many of the Indians' rituals integrated both Catholic and non-Catholic elements, that the Indians and the missionaries shared an understanding that non-Catholic traditions and Catholicism were not mutually exclusive, and that the Indians drew no significant differentiation between these two traditions (and therefore did not view one as secondary to the other).

¹⁴⁵ The *ofrenda* was the only one that he analyzed at length. The only other example is when Bernal Villa explained that the Indians asked for help from the Catholic saints only in what he implied were secondary matters (such as the theft of animals or to prevent sorcery), but in times of crisis they preferred their more powerful "aboriginal supernatural beings." Ibid., 57, 78, 83.

¹⁴⁶ Bernal, "Aspectos de la cultura Páez." Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez."

¹⁴⁷ Bernal, "Medicina y magia entre los Paeces." Bernal, "La fiesta de San Juan."

6.4 INDIGENOUS RITUAL LIFE IN MID-TWENTIETH-CENTURY TIERRADENTRO

Vincentian missionaries, as I explained before, largely omitted any reference to the Indians' culture in their writings. Missionary González was the exception, and while his notes on the subject are brief and sketchy, some of the interactions he documented suggest that the missionaries did not consider the Indians' Catholic and non-Catholic traditions as mutually exclusive.

In his 1950s treatise González referred briefly to Nasa *thê'walas*, whom he considered the Indians' primitive, and utterly incompetent, equivalent to doctors. In fact, González ridiculed their healing techniques and accused them of being a fraud.¹⁴⁸ But these extremely negative views about the shamans' activities did not stop González from interacting with them. For instance, González requested financial help to rebuild a church from a well-known shaman in Wila, and later bartered a piece of land with him.¹⁴⁹

Missionaries' relations with shamans went beyond financial exchanges. Hence when González asked for the financial help of Wila's *thê'wala* to repair the local church, he did it by claiming that the money would be dedicated to Jesus Christ, that is, by appealing to the shaman's Catholicism and hence tacitly recognizing him a part of the missionary's flock. The fact that González reported no qualms in turning to a person he openly identified as shaman suggests that the missionary did not conceive of Nasa traditions, at least those the *thê'walas* represented, to be incompatible with Catholicism.

¹⁴⁸ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 61-62, 288-291.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 290-291, 298.

González was not alone in forging this type of relationship with Nasa shamans. First, González reported all these episodes in a matter-of-factly tone, suggesting that he saw no need to justify or explain such interactions as if they were out of the ordinary. Second, in the 1950s anthropologist Nachtigall witnessed a similar understanding between the *laurita* nuns and the shamans, when the former entrusted a well-known *thê'wala* with carrying the religious banners during the saints' festivities in Calderas.¹⁵⁰

Recently, two leading anthropologists in the study of the Nasa Indians have claimed, without providing supporting evidence, that in the first half of the twentieth century the Catholic Church persecuted the Nasa shamans.¹⁵¹ However, all the evidence that I have found suggests that, in the specific case of Tierradentro (for there are many Nasa communities outside of this area) persecution was, at a minimum, not a prominent feature of relations between missionaries and Nasa *thê'walas*. This evidence is too fragmentary to make any forceful assertions. However, it is significant that even González failed to report any repressive measures on the part of the missionaries, in spite of the confrontational tone that he adopted in his 1950s writing. In that piece González had no qualms in detailing all the specific actions he had taken or had supported to advance the dismemberment of the Indians' *resguardos*. It seems safe to assume that, had González or other missionaries close to him taken any measures against the *thê'walas*, González would have similarly reported them. Furthermore, the anthropologists that worked among the Nasa in the 1940s and 1950s did not report any instance in which the missionaries had targeted the shamans. If anything, these scholars mentioned instances in which the shamans had harassed the Catholic personnel. Nachtigall noted that in Calderas a shaman put "magical herbs" in the

¹⁵⁰ Nachtigall, "Shamanismo entre los indios Paeces," 233.

¹⁵¹ Rappaport, *Intercultural Utopias*, 242. Portela claims that shamans were persecuted by both the church and the state. Portela, *Cultura de la salud Páez*, 85.

water source that *laurita* nuns used, in an attempt to kill them. Bernal Villa remarked that in that same village shamans had placed bewitched eggs in an undefined location to keep the priest from visiting the village.¹⁵²

Meanwhile, the fact that shamans participated in celebrations such as the saints' festivals suggests that they, just like the missionaries, saw no intrinsic contradiction between their Catholic and their non-Catholic beliefs. This attitude might explain the episode I described at the beginning of this chapter, when several shamans performed a number of rituals to attract missionary González back to celebrate Holy Week.¹⁵³ Moreover, in some of the testimonies anthropologist Bernal Villa collected in the 1950s, Tierradentro *thê'walas* mentioned their belief in figures from the Catholic pantheon, specifically the Virgin and God.¹⁵⁴

In Tierradentro, the Indians not only perceived Catholic and non-Catholic traditions as compatible, but actually mixed them in complex ways within the multiple rituals they performed. The Vincentians were aware of some of the instances where this mixture occurred. One of the most revealing cases involved Juan Tama. González argued that Juan Tama had been "something like a divinity"¹⁵⁵ for the Indians, but was no longer revered. The missionary asserted, however, that a few old people still remembered Tama and, in fact, gave the priest alms each November whose express purpose was for him to recite funerary prayers (*responsos*) for Juan Tama and his wife.¹⁵⁶ In this casual manner González attested that in Tierradentro the Nasa had integrated at least some pre-Catholic ideas into their Catholic practices, and, moreover, in ways that demanded the missionaries' active consent and participation: after all, the priest was supposed to

¹⁵² Bernal, "Medicina y magia entre los Paeces," 258. Nachtigall, "Shamanismo entre los indios Paeces," 233.

¹⁵³ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 288-289.

¹⁵⁴ Bernal, "Aspectos de la cultura Páez," 307-308. Bernal, "Medicina y magia entre los Paeces," 250.

¹⁵⁵ "algo así como una divinidad" González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 73.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 163.

pray for Juan Tama. Furthermore, this episode reveals that in practice both the indigenous parishioners and the Catholic priests conceived of the relation between Tama and the Catholic Church in terms of acceptance or integration rather than confrontation.

In the 1940s and 1950s some anthropologists claimed that a similar blend characterized the saints' festivals celebrated throughout Tierradentro. (Unlike in the case of Juan Tama, there exists no evidence that the missionaries were cognizant of these amalgamations).

Anthropologists Hernández de Alba and Bernal Villa focused on a ceremony known as the *ofrenda* (offering), which characterized Tierradentro's celebration of All Souls' Day in November. The *ofrenda* started when the Indians took products harvested from their fields and other foodstuffs to the church as an offering to their deceased relatives. Once inside the church the Indians organized the victuals in piles and lighted some candles on top of each stack. They also brought flowers as offerings for the souls of dead children. Once everything was ready the priest celebrated a mass in honor of the dead, and afterwards led a procession to the cemetery. When they returned to the church the Indians "bought" the products they had offered and gave the money to the priest as payment for the mass. Before leaving the church the Indians kissed the crucifix the indigenous sacristan held, once for each dead relative the Indian was remembering.¹⁵⁷ Many sources explained that the Indians considered their dead relatives' souls actually ate a portion of the offerings laid out on the floor. According to Hernández de Alba and Arcila, this happened when the Indians and the priest left the church to go in procession to the

¹⁵⁷ Douay, "Contribution a l'Américanisme," 772. Cuervo, *Estudios arqueológicos y etnográficos*, 2: 192. Nachtigall, "Shamanismo entre los indios Paeces," 236. API, untitled folder, (Carta del Prefecto Apostólico de Tierradentro al Ministro de Educación Nacional. Inzá, 28 marzo 1942). Hernández, "Etnología de los Andes del sur," 215. Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 61-62. Arcila, *Los indígenas Páez de Tierradentro*, 27-42. BLAA/LRM, MSS 1494, ff. 7-8.

cemetery, leaving the building under the *cabildo*'s watch. Hence the victuals sold at the end of the ceremony were the souls' leftovers.¹⁵⁸

As I explained before, anthropologists Bernal Villa and Hernández de Alba claimed this ceremony was a way for the Indians to appease their dead relatives' souls so that they would not send diseases to the living. The ceremony had other purposes too, which the anthropologists recorded but did not emphasize in their analysis. For example, an indigenous woman explained to Hernández de Alba that if a person failed to present an offering on this occasion her crops would be poor.¹⁵⁹ The anthropologists' interpretation not only ignored some of the ceremony's goals, but also downplayed the multiple Catholic elements that were present. These included the fact that the ceremony occurred within a Catholic church, that a Catholic priest presided over it, and that it entailed a Catholic mass and a procession. At the same time, it is important to note that indigenous officials, specifically the sacristan and the *cabildo*, fulfilled important ritual roles during this celebration.

A mixture of Catholic and non-Catholic traditions also characterized the festival of Saint John on June 24. According to anthropologist Bernal Villa this was one of Tierradentro's most popular festivals, and its particularity was that all people bathed on that day as a way to keep themselves and their animals from contracting a skin disease called "*chande*" (scabies), which the Indians attributed to a spirit called "*arco*."¹⁶⁰ That is, the celebration of a Catholic saint included non-Catholic traditions and convictions.

All Souls' Day and Saint John's were only two of several saints' festivals the Nasa celebrated across Tierradentro. Holy Week (especially Holy Friday) and Christmas (especially

¹⁵⁸ Hernández, "Etnología de los Andes del sur," 215. Arcila, *Los indígenas Páez de Tierradentro*, 41. Douay, "Contribution a l'Américanisme," 772.

¹⁵⁹ BLAA/LRM, MSS 1494, f. 8.

¹⁶⁰ Bernal, "La fiesta de San Juan en Calderas," 215-216, 218-219. Bernal, "Religious Life of the Páez," 55-56, 91.

Christmas Eve) were equally popular. Moreover, each *parcialidad* celebrated its patron saint's day.¹⁶¹ The Nasa of Tierradentro also attended in great numbers (together with Guambiano Indians and non-Indians) the festival in honor of Our Lady of las Mercedes held in Nátaga (department of Huila) every September 24.¹⁶²

On all these occasions priests played an important role during the three or four days that each festival's main celebration lasted, when both the community's Indians and one or more priests congregated in the *parcialidad*'s main village. Each one of these festivals, however, included celebrations that started about one month before this moment. Priests did not participate in these activities, which were led instead by indigenous officials (*fiesteros*, *albaceros*, *mayordomos*) elected specifically for these tasks. These preliminary celebrations followed an elaborate script that included ritualized gift exchange, drinking, eating, and dancing to the music that indigenous bands played. Many of these same ritual activities immediately preceded and followed the masses and processions that priests officiated during the festival's main celebrations, but priests did not take part in them.¹⁶³

There were other rituals that involved Catholic saints but were outside of the priests' purview. For example, there was a large rock in Mosoco that the Indians considered represented Saint Thomas. When an Indian lost horse or a head of cattle she would visit this rock to ask the saint for help in finding it.¹⁶⁴

Just like the saints' festivals, the Indians' numerous life cycle rituals mixed elements of Catholic and non-Catholic origin. When a child was born, for example, the baby, her parents, and

¹⁶¹ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 77. Hernández, "Etnología de los Andes del sur," 214-215. Quintero, *Territorio ignoto*, 56. Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 55. Otero, *Etnología Caucana*, 52.

¹⁶² Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 56.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 70-78. Pérez, *Colombia de norte a sur*, 122-123. Arcila, *Los indígenas Páez de Tierradentro*, 27. Quintero, *Territorio ignoto*, 57-58. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 75-77. Ortiz, *Uncertainties in Peasant Farming*, 78-79. Bernal, "La fiesta de San Juan en Calderas," 194-195, 202-203, 206-215.

¹⁶⁴ "piedra de Santo Tomás." Pérez, *Colombia de norte a sur*, 119. Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 114.

other immediate relatives underwent several rituals. These included the parents washing themselves, their child, and their clothes at different times; burying or burning the placenta; the father taking the child to the local (in most cases indigenous) sacristan for a baptism with water; the mother circumcising the baby boy or breaking the baby girl's hymen; and, sometime later, taking the baby to the priest for a baptism with oil and the ensuing celebration with eating, dancing and drinking.¹⁶⁵ In this case, the Indians not only mixed elements from different traditions, but also resorted to both non-indigenous and indigenous ritual experts: the priest, the sacristan, and also the *thê'wala*.

Similarly, a wedding involved mixed elements and various ritual experts. It began with a Catholic ceremony under the priest's watch, followed by a celebration involving eating, drinking, and dancing, which could last for up to five days. During this event the couple, their parents, and the godfather and godmother carried out several rites, including food and alcohol exchange among themselves and with their guests, as well as praying to the "souls of the dead" so that they would bless the union and would grant their permission for the participants to dance.¹⁶⁶ According to Hernández de Alba, it was either the indigenous sacristan or the head of the household who led these prayers.¹⁶⁷

Priests rarely participated in burials or mourning ceremonies,¹⁶⁸ but these events also entailed Catholic and non-Catholic elements. After a person died her relatives wrapped the corpse in white cloth and placed it in the middle of a room decorated with candles and flowers for relatives and friends to visit. The next day mourners, in an effort to cleanse the impurity

¹⁶⁵ Hernández, "Etnología de los Andes del sur," 203. Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 86. BLAA/LRM, MSS 1534, f. 2. BLAA/LRM, MSS 1494, f. 6, 10-11. Bürg, "Beitrag zur Ethnographie Südkolumbiens," 347.

¹⁶⁶ "almas de los muertos." Hernández, "Etnología de los Andes del sur," 197, 204-207. BLAA/LRM, MSS 1534, f. 2. BLAA/LRM, MSS 1494, ff. 9-10.

¹⁶⁷ BLAA/LRM, MSS 1534, f. 2. BLAA/LRM, MSS 1494, f. 10.

¹⁶⁸ Wavrin, *Chez les Indiens de Colombie*, 139. Nachtigall, "Shamanismo entre los indios Paeces," 236-237. Ortiz, *Uncertainties in Peasant Farming*, 76.

caused by the corpse, either got rid of or washed all the deceased person's possessions. Then they took the corpse to the cemetery, placing the cadaver inside a chamber excavated on the side of a deep grave. Next they laid items like candles, coins, food, and *chicha* at the corpse's feet. After the burial the participants washed in a river. Bernal Villa and Nachtigall reported that a *thê'wala* had to officiate over this ritual bathing, and that the shaman had to purify the deceased person's house before the mourners could enter again, to prevent any disease from befalling them. According to Nachtigall, after eating and drinking for a while the partakers had to follow the shaman to the river, where he performed a long and complex ritual. For the next nine days relatives had to keep flowers, candles, and a cross in the same place where the deceased person's head had been, praying every night. Bernal Villa identified these prayers as a Catholic *novena*, and Hernández de Alba reported that it was the indigenous sacristan who directed them. Bernal Villa explained that on the ninth day the mourners performed a short procession and other ceremonies thus ending the *novena*.¹⁶⁹ Pérez de Barradas and Hernández de Alba asserted that around a month after the burial a *thê'wala* purified the house where the dead person had lived.¹⁷⁰

When erecting a new house the Indians also resorted to both indigenous and non-indigenous ritual experts. Before beginning construction, the Indians had to ask a shaman to select an adequate location and perform a ceremony there,¹⁷¹ and when the house was finished

¹⁶⁹ Hernández, "Etnología de los Andes del sur," 208-209. Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 16, 83-84, 130-131. Nachtigall, "Shamanismo entre los indios Paeces," 237-240. Pérez, *Colombia de norte a sur*, 120. BLAA/LRM, MSS 1494, f. 6-7. Wavrin, *Chez les Indiens de Colombie*, 139-140. Bürg, "Beitrag zur Ethnographie Südkolumbiens," 342-345.

¹⁷⁰ Hernández, "Etnología de los Andes del sur," 208-209. Pérez, *Colombia de norte a sur*, 120. BLAA/LRM, MSS 1534, ff. 2-3. BLAA/LRM, MSS 1494, f. 7. Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 131. Bernal, "Medicina y magia entre los Paeces," 243-245.

¹⁷¹ Bernal, "Medicina y magia entre los Paeces," 235. Nachtigall, "Shamanismo entre los indios Paeces," 235. Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 94.

the owner called again upon the *thê'wala*.¹⁷² Hernández de Alba reported that wealthier Indians would pay for a “benediction or consecration” party performed by a priest in the company of the house’s godparents.¹⁷³

Mixture between Catholic and non-Catholic traditions occurred also at the level of the indigenous officials’ functions. For example, in San Andrés and Calderas the *síndico* used the local church’s resources to support the ceremony in which the outgoing and incoming *cabildos* cleansed their staffs of office, even though this ritual was clearly outside of the Catholic priest’s purview. In Calderas the *síndico* would buy several of the items used as offerings, and also would feed the participants and the shaman after they returned. In San Andrés the *síndico* also used church’s resources to feed the participants after the ceremony was over.¹⁷⁴

Sources called this ritual the cleansing, curing, or refreshing of the staffs, referring to the “staffs of office” (*varas de mando*) that *cabildo* members carried as a symbol of their authority. In the first days of the year and under the guidance of a shaman, both the incoming and the outgoing *cabildo* of each *parcialidad* met together on the banks of a lagoon atop a tall mountain. There they performed a ceremony that included offerings to Juan Tama¹⁷⁵ (or, according to Bernal Villa, to the deity called “thunder”¹⁷⁶). The participants also washed their staffs in the lagoon as way to cleanse them from impurity. Otero claimed that *cabildo* members also had to bathe in the lagoon. The ceremony had a double purpose: for the outgoing *cabildo* it was an

¹⁷² Bernal Villa claimed it was the same one as the one involved when using a hut to gather corn in a field. Bernal, “Medicina y magia entre los Paeces,” 245.

¹⁷³ “bendición o consagración.” Hernández, “Etnología de los Andes del sur,” 188.

¹⁷⁴ Bernal, “Religious Life of the Paez,” 98-99.

¹⁷⁵ González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 62. González 1925, 217. Otero, *Etnología Caucana*, 100. Bürg, “Beitrag zur Ethnographie Südkolumbiens,” 340-341. Hernández, “Etnología de los Andes del sur,” 212.

¹⁷⁶ Bernal, “Religious Life of the Paez,” 98. Bernal Villa explained that in Calderas, Santa Rosa, and San Andrés the Indians revered “trueno” (*Kapish*), not Juan Tama. Bernal, “Religious Life of the Paez,” 105.

occasion to account for its actions, while the incoming members were asking for help in the tasks ahead of them.¹⁷⁷

Meanwhile, the *thê'walas* that anthropologists interviewed in the 1950s had integrated some Catholic figures and practices into their own activities. For example, different shamans attributed the Virgin with an important role in their healing, such as creating the *tama* (one of their instruments), creating the “goblin” (one of the spirits that helped them), and even directly teaching the *thê'walas*. Some shamans also believed that God was the one sending the “*señas*” (signs), which indicated to the shaman what was ailing the patient.¹⁷⁸ Additionally, both the Virgin and Saint Thomas, who sometimes were considered brother and sister, had been integrated into the Nasa mythological stories that recounted the origin of the world. Some of these stories attributed to the Virgin the creation of the world and the plants, fire, and even humans; and to Saint Thomas the creation of the cliffs and crags that dotted Tierradentro’s landscape, as well as the provoking of earthquakes.¹⁷⁹

Mid-twentieth century anthropologists argued that the Nasa rituals they identified as pre-Columbian were techniques to prevent individual or collective harm, or to deal with it once it had befallen. They failed, however, to delve into the functions that either ritual elements with Catholic origin or Catholic priests had within Tierradentro’s indigenous communities. Nonetheless, reading anthropologists’ writings and a few other sources against the grain suggests that traditions with Catholic origin also offered protection. For example, Bernal Villa noted that

¹⁷⁷ Bürg, “Beitrag zur Ethnographie Südkolumbiens,” 340-341. Otero, *Etnología Caucana*, 98, 100. Hernández, “Etnología de los Andes del sur,” 212. Rappaport, “Territory and Tradition,” 344-345. For a the current ceremony’s description and explanation see: Carlos Vladimir Zambrano, “Voltear el sucio. Ceremonias de los Páez para tener un gobierno limpio,” in *Diversidad es riqueza: ensayos sobre la realidad colombiana* (Bogotá: Instituto Colombiano de Antropología, 1992).

¹⁷⁸ Bernal, “Medicina y magia entre los Paeces,” 224, 232, 234, 248. Bernal, “Religious Life of the Páez,” 89, 140.

¹⁷⁹ Bernal, “Religious Life of the Páez,” 56-57, 177-179. Bernal, “Aspectos de la cultura Páez,” 300-302, 304, 307-308.

the Indians asked the Catholic saints to guard them against witchcraft and the theft of animals,¹⁸⁰ while as noted above a major goal of the activities surrounding Saint John's festival was to prevent a disease caused by a spirit known as "rainbow."¹⁸¹

Missionary González offered an additional hint at the functional similarity of Catholic and non-Catholic practices. In his memoirs he explained that the Indians did not like to confess when they felt healthy, and when he urged them they would retort "do you think that we are sick?"¹⁸² This suggests that the Indians saw confession as a technique, similar to the others anthropologists described in great detail, to deal with illness.

However, elements of Catholic origin seem to have been absent from many other Nasa rituals. That was the case with ceremonies related to a woman's menstruation;¹⁸³ building a hut within a corn field;¹⁸⁴ eating the harvested corncobs;¹⁸⁵ cutting wood for different purposes;¹⁸⁶ building bridges;¹⁸⁷ butchering and selling livestock;¹⁸⁸ cultivating a field in virgin land;¹⁸⁹ visiting or settling in places like mountains, marshes, lagoons, or *páramos*;¹⁹⁰ preventing government officials from checking on specific people;¹⁹¹ stopping an armed attack against the community;¹⁹² or ensuring that corn would grow properly.¹⁹³

¹⁸⁰ Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 57.

¹⁸¹ Bernal, "La fiesta de San Juan," 215-216, 218-219. Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 55-56, 91.

¹⁸² González, *Los paezes, o, genocidio*, 173.

¹⁸³ Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 85. Bürg, "Beitrag zur Ethnographie Südkolumbiens," 347. Douay, "Contribution a l'Américanisme," 784. ICANH, EDU-0009, 60. Hernández, "Etnología de los Andes del sur," 204. BLAA/LRM, MSS 1494, f. 7.

¹⁸⁴ Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 131-132. Bernal, "Medicina y magia entre los Paeces," 245.

¹⁸⁵ Arcila, *Los indígenas Páez de Tierradentro*, 54.

¹⁸⁶ Bernal, "Medicina y magia entre los Paeces," 235.

¹⁸⁷ "espantar los malos espíritus." Hernández, "Etnología de los Andes del sur," 214.

¹⁸⁸ Nachtigall, "Shamanismo entre los indios Paeces," 232.

¹⁸⁹ Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 132. Bernal, "Medicina y magia entre los Paeces," 245-246.

¹⁹⁰ Bernal, "Medicina y magia entre los Paeces," 235. Bernal, "Aspectos de la cultura Páez," 287. Hernández, "Etnología de los Andes del sur," 214. Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 113. Pérez, *Colombia de norte a sur*, 112. Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 97, 114.

¹⁹¹ Otero, *Etnología Caucana*, 93-94.

¹⁹² Bernal, "Economía de los Páez," 321. Bernal, "Religious Life of the Paez," 128.

These cases, however, do not change the fact that crucial Nasa ceremonies mixed Catholic and non-Catholic elements seamlessly. These were not distinct realms of practice, much less an “authentic” Indian layer with a false Catholic veneer. The Nasa had drawn ritual practices from multiple origins into a complex and integrated whole, in which protection and healing could be sought in multiple ways.

6.5 CONCLUSION

Starting in the late seventeenth century, sustained interactions between Nasa communities and Catholic missionaries in Tierradentro led to significant transformations in the local culture. In this chapter I have traced the manifold decisions, understandings, and changing circumstances that facilitated the accommodation between non-Catholic and Catholic traditions that characterized the 1950s Nasa culture.

The Spanish Crown’s strategy of granting Catholic missionaries a crucial role in the integration of the Nasa into the colonial system proved successful, but only to a point. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the Nasa Indians adopted several Catholic sacraments and festivities associated with figures from the Catholic pantheon, but, just like they did in the political realm, they managed to retain significant autonomy in the way they organized and practiced their Catholicism. This responded at least in part to the fact that the missionaries lacked the means to impose their agenda upon the Indians. Indian autonomy, however, had very real

¹⁹³ Nachtigall, “Shamanismo entre los indios Paeces,” 229.

limits, as the colonial authorities' repressive response to the Nasa-led religious movements of 1706-1707 and 1833 revealed.

Moreover, as some anthropologists correctly emphasized in the 1940s and 1950s, the adoption of Catholic practices did not mean that the Indians were renouncing their non-Catholic ones. Nonetheless, it is likely that already by the nineteenth century a version of "popular Catholicism" had taken shape in Tierradentro, with the Indians recognizing a host of figures from the Catholic pantheon and the local Catholic priests openly supporting at least some of the rituals and beliefs that had coalesced around these figures. Although we know very little about how this arrangement came about, it had to entail significant transformations within Nasa culture and, importantly, its existence is likely the reason why nineteenth-century priests were able to assert that the Nasa were universally Catholic.

When they arrived to Tierradentro in 1905 the Vincentians shared their predecessors' conviction that the Nasa were already Catholic. The missionaries had good reasons to believe this. First, the Indians had accepted several ideas and practices that the missionaries considered quintessentially Catholic. Second, it seems the Indians, shamans included, considered themselves to be Catholic.

While non-Catholic traditions were alive and well in Tierradentro, the Vincentians never considered that they amounted to a competing religion, as anthropologists in the 1940s and 1950s would argue. In fact, the missionaries attributed exclusively to lack of priestly supervision the "superstitions" they identified. Their main concern about the Indians' religiosity was that their protégés were not pious enough, as demonstrated by the Indians' unwillingness to regularly attend Sunday mass or confess, or their lack of solemnity during mass. The Vincentians

attributed these deficiencies to the Indians' innate intellectual limitations, which were aggravated by their voluntary isolation from non-indigenous people.

In line with their view that the Nasa were already Catholic, the Vincentians advanced a religious agenda that did not focus on conversion or extirpation. Instead they endeavored to strengthen and reshape some of the Indians' Catholic practices, as well as to introduce new devotions, to improve the church's physical presence, and to widen and regularize the taking of sacraments. Demands coming from the indigenous flock shaped important aspects of this agenda, most prominently the missionaries' decision to concentrate most of their evangelizing activities around the celebration of saints' festivals.

To carry out these goals the Vincentians worked very closely with indigenous officials, especially *cabildo* members. In fact, these officials not only managed the resources that each community allotted to the Church, but they also played a key role as organizers of religious ceremonies (such as the saints' festivals) and as officiants in certain mass-related rituals. *Cabildo* members' role was so crucial that they could direct some of the Catholic celebrations even when the priest was not present. That is, *cabildos* maintained an intermediary position not only between the indigenous communities and government authorities (chapter 2), but also between their communities and the missionaries.

The professional anthropologists that started to study Tierradentro's indigenous inhabitants in the late 1930s challenged the premise on which Vincentian evangelization had hinged: that the Indians had been effectively converted to Catholicism. In the 1940s and 1950s anthropologists Gregorio Hernández de Alba, Segundo E. Bernal Villa, and Horst Nachtigall asserted, instead, that the Nasa Indians had maintained a fully functional pre-Columbian religion.

These anthropologists' take had a number of limitations, most obviously the assumption that the Indians' culture had remained unchanged since pre-Columbian times. However, their writings importantly debunked the idea that Nasa culture was an assemblage of disconnected and senseless remnants. Instead, they revealed its complexity and sophistication, and argued that it not only constituted a coherent worldview, but it also had valid social functions. To reveal these functions they focused on the shamans, and claimed that their activities maintained internal harmony and upheld the communities' values.

At the same time that they were unearthing this complex culture, Hernández de Alba and Bernal Villa downplayed the role of Catholicism within it. They argued that Catholicization had not entailed significant cultural transformation in Tierradentro, since these traditions, first, played only a secondary role in the Indians' culture when compared to the Indians' pre-Columbian beliefs; second, had added practically no new cultural traits; and third, when they had functions, those related to the Nasa worldview rather than to Catholic orthodoxy. In their effort to sustain the view that Catholicism had not entailed significant cultural changes, these anthropologists glossed over several ideas and practices that they themselves had reported and identified as Catholic. These were precisely those practices that, lacking any similarity with pre-Columbian practices, might have signaled the introduction of novel elements and hence cultural transformations deeper than the anthropologists were willing to concede.

The anthropologists' views about the role of Catholicism within Nasa culture was profoundly mistaken. The culture they found in Tierradentro was in fact the product of a complex accommodation between Catholic and non-Catholic traditions. As we have seen, in many cases rituals surrounding one single event included both Catholic and non-Catholic elements. At times of birth, marriage, inaugurating a house, burial and more, the Indians relied

on priests and *the'walas* alike to complete complementary rituals. There is no evidence that Nasa Indians differentiated between these two traditions. Catholicism was but one component of a larger and complex ritual life within which the presence of priests was required for certain practices, and quite irrelevant to many others.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

The constitution that Colombia approved in 1991 established a watershed for Colombia's indigenous populations. It recognized Colombia as a multiethnic society and established special rights for Colombian ethnic groups. It also acknowledged the Indians' right to self-government within autonomous territories, and their right to bilingual education. *Resguardos* became inalienable, and indigenous territories turned into jurisdictions where "indigenous customary legal systems" could be exercised. Additionally, two Senate seats were reserved for Indians.¹

Colombia seemed an unlikely place for the emergence of such sweeping legislation for two reasons. First, only a minuscule percentage of its population, around 2 percent, self-identified as indigenous.² Second, this progressive constitution emerged from within a political system that had been enveloped in widespread political violence for decades, and in which human rights violations occurred on a daily basis.³ How could landmark rights emerge here, of all places?

As commentators have emphasized, these constitutional changes resulted in great measure from the generalized legitimacy that Colombia's self-identified indigenous organizations enjoyed within the larger Colombian society. These organizations had started to

¹ Van Cott, *The Friendly Liquidation*, 83-88.

² Pineda, "Pueblos indígenas de Colombia," 13. Rappaport, *Intercultural Utopias*, 1.

³ Jasmin Hristov, "Indigenous Struggles for Land and Culture in Cauca, Colombia," *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 32, no. 1 (2005): 88-92.

emerge in the 1970s and had proven surprisingly successful in recuperating lands and maintaining political autonomy in spite of brutal state repression and guerrilla hostility. By the late 1980s the larger Colombian society identified them as the paladins of social justice and human rights.⁴ These small and isolated populations had come to occupy a crucial place within the nation's politics and political imaginary. As I hope to have shown in this dissertation, for some of these communities the late-twentieth-century indigenous movements were the last chapter in a long history of complex negotiations with local, national, and international actors to maintain their land and their autonomy.

This finding flies in the face of common assumptions within Colombian literature. Scholars have assumed that missionary organizations created parallel states within the indigenous regions the government had entrusted them since the late nineteenth century.⁵ In Tierradentro, the missionary presence did not work against the consolidation of state authority over the region. In fact, the missionaries themselves pulled in the state by seeking to apply (and in some cases succeeding) the anti-*resguardo* legislation that the government had passed, and by engaging enthusiastically in the country's partisan politics.

Furthermore, the Vincentians' intense politicking in Tierradentro challenges widespread views about the role of the Catholic Church in republican Latin America. One of them is that the consolidation of modern institutions, including political parties and elections, was accompanied by the marginalization of the Church.⁶ In Tierradentro, however, priests were far from marginal political players. A second view, particularly in the historiography about Colombia, is that the missionary organizations in charge of indigenous areas were poor agents of Colombian

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Bonilla, *Servants of God or Masters of Men?* Brett Bodley Troyan, "The Intersection of Politics and Religion." Rausch, "Church-State Relations on the Colombian Frontier."

⁶ Ivereigh, *The Politics of Religion*.

nationalism because most of them were foreign.⁷ And yet in Tierradentro the priests, both foreign and Colombian, embraced and sustained two key institutions of the Colombian nation, that is, political parties and elections.⁸ A final belief is that Church actors, and the Conservative parties they usually allied with, tended to support policies that favored the stability and survival of indigenous corporate communities.⁹ As we have seen, the Vincentians sought assimilation and transformation, and indeed led the charge against the *resguardos* that ensured corporate communities' survival as such.

And yet, despite their strong political engagement at the local, regional, and national levels, these missionaries were unable to impose their politics on the indigenous communities. On the contrary, the local population remained largely Liberal in defiance of the missionaries' Conservative sympathies. Moreover, indigenous demands shaped important aspects of the Vincentians' evangelizing strategies, the missionary-run schools' organization, and the mission's structure. That is, Vincentians were far from wielding the omnipotent powers that Colombian literature has usually attributed to missionaries in outlying indigenous areas.

The state's sustained presence in Tierradentro did not result exclusively from missionary actions. In fact, the local populations' efforts to engage with the nation's electoral, military, and legal institutions were equally or more influential in securing a state presence. Some of these efforts, ironically, strengthened precisely after the Vincentians arrived to the region and started to push for *resguardo* dissolution. Seeking to defend their communal lands, local indigenous communities intensified their search for connections not only with regional and national authorities, but also with different sectors of the Colombian society. In the late 1930s they found

⁷ Troyan, "The Intersection of Politics and Religion," 112. Friede, *La explotación indígena en Colombia*, 34.

⁸ Rausch noted the partisanship of missionaries in the Llanos, but did not consider it an indication of state presence. Rausch, "Church-State Relations on the Colombian Frontier," 59-66.

⁹ Sullivan-González, *Piety, Power, and Politics*. Williams, "Negotiating the State."

important allies among the first generation of *indigenistas* and professional anthropologists, as well as among emerging leftist organizations.

In sum, in the last analysis the interactions between missionaries and Indians did promote the latter's greater integration within the larger Colombian society. But, ironically, the process did not follow the path the missionaries and the national government had envisioned, for this integration did not emerge from any missionary success in turning these communities into ethnically undifferentiated citizens.

On the contrary, five decades after the Vincentians had first arrived to Tierradentro the region's indigenous communities still maintained significant levels of political and cultural autonomy. Paradoxically, this was partially the result of the missionaries' and the government officials' decision to rely on indigenous *cabildos* for a large number of tasks. In addition to their legal functions of administering *resguardos* and correcting their communities' moral transgressions, *cabildos* also organized and officiated in religious celebrations, helped the priest during mass in different ways, elected the officials that organized the saints' festivals, and administered the church's assets. In sum, *cabildos* had consolidated, even expanded their colonial position as crucial brokers between their communities and the larger Colombian society. In this way missionaries and government officials had fostered precisely the autonomy that they had been trying to curb by attacking *resguardos*. Moreover, *cabildos* proved crucial in the defense of those same communal lands.

The cultural autonomy of these communities went beyond *cabildos*' mediations. In fact, in the 1950s the Nasa from Tierradentro had a complex and sophisticated ritual life that had integrated several Catholic practices and ideas, but mixed them with multiple non-Catholic traditions. Catholic priests had a crucial role in many of the Indians' rituals, but many other

ceremonies, including some that had integrated Catholic elements, occurred outside of their purview.

Surprisingly, in Tierradentro the Vincentians turned a blind eye to this rich native culture and simply assumed that the Indians had fully converted to Catholicism. The Indians, in turn, not only accepted but sometimes actively sought after missionary participation in their rituals. As a result of this accommodation, religion did not become an arena of controversy in Tierradentro. This was perhaps the deepest irony of all, since religious conversion was supposed to be at the core of the missionary enterprise around the world.

That such a cultural accommodation emerged in Tierradentro is even more intriguing because the missionaries not only despised these indigenous communities, but had explicitly tried to destroy their lifestyle. In this sense Vincentians did not assume the protective role that scholars have attributed to the early-nineteenth- and late-twentieth-century missions that targeted indigenous regions. Instead, the Nasa communities from Tierradentro persisted because they were able to use their connections with a wide variety of actors (local, regional, national, and international) to integrate into the Colombian nation, while at the same time maintaining their autonomy.

Recent studies about Colombia's self-identified indigenous organizations have emphasized that they originated and continue to function as intercultural projects. They bring together diverse indigenous actors, non-indigenous political activists from different strands, non-indigenous scholars, and national, regional, and local state officials.¹⁰ As I have shown in this dissertation, these intercultural strategies were not a late-twentieth-century innovation: Colombia's indigenous peoples had been using them at least since Independence.

¹⁰ Troyan, "Ethnic Identity and State Formation." Rappaport, *Intercultural Utopias*.

APPENDIX A

TABLES

Table 1. *Cabildo* Positions in Tierradentro According to Different Sources, 1887-1950s

Year	<i>Parcialidad</i>	Composition
1887 ¹	unspecified (10 members)	<i>capitán</i> (captain) <i>alcalde</i> , 2 (mayor) <i>fiscal</i> , 2 (prosecutor) <i>gobernador</i> (governor) <i>alguacil</i> , 4 (constable)
1941-1942 ²	San Andrés (13 members)	<i>capitán</i> <i>síndico</i> (treasurer) <i>gobernador</i> <i>gobernador suplente</i> (alternate governor) <i>alcalde</i> , 2 <i>alguacil</i> , 2 <i>comisario</i> (commissioner) <i>fiscal</i> , 3 <i>comisario escolar</i> (school commissioner)
1944-1945 ³	unspecified (8 or more members)	<i>capitán</i> <i>síndico</i> <i>gobernador</i> <i>gobernador suplente</i> <i>alcalde</i> <i>alcalde suplente</i> <i>alguacil</i> , 2 or more
1946 ⁴	unspecified (10 members)	<i>gobernador</i> <i>gobernador suplente</i> <i>comisario</i> <i>alcalde</i> , 2 <i>alguacil</i> , 2

¹ Cuervo, *Estudios arqueológicos y etnográficos*, 2: 182-183.

² BLAA/LRM, MSS 1494, f. 10.

³ Arcila, "Impresiones de una excursión a Tierradentro," 660.

⁴ Hernández de Alba, *The Highland Tribes of Southern Colombia*, 946.

		<i>fiscal, 3</i>
1952-1953 ⁵	Calderas (11 members)	<i>gobernador</i> <i>gobernador suplente</i> <i>comisario, 3</i> <i>alcalde, 2 (mayor and menor)</i> <i>alguacil</i> <i>fiscal, 2</i> <i>comisario escolar</i>
1952-1953 ⁶	Santa Rosa (5 members)	<i>gobernador</i> <i>alcalde</i> <i>alguacil</i> <i>fiscal</i> <i>comisario escolar</i>
1952-1953 ⁷	Lame (6 members)	<i>gobernador</i> <i>gobernador suplente</i> <i>comisario</i> <i>alguacil</i> <i>fiscal, 2</i>
1952-1953 ⁸	Togoima (11 members)	<i>gobernador</i> <i>gobernador suplente</i> <i>comisario, 3</i> <i>alcalde, 2</i> <i>alguacil</i> <i>fiscal, 2</i> <i>comisario escolar</i>

⁵ Nachtigall, *Tierradentro: archaologie und ethnographie*, 172.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

Table 2. *Cabildos* in Tierradentro, 1887-1941

Year	<i>Parcialidad</i>	Members	Source
1887	Inzá (Guanacas) (6 members)	Gobernador: Teodoro Sanza Gobernador suplente: Manuel Salvador Lame Alcalde: Juan Bautista Ramos Alguacil: Manuel Antonio Ule Fiscal: Veritacion Cuchumba Capitán: Atanacio Ule	ACC/AM, Paq. 177, Leg. 3, s.n.f.
1888	Togoima (6 members)	Gobernador: Francisco Ramos Síndico: Isidro Gullumuz Capitán: Venancio Andela José María Jorge [position not specified] Alcalde Mayor: Pedro Suins [witnesses are not sure] Capitán: Cruz Liz [witnesses are not sure]	ACC/NS, 1940, vol. 2, escritura 66, ff. 712v-722v.
1904	Topa (3 members)	Capitán: Ramón Quintero Gobernador: Marco Cuchimba Representante del síndico: José María Tunja	ACC/AM, paq. 323, leg. 38, s.n.f.
1905	Calderas (4 members)	Gobernador: Rufino Iquinás Alcalde: Antonio Tumbo Capitán: Manuel Urriaga Alguacil: José Ule	ACC/AM, paq. 332, leg. 89, s.n.f.
1910	Inzá (Guanacas) (5 members)	Gobernador: Rumaldo Muñoz Alcalde: Juan de la Cruz Ramos Capitán: Juan [unreadable] Alguacil: Pedro Ule Fiscal: [unreadable]	ANI/P 1922, escritura 15, ff. 40-43v
1911	San José (4 members)	Gobernador: Eugenio Puchicue Alcalde: Juan Lipons Alguacil: Roque Yonda Comisario: Rafael Dagua	ACC/NS, 1911, vol. 1, escritura 62, ff. 242-245v
1912	Suin (5 members)	Gobernador: Vicente Díaz Capitán: Lorenzo Chúvila Alcalde: Joaquín Díaz Comisario: Vicente Alonso Alguacil: Pedro Díaz	ANI/P 1912, escritura 9, s.n.f.
1912	Lame (6 members)	Gobernador: Patrocinio Puchicué Capitán: José Peetins y Sixto Yacuechime Alcalde: Alejandro Peetins y Espiritusanto Beniceto Comisario: Inocencio Guainas	ANI/P 1912, escritura 9, s.n.f.
1912	Chinas (5 members)	Gobernador: José Ustud/Ostuo Alcalde: Nemecio Ramos Capitán: Lorenzo Bunsuqué Comisario: José Tenorio Alguacil: Santos Via	ANI/P 1912, escritura 9, s.n.f.
1912	Vitoncó (11 members)	Gobernador: Pascual Muse. Capitanes: Mercedario Dicué,	ANI/P 1912, escritura 11, s.n.f.

		Venancio Fince Alcaldes: José Pumba y Santos Fisús, Ángel Quimboa y Nicanor Castro Alguaciles: Francisco Tumbo, Pedro Lipis, Justo Lectamo, Isidro Baicué	
1912	Mosoco (8 members)	Gobernador: Cruz Vivas Capitán: Ezequiel Cuene Alcaldes: Samuel Cuene, Marcelino Tenorio, José Dolores Tenorio Alguaciles: Antonio Rivera, Juan Puque, José Dolores Ysoto	ANI/P 1912, escritura 11, s.n.f.
1913	Belalcázar (7 members)	Gobernador: Eugenio Quiguanás Alcaldes: Antonio Chate y Juan Quintero Alguacil: Pascual López Comisario: Espiritusanto Velasco Capitanes: Salvador Collo y Ramos Calis	ANI/P 1913, escritura 26, ff. 62-65
1913	Araújo (5 members)	Gobernador: Ignacio Cruz Alcalde: Gregorio Vitopia Alguacil: Reyes Cupaqui Comisario: Andrés Epia Capitán: Francisco Nieto	ANI/P 1913, escritura 26, ff. 62-65
1914	Wila (10 members)	Gobernador: José Lión Vargas Capitanes: Reyes Remigio, Eusebio y Serafín Chapeño Alcaldes: Cruz Campo, Marcelino Finscué y Pedro Yaqui Comisario: Ramón Cuetumbo [Cuchimbo?] Alguacil: Bautista Silva Síndico: José Rosario Chindicué	ANI/P 1914, escritura 15, ff. 29-31
1914	Tálaga (11 members)	Gobernador: Damacio Velasco Capitanes: Rafael Guegia, José Yoconas, Enrique Biscué Alcaldes: Lino Enscué y Jesús Yonda Alguacil: Calixto Tálaga, Felipe Inceca Comisarios: Antonio Perdomo, Sebastián Tenorio Síndico de la iglesia: Emigdio Velasco	ANI/P 1914, escritura 15, ff. 29-31
1914	Chinas (4 members)	Gobernador: José Dolores Finscué Comisario mayor: Manuel Chacué Alcalde: Rogerio [¿?] Alguacil: Juan Busacue.	ACC/NS, 1914, vol. 1, escritura 41, ff. 238v, 240-250
1914	Calderas (4 members)	Gobernador: Justiniano Piñacué Alcalde: Camilo Iquinas Alguacil: Ezequiel Piñacué Capitán: Manuel Uriaga	ACC/NS, 1914, vol. 1, escritura 42, ff. 240v, 251- 269v
1920	Belalcázar (6 members)	Gobernador: Eugenio Quiguanás Alcalde: Cruz Caliz Comisario: Florentino Muñoz	ANI/P 1920, escritura 51, ff. 210-213v

		Alguacil: Feliciano Ecue Capitán primero: Salvador Collo Capitán segundo: Ramos Caliz	
1924	La Laguna (3 members)	Gobernador: Sebastián Oidor Alcalde: Justiniano Tao Alguacil: Nicolás Salazar	ACC/NS, 1924, vol. 2, escritura 156, ff. 1026v-1029v
1924	Topa (4 members)	Gobernador: Raymundo Medina Alcalde: Justiniano Cuchimba Alguacil: Román Liscano Fiscal: José María Tunja	ACC/NS, 1924, vol. 2, escritura 156, ff. 1026v-1029v
1927	Ricaurte (5 members)	Gobernador: Celiano Triana Comisario: Felix Achipiz Alcalde: Sixto Yasnó Alguacil: [no name] Secretario: Cesáreo Medina	ANI/P 1927, escritura 43, ff. 486-490
1927	Tálaga (7 members)	Gobernador: José Elías Enseca Comisario: Jesús Pacho Alcalde: Andrés Quebrada Comisario del Centro: Isaías Perdomo Capitanes: Mercedario Quilcué, Alcibíades Velasco, Juan Quilcué	ANI/P 1927, escritura 48, ff. 511, 514-518
1927	Wila (9 members)	Gobernador: Venancio Pete Alcalde 1: Pedro Mesa Alcalde 2: Gabriel Chindicué Alcalde 3: Ezequiel Finscué Comisario: Cipriano Acué Alguacil: Sebastián Chapeño Capitán mayor: Rosario Baicué Capitán segundo: Venancio Chindicué Síndico de la iglesia: Emigdio Cainas	ACC/NS, 1927, vol. 2, escritura 131, ff. 663-663v, 665-688
1928	Toeze (6 members)	Gobernador: Isaías Campo Comisario: Manuel Tere Fiscal: Nicolás Inseca Síndico: José Dolores Campo Alcalde [no name] Alguacil [no name]	ANI/P 1928, escritura 19, ff. 108-113
1928	Turminá (3 members)	Capitán: Manuel Cotacio Síndico: Pedro Damián Cruz Secretario: Florentino Rojas [there are more members, but neither names nor positions were included]	ANI/P 1928, escritura 20, ff. 117-132
1928	Yaquivá (6 members)	Gobernador: Sebastián Quina Alcalde: Antonio Alfaro Comisarios: José Osa, José Yugüe Alguacil: Vicente Jorge Capitán: Domingo Chate Síndico: Nicodemus Alfaro [there are more members, but neither names nor positions were included]	ANI/P 1928, escritura 20, ff. 117-132
1928	San Andrés (9 members)	Gobernador: José Félix Lemeche	ANI/P 1928, escritura 20, ff.

		Capitán 1º: Felipe Volverás Capitán 2º: Luis Pencué Alcalde principal: Francisco Péncue Alcalde suplente: Lorenzo Pancho Alguacil: Alejo Cunacué Comisario principal: Inocencio Lemeche Comisario suplente: Pascual Fíndicue Síndico: Anselmo Cunacué	117-132
1929	Mosoco (6 members)	Gobernador: Ricardo Tenorio Comisario mayor: Marcelino Dicué Comisario segundo: Rufino Vivas Alcalde suplente: Antonio Basto Alguacil: Guillermo Ysco Fiscal: Julián Andela	ANI/P 1929, escritura 16, ff. 89-96
1929	Togoima (5 members)	Gobernador: Genaro Jorge Comisario: Hermenegildo Liz Alcalde: Nicolás Muchicom Alguacil: Tomás Ite Capitán: Paulino Andela	ANI/P 1929, escritura 27, ff. 153-156
1936	San José (6 members)	Gobernador: Justo Ramos Presidente del cabildo comisario: José Ramos Alcalde: Julio Yandy Alcalde: Guillermo Muncue Alguacil: Sebastián Campo Capitán: Roque Yonda	ACC/NS, 1950, vol. 1, escritura 82, f. 474-475, 478-480v
1938	Togoima (3 members)	Síndico: Simón Medina G. (the former was Aurelio Liz, who died) Capitán: Juan Velasco (el anterior fue Simón Medina G., electo para síndico) Capitán segundo: Domingo Velasco	AVAT, Libro de cuentas del síndico Aurelio Lis, ff. 3v-4.
1939	Turminá (11 members)	<u>Principal Cabildo:</u> Gobernador: Lino Antonio Caldón Alcalde: Francisco Rojas Capitán: José Rojas Cotacio Alguaciles: Manuel Jesús Guevara, José Antonio Sánchez, José Pantalión Sánchez <u>Alternate Cabildo:</u> Gobernador: Pedro Damián Cruz Alcalde: Buenaventura Rojas Capitán: Juan José Ramos Alguaciles: Pablo Sánchez, Juan Domingo Rojas.	AGN/MI/AI, caja 183, carpeta 1528, ff. 87-87v
1940	Wila (5 members)	Gobernador: Bautista Pete Comisario: Santos Remigio Alcalde: Miguel Tálaga Alguacil: Rosario Oteca Capitán: Rosario Baicué	ACC/NS, 1940, vol. 2, f. 1056-1062v, 1063-1064
1941	San Andrés (11 members)	Capitán 1º: [no name] Capitán 2º: Juan Bautista Cuello Gobernador: Gabriel Piñakué	BLAA/LRM, MSS1897

		Comisario Mayor: Lorenzo Cuello Alcalde: Domingo Yuque Alcalde: Antonio Piñakué Alguacil: Cruz Cumeta Fiscales: Genaro Quinto y N. N. Comisario [no name] Síndico: Anselmo Cunacué Secretario [no name]	
1941	Mosoco (8 members)	Gobernador: Ventura Tenorio C. Comisario: Pedro Mulcué Peña Alcalde: Juan Tenorio Alcalde: Guillermo Mulcué Alguacil: Samuel Cuene V. Alguacil: Abel Cuene Fiscal: Ventura Chaves Secretario: Jorge Mulcué S.	ACC/NS, 1941, vol. 2, escritura 116, f. 916v-920, 922-922v
1941	Vitoncó (5 members)	Gobernador: Antonio Lipons Alcalde: Celio Tumbo Comisario: Ramos Güetia Alguacil: Isaías Pinzón Capitán: Julio Dicué	ACC/NS, 1941, vol. 2, escritura 116, f. 916v-920, 922-922v
1941	Lame (5 members)	Gobernador: Narciso Perdomo Alcalde: Cenón Fenguení Julí Alguacil: Corpus Yacué Capitán: Isaías Guaynás Comisario: José Dolores Díaz	ACC/NS, 1941, vol. 2, escritura 116, f. 916v-920, 922-922v

Table 3. Missionaries in Tierradentro, 1613-1905⁹

Name	Year	Place	Details
Jerónimo and another priest	At some point between 1613-1640 or 1655 ¹⁰	Tierrasblancas in Guanacas	Jesuit. Died in Guanacas
Cujia [Cuxia], Gaspar	At some point between 1613-1640 or 1655	Tierrasblancas in Guanacas	Jesuit. Sent later to Quito, then to Marañón.
Navarro, Ignacio Francisco	At some point between 1613-1640 or 1655	Tierrasblancas in Guanacas	Jesuit.
Rivera, Juan de	At some point between 1613-1640 or 1655 [1663?]	Tierrasblancas in Guanacas	Jesuit. Sent later to missions in Cauca and died in Cali. He learned the indigenous language and apparently wrote a <i>catecismo</i> in that language. Charged by Popayán's governor to demarcate the <i>resguardo</i> of the <i>cacique</i> Guyumús from Andrés de Zúñiga's <i>hacienda</i> in 1663.
Orta, Francisco	At some point between 1613-1640 or 1655	Tierrasblancas in Guanacas	Jesuit
Cantillas [Centellas], Luis Vicente	At some point between 1613-1640 or 1655	Tierrasblancas in Guanacas	Jesuit
Gómez de Ceballos, Gaspar	1682-1686. 25 November-January	Parish of Tálaga	Franciscan
Araujo [Araujo] y Sotomayor, Antonio (Arroyo Sotomayor, Antonio)	1686-1689. January-April	Parish of Tálaga	Franciscan
Álvarez de la Torrecita, Alfonso [Alonso]	1689 (19 November)-1690 (April)	Parish of Tálaga	Secular priest
Zúñiga y Velasco, Francisco [Zúñiga Velasco, Andrés de]	1691-1699. 25 December-8 February	Parish of Tálaga	Secular priest. Also in charge of Wila.
Morrones [Moriones] y Montenegro, Cristóbal Francisco de ¹¹	1695, 1696	Suin	<i>Cura doctrinero</i> in those dates.
Villarreal, Matías de (Matías de Villarreal)	1699-1718. 8 September	Parish of Tálaga, residency in Tóez	Secular priest, administered: Tálaga, Tóez, San Vicente Ferrer,

⁹ González, *Los paeces, o genocidio*, 57-59, 63-73, 93-100, 102. Bernal Villa, "The Religious Life," 30-35, 47. González, "Misión de Tierradentro." Castillo y Orozco, *Vocabulario Páez-Castellano*, 68-69, 78. Uricoechea, "Introducción," xxii. Quintero, *Territorio ignoto*, 115-130. Naranjo, "Apuntes para una historia de la Congregación de la Misión en Colombia. Nátaga, Tierradentro," 35-38.

¹⁰ González claims the Jesuits left in 1640, and Bernal Villa adopted this date also. Uricoechea also uses that date. González, *Los paeces, o genocidio*, 58. Bernal Villa, "The Religious Life," 31. Uricoechea, "Introducción," ix. According to the Jesuits writer Manuel Rodríguez, they left in 1655. Rodríguez, *El Marañón y Amazonas*, 78.

¹¹ Quintero, *Territorio ignoto*, 116. Otero, *Etnología Caucana*, 54.

	[February]-15 August		Wila, Vitoncó, Suin, Pueblito. Started building the church of Tóez.
Campo, Marcos del	1713	Parish of Guanacas	Secular priest
Salamanca, Salvador de	early 1700s, 1713, 1745	Parish of Calderas, residency in Togoima	Secular priest, founded Schitoques and built the church of Togoima. He built a church in Ricaurte (Schitoques) to congregate the population, in 1745.
Río, Juan del (Fray Juan de los Ríos)	1714, 1721	Parish of Calderas, residency in Togoima	Secular priest. Interim, with residency in Calderas and Togoima. Supported the Indians' lawsuit to regain the lands of Itaibe.
Ledesma, José Narciso de	1714-1760	Parish of Calderas	Secular priest. Priest of Calderas, took the Parish of Tálaga temporarily in 1731.
Viques [Vique] de Morales, Antonio ¹²	1715, 1719	Yaquivá	<i>Cura doctinero</i> in those dates.
Rojas de Velasco, Lucas	1718-1731. September-12 October	Parish of Tálaga	Secular priest. Sent to Toribío after Tierradentro.
Campo, Marcos del ¹³	1721	Parish of Guanacas	Parish priest on that date.
Castillo y Orozco, Eugenio del	1735-1761	Parish of Tálaga and annexes	Secular priest. Appointed to Tálaga on June 21, 1736. Uricoechea indicates he was Tálaga's priest since 1735. Received the parish from José Narciso de Ledesma. Founded the village of Chinas on May 26, 1748, and built its church.
Castillo y Orozco, Isidro del	1741-1751 (March 10)	Parish of Calderas	Secular priest. Sent as temporary priest of Calderas. Already knew Nasa Yuwe when he took this position.
Núñez, José Joaquín [Núñez (Muñoz?) de Tovar, Joaquín ¹⁴]	1746, 1785, 1807	Togoima (curacy?) and annexes	Secular priest. Built the churches of Togoima, Santa Rosa, and San Andrés. He married Agustín Calambás and Teresa Guyumús. He also administered holy oils to Angelina Guyumús
Haro y Castro, Dionisio del [Castro, Dionisio de] [Arias de Castro, Donisio]	1760	Parish of Vitoncó, residency in Avirama	Secular priest. Appointed as priest of Calderas in 1751. Nephew of Eugenio del Castillo y Orozco.
Gutiérrez, José Antonio ¹⁵	1761-1800 (December 18)	Parish of Vitoncó (Tálaga as Vice-parish of Vitoncó)	Secular priest. Died 18 December in Tierradentro
Chavez, Sebastián Santiago ¹⁶	1785-1794	Parish of Vitoncó, residency in Avirama	Secular priest.

¹² Quintero, *Territorio ignoto*, 116. Otero, *Etnología Caucaña*, 53.

¹³ Quintero, *Territorio ignoto*, 120.

¹⁴ Ibid, 121-123.

¹⁵ Mencionado en título de demarcación de Vitoncó, Tálaga y Toéz de 1775. AGN/MI/AI, caja 182, carpeta 1519, ff. 7-7v. AGN/MI/AI, caja 182, carpeta 1526, ff. 3-9.

Scabalceta y Seloia, Francisco [Icazbalceta, Francisco]	1792 1793 1798	Togoima Curacy of Inzá Parish of Vitoncó. Parish of Calderas, residency in Avirama	In Togoima, sent to the curacy of Inzá, where he arrived in 1793. Franciscan. Baptized in Togoima, Wila and other villages. In 1798 took parish of Calderas but with residency in Avirama.
Chávez, José Joaquín	1798- 1821. 8 January	Parish of Calderas	Secular priest, also temporary priest of Vitoncó and Tálaga. Died in Avirama in 1821
Fernández de Navia, Ramón	1801-1817	Parish of Vitoncó	Secular priest
Gutiérrez, José Antonio	1817	Inzá and Yaquivá	Secular priest. One baptism in Wila in 1817
Losada, José Antonio	1825	Parish of Vitoncó	Secular priest
Carvajal, José	1825	Priest of El Pedregal	Secular priest
Salamanca, Pedro Pablo	1834. 30 June	Parish of Vitoncó and annexes	Secular priest. According to Cuervo, the Bishop of Popayán sent him to reconcile Nasa Indians with the church after previous priest had abused them leading them to develop a nativistic movement in 1833. ¹⁷
Carvajal, Pedro José	1838	Administered Cuetando, Pueblito, Tálaga, Chinas	Secular priest. Died in Cuetando. His nephew gave the parish book to his successor in 1838
Carrillo, Luis	1838	Parish of Vitoncó	Secular priest. <i>Excusador</i> of Vitoncó. Called back to Popayán
Núñez, M. A.	1838	Parish of Vitoncó	Secular priest
Aus, Juan Ramón	1843. 2 March	Parish of Vitoncó	Secular priest. He only performed some baptisms in Vitoncó
Casas, Juan de Jesús	1844-1845	Parish of Vitoncó	Secular priest. Sent to La Plata
Beltrán, Manuel María	1845	Parish of Vitoncó	Secular priest. He performed some baptisms
Rojas, Esteban	1846	Parish of Vitoncó	Secular priest. He performed some baptisms
Orozco, Manuel María	1846, 1852	Parish of Vitoncó	Secular priest. He certified (<i>protocolizó</i>) the <i>resguardo</i> titles of Vitoncó, Tálaga, and Tóes in 1852. ¹⁸
Martínez, Mateo	1848	Priest of El Pedregal	Secular priest
Marcos Palomín, Manuel José	1848	Priest of Tálaga	Secular priest
Gámez, Emigdio	1848-1897	Vicarage of Guanacas, residency in Inzá	Secular priest
Machado, Francisco	1850	Parish of Vitoncó	Secular priest. Very good calligraphy
Guzmán, Manuel María	1855	Parish of Vitoncó	Secular priest
Aranda, José Agustín	1857	Parish of Vitoncó	Secular priest

¹⁶ Mentioned as *cura doctrinario* of Calderas in the demarcation between Vitoncó, Tálaga, and Tóez of 1775. AGN/MI/AI, caja 182, carpeta 1526, ff. 3-9.

¹⁷ Cuervo, *Estudios arqueológicos y etnográficos*, 2: 196.

¹⁸ ANI/P 1912-1913, vol. 1, año 1912, escritura 10.

Grijalba, Jerónimo de	1858. 28 March	Parish of Vitoncó	Secular priest
Guzmán, Antonio	1868	Parish of Vitoncó	Secular priest
Castillo, Juan G. del	1872	Parish of Vitoncó	Secular priest
Peñaranda, Miguel	1874	Parish of Vitoncó	Secular priest
Franciscans and Redentorists participated in many short missions to Tierradentro	1887-1899		
Chambon, Arturo	1895, June-July		French Vincentian, short mission.
Gaujón, Teófilo	1895, June-July		French Vincentian, short mission.
Ruiz, José Antonio	1895, June-July		Vincentian, short mission.
Collins, Enrique	1897		Secular priest. Traveling missionary, he baptized in all villages
Rada, Alejandro	1898	Vicarage of Guanacas	Secular priest
Gaujon, Teófilo	1899		Vincentian. Many excursions, Franciscans and Redentorists also participated
Aranda, José Agustín	1899	Vicarage of Guanacas	Secular priest
Paredes, Pedro Antonio	1899	Vicarage of Guanacas	Secular priest
Machado, José	1900	Vicarage of Guanacas	Secular priest
Madechín, Alejandro	1903	Vicarage of Guanacas	Secular priest, short visit
Salcedo, Alcides	1904	Vicarage of Guanacas	Secular priest
Restrepo, Máximo	1904-1905 (9 October)	Vicarage of Guanacas	Secular priest. He transferred the region to the Vincentians

Table 4. Vincentian Personnel in Tierradentro, 1905-1950¹⁹

Name	In Tierradentro	DOB	DOD	Place of Origin	Positions (Tierradentro)	Positions (Colombia)	Positions (other places)	Comments
Rojas Arrieta, Guillermo	1905-1907	25 June 1855	4 Feb. 1933	Costa Rica (Cartago)	Superior of the House of Tierradentro and National Education Inspector (1905-1907). Superior of the House of Nátaga and Tierradentro (1907-1910). Director of the Missions of Huila and Tierradentro	Rector Escuela Apostólica de Santa Rosa de Cabal, Rector Seminary of Popayán, Superior in Santa Rosa, Parish Priest in Nátaga.	Bishop/Arcbishop of Panama, 1912-1933	Priesthood 1882. Vocation 1887 (he was already a priest). Spoke English, French, German, Italian, and also Nasa Yuwe.
Ortiz, David	1905-1929	15 Nov. 1857	3 Mar. 1929 (Belalcázar)	Colombia (Roldanillo, Valle)	Coadjutor (1905-1908)	Co-founder of the House of Panamá. Seminary of Popayán, Missions of Huila	Minor Seminaries of Quito and Guayaquil.	2 nd Colombian Vincentian. Studied in Paris, in Saint Lazare. Priesthood 1882. Spoke Nasa Yuwe, wrote a catechism in that language
Durou, Louis	1908-1912	1 Feb. 1870	17 Dec. 1938 (Guatemala)	France (Ste. Sabine, Dordogne)	Superior of the Mission of Tierradentro (1908-1910), Superior of the House of Nátaga and Tierradentro (1910-1912), Director of the Missions of Huila and Tierradentro, National Education Inspector	Seminary of Popayán	Vice-Visitor of the Province of Central America, Visitor of the Province of Central America, Archbishop of Guatemala (1928-1938)	Vocation 1901. Arrived to Colombia in 1904. Spoke Nasa Yuwe.
Tramecourt,	1910-1941	1861	8 July 1940	France (Azincourt)	Coadjutor (1910-1912). National	Representative to the	Parish Priest	Voc. 1898 (was already

¹⁹ Arcila, *Los indígenas Páez de Tierradentro*, 48. González, *Los paeces, o, genocidio*, 209-264, 309. Naranjo, José. “Apuntes para una historia de la Congregación de la Misión en Colombia. Nátaga, Tierradentro,” 51-63. Quintero, *Territorio ignoto*, 48, 49-52, 87, 97-99, 107, 112, 193-194. Colombia, *Informes de las misiones católicas de Colombia relativos*, 17. ACM/CG, files of: Arévalo, Felipe Antonio; Botero Jaramillo, Marco Tulio; Buitrago, Nicasio de Jesús; Cardona Mejía, Jesús María; Castiau, Jean Auguste; Delsart, Víctor; Dufranc, André Michel; Durou, Louis; Eraso Torres, Jorge; Falla, Manuel María; Gascioli, Noel; González, David; Larquère, Émile; Martínez, Gratiano; Mosquera, Luis; Moulet, Gabriel; Ortiz, David; Ossa, José Jesús; Puyo, Pedro María (Alejandrino); Rodríguez, Rogelio; Rojas Arrieta, Guillermo; Santos, Pastor; Tramecourt, Louis; Vallejo, Enrique Alejandro.

Louis				urt, dioc. d' Arras)	Education Inspector, Superior of the House of Tierradentro, and Director of the Mission of Tierradentro (1916- 1924). Parish Priest of Belalcázar (1924- 1940).	Provincial Assembly in 1917, Missionary in Huila.	somewhere in France.	a priest). Never spoke proper Spanish, but mixed it with French.
Larquère, Émile	1912-1915 1924 (27 February)- 1948	18 (16?) May 1869	3 July 1948 (Belal- cázar)	France (Riviére, Landes)	Superior of the House of Nátaga (including Tierradentro), National Education Inspector (1912- 1916). Prefect Apostolic (1924- 1948)	Missions of Huila, Assistant Visitor, Missions of Boyacá, Apostolic Prefect of Arauca (1916- 1924)		Entered the community in 1885. Voc. 1887. Priesthood 1895. Arrived to Colombia in 1904.
Puyo, Pedro María (Alejan- drino)	1913-1921	25 Nov. 1879	15 Aug. 1921 (Belal- cázar)	Colombia (Carnice- rías)				Voc. 1900. Priesthood 1908. Apparently, considered a popular saint. Spoke Nasa Yuwe. Two of his brothers were also Vincentians: Joaquín María and Juan de la Cruz.
Mosque- ra, Luis	1914-1928	28 May 1879	1933 (Bo- gotá)	Colombia (Popayán)				Tomás Cipriano de Mosquera's grandson. Became a priest later in life. Voc. 1905. Perpetual vows in 1907. Left the CM in 1932 (1 January)
Castiau, Jean Auguste	1916-1927	21 Mar. 1879	24 Aug. 1952 (Vi- chy)	France (Desertine s, Allier)		Seminary of Popayán, Escuela Apostólica de Santa Rosa del Caballero, Missions in Huila		Voc. 1900. Returned to France.
Delsart, Víctor	1917 (27 April)-1918 (15 August)	27 April 1876 (Ors,	?	France		Missions of Huila. Director of the Missions of Cali		Voc. 1896. Priesthood 1903. Returned to

		Cam brai)						France in 1922, drafted into the war. Left the CM in 1924, incardinated in Diocese of Cambrai.
Buitrago, Nicasio de Jesús	1918-1937	12 May 1879	6 Feb. 1980 (Car- tago)	Colombia (Santa Rosa de Cabal, Caldas)		Seminary of Popayán, Superior of the House of Cartago,		Voc. 1900. Perpetual vows in 1902, ordered priest in 1908.
Falla, Manuel María	1918-1920, 1925-1931	28 April 1889	30 July 1931 (Inzá)	Colombia (Palmira, Valle)		Escuela Apostólica de Santa Rosa de Cabal, Seminario de Tunja		Voc. 1905.
Botero Jarami- llo, Marco Tulio	1922	7 May 1883	30 April 1971 (Cali)	Colombia				Voc. 1901. Priesthood 1908.
Gonzá- lez, David	1922 (8 September)- 1954	24 May 1883	23 Aug. 1974	Colombia (Tuluá or Andalu- cía, Valle)	National Education Inspector, Pro- Prefect Apostolic, Parish Priest of Inzá, Parish Priest of Belalcázar.	Missions of Garzón, Escuela Apostólica de Santa Rosa de Cabal, Seminario of Ibagué, Director of the Daughters of Charity (Province of Colombia), Superior of the House of Cali		Voc. 1902. Priesthood 1910.
Buitrago, Carlos Vicente	1926?			Colombia				He finished his ecclesiastical studies in Inzá. Cousin of Nicasio Buitrago, his two brothers were also Vincentians, Justo Pastor and Roberto.
Dufranc, André Michel	1928-1940 (June)	5 Aug. 1899		France (Onesse- Laharie, Lardes)			Missionary in Egypt	Voc. 1921. Priesthood 1927. Returned to France in 1940, to enlist in the army. Left

								the CM in 1964. Filmed at least one movie about Tierradentro, entitled “El Tesoro de Tumbichukue”
Santos, Pastor	1929 (1 October)-1943	1875	11 Nov. 1956 (Bogotá)	Colombia (Cocuy or Tunja, Boyacá)				Voc. 1893. Priesthood 1900. Together with Elías Sánchez, first Vincentians from Boyacá.
Arévalo, Felipe Antonio	1937 (2 September)-1952	26 May 1906	18 March 1963 (Neiva)	Colombia (Ipiales, Nariño)	Parish Priest of Belalcázar (1940-1951)	Seminary of Popayán, Seminary of Garzón, Superior of the House of Nátaga.		Studied in the Seminary of Quito. Vocation 1928. Priesthood 1938.
Gascioli, Noel	1938 (16 October)-1940, 1942-1948, 1956-1969	17 Dec. 1913	11 July 1970 (Santa Marta, Colombia)	French Algeria (Bône or Bona)		Escuela Apostólica de Santa Rosa de Cabala, Prefecture of Arauca		Voc. 1930. Priesthood 1938. Arrived to Colombia 1938.
Martínez, Gratiniano	1938-1941, 1957	25 May 1892	30 April 1958	Colombia (Villa-hermosa or Ibagué, Tolima)	Parish Priest of Inzá	Apostolic Prefect of Arauca		Voc. 1913. Priesthood 1921. His brothers Fidenciano and Francisco Eladio were also Vincentians.
Cardona Mejía, Jesús María	1941-1956, 1960-1962	1 Oct. 1910	20 Sept. 2010	Colombia (La Victoria, Valle)		Sanctuary of the Miraculous Medal, Santa Rosa de Cabal.		Voc. 1933. Perpetual 1935. Priesthood 1941.
Moulet, Gabriel	1941-1962	20 May 1903	18 July 1962 (La Plata, Huila)	France (Marseille)	Parish Priest of Belalcázar.	Prefecture of Arauca.	Missionary in Ethiopia (1931-1937)	Voc. 1922. Priesthood 1930. Fought in the Alps, distinguished himself in struggle against Moors. Arrived to

								Colombia in 1938.
Rodríguez, Rogelio	1943 (September)-1947 (July), 1951-1956	24 Oct. 1915	21 Sept. 1926 (Belalcázar, Cauca)	Colombia (Pacora, Manizales)	House of Huila.			Voc. 1935. Priesthood 1943.
Ossa, José Jesús	1948 (January)-1949, 1954-1959	9 July 1922		Colombia (Caramanta, Antioquia)		Seminary of Tunja		Priesthood 1947. Left the CM in 1963 for the Diocese of Jericho
Eraso Torres, Jorge	1949-1951	16 Feb. 1921		Colombia (Pasto, Nariño)				Voc. 1939. Priesthood 1945. Left the CM, incardinated by the Bishop of Pasto
Vallejo, Enrique Alejandro	1950-1977	3 May 1902	22 Nov. 1985 (23 Nov. 1984?) (Cali)	Colombia (Santa Rosa de Cabal)	Apostolic Prefect of Tierradentro, 27 October 1950-1977.	Seminaries of Tunja, Popayán, Garzón. Missionary in Arauca. Rector of the Seminary of San Gil. Rector of the Seminary of Tunja.		Voc. 1923. Priesthood 1932.

Table 5. Presidential Elections in Tierradentro, 1918-1930*

Year and District	Registered Voters	Conservative Candidate	Liberal Candidate	Other Candidates	Total of Votes Casted	% of Participation	Sources
1918							<i>Registro Oficial</i> 16 marzo 1922, 703
Inzá	362	152 (Suárez)	0 (Lombana)	92 (Valencia)	244	67,4 %	
Páez	412	15 (Suárez)	0 (Lombana)	208 (Valencia)	223	54,1 %	
1922							<i>Registro Oficial</i> 16 marzo 1922, 703
Inzá	468	191 (Ospina)	109 (Herrera)	--	300	64,1 %	
Páez	659	50 (Ospina)	528 (Herrera)	--	578	87,7 %	
1930							AGN/MG/S4/E, vol. 28, ff. 196-196v, 198-198v.
Inzá	--	260 (Valencia)	117 (Olaya)	8 (Vásquez)	385	--	
Páez	--	38 (Valencia)	593 (Olaya)	38 (Vásquez)	669	--	
1938							Colombia. Ministerio de Gobierno. <i>Informe del Jefe de la Sección 1a Negocios Generales al señor Ministro de Gobierno. Anexo a la memoria.</i> Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional, 1938, 120.
Inzá	--	¿?	507 (Santos)	--	¿?		
Páez	--	¿?	1549 (Santos)	--	¿?		

* The winning candidate indicated in bold letters.

Table 6. Elections of *Representantes a la Cámara* in Tierradentro, 1896-1933

Year and District	Registered Voters	Conservative Votes	Liberal Votes	Other Votes	Total of Votes Cast	% of Participation	Sources
1896							ACC/AM, paq. 235, leg. 82. Inzá, 7 mayo 1896.
Páez	--	44	32	--	76	--	
1921							<i>Registro Oficial</i> 30 mayo 1921, p. 213
Inzá	391	106	64	0	170	43,47%	
Páez	453	27	142	0	169	37,3 %	
1923							AGN/MG/S4/V, vol. 175, ff. 92-93
Inzá	456	138	64	--	202	44,3 %	
Páez	889	44	446	--	490	55,1 %	
1933							“La mayoría liberal en el Cauca es de 10.338 votos” <i>El Cauca</i> , 19 mayo 1933, 1.
Inzá	--	209	215	--	424	--	
Páez	--	39	628	--	667	--	

Table 7. Elections of *Diputados* to Cauca’s *Asamblea* in Tierradentro, 1904-1933

Year and District	Registered Voters	Conservative Votes	Liberal Votes	Other Votes	Total of Votes Cast	% of Participation	Sources
1904							ACC/AM, paq. 323, leg. 31, s.n.f. Inzá, 28 abril 1904.
Páez	--	166	0	0	166	--	
1915							AGN/MG/S4/ E, vol. 5, f. 511.
Inzá	1128	318	63	5	386	34,2 %	
Páez	1775	23	220	0	243	13,7 %	
1919							AGN/MG/S4/V, vol. 131, f. 192-193.
Inzá	1617	476	0	283	668	41,3 %	
Páez	2762	16	667	104	787	28.5 %	
1921							<i>Registro Oficial</i> 18 marzo 1921, 98.
Inzá	1570	169	0	0	169	10,8 %	
Páez	2790	10	0	0	10	0,36 %	
1933							AGN/MG/S4/E, vol. 51, ff. 389-395.
Inzá	--	540	569	0	1109	--	
Páez	--	22	2071	0	2093	--	

Table 8. Elections of *Consejeros Municipales* in Tierradentro, 1917-1931

Year and District	Registered Voters	Conservative Votes	Liberal Votes	Other Votes	Total of Votes Cast	% of Participation	Sources
1917							AGN/MG/S4/E, vol. 8, f. 125.
Inzá	1239	325	163	--	488	39,4 %	
Páez	2342	--	--	141	141	6,02 %	
1923							<i>Registro Oficial</i> 9 noviembre 1923, 1715
Inzá	1834	348	142	0	490	26,7 %	
Páez	3456	3	226	0	229	6,6 %	
1931							AGN/MG/S4/E, vol. 40, f. 37
Inzá	2688	532	664	--	1196	44,5 %	
Páez	3592	14	451	--	465	12,9 %	

Table 9. *Resguardo* Titles in Tierradentro

<i>Resguardo</i>	Titles	Others
Araújo	Title from 1667. ²⁰ Escritura 61 de 12 junio 1911, Notaría de Silvia. Possession of the <i>resguardos</i> of Avirama, Togoima, and Belalcázar, given by the governor and captain general of Popayán. January 3, 1755. ²¹	Escritura 26 de 23 agosto 1913, Notaría de Inzá. Separates the <i>resguardos</i> of Belalcázar and Araújo. ²²
Avirama	Title from 1667. ²³ Escritura 61 de 12 junio 1911, Notaría de Silvia. Possession of the <i>resguardos</i> of Avirama, Togoima, and Belalcázar, given by the governor and captain general of Popayán. January 3, 1755. ²⁴ Escritura 48 de 20 mayo 1914, Notaría de Silvia. Document about limits of the <i>resguardo</i> of Avirama, January 7, 1855. ²⁵	
Belalcázar (Pueblito, Ambostá)	Title from 1667. ²⁶ Escritura 61 de 12 junio 1911, Notaría de Silvia. Possession of the <i>resguardos</i> of Avirama, Togoima, and Belalcázar, given by the governor and captain general of Popayán. January 3, 1755. ²⁷	Escritura 26 de 23 agosto 1913, Notaría de Inzá. Separates the <i>resguardos</i> of Belalcázar and Araújo. ²⁸ Escritura 51 de 16 diciembre 1920. <i>Cabildo</i> of Belalcázar hands over to the <i>Personero Municipal</i> the settlement area. ²⁹ Escritura 7 de 6 febrero 1923, Notaría de Inzá. Procopio Mera, Andrés Lucumí, Cenón Valencia, Aquilino Valencia, Juan Lucumí, Celestino Lemus. As descendants of the main <i>comuneros</i> of the undivided land they have in Belalcázar, they agree to divide that land. ³⁰
Calderas	Title from 1667. ³¹	

²⁰ Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 39-41. They say a copy of the title can be found in the Archivo Histórico de Tierradentro.

²¹ ACC/NS, 1911, vol. 1, escritura 61, ff. 238v-242v.

²² ANI/P 1912-1913, vol. 1, año 1913, escritura 16.

²³ Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 39-41. They say a copy of the title can be found in the Archivo Histórico de Tierradentro.

²⁴ ACC/NS, 1911, vol. 1, escritura 61, ff. 238v-242v.

²⁵ ACC/NS, 1914, vol. 1, escritura 48, f. 345v-348v

²⁶ Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 39-41. They say a copy of the title can be found in the Archivo Histórico de Tierradentro.

²⁷ ACC/NS, 1911, vol. 1, escritura 61, ff. 238v-242v.

²⁸ ANI/P 1912-1913 vol. 1, año 1913, escritura 16.

²⁹ ANI/P 1920, vol. 1, escritura 51, ff. 210-213v.

³⁰ ANI/P 1923-1924, vol. 1, año 1923, escritura 7, ff. 24-33.

³¹ Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 39-41. They say a copy of the title can be found in the Archivo Histórico de Tierradentro.

	Escritura 42 de 9 mayo 1914, Notaría de Silvia. (Statements from witnesses). ³²	
Chinas	Escritura 12 de 22 febrero 1912, Notaría de Inzá. (Statements from witnesses). ³³	
Cohetando	Title from 1667. ³⁴ Escritura 61 de 12 junio 1911, Notaría de Silvia. Possession of the <i>resguardos</i> of Avirama, Togoima, and Belalcázar, given by the governor and captain general of Popayán. January 3, 1755. ³⁵	
Guanacas	Escritura 256 de 3 abril 1894, Notaría de Popayán. (Statements from witnesses). ³⁶	Escritura 15 de 30 agosto 1922, Notaría de Inzá. Settlement area of Inzá. ³⁷ Escritura 20 de 21 agosto 1928, Notaría de Inzá. Settlement areas of Turminá, Vivorá, Yaquivá, and San Andrés. ³⁸
La Laguna	Escritura 99 de 10 febrero 1899, Notaría de Popayán. ³⁹ Possession given by the King in 1735, confirmed by the Governor and Captain General of Neiva in 1737.	Escritura 156 de 15 diciembre 1924, Notaría de Silvia. Demarcation between the <i>resguardos</i> of La Laguna and Topa. ⁴⁰
Lame	Titles given by Philip II. ⁴¹ Escritura 959 de 23 octubre 1883, Notaría de Popayán. Title for Vitoncó given by Cristóbal Mosquera y Figueroa on July 19, 1708. Copy certified in 1836. ⁴²	Escritura 116 de 21 octubre 1941, Notaría de Silvia. Delimitates the <i>resguardos</i> of Mosoco, Vitoncó. and Lame. ⁴³
Mosoco	Titles given by King Philip II. ⁴⁴ Escritura 959 de 23 octubre 1883, Notaría de Popayán. Title for Vitoncó given by Cristóbal Mosquera y Figueroa on July 19, 1708. Copy certified in 1836. ⁴⁵	Escritura 11 de 21 febrero 1912, Notaría de Inzá. Separates the <i>resguardos</i> of Vitoncó and Mosoco. ⁴⁶ Escritura 16 de 4 junio 1929, Notaría de Inzá. Settlement area of Mosoco. ⁴⁷

³² ACC/NS, 1914, vol. 1, escritura 42, ff. 240v, 251-269v.

³³ ANI/P 1912-1913, vol. 1, año 1912, escritura 12. ANI/P 1914-1915, vol. 1, año 1915, ff. 4-9. See related documents of 1914: ACC/NS, 1914, vol. 1, escritura 41, ff. 238v, 240-250.

³⁴ Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 39-41. They say a copy of the title can be found in the Archivo Histórico de Tierradentro.

³⁵ ACC/NS, 1911, vol. 1, escritura 61, ff. 238v-242v.

³⁶ Mentioned in: ANI/P 1921-1922, vol. 1, año 1922, escritura 15, ff. 42v-43.

³⁷ ANI/P 1921-1922, vol. 1, año 1922, escritura 15, ff. 40-43v.

³⁸ ANI/P 1928-1929, vol. 1, año 1928, escritura 20, ff. 117-132.

³⁹ AGN/MI/AI, caja 269, carpeta 2554, ff. 68-80.

⁴⁰ ACC/NS, 1924, vol. 2, escritura 156, ff. 1026v-1029v.

⁴¹ Mentioned in: Quintero, *Territorio Ignoto*, 129.

⁴² AGN/MI/AI, caja 182, carpeta 1526, ff. 10-13v.

⁴³ ACC/NS, 1941, vol. 2, escritura 116, f. 916v-922v.

⁴⁴ Mentioned in: Quintero, *Territorio Ignoto*, 129.

⁴⁵ AGN/MI/AI, caja 182, carpeta 1526, ff. 10-13v.

⁴⁶ ANI/P 1912-1913, vol. 1, año 1912, escritura 11.

⁴⁷ ANI/P 1928-1929, vol. 1, año 1929, escritura 16, ff. 89-96.

		Escritura 116 de 21 octubre 1941, Notaría de Silvia. Delimitates the <i>resguardos</i> of Mosoco, Vitoncó, and Lame. ⁴⁸
Ricaurte		Escritura 43 de 12 diciembre 1927, Notaría de Inzá. Settlement area of Ricaurte. ⁴⁹
San Andrés de Pisimbalá	Title from 1667. ⁵⁰ Escritura 79 de 4 abril 1906, Notaría de La Plata (Statements from witnesses).	Escritura 20 de 21 agosto 1928, Notaría de Inzá. Settlement areas of Turminá, Vivorá, Yaquivá, and San Andrés. ⁵¹
San José	Escritura 959 de 23 octubre 1883, Notaría de Popayán. Title for Vitoncó given by Cristóbal Mosquera y Figueroa on July 19, 1708. Copy certified in 1836. ⁵² Escritura 62 de 13 junio 1911, Notaría de Silvia. (Statements from witnesses). ⁵³	
Santa Rosa	Title from 1667. ⁵⁴ Escritura 563 de 2 agosto 1898, Notaría de Popayán (Statements from witnesses)	
Suin	Titles given by King Philip II. ⁵⁵ Escritura 959 de 23 octubre 1883, Notaría de Popayán. Title for Vitoncó given by Cristóbal Mosquera y Figueroa on July 19, 1708. Copy certified in 1836. ⁵⁶ Escritura 12 de 22 febrero 1912, Notaría de Inzá. (Statements from witnesses). ⁵⁷	Escritura 9 de 20 febrero 1912, Notaría de Inzá. Separates the <i>resguardo</i> of Suin from Lame and Chinas. ⁵⁸
Tálaga	Escritura 10 de 9 agosto 1852, Juez Letrado de Popayán. ⁵⁹ Escritura 709 de 5 octubre 1858, Notario Público de Popayán. ⁶⁰ Escritura 388 de 8 junio 1898. ⁶¹	Demarcation of Tálaga, Tóez, and Vitoncó en 1775. ⁶⁴ Escritura 15 de 23 julio 1914, Notaría de Inzá. Demarcates the limits between Tálaga and Wila. ⁶⁵

⁴⁸ ACC/NS, 1941, vol. 2, escritura 116, f. 916v-920, 922-922v.

⁴⁹ ANI/P 1926-1927, vol. 1, año 1927, escritura 43, ff. 486-490.

⁵⁰ Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 39-41. They say a copy of the title can be found in the Archivo Histórico de Tierradentro.

⁵¹ ANI/P 1928-1929, vol. 1, año 1928, escritura 20, ff. 117-132.

⁵² AGN/MI/AI, caja 182, carpeta 1526, ff. 10-13v.

⁵³ ACC/NS, 1911, vol. 1, escritura 62, ff. 242v-245v.

⁵⁴ Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 39-41. They say a copy of the title can be found in the Archivo Histórico de Tierradentro.

⁵⁵ Mentioned in: Quintero, *Territorio Ignoto*, 129.

⁵⁶ AGN/MI/AI, caja 182, carpeta 1526, ff. 10-13v.

⁵⁷ ANI/P 1912-1913, vol. 1, año 1912, escritura 12. ANI/P 1914-1915, vol. 1, año 1915, ff. 4-9. See related documents of 1914: ACC/NS, 1914, vol. 1, escritura 41, ff. 238v, 240-250.

⁵⁸ ANI/P 1912-1913, vol. 1, año 1912, escritura 9.

⁵⁹ Mentioned in: ANI/P 1914-1915, año 1914, escritura 15, ff. 29-31.

⁶⁰ Mentioned in: ANI/P 1914-1915, año 1914, escritura 15, ff. 29-31.

⁶¹ Mentioned in: ANI/P 1914-1915, año 1914, escritura 15, ff. 29-31.

	<p>Escritura 709 de 5 octubre 1898, Notaría de Popayán.⁶²</p> <p>Escritura 10 de 20 febrero 1912, Notaría de Inzá. <i>Resguardo</i> titles given to the <i>caciques</i> of Tálaga, Tóez, and Vitoncó in 1679.⁶³</p>	<p>Escritura 48 de 29 diciembre 1927. Settlement area of Tálaga.⁶⁶</p>
Tóez	<p>Escritura 10 de 20 febrero 1912, Notaría de Inzá. <i>Resguardo</i> titles given to the <i>caciques</i> of Tálaga, Tóez, and Vitoncó in 1679.⁶⁷</p> <p>There exists a title from 1898 in the Notaría of Popayán.⁶⁸</p>	<p>Demarcation of Tálaga, Tóez, and Vitoncó en 1775.⁶⁹</p> <p>Escritura 19 de 20 agosto 1928, Notaría de Inzá. Settlement áreas in Wila and Tóez.⁷⁰</p>
Togoima	<p>Title from 1667.⁷¹</p> <p>Escritura 61 de 12 junio 1911, Notaría de Silvia. Possession of the <i>resguardos</i> of Avirama, Togoima, and Belalcázar, given by the governor and captain general of Popayán. January 3, 1755.⁷²</p>	<p>Escritura 27 de 14 octubre de 1929. Settlement area of Togoima (Guadualejo).⁷³</p>
Topa	<p>Escritura 99 de 10 febrero 1899, Notaría de Popayán.⁷⁴ Possession given by the King in 1735, confirmed by the Governor and Captain General of Neiva in 1737.</p>	<p>Escritura 156 de 15 diciembre 1924, Notaría de Silvia. Demarcation between the <i>resguardos</i> of La Laguna and Topa.⁷⁵</p>
Turminá	<p>Escritura 380 de 10 junio 1897. (Statements from witnesses).⁷⁶</p>	<p>Escritura 20 de 21 agosto 1928, Notaría de Inzá. Settlement areas of Turminá, Vivorá, Yaquivá, and San Andrés.⁷⁷</p>
Vitoncó	<p>Titles given by King Philip II.⁷⁸</p> <p>Escritura 10 de 20 febrero 1912, Notaría de Inzá. <i>Resguardo</i> titles given to the <i>caciques</i> of Tálaga, Tóez, and Vitoncó in 1679.⁷⁹</p>	<p>Escritura 11 de 21 febrero 1912, Notaría de Inzá. Separates the <i>resguardos</i> of Vitoncó and Mosoco.⁸¹</p> <p>Escritura 116 de 21 octubre 1941, Notaría</p>

⁶⁴ AGN/MI/AI, caja 182, carpeta 1526, ff. 3-9.

⁶⁵ ANI/P 1914-1915, vol. 1, año 1914, escritura 15, ff. 29-31.

⁶² Mentioned in: AGN/MI/AI, caja 182, carpeta 1519, ff. 8-8v.

⁶³ ANI/P 1912-1913, vol. 1, año 1912, escritura 10. Additional copies (some of them incomplete): AGN/MI/AI, caja 182, carpeta 1526, ff. 3-9. AGN/MI/AI, caja 182, carpeta 1519, ff. 7-7v

⁶⁶ ANI/P 1926-1927, vol. 1, año 1927, escritura 48, ff. 511, 514-518

⁶⁷ ANI/P 1912-1913, vol. 1, año 1912, escritura 10. Additional copies (some of them incomplete): AGN/MI/AI, caja 182, carpeta 1526, ff. 3-9. AGN/MI/AI, caja 182, carpeta 1519, ff. 7-7v

⁶⁸ Mentioned in: AGN/MI/AI, caja 182, carpeta 1519, ff. 8-8v.

⁶⁹ AGN/MI/AI, caja 182, carpeta 1526, ff. 3-9.

⁷⁰ ANI/P 1928-1929, vol. 1, año 1928, escritura 19, ff. 108-116.

⁷¹ Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 39-41. They say a copy of the title can be found in the Archivo Histórico de Tierradentro.

⁷² ACC/NS, 1911, vol. 1, escritura 61, ff. 238v-242v.

⁷³ ANI/P 1928-1929, vol. 1, año 1929, escritura 27, ff. 153-156.

⁷⁴ AGN/MI/AI, caja 269, carpeta 2554, ff. 68-80.

⁷⁵ ACC/NS, 1924, vol. 2, escritura 156, ff. 1026v-1029v.

⁷⁶ AGN/MI/AI, caja 183, carpeta 1528, ff. 30-38.

⁷⁷ ANI/P 1928-1929, vol. 1, año 1928, escritura 20, ff. 117-132.

⁷⁸ Mentioned in: Quintero, *Territorio Ignoto*, 129.

	Escritura 959 de 23 octubre 1883, Notaría de Popayán. Title for Vitoncó given by Cristóbal Mosquera y Figueroa on July 19, 1708. Copy certified in 1836. ⁸⁰	de Silvia. Delimitates the <i>resguardos</i> of Mosoco, Vitoncó and Lame. ⁸²
Wila [Huila]	Escritura 10 de 9 agosto 1852, Juez Letrado de Popayán. ⁸³ Escritura 709 de 5 octubre 1858, Notario Público de Popayán. ⁸⁴ Escritura 388 de 8 junio 1898. ⁸⁵ Escritura 131 de 2 noviembre 1927. (Statements from witnesses). ⁸⁶	Escritura 15 de 23 julio 1914, Notaría de Inzá. Defines the limits between the <i>resguardos</i> of Tálaga and Wila. ⁸⁷ Escritura 19 de 20 agosto 1928, Notaría de Inzá. Settlement areas in Wila and Tóez. ⁸⁸
Yaquivá	Title from 1667. ⁸⁹ Escritura 150 del 5 de marzo de 1897, Circuito de Popayán. (Statements from witnesses). ⁹⁰	Escritura 20 de 21 agosto 1928, Notaría de Inzá. Settlement areas of Turminá, Vivorá, Yaquivá, and San Andrés. ⁹¹

⁷⁹ ANI/P 1912-1913, vol. 1, año 1912, escritura 10. Additional copies (some of them incomplete): AGN/MI/AI, caja 182, carpeta 1526, ff. 3-9. AGN/MI/AI, caja 182, carpeta 1519, ff. 7-7v

⁸¹ ANI/P 1912-1913, vol. 1, año 1912, escritura 11.

⁸⁰ AGN/MI/AI, caja 182, carpeta 1526, ff. 10-13v.

⁸² ACC/NS, 1941, vol. 2, escritura 116, f. 916v-920, 922-922v.

⁸³ Mentioned in: ANI/P 1914-1915, año 1914, escritura 15, ff. 29-31.

⁸⁴ Mentioned in: ANI/P 1914-1915, año 1914, escritura 15, ff. 29-31.

⁸⁵ Mentioned in: ANI/P 1914-1915, año 1914, escritura 15, ff. 29-31.

⁸⁶ ACC/NS, 1927, vol. 2, escritura 131, ff. 663-688

⁸⁷ ANI/P 1914-1915, vol. 1, año 1914, escritura 15, ff. 29-31.

⁸⁸ ANI/P 1928-1929, vol. 1, año 1928, escritura 19, ff. 108-116.

⁸⁹ Findji and Rojas, *Territorio, economía y sociedad Páez*, 39-41. They say a copy of the title can be found in the Archivo Histórico de Tierradentro.

⁹⁰ AGN/MI/AI, Caja 183, Carpeta 1529, ff. 1-8. Otra copia: AGN/MI/AI, Caja 183, Carpeta 1529, ff. 17-20v.

⁹¹ ANI/P 1928-1929, vol. 1, año 1928, escritura 20, ff. 117-132.

Table 10. Settlement Areas in Tierradentro, 1909-1929

Place	Resolution (year)	Demarcation (year)	Others
Inzá ⁹²	1909 (January)	1910 (March)	Registered in 1922.
Belalcázar ⁹³	1920 (August)	1920 (December)	
Turminá ⁹⁴	1927 (February)	1927 (April)	
Vivorá ⁹⁵	1927 (February)	1927 (May)	
Yaquivá ⁹⁶	1927 (February)	1928 (January)	
San Andrés ⁹⁷	1927 (February)	1928 (March)	
Ricaurte ⁹⁸	1927 (August)	1927 (November)	
Tálaga ⁹⁹	1927 (August)	1927 (December)	
Wila ¹⁰⁰	1927 (August)	1928 (March)	
Tóez ¹⁰¹	1927 (November)	1928 (March)	
Togoima (Guadualejo) ¹⁰²	1927 (November)	1929 (October)	Known as Guadualejo
Mosoco ¹⁰³	1929 (April)	1929 (April)	There seems to be a previous demarcation in: <i>Registro Oficial</i> No. 1481, 13 June, 1928.

⁹² ANI/P 1921-1922, vol. 1, año 1922, escritura 15, ff. 40-43v.

⁹³ ANI/P 1920, vol. 1, escritura 51, ff. 210-213v.

⁹⁴ ANI/P 1928-1929, vol. 1, año 1928, escritura 20, ff. 118-121.

⁹⁵ ANI/P 1928-1929, vol. 1, año 1928, escritura 20, ff. 122-124.

⁹⁶ ANI/P 1928-1929, vol. 1, año 1928, escritura 20, ff. 125-128.

⁹⁷ ANI/P 1928-1929, vol. 1, año 1928, escritura 20, ff. 129-132.

⁹⁸ ANI/P 1926-1927, vol. 1, año 1927, escritura 43, ff. 486-490.

⁹⁹ ANI/P 1926-1927, vol. 1, año 1927, escritura 48, ff. 511, 514-518.

¹⁰⁰ ANI/P 1928-1929, vol. 1, año 1928, escritura 19, ff. 109-112.

¹⁰¹ ANI/P 1928-1929, vol. 1, año 1928, escritura 19, ff. 113-116.

¹⁰² ANI/P 1928-1929, vol. 1, año 1929, escritura 27, ff. 153-156.

¹⁰³ ANI/P 1928-1929, vol. 1, año 1929, escritura 16, ff. 89-96.

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