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Community and the Contours of Empire: The Hacienda System in the Northern Highlands of Ecuador

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Abstract
Relationships between humans and material goods are key in the emergences of social identity and status under imperial projects. I argue that a critical focus on the concept of "community" provides a salient frame by which to assess status and identity and that everyday materiality is a key mechanism by which such collective forms of identity are forged. I draw on historical documents, oral histories, and archaeological evidence of a late nineteenth-century indigenous hacienda laborer household from Hacienda Guachalá, highlands of Ecuador, and show that status and identity may be generated through what you do rather than what you own.

Keywords Community · Materiality · Hacienda system · Household · *Huasipungo* · Ecuador

Celebrating Things

The third consecutive day of celebrations in the otherwise quiet parish of Cangahua, Ecuador brought another stream of highland communities singing, dancing and drinking from their homes in different parts of the mountains all the way down to the parish political center. On this day in late June, 2017, as they have year after year, the groups came dressed in outfits typical of their communities and the annual San Pedro fiesta. This was the third taking of the plaza ("gran toma de la plaza") and the celebrations would continue all night, all weekend, and over the next several weeks. Following the winding paths between rural homes and agricultural fields, the participants traced routes across the landscape with a common destination: the Cangahua town plaza. Some descended with the beat of their Andean instruments while others trailed behind

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trucks that were mounted with a tower of speakers blaring the tunes of traditional *coplas*. The events took on the form of a procession, each community representing itself with their name on large signs, through dress, musical lyrics, material props and some with presentations similar to parade "floats."

Throughout the festivities everyday material objects stood out as important figures. One pickup truck was lavishly decorated with stalks of plants grown locally, including maize, potatoes, onions, and other herbs and medicinal plants (Fig. 1). On the truck bed of this "float" an older woman was hard at work grinding corn grains on a large, stone mortar. Next to her sat a medium sized ceramic jar, glazed on the inside but plain and unelaborate on the exterior and typical of jars used in the area until recently. The vessel, grains and woman formed an assemblage evocative of local social identity and wellbeing. Another group of participants, dressed in white and red colors typical of the area historically, danced and sang toward the plaza. Each brandished oversized models of everyday implements, including a wooden *chicha* spoon, large wooden plate (*batea*), a hand plow and pick, and ceramic jars carried on the back (Fig. 2). These simple objects stood out among the elaborate costumes and atmosphere of the day.

The fiestas that erupt in Cangahua each year celebrate and strengthen a shared cultural heritage, a way of living and cultural identities. While the festivities are a syncretic manifestation of Indigenous and Catholic practices, official programs welcome locals and visitors to this important and "age-old celebration in honor of Father Sun and Mother Earth to give thanks for the past year's harvests" (GAD 2016). In 2016, the official program stated that participation in the fiestas should be a motive to strengthen the bonds of friendship and ensure a bright future for "the younger generations that have become the custodians of the practices and traditions inherited from their ancestors" (GAD 2016). As groups flowed by, I began to consider why seemingly simple material goods featured so prominently in these annual displays of cultural pride and identity? What role did such goods play in locally meaningful categories and experiences of status and identity? How might these orientations be steeped in centuries of social life and the local political landscapes?

Fig. 1 "Parade float" during the San Pedro festivities in Cangahua, Ecuador, June 2017. A woman on the bed of a pickup truck grinds corn on a stone mortar. The truck is decorated with local crops and medicinal plants in addition to a ceramic jar and stone mortar. Photo by the author

Fig. 2 A community dances toward the main plaza of Cangahua during the third "taking of the plaza" of the San Pedro festivities in June, 2017. Note the objects that they have chosen to display. These are examples of the objects described as *yanga cosas* in this article. Photo by the author

To consider these questions, the fiestas must be understood in light of the enduring consequences of Spanish imperialism in the region. A majority of the parish residents are descendants of the generations of indigenous laborers who toiled on the nearby Hacienda Guachalá since the colonial period in the 1600s until agrarian reform changes of the 1960s. Today, most of the lands of the once-massive hacienda are now either in the hands of the former workers or, increasingly, belong to export-driven industrial flower growers – the beneficiaries of a renewed period of land accumulation. Just years after agrarian reforms that, at least in theory, began to democratize the balance of power between the hacienda elite and laborers in the 1960s, neoliberal reforms have quickly returned the rural parish to all-to-familiar forms of agrarian labor and servitude (Korovkin 2003; Lyall 2014). Interviews with local informants have shown that in the face of these neoliberal changes, which have brought a renewed push toward individualized identities, changing livelihoods, and environmental degradation, local people have altered their own forms of engagement with these changing circumstances. In particular, they have re-created collective forms of economic production, gender-based collective support systems, and a strengthening of communal forms of social and ecological activism (Korovkin 2003; Lyall 2014; Rousseau 2017). Here, as elsewhere in the Andes (Colloredo-Mansfeld 2009; Orta 2013) and across the globe (Foster 2008; Tsing 2005) various forms of "community" emerge as meaningful frames of social identity and action amidst the ever-morphing grids of lasting imperial influence.

The celebration of material goods in this current context illustrates the point that I make in this article; namely that a critical focus on the concept of "community" provides a salient frame by which to assess status and identity – the key foci of this special issue – and that everyday materiality is a key mechanism by which such collective forms of identity are forged. I am particularly inspired in this analysis by a category of "humble things," or *yanga cosas* in local Kichwa (Colloredo-Mansfeld 1999). Following descriptions from his Otavalan informants in the highlands just north of Cayambe, Rudi Colloredo-Mansfeld (1999:114) notes that such objects are used "in daily routines, not only for practical tasks, but also to foreground collective obligations and identities." The objects he alludes to are the same ones that participants brandished

and celebrated on the streets of Cangahua, including those used for household tasks, the sharing of meals, and work in the fields. What Colloredo-Mansfeld demonstrates in his analysis is that status is often less about possessing material wealth and more about sustaining and honoring a wide network of mutual obligations and social ties. My own ethnographic work in Cangahua supports a similar interpretation as informants often claim "living in community" or a collective ethic as the most meaningful aspect of who they are and how they combat the negative social and environmental effects of cut-flower plantations. In short, Colloredo-Mansfeld's insights offer a novel approach to interpret material culture of Spanish empire; not as reflections of ethnic identity or social status but as part of the active and dynamic process of community production and social life.

My concern in this essay is to examine the longer history of rural life and community dynamics in the shadows of Hacienda Guachalá during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; to develop a deeper understanding of social life as it emerged and continues to emerge in the space between everyday life and broader structural forces. To do so, I draw on historical evidence, oral histories, and portions of household archaeological research conducted in and around Guachalá since 2014. Specifically, I interpret an archaeological assemblage recovered from a late nineteenth-century house site at Hacienda Guachalá that would have belonged to a family of hacienda laborers under a form of debt-peonage known locally as the *huasipungo* system. The household, as with all other *huasipunguero* households, would have had to provision everyday goods themselves and the assemblage is therefore telling. As I will describe, there was scant evidence of mass-produced goods like imported, matched sets of ceramics, metal, or glass bottles (for industrial medicine or alcohol). In contrast, there was an abundance of large-diameter coarse earthenwares typical of communal foodways. These *yanga cosas* foregrounded a set of social relations that forge collective identities and social status that depends more on honoring everyday obligations and relationships rather than wealth.

Communities and Everyday Materiality

Archaeologists have provided evidence for the material dimensions of colonial and postcolonial processes and how categories of status and identity, including categories of race, class, gender, sexuality, and age, all emerge in particular contexts (Croucher and Weiss 2011; Fennell 2017; Leone and Knauf 2015; Liebmann and Rizvi 2008; Voss 2008a, b; Voss and Casella 2011). This ever-increasing literature on the broad, yet important subject of social identity continues to grapple with how to account for these issues in ways that would have been meaningful to people in the contexts we study and the role of material goods. Identity is now accepted as relational, contextual, and often contested (Fowler 2010:364; Meskell 2002). This poses major methodological issues for archaeologists seeking to assess the role of material goods in relation to those dynamic identities. In this essay I suggest that shifting to an analysis of community is one way by which to reconsider the related themes of status and identity as a more salient frame for social life in the Cangahua region of Ecuador.

While use of the term "community" has a long history in archaeology, several scholars have reinvigorated the discussion beyond its understanding as a nucleus of

co-residence or building block of society (see MacSweeney 2011 for comprehensive overview). Canuto and Yaeger (2000: 5) brought attention to the issue by pushing for a "modified interactionalist paradigm, informed by practice theory." This perspective intended to focus archaeological analysis on social interactions and the sense of identity that was produced in those interactions. Pauketat (2008: 249) went a step further in claiming that communities may be understood as a "quality of places, experiences, practices, and even human bodies," thus asserting that things and places were important components in the emergence of communities. Speaking to a more active and relational conceptualization of community, he suggests that "community is as community does" (Pauketat 2008: 240). Most recently, Oliver Harris (2014) has discussed communities as "assemblages" so as to expand the breadth of phenomena that we consider as constitutive elements in the making of communities. Following Latour (1993) and a host of others, he suggests that "agency emerges from the relations between humans and non-humans" and that by accepting objects as "mediators of relations," we understand them as part of the community (Harris 2014:88).

What these approaches suggest is that a critical take on community requires attention to the everyday materiality that constitutes such social forms. I agree with Overholtzer and Robin (2015: 6) that "bodily engagement with daily material practices forms a crucial site for the constitution of people, identities, and societies" (see also Olsen 2010: 37–38; Webmoor and Witmore 2008). In fact, I believe that this is the crux of why participants of the San Pedro festivities celebrate everyday objects or "yanga cosas" in annual festivities. It is not because they are economic prestige goods, but because those goods continue to foster social practices and collective identities through which contemporary communities are woven. In assessing archaeological assemblages to understand status and identity, we must seek to understand "not the presence but rather the forms of attachment between humans and things" (Jones and Boivin 2010: 345). Archaeological research gives greater depth to these questions in showing whether, or in what ways, contemporary modes of social life "are infused with social orientations that were shaped in relation to colonial" and past forms of authority, as Francois Richard (2015a:231) has shown in rural Senegal.

The insights provided by Colloredo-Mansfeld in the 1990s and other Andeanists foreshadowed, to some degree, the important new approaches to "materiality" and are part of a key literature on the concept of community in the Andes. Classic ethnographic studies like Catherine Allen's (1988) work in Sonqo, Peru, challenged the notion that community was a bounded entity or a quality that a group possesses. Instead, Allen observed that reciprocity acts as a primary mechanism of social compulsion, calling it the "pump" at the heart of Andean life. Allen articulates the *ayllu* (always imperfectly glossed as an Andean form of community) as a dense network of social ties and a set of practices through which it is reproduced. In this sense, communities are always fluctuating social forms or, as Andrew Orta (2013:112-113) aptly argues, they are "forged." His point is key here since, as his metaphor of the hammer hitting the hot metal implies, "forging creates strength and resiliency as local compressive forces reshape the grains of the metal" (Orta 2013:112). The idea is not to claim community as a resistant form of the premodern past, but rather to point out that people have articulated forms of communal expressions in novel ways according to the circumstances in which they find themselves (Colloredo-Mansfeld 2009). A historical anthropology can capture these dynamics across time.

Colonial authorities, and later, state and local officials attempted to cultivate new subjects through the locus of community and household precisely because they were key interfaces for the social mechanisms that gave, and continue to give communities, energy and productive power. As a point of clarification, in Cangahua and across Ecuador, communities, or *comunas*, are also legal entities with administrative structures. In fact, Marc Becker (1999) has argued that the State implemented the 1937 Ley de Comunas specifically to manipulate local affairs; efforts that were bucked by indigenous activists in the Cangahua region. With this in mind, I nevertheless discuss community here more so as a conceptual frame so as to interrogate the dynamics of social collectivities. Communities, whether legal entities or other forms of association, are complicated, messy, heterogeneous, and in ceaseless production. It is through these novel interactions that coalitions adapt, negotiate, create, and fight for their futures (Colloredo-Mansfeld 2009). Archaeological evidence of these processes can breathe new life into studies of community production of hacienda laborers; an important task given the enduring consequences of this imperial history today.

Imperial Histories in Cayambe

Departing the streets of the capital city, Quito, and shifting onto the Pan-American northeast toward the city of Cayambe, the landscape begins to change. The deep *quebradas* (ravines) create creases amongst the dry mountains that rise above the highway. Native penco, or Andean agave, plants dangle and dot the landscape as the colder air of increasing altitude sets in. Driving further up the curves and gradients, a rural topography comes into focus, dotted with the slowly decaying ruins of former hacienda houses and stables built during the Spanish colonial and Republican periods. The high walls, guard towers, and characteristic white greenhouse tents of the new cut-flower plantations announce themselves as the new sovereigns of the land. And yet the still-visible concentric wall fortifications emanating out from hilltop sites where Indigenous groups resisted the late Inca expansion northward centuries before, remind the passerby that these lands have always been contested. The natural and built landscape of Cayambe emanates an awkward geography of ruin and re-animation, one which evidences the reality that the "corona of imperial influence" extends far beyond any one moment in time and with far-reaching consequences (Richard 2015b:449; Stoler 2013).

Roughly an hour drive northeast of Quito, the canton of Cayambe lies at the center of the world straddling the Equatorial line (Fig. 3). Prior to Inca northern expansion in the late fifteenth century the area was inhabited by the Caranqui-Cayambe population, a loosely-defined reference to what were likely several semi-autonomous polities connected by a shared ethnic identity and ritual practices (Bray 2008, 2015). These local groups were able to fend off the expanding Inca forces from the area for nearly two decades until around 1505 when Inca forces began to assert control of the new territories as they had throughout their rapidly expanding empire. They moved colonists known as *mitimaes* into the Cayambe region in a demographic shift that Segundo Moreno refers to as an early example of *mestizaje* in Ecuador (Moreno Yánez 2008:38). This means that by the time the Spanish made their own incursion into the northern highlands of Ecuador in 1534, the residents of Cayambe were already navigating morphing grids of imperial power from the south.

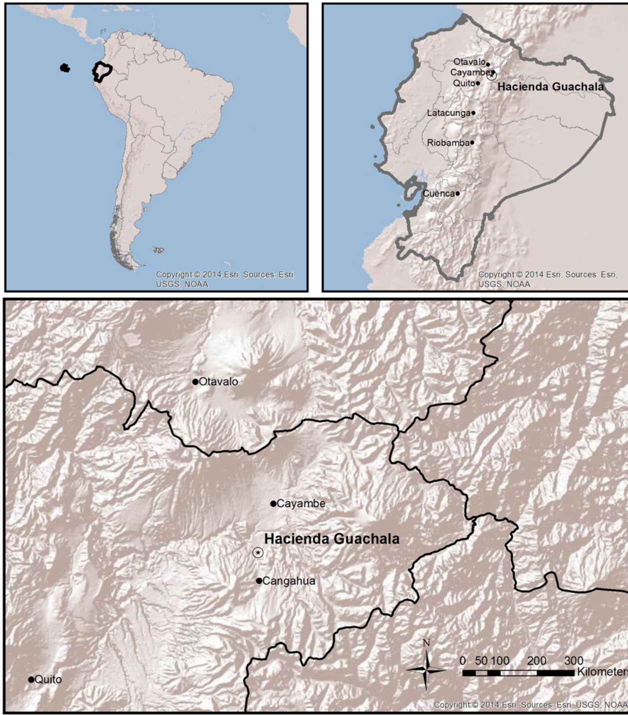

Fig. 3 Map showing location of Hacienda Guachalá, Cangahua, Ecuador

Just decades removed from resistance efforts against the Inca forces, Sebastián de Benalcázar led a new wave of Spanish forces northward toward Cayambe in 1534. As was common throughout newly possessed lands of the Spanish empire, the Crown quickly began distributing grants of indigenous labor and tribute known as *encomiendas* to elite Spaniards. The system was designed to create profit for Spaniards and assimilate local populations toward Spanish cultural identity. Perhaps its most enduring effect was the foundation that it created for systems of land tenure and labor relations that formed the basis of the hacienda system by the seventeenth century. While the relative power of haciendas varied across different parts of the Andes, it was particularly powerful in what is today Ecuador, where nearly half of the registered Indigenous population was attached to these large estates by the end of the colonial period in the 1820s (Larson 2004). The hacienda thus became the dominant locus of social organization and political economy throughout the colonial period (Jacobsen 1993; Klein 1993; Larson 2004; Lyons 2006; Powers 1995).

Hierarchies within hacienda estates manifested largely along ethnic lines into a system of elite white owners, *mestizos* with various administrative roles, and indigenous workers. The administrator, more so than the owner, managed the affairs of the estate along with scribes (*escribientes)* who kept financial accounts and *mayordomos* who acted as overseers of daily tasks (Lyons 2006:76–80; O'Connor 2007:156–159; Thurner 1993). The dominant labor system in the region was a form of debt-peonage known in Ecuador as *concertaje* (later called *huasipungaje)*, wherein Indigenous

peoples (the *conciertos)* were coerced to work on the haciendas in exchange for a miniscule salary and small plot of loaned land (*huasipungo)* on which to grow subsistence crops (Becker and Tutillo 2009; Ramon 1987). This system of quasi-slavery was the basis for exploitative and abusive labor relations across Ecuador.

Independence for the new Andean nations over the course of the 1820s generated significant debate over the rights of Indigenous and enslaved peoples as well as their relationship with Republican states. Gaining formal citizenship after 1857 did not proffer equality nor eliminate forms of abuse that were institutionalized since Spanish arrival. Rather, as Andrés Guerrero (1997:558) argues, the ethnic majority of non-Spanish speakers "remained enclosed in a silent category…hidden beneath the body of the citizenry." Now "concealed beneath the shadow of citizenship," elites of both liberal and conservative political persuasions could begin their nation building projects and the construction of a homogeneous national identity (Guerrero 1997: 558).

Haciendas played an important role in this mission as a form of state by proxy in rural margins. The homogenizing work could be accomplished through the disciplining of labor, and as I suggest below, by attempting to shape social relations through labor and accounting practices. Landholders sought to disarticulate collective forms of identity through the institution of the hacienda. And for a period of time, scholars have tended to perpetuate the idea that community dissolution was largely successful. A prevailing narrative asserted that structural forces had effectively dissolved those social mechanisms from hacienda laborers (Cotler 1970; Favre 1976). This view was summed up in the concept of the "triangle without base" in which the social organization of the hacienda was strictly a vertical hierarchy tying the landlord to peasants, with no significant attention to horizontal linkages between laborers themselves (Lyons 2006; Thurner 1993: 43–44). It is precisely these horizontal linkages that I assess archaeologically in the specific case of Hacienda Guachalá.

The Local-National Context: Guachalá and the Conservatives

The analysis at the heart of this essay centers on one influential hacienda: Guachalá. The case of Guachalá is instructive because haciendas were key choreographers for much of the Ecuadorian state project during the second half of the nineteenth century. As such, haciendas were contested realms of social identity. The underlying assumption for this essay is that material goods played key roles in the texture of social relationships, where the everyday intersected with broader State forms and political ideologies.

Originally an *encomienda,* Guachalá became a private hacienda in 1647. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the hacienda grew, at its height covering a majority of the roughly 1,000 km^2 of the parish of Cangahua (Becker and Tutillo 2009: 171–172). As elsewhere in the region, the hacienda was always an important producer of sheep wool, much of which was used to produce textiles for export regionally throughout the Andes. The hacienda officially became a licensed *obraje* in 1700 and it continued to produce textiles until the middle of the twentieth century (Becker and Tutillo 2009; Bonifáz Andrade 1995). Particularly during the latter half of the nineteenth century, the *obraje* was the central productive aspect of Guachalá. The hacienda also cultivated agricultural products such as barley, wheat, maize, potatoes, and beans, and produced goods such cheese and milk.

Between 1819 and 1892, the period of focus here, the total number of workers at Guachalá rose from 202 to 428. The number of indebted rose from 61% in 1819 to 93% in 1892 (Becker and Tutillo 2009: 172). Several notes of absent workers in account books throughout the nineteenth century and a police report requesting the return of a runaway laborer from Guachalá in 1903 reveals just how suffocating these relationships were (AHE SG.0002.17).

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Conservatives held much of the political power in Ecuador until the liberal revolution of 1895. The Conservative project found particular strength under the leadership of Gabriel García Moreno (1861–65, 1869–75), the most prominent political figure of Ecuador during this period. Moreno instituted a form of conservative nationalism that insisted on Catholic devotion as a means for uniting the country, while legislating for economic and technical modernization (Henderson 2008; Larson 2004; Williams 2005). The two positions were complementary in practice. The civil and moral mission of the Catholic faith would hypothetically eliminate local cultural differences, unite the country, and produce a more efficient work force capable of competing in global markets.

Moreno attempted to initiate a "Catholic modernity" through the national collectivity of the *pueblo Católico* (Williams 2005: 208–209). In an analysis of 1870s newspapers, Derek Williams revealed how this was partly to be achieved through nationalized religious education that would bring "enlightenment and progress" to remote rural areas so as to reverse the perceived "repugnance to all innovation" of Indigenous peoples (Williams 2005: 211–212). Over time, and particularly by the Liberal Revolution of 1895, this approach to national progress was increasingly associated with a homogenized body politic that would progressively produce and consume mass-produced commodities (Hardin 2014). Furthermore, to root out the "immoral" behavior of Ecuadorian society, the Garcian government clamped down on "pagan" rituals during religious celebrations and criminalized public drinking, including a national ban on alcohol consumption in taverns, *chicherías*, and town plazas in 1871(Williams 2005: 218). These policies were rooted in the logic of Catholic morality as the base of a national project but it is also clear how such policies were instituted along ethnic lines. For elites in Ecuador, an "empire of morality" promised to unite a country of diverse cultural textures through religious devotion, economic consumerism, and enlightened social etiquette.

These national politics were not merely ideas spouted without consequence in the legislative halls of Quito. Rather, they gained purchase locally across the highlands and truly hit home at Hacienda Guachalá when García Moreno himself rented the estate for five years beginning in 1868. His presence added direct state-level connection to an already storied property.

Documenting Labor, Choreographing Life

A series of documents relating to the administration and accounting of Hacienda Guachalá are demonstrative in the ways in which administrators attempted to choreograph particular identities for laborer families consonant with the goals of the State. These records include labor contracts, daily work records, details of laborer debts, and material inventories of the estate through time. I suggest that the documents do not reflect a passive reality but actively worked to cultivate it.

The choreographed version of Indigenous laborer identity began with the drawing up of the contractual agreement of *concertaje* labor. The contracts formalized a version of household and gender organization consonant with a patriarchal system that recognized only male heads of households and nuclear families. Several contracts finalized at Guachalá in 1899 illustrate this process (AHE SG-0002.17). The documents were formal agreements between individual men and Josefina Ascázubi, the estate owner at the time. The terms stipulated that the laborer had to work at least five years, at least five days a week, for 5¢ daily wage. In exchange the laborer was given a small plot of land called a *huasipungo* for his and his family's subsistence. Finally, he was given a cash credit that he could not pay back with money – he had to repay the advance in labor. The contract, signed by both parties, thus laid the basis for a relationship of ever-steepening debt that hardly ever terminated after the five-year period.

The debt incurred from the mere signing of the labor contract was only the beginning of the inevitable downward spiral of debt. Since the wages and subsistence plots could not provide for the daily needs of the families, at various points in the year they would be forced to request an advance from the *hacendado,* either in the form of cash or goods. These were of two types, either the *socorro* ("aid") or *suplido/suplimento* (supplement). A *socorro* was usually a subsistence necessity like barley, corn or potatoes while the *suplido* often took the form of an emergency cash advance for things like a funeral, a ritual obligation or major medical expense (Becker 2004; Lyons 2006: 132).

Furthermore, after each day of work, the administrators would record a tick mark known as a *raya* next to the name of each laborer. These accounting books were known as the *libro de raya* and served as a sort of time sheet to confirm labor compliance (Fig. 4). From the very start of the formal working relationship to the daily accounting practices, the hacienda was already molding an ideal worker family. First, the land was officially that of the male head of household in most cases, forcing women to a position of dependence on men – either husbands or male family members and the *hacendado* himself (Becker 2004; O'Connor 2007:160–162). This form of paternalism was characteristic of highland estates as a microcosm of Indian-State relations broadly. Second, the formalization of a single plot of land to a single family aligned with the delineation of a singular nuclear family that was not consonant with local household dynamics known throughout the Andes (Bolton and Mayer 1977; Mayer 2002; 1989). Finally, the *libros de rayas* like that pictured above evoke a sense of repetition and routinization. They embody and perform a sense of human abstraction, homogenization and discipline consonant with the modernizing push of the nation-state in the second half of the nineteenth century. Economic sociologist Peter Miller (2008: 56) suggests that "accounting could shape and create social relations…and influence the way in which individuals and organizations understand the choices open to them and the ways in which they act." I suggest that his interpretation of contemporary accounting practices is equally apt in describing the choreography of Guachalá's "books."

If the accounting practices served to cultivate a particular type of subject, the written inventories of the items possessed by the estate owners provide a lens into how the *hacendados* performed their own elite subjectivity. Inventories from 1868 and 1892 are instructive (AHE SG.0002.14, AHE SG.0002.15). In fact, the 1868 inventory was carried out specifically as a procedure before renting to Gabriel García Moreno, a year before he resumed the presidency in Ecuador and intensified his conservative project

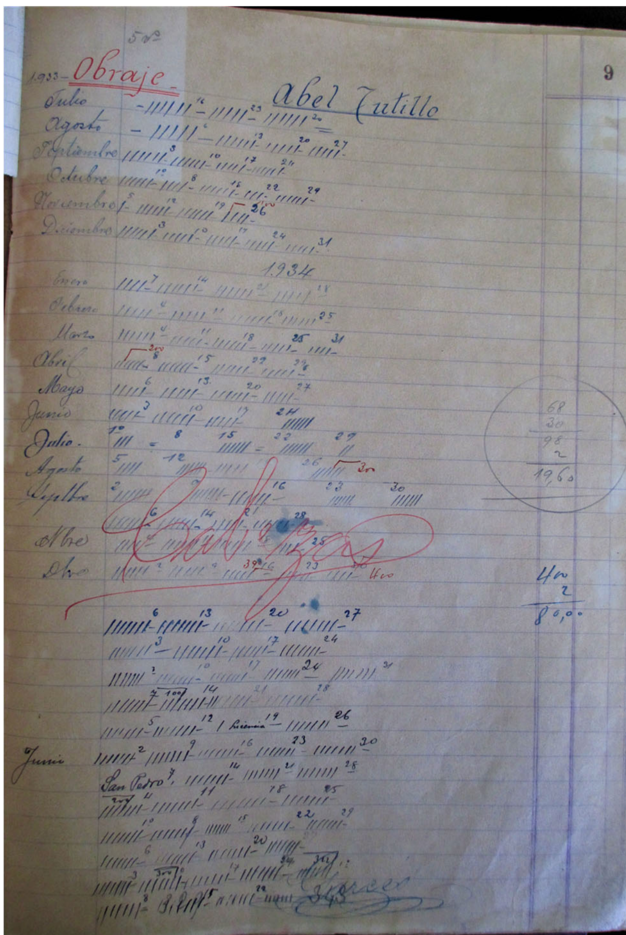

Fig. 4 Libro de Rayas, from the period 1933–1935, Hacienda Guachalá. From Archivo Histórico del Ecuador. SG.0002.25

throughout the nation. In both inventories several pages are dedicated to describing the ornaments, furniture, and paintings of the chapel. Religious paraphernalia is described in great detail and was part of the hacienda chapel attended by residents of the region of all social standing for centuries.

These same inventories include thorough listings of houseware items that attest to the social etiquette of matched and individualized dining sets (Table 1). Tablewares include sets of soup dishes and dinner plates, wine glasses, water glasses, coffee cups and teacups, dessert dish, sugar holders, pitchers and platters. The majority are of imported refined earthenwares or glasswares. The inventory specifies a particular use for each vessel, differentiating water glasses from wine glasses and coffee cups, for example. Many have matching sets such as tea cups with tea plates, and the number of the vessels testifies to the individualized etiquette for the use of all of the items. In a manner similar to many archaeological contexts excavated throughout North and South America dating to the periods since European expansion, the material inventories bear

Table 1 Inventory excerpts of Hacienda Guachalá, ca. 1868 and 1892

"Dining set" - 1868	"Table ware" - 1892
24 white plates from soup bowls to trenchers	1 soup dish of blue china with a top
2 teacups without handles	6 round platters, flat, of ordinary china
2 deep soup bowls with lids one scratched, and another soup bowl of another color	4 elliptical platters
4 large platters of various colors	1 dessert dish of fretted ceramic china
3 of the same, small, of various classes	1 small dessert dish of fine china
3 soup bowl lids	A pair of metal wire fruit bowls
A sugar holder without handle or lid	34 plates of fine china from soup bowls to trenchers
1 glass cup	1 china sugar dish with top
1 white pitcher, chipped and without handle	1 large teacup of ordinary china
5 wine glasses	1 butter dish of ordinary china without its handle
9 water drinking glasses	29 teacups and 23 teaplates of china
12 coffee cups with their matching plates	1 brass tweezer
1 coffee maker and a tin milk canister	1 cookie box opener
4 tin candlesticks	10 teacups
1 candle snuffer (despabiladera)	1 small iron kettle
One pot without a handle	Another of the same, worn
(Archivo Histórico del Ecuador SG.0002.14)	1 wooden oil holder, worn, with five glass pieces
	2 used trays
	3 tin coffeemakers, 2 in good condition, the other used
	Pair of glass pitchers
	2 ordinary glass decanters
	18 wine glasses
	12 water drinking glasses
	11 small cups
	3 plates of ordinary china
	1 steel spoon
	33 spoons with bone endings
	12 ordinary carving plates
	3 knives and 3 forks to carve turkey
	15 white brass spoons
	(Archivo Histórico Ecuador SG.0002.15)

The first was carried out prior to renting the estate to conservative president of the Republic, Gabriel García Moreno

witness to the intense commodification of individualized serving and table wares. Historical archaeologists have generally interpreted this shift in consumption as a consumer revolution in which elite use goods to signal high status (Carson 1994), as

the result of shifts in human worldviews (Deetz 1977) or as an expression of the ideological shift toward possessive individualism (Leone 1999; Shackel 1993). What I highlight here is that those goods also acted as central mediators in specific social practices that worked to sustain certain claims to the privileges of citizenship and to the power inherent in being part of a national (but exclusionary) collective.

The Archaeological Evidence

The Pambamarca Archaeology Project (PAP), with which I have collaborated since 2014, began investigations in the area in 2002 with the goal of understanding the nature of local resistance along the northern frontier of the Inca Empire (Connell et al. 2003). The project's work involves years of area survey and excavations within and between several of the major fortress sites, including contexts on the property of Hacienda Guachalá. The research discussed in this paper includes some data recovered during those investigations, though it focuses mostly on systematic excavations and archival research that I have carried out since 2014 specifically related to the Hacienda. This history of research has presented a unique opportunity to analyze material from a variety of contexts, including at the hacienda core and the surrounding landscape.

The social organization of Hacienda Guachalá and its *huasipungo* system presented a major methodological challenge for a project interested in the domestic lives of families who built ephemeral homes on plots of inhospitable land scattered across the surrounding landscape: How do you find them? What do you look for? I knew through historical evidence and local knowledge that the hacienda core included three main sectors (Fig. 5): (1) The main plaza was an open space surrounded by the chapel and offices of administrative workers like scribes (*escribientes)* and the *mayordomo*; (2) The domestic quarters of the *hacendado* family were located just to the south off the main plaza in its own corridor; (3) To the north of the main plaza was the *obraje* work area with spaces for all steps of the textile production process. Documents also specify the presence of several prisons and stocks for the disciplining of workers. For part of its history, apparently after 1819, there were living quarters for workers in the *obraje* patio. But the majority of workers lived on their semi-autonomous *huasipungo* plots in the surrounding landscape, most often in precarious positions by deep ravines and on unfertile land.

To grapple with the hacienda's history and the lives of those who labored on it thus means approaching its sphere of influence and association far beyond the architectural core. As no systematic historical archaeology has been done in the region, many of the basic material registers were unknown at the start. It was not known if there were useful indicators of domestic sites (*huasipungos)* on the surface, for example. What sorts of material, ceramic or otherwise, might indicate the presence of laborer house sites? Because the physical homes would have been made entirely of ephemeral natural building materials, a surface indicator like a class of ceramics would help to identify potential sites in survey. The first step in these investigations was thus to analyze ceramics that had already been collected by PAP in survey and excavations across the entire area of the Pambamarca Fortress Complex and compare them to the few other historic collections available across Ecuador (Balanzátegui 2012; Chancay Vásquez 2004; Jamieson 2000; Jamieson and Hancock 2004; Jamieson et al. 2013).

Fig. 5 Core hacienda architecture indicating three primary sectors as they would have been occupied during the nineteenth century. Sector 1 comprises the main plaza that would have included the chapel and rooms for the primary administrators. Sector 2 corresponds to the domestic wing of the *hacendado* family. Sector 3 corresponds to the "casa de obraje," which would have included the *obraje* work area and some domestic spaces for workers. Aerial image courtesy of Mark Willis

This process identified two main ceramic indicators of laborer occupation or activity (Fig. 6). The first is a green or yellow lead-glazed coarse earthenware that is found throughout the area in varying densities. These have been identified in regions to the south like Riobamba and Cuenca as well as to the north, associated with a hacienda in La Concepcion, Chota-Mira Valley (Balanzátegui 2017, 2018; Jamieson 2000). In the area of Guachalá, I associate these wares with the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries based on preliminary stratigraphic associations, though their production certainly spans broader periods, including their use even today. The second class of ceramic indicators is a polychrome glazed ware that has also been recovered across the highlands and at points east. The most common in this study area is a decorative palette of brown and green on a pink or buff background with a fine grained yellowish red (5YR 5/6, 5/8) paste, and a thin glaze with likely low tin content. Based on Neutron Activation Analyses of ceramics from his excavations in the Cuenca and Riobamba areas, Jamieson has suggested that this brown and green decorative palette belongs to a definable chemical group indicating that they were produced in Quito (Jamieson and Hancock 2004; Jamieson et al. 2013:207–208). While similar analyses will need to be undertaken to make definitive statements on the source and composition of the sherds found around Guachalá, it seems likely based on decorative similarities that these were produced in Quito, indicating some level of market exchanges with this more distant urban center on the part of indigenous *huasipungueros*.

Systematic transect-based survey of the landscape around Guachalá is nearly impossible because of dense residential and agricultural use areas and because much of the land is now owned and protected by private cut-flower plantations. Nevertheless,

pedestrian surveys and surface collections in the area between the center of Cangahua and the current estate recovered dozens of sherds such as those described above. Surface artifacts in general were sparsely scattered, and only one dense concentration of historic ceramics offered significant evidence of a *huasipungo* domestic context. In contrast to hacienda sites in other areas of Latin America (Meyers 2012; Newman 2014a, b; Sweitz 2012) there was no "worker village" with gridded organization and roads or still-standing multi-room compound around the site. A key early observation, then, was that domestic space was not organized according to European spatial logics as they were in other hacienda contexts and in earlier colonial sites across the Andes (VanValkenburgh 2012; Wernke 2013).

The site that did present significant evidence for domestic space is located roughly 300 m east of the hacienda core on a hill referred to locally as "Molino loma" for the old grain mill that functioned for much of the hacienda's history. The artifacts are in association with two very subtle perpendicular alignments of local mud bricks of local volcanic ash-based soil called *cangahua.* These had a height of only about 50 cm above the surface and were in a poor state of preservation because this material tends to "melt" as rains slowly wear it away. In order to investigate these scatters and the associated cangahua block alignments, 11 excavation units totaling 21 m^2 have been completed. Excavations along the *cangahua* alignments exposed material consistent with a domestic context, including lenses of ash, burned ceramics, significant concentrations of faunal remains, and a grinding stone for food preparation. This material was not deposited in a single midden but rather scattered

Fig. 6 Typical ceramics of the study region, likely dating to the eighteenth-twentieth centuries. At top left, yellow lead-glazed, hand painted bowl (27C05.27.1). At top right, brown on buff, unidentified form (21C17.687.22). At bottom, green lead-glazed fragments, unidentified form (27C05.19.1)

across the area. This is consistent with activity and discard patterns of *huasipungo* sites and contemporary practices as well.

Excavations here revealed that these two perpendicular alignments were not walls of a home as originally hypothesized, but rather demarcations of a *huasipungo* land parcel. The *huasipungo* house plots of laborers described in ethnographic accounts were generally composed of an ephemeral *choza* (hut) construction topped by thatched roof located within a space of cangahua or adobe "walls" or wind breakers over a space of about 20 m^2 to as large as several hectares (Becker and Tutillo 2009; Guerrero 1991; Lyons 2006). As the *choza* construction is ephemeral, it would leave only minor traces archaeologically. The area outside of the house, a sort of yard space, would have been open for subsistence gardens, animal pasture and other domestic activities such as spinning wool and food production. The archaeological material is therefore consistent with these arrangements and may have been quite similar to the 1930s *huasipungo* parcel from the nearby Hacienda La Merced seen in Fig. 7.

A total of 5895 artifacts were recovered from this domestic space. As seen in Table 2, ceramics and faunal remains comprise the majority of material recovered from the site. Ceramics made up about 68% while faunal remains made up roughly 29% of the total assemblage. Glass, lithics, roof tiles and personal items, including a glass bead and spindle whorl contributed the remaining 2%. Faunal and lithic analyses are ongoing and therefore not reported here in further detail.

Classification of vessel forms was done following Shepard's (1956) division of restricted and unrestricted vessels and the modifications applied to Shepard's system subsequently by archaeologists in the highlands of Ecuador (Balanzátegui 2012, 2017; Gonzalez 2010). As there is little prior investigation of nineteenth-century coarse earthenwares in the region, this system was a useful classification to begin to separate vessel classes, without the added biases of applying a specific functional vessel term such as cup or pot. This also accounts for ethnoarchaeological and ethnographic insights regarding the often ambiguous and multi-purpose vessel use in indigenous households in contrast to mestizo household practices (Balanzátegui 2012). As a result,

Fig. 7 *Huasipungo* household in Cayambe region ca. 1930. The context of OP19 would likely have been similar in organization and features. AHE 84.F0031.10

Table 2 Artifacts recovered from OP19, historic house site, by type

Artifact type	Sum of count	% of count	Sum of Wgt (g)	% of Wgt
Coarse earthenwares - glazed	512	8.69%	2390.7	6.93%
Coarse earthenwares - plain	3009	51.04%	19,166	55.56%
Coarse earthenwares - slip	282	4.78%	2023.5	5.87%
Refined earthenwares	11	0.19%	24.5	0.07%
Roof tiles	14	0.24%	584	1.69%
Faunal	2042	34.64%	10,220	29.63%
Lithics	17	0.29%	67	0.19%
Glass	6	0.10%	19	0.06%
Metal	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Miscellaneous	2	0.03%	2	0.01%
	5895	**100.00%**	**34,496.7**	**100.00%**

this analysis refers to two primary vessel classes: Unrestricted vessels refer to flatwares such as plates, dishes and flat griddles (known locally as *tiestos*), and hollowware such as bowls or cups. Restricted vessels refer to jars, pots, or storage vessels with various rim morphologies.

Ceramics recovered from this domestic space strongly support an interpretation that residents cooked and ate largely along local style foodways practices, without any obvious indication of using matched sets as seen in the estate inventory. As seen in Tables 3 and 4, large restricted vessels such as those used for preparing and storing foods made up a majority of the ceramic assemblage with 66.3%. Of those, over 64% ($n = 52$) of restricted vessels had large estimated diameters over 24 cm, indicative of communal style food preparation (Balanzátegui 2012). *Tiestos* made up the next largest class of ceramics at 21.8%. *Tiestos* are traditional ceramic vessel forms in the Ecuadorian highlands characterized by a flat griddle shape for toasting maize and other ground flours (Fig. 8). They are large vessels with diameters around 50 cm. Similar to Mesoamerican *comales* and also referred to as "griddles," they are referred to locally as *tiestos* and are used in some households today (Minc et al. 2016). They were separated out in these analyses as they constitute a rather standardized and more easily identifiable vessel form and index an important form of food preparation. Unrestricted vessels made up 11.9% of the ceramic assemblage, of which 54% had large diameters over 24 cm. The broad pattern of forms from this household ceramic assemblage typifies

Table 3 Ceramic percentages of OP19 household assemblage, by general vessel class

Vessel class	Sum of count	% of count	Sum of weight (g)	% of weight
Restricted	85	64.39%	1758	66.31%
Unrestricted	26	19.70%	315	11.88%
Tiesto	21	15.91%	578	21.80%
Total	**132**	**100.00%**	**2651**	**100.00%**

Table 4 Estimated diameters organized by vessel class

Diameter estimate	<14 cm	15–24 cm	>24 cm	Total
Restricted vessels				
Count	5	24	52	81
Weight (g)	36	876	779	1691
Unrestricted vessels				
Count	6	12	6	24
Weight (g)	37	95	157	289
Tiesto				
Count	0	0	18	18
Weight (g)	0	0	525	525
Unidentified				
Count	3	21	27	51
Weight (g)	9	79	190	278
Totals				
Count	14	57	103	174
% of count	8.05%	32.76%	**59.20%**	100%
Weight	82	1050	1651	2783
% of weight	2.95%	37.73%	**59.32%**	100%

Note the majority of total diagnostic rims with large diameters greater than 24 cm. This suggests that those living at this site continued traditional practices of preparing and serving meals

Indigenous preparation and serving practices that bring people together around the hearth.

The assemblage also shows some evidence for changing decorative preferences. Of the coarse earthenwares, about 10.1% by weight have either exterior or interior (or both)

Fig. 8 Contemporary use of ceramic tiestos (griddle pans) to cook "tortillas de tiesto," community of Chumillos Central, Cangahua Parish, Ecuador. Photo by the author

surfaces glazed. Twenty one sherds, representing a minimum of 10 vessels presented glazes and decorative palettes indicative of the late polychrome glazed wares described earlier. This included a green on white bowl, green and brown on pink, and brown on buff decoration. The brown and green decorated rim sherds that were large enough to reveal their form indicate that these were plates or shallow bowls with diameters between 20 and 25 cm. While not a significant percentage of the total ceramic assemblage, these sherds may suggest changing aesthetic tastes incorporated within a repertoire of vessel forms that were typical of local foodways practices. Regardless, the evidence also shows that imported refined earthenwares, like those featured so prominently in the estate inventories, were decidedly not a part of foodways practices here, as only 11 sherds representing a minimum of five vessels were recovered.

Discussion

The archaeological assemblage from this domestic space offers a sense of the materiality of hacienda life – life beyond the disciplining efforts and standard narratives of the hacienda. The organization and use of space is an important first indicator. Survey, historical evidence and local knowledge all support the conclusion that the residential *huasipungo* system at Guachalá was not organized according to any pre-planned spatial logic or gridded village as with other hacienda sites in Latin America (Meyers 2012; Newman 2014a, b; Sweitz 2012). The space itself showed refuse discard patterns scattered across the area rather than in defined middens and activity areas typical of household patterns described ethnographically throughout the Ecuadorian highlands and in the Cangahua area today. These are lifeways that blur household boundaries as Mary Weismantel (1989) famously described in her studies of life in Zumbagua, Ecuador. There, according to Weismantel, the household is defined more by the material network of the hearth than by nuclear family structure. Relatedness, she suggests, is not necessarily dictated by blood or consanguineal ties but by the intimate acts of eating together. That is, “it is the sharing of cooked food that defines Zumbagua social groups, from the household to the community” (Weismantel 1989: 67; also Corr 2002).

In his work south of Cayambe in Chimborazo province, anthropologist Barry Lyons examined similar processes through complex social relations between hacienda laborer descendant families. These horizontal ties (the “base of the triangle”) during the 1990s included strong expressions of moral attitudes enacted through the mechanisms of reciprocity and exchange. He found that descendants of hacienda laborer families often exchanged labor such as the care of personal livestock or assistance in the harvest of subsistence plots. He notes that these are forms of reciprocity that sustained a sense of ongoing mutual obligation and relationships. In the context of the hacienda system, these social ties would have been essential strategies to cooperate on household labors so as to avoid the need to request products from the hacienda and the debt that it would have incurred.

All of these social practices are foregrounded by everyday material goods; the *yanga cosas* that Rudi Colloredo-Mansfeld highlighted in his work and the items that participants celebrated in the San Pedro festivities in Cangahua. By examining the everyday goods from excavations at Guachalá, the goal was to consider how the

indigenous residents of this space negotiated their own social lifeways amongst a system that targeted the household and community to cultivate a different kind of subject. The evidence suggests several important interpretations. First, there was a near absence of high status and manufactured commodities like European ceramics and glassware. Documentary records show that this type of good was never given to *conciertos* by the hacienda as were things like grains (maize and barley), meats and cash advances. Medicines don't show up in the records until the 1930s. Since no medicines were requested from the hacienda, and there is no evidence for manufactured medicine bottles, residents likely relied on ancestral medicinal knowledge and recipes to care for their sick. Even today, many prefer ancestral medicinal practices to modern pharmaceuticals both as parts of their cultural identity and their practical effects. In oral historical interviews, former huasipungeros consistently highlighted the harvesting and use of natural medicinal plants as an important obligation in their families.

Having to provision everyday goods themselves and without urban centers nearby, *huasipunguero* families likely met material needs through forms of exchange that pre-dated Spanish arrival, perhaps through the work of long-distance peddlers like *mindalaes.* These "merchants" have been described extensively by Frank Salomon (1986:102–105) as specialists who would have traveled across the landscape to sell or trade goods beginning before the arrival of the Spanish (Pezzarossi 2015 for a Guatemalan case). Several former *huasipungueros* from the descendant community of La Buena Esperanza described how indigenous peddlers from Otavalo often traveled between homes across the landscape to barter foodstuffs and ceramic pots. One woman noted that she didn't care what it looked like, "as long as it was the right shape." Another woman of 97 years of age expressed similar sentiments and lamented that homes do not even have hearths (*tullpas)* anymore to cook and eat together.

The ceramics recovered archaeologically reflect these women's memories and attitudes and indicate communal foodways practices. The evidence includes significant use of *tiestos* to prepare meals of local grains like those so key to social identity in Zumbagua, Salasaca (Corr 2002) and locally in Cangahua today. Cooking and storage vessels had majority large diameters over 24 cm as did serving vessels like large bowls and plates. There is some evidence of changing consumer or aesthetic tastes with the presence of decorated glazed wares that were probably produced in Quito and other distant urban centers. This mixture of changing decorative treatments with forms points to the creative changes and innovations that occur in material culture across time and space. These are just some of the negotiations that occur as people deal with the effects of broad-scale ideologies and transformations in their everyday lives. Shifting from a Eurocentric frame of material interpretation, these *yanga cosas* demonstrate that status and identity is not always about the economic value of the goods possessed, but about how those goods generated social practices important to the forging of social ties and community.

Conclusion

The hacienda system has, in many ways, organized social, economic and political life in Latin America since the early colonial period. In the Cayambe region contemporary life is inflected with this past. And today, the cut-flower industry, which was introduced

with a groundswell of neo-liberal reforms in the 1980s, has generated a new wave of transformation that local residents confront on a daily basis. The industry has ushered in a return to massive landholdings, it has generated new waves of migrations that attract workers from the coast and immigrants from other areas of the Andes, it has provided a steady source of income for residents, while at the same time exposing them to dangerous chemicals. For some informants, ownership of a motorcycle to get to work is a symbol of their achievement and hard work on the plantations. Women, too, have new social and economic opportunities as a result of new jobs. Some communities have actively opposed the presence of the industry through protest and the legal system, while others negotiate potential benefits like schools, parks and other infrastructure. Some see benefits in the transformation while others see an eerily familiar pattern of exploitation. What is clear is that today, as throughout the past, large structural realignments are negotiated in the daily lives and material practices of those most affected. Used critically, archaeological evidence and narratives can help to understand the ways in which community can be a salient frame for political power and social gain. And as neoliberal reforms continue to usher in this new wave of powerful landholders to Cayambe, it is essential to bring forward the lessons of the past in managing powerful forces of the present.

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