

## Trivialising Culture, Social Conflict and Heritage Tourism in Quito

Alan Middleton

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### Introduction

The Strategic Plan for Tourism of the Metropolitan Tourist Corporation of Quito proposes that Quito should present itself as a city with history, which evolves and knows how to combine the past, present and future, like the majority of the most important tourist cities in the world. Consequently, its future in international tourism is highly dependent on what happens in the Historic Centre of Quito (HCQ), for this is the central element in the attractiveness of Quito, perhaps the icon of its international image (Corporación Metropolitana de Turismo de Quito, 2002). The Plan argues that Quito's position as a Cultural Heritage Site of Humanity ought to be its central product and the basic element in its promotion. In studies of what the tourists value about Quito, its 'friendly people' comes top of the list. The vision for 2010 is of a lively historic centre, exemplified by its cultural dynamism and the friendliness of its people. By promoting the physical, cultural and human elements of the city, Quito is thought to have the potential to be recognised internationally as the 'Cultural Capital of the Andes'.

The development of heritage tourism in Quito, however, has depended on the removal of some of Quito's people from the streets, opening access to colonial and republican buildings, and reducing indigenous culture to colourful representations and processions that confirm the 'otherness' of people who are integrated into society at the bottom of the social structure. In the competition for global tourism, the physical attributes of the city's history have been given pride of place in the tourist literature. The grand houses, churches, cathedral, museums, and public spaces express the dominant Spanish culture in a city that was created through extracting surpluses from the country's rural areas. The beauty of Quito is a physical manifestation of the exploitation of the indigenous population over half a millennium. As is the case with other colonial centres in Latin America (Dias, 2001), the Historic Centre of Quito is testimony to the historic concentration of power and wealth in Ecuadorean society. The 'particular representation' (Hall, 1994) of history that is provided for the heritage tourists in the HCQ is selective and distorted. As an expression of colonial wealth and to the extent that it ignores the suffering of indigenous populations, the reality that is defined for the tourist is the result of political choices. From the social and economic history of the forced labour for private gain of the colonial times through to the debt bondage of *huasipungo* in the twentieth century, unpaid indigenous labour was used to accumulate the wealth that allowed the church, governments and private individuals to create the buildings and the spaces that the tourists enjoy (Perez, 1947; Jaramillo Perez, 1962). The 'selective identification, interpretation, conservation and marketing of the inherited built environment' (Tunbridge, 1994) of Quito results in a cultural message that airbrushes out the colonial and post-colonial repression of a society and economy that has been part of the world's political economy for more than 500 years. Also lost, is the culture of indigenous resistance.

What heritage tourism sees but does not recognise is a physical world that is an expression of a particular set of values, which derive from an historic struggle for

power and which continue to define social, cultural and economic relations. These relations have certainly changed over time, but the values of local elites are more consistent with the consumerist life-styles of international tourists than with values and needs of indigenous populations (Crick, 1989). In order to make the HCQ available for the international tourists, the descendants of those whose labour created this concentration of power and wealth were removed from the streets and other public spaces that surrounded the magnificent architecture of the convents, churches, monuments and other historic buildings (Middleton, 2003).

International tourism's income-earning potential encourages city officials to support elite interpretations of history and heritage and, just as nineteenth century and early twentieth century elites saw indigenous populations as major obstacles to development (Guerrero, 1997; Clark 1998; Garrand-Burnett, 2000), street traders were identified as the main barrier to the modernisation of the city at the end of the twentieth century (BID, 1994; Herrera and Cordova, 1998). These people, whose livelihoods depend on the continuing economic vitality of the HCQ, were characterised as an obstacle to the modernisation of the historic city centre and the creators of the congestion, rubbish and insecurity that sends tourists elsewhere.

The historic city is therefore the physical manifestation of social and economic forces and the growth of heritage tourism has amplified the fact that the use of these urban buildings and spaces continues to be contested by the descendants of the invisible indigenous labour force that was exploited in their creation. This continuity between the visible and invisible attributes of history and the globalisation of heritage consumption, in turn, creates its own local consequences. The conflict between the heritage consumption of an international elite and the survival needs of local populations creates spatial, cultural, economic, social and political outcomes.

### **Social cleansing and the use of space**

By the time Quito became the first city in the world to be recognised by UNESCO as a Cultural Heritage Site of Humanity in 1978, the upper and middle classes had moved out of the 'Colonial Centre' as the HCQ was known at the time, to take up residence in the north of the city, close to the new offices and sources of employment in government ministries, the financial sector and commerce. Popular housing developed mainly in the south of the city and the city core remained the centre of small-scale trading and artisan production. UNESCO recognition placed the area in a global cultural context and encouraged the development of a framework for conservation. Following earthquake damage in 1987, a heritage rescue fund (Fondo de Salvamento de Patrimonio – FONSAL) was created to support the rehabilitation work of the council (Carrion and Vallejo, 1992; Bromley and Jones, 1995). The concept of rehabilitation was extended beyond buildings and monuments of architectural importance to cover public spaces, buildings of less architectural merit, and the improvement of services and infrastructure, including transport.

A Master Plan for the Integral Rehabilitation of the Historic Centre of Quito that was drawn up in 1988 and became part of the District Metropolitan Plan for Quito in 1991 (Municipio de Quito, 1988; Municipio de Quito, 1991), was based on the principles of democratisation, decentralisation and participation and led to the formulation of a policy that emphasised both conservation and development. At this time, the rehabilitation of the cultural heritage and the improvement of the living conditions of those who lived in the HCQ were seen as inseparable and proposals

were put forward for the economic regeneration of the area that included increasing employment and training for street traders.

The funding obtained through partnerships with various national conservation agencies in Belgium, Spain, Italy and the United States, however, was for the restoration of Quito's monasteries, churches and squares (Corzo, 1997). As a consequence, conservation policy concentrated on buildings and monuments and on cosmetic measures to renovate streets and squares (Bromley, 1998). When encouraging tourism became important in FONSAL's plan for the HCQ in 1994, the exclusion of the informal traders became part of the city's conservation strategy.

A Company for the Development of the Historic Centre of Quito (the *Empresa*) was set up in 1995 to manage a \$51 million dollar loan from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and its programme consisted of the rehabilitation of public spaces and buildings of particular historical and architectural value, improvement of the urban infrastructure and the provision of services that would rescue the historic area from decline. This was seen as a means of improving the quality of life of residents as well as making the Centre more attractive for visitors but the IDB was concerned about informal trade and it argued that the traders were holding back other forms of private sector investment (BID, 1994). The Bank asked that a study be carried out on the street traders and between 1996 and 1998 four different studies were carried out (Municipio de Quito 1996; Empresa de Desarrollo del Centro Historico de Quito 1997; Middleton, 1997; Herrera and Cordova, 1998).

The first three studies acknowledged that informal commerce was a dynamic aspect of the local economy, offering employment and income to a sector of the workforce and supplying cheap goods for the consumption of lower and lower-middle income households. The *Empresa* recognised that informal trade was a creative response to a lack of other employment opportunities and that any strategy for the reorganisation of the use of space in the HCQ should take this into account. However, for the IDB and local planners, the removal of these informal activities from the streets was a necessary part of the conservation policy and a precondition for private sector investment and the growth of tourism in the city. The fourth study confirmed this view, was therefore more acceptable to the authorities, and provided a context for future conflict. The development of heritage tourism and what to do about the street traders emerged as a major political issue for the *Empresa* as they tried to redevelop the HCQ and reposition it as an international tourist attraction:

The *Empresa* in particular had to confront a fundamental set of interrelated dilemmas: how to reconcile the use of public space for tourists and the middle classes with the interests of the traders; how to tackle the issue of the restoration of public buildings with the practice of traders; how to measure and compare the contribution of the city traders to the city economy with the potential contribution of tourists who were thought to be put off by their activity; how to reconcile the planners' need for control over public and private spaces with the aspirations of the traders; ultimately, in fact, how to promote the rational use of space in the context of the global trends of international tourism and the local interests of a significant segment of social, economic, cultural and political life in the city. (Middleton, 2003)

There was no doubt that the views of the churches and other buildings of architectural interest were being obstructed by trading activities and that if tourism was to be developed these buildings needed to be brought into view. The area was congested, the generation and management of waste was costing the council more than they were earning in revenues from traders, buildings were being damaged by the nails that secured makeshift stalls, dampness was being created by stalls being pitched

hard against walls, and access to formal premises was blocked off. In spatial-physical terms, there was much that needed to be done. For the council planners, who had difficulty in recognising that tourism policy involved more than the monumentalism that had driven FONSAL's earlier policies, however, the easiest way to deal with the socio-economic complexities of the HCQ was to clear the streets, by force if necessary.

Following a proposed Master Plan for Informal Commerce in the Historic Centre of Quito (Herrera and Cordova, 1998), the three agencies responsible for planning and land use in the HCQ drew up a Plan for the Modernisation and Ordering of Popular Commerce in Quito (the Modernisation Plan – Municipio de Quito, 1999) that completely ignored the interests of the street traders. The Master Plan, which was written to support the perspective of the city planners and the middle and upper classes of the city, was concerned with the recovery of urban spaces occupied by informal traders and establishing regulations that would control the traders in future (Middleton, 2003). The remit was clearly written to deal with the issue of clearing the space for an international tourist elite. All the problems of the city were blamed on the traders and the idea that the traders could contribute anything to the development of tourism was not considered. As an expression of the values of the planners and the local and international elites, the content of the Master Plan serves to expose the political nature of tourism policy. When the authors advised the Mayor that 'the execution of the strategy needed 'an unyielding and very tough political decision' (Herrera and Cordova, 1998, 47-48) and that there should be no negotiation over its key principles, its rejection by the traders was inevitable.

The Modernisation Plan did recognise that there was scope for a more supportive approach to be adopted for popular trade and its 'fundamental principles' spoke of transparency, efficiency, promotion, facilitation and harmonisation, but its objectives for the CRQ were to re-order the land use and change its image for the development of tourism. The discourse of the mayor became increasingly hostile, saying that there would not be a single trader left on the streets by the middle of 1999 (Ultimas Noticias, 22.1.99) and that 'if we don't get collaboration, the police will intervene' (Hoy, 5.2.99). Political allies of the Mayor joined the attack on the traders by employing the language that characterised the racist anti-indigenous discourse of Ecuadorean history. The President of the Commission for Historic Areas, arguing in support of increased tourist activity in the HCQ, said that it was impossible to project a good image of the city if the monuments were converted into petty markets 'where none of the norms of hygiene are observed' (La Hora, 8.2.99); and a local headmaster complained that the traders not only left their rubbish behind but that their children were using the public spaces as toilets. These are clear expressions of middle-class perceptions of indigenous culture that have a long history in Ecuador.

### **International tourism and the trivialisation of indigenous culture**

There is a deep-seated racism in Ecuadorian society that is often expressed in terms of the 'culture' of indigenous peoples, emphasising their 'lack of education' and their 'irrationally' (Clark, 1998). This encourages a paternalistic view that holds that they don't really understand what is best for them. From the point of view of the planners, this 'problem of culture' stopped the traders from understanding their point of view and from behaving in a way that the officers thought was appropriate. It was, in the words of the planners, 'impossible to deal with these people'.

Although around 60% of the market traders in Quito were born in the city (Herrera and Cordova, 1998) many are the sons and daughters of indigenous immigrants and there has been a link between street trading and the rural indigenous population that can be traced back to the nineteenth century. Pressures to remove indigenous traders from the central area at that time were partly based on the argument that they lowered the cultural tone of the area, but also that they dirtied the sidewalks of the city centre (Kingman and Goetschel, 1992). The link that was made in the minds of the planners between the modern traders and indigenous groups is therefore not without foundation. There is a long-standing perception which identifies the traders as part of this indigenous culture that is despised by the middle and upper classes. It is a perception that has its historical roots in the nineteenth century thinking and in the analyses of the European Hygienists. It is a 'way of seeing' which is also supported by the fact that, although the migrants from the rural areas and from the other towns and cities of the Sierra are a minority, they are highly visible. The greatest concentration of indigenous people from the Province of Chimborazo, for example, is to be found in the Historic Centre of Quito. They work in the streets of Ipiales and San Roque and a few of them also live in this area (Tocagón, 1997, 194). The majority of them work in informal trade, selling goods such as clothes, fruit and vegetables. Some are porters in the market and their children work as shoe-shiners in the streets and squares in the HCQ during their free time and school holidays. As they emerge from the rural areas to find work in the cities, they 'pose a danger to white-*mestizo* power and society as they advance economically or move physically into schools, shops, government offices and other institutional settings' (Colloredo-Mansfield, 1998, 192-193). Their presence in the historic city centre is seen by many middle-class Quiteños as an expression of this threat to the well-being of themselves and the city. In their view, they are precisely the type of people who had to be removed from the streets in favour of international tourists.

Many of the international tourists who visit Ecuador to see its cultural attractions, as expressed in the churches, monasteries and museums, also have an interest in indigenous culture. However, the culture that they wish to absorb should be safe, friendly and welcoming. There is a preference, at least in the minds of those who most actively seek to attract tourists, that the indigenous peoples and their culture should harmoniously adorn the colonial spaces. They have no interest in the indigenous culture of resistance. Tourists do not wish to participate in events such as the processions and marches that have led to the indigenous population, with the support of the street traders, overthrowing a succession of the country's presidents since 1997.

Throughout the 1990s, there was a close affinity between informal traders and indigenous movements. The traders joined the indigenous uprisings that closed down the Sierra in 1990 in a dispute over ancestral lands, helped to depose the corrupt populist President Abdala Bucaram in 1997, closed down the Sierra again in 1999 in response to President Muhaud's neo-liberal reform package and supported the coup which overthrew Mahuad in 2000. It was the planners of Mahuad's municipal government of 1997 who complained about the 'culture' of the traders, lamented that it was impossible to deal with them and sought to remove them from the streets to give the tourists access to the churches and other monuments of the Historic Centre.

As Little points out in his contribution on the Maya population of Guatemala in this volume (Little, 2008), urban indigenous populations also have a vested interest in tourism, which creates a state of ambivalence in relation to tourist activities. In Antigua, the Maya are under pressure from the Ladino population who want their

removal from the physical space that carries a World Heritage designation, but they are nevertheless an essential attraction for the international cultural tourist, who expects to find them in this physical context. The fact that they are considered to 'both pollute and beautifully adorn this contested place' creates social, cultural and political ambiguities that are also found to some extent in Quito in the situation of street traders and in the treatment of indigenous culture. In Ecuador, however, in contrast to the situation in the early 1990s, the rural indigenous population is now a powerful political force that has brought down governments and, with urban allies such as the street traders, can create new ones.

The angry culture of resistance that finds political expression in this way, however, implies violence and scares tourists away. The tourists prefer the folklore of costumes, music and dance. The presentation of their culture for heritage tourism chooses to create an image that is safe and friendly, rather than conflictive. Social relations that embody a culture of repression and resistance, which has been passed down from generation to generation over half a millennium, are reduced to a harmonious vision that is acted out in a newly sanitised urban space. This partial representation of indigenous culture is acted out in the same spatial context from which the traders have been removed.

### *Ballet Jacchigua*

In the streets around Plaza San Francisco, members of the Ballet Jacchigua gather to wait for groups of tourists, dressed in clothes which they pretend are typically indigenous. The women who are part of this ballet have lipstick on their lips, mascara on their eyelashes and they are wearing clothes which constitute a mixture of some indigenous and some modern elements, such as plastic collars and machine-embroidered blouses. In a church, which is now accessible because there are no longer traders blocking the streets and where the welcoming event for the tourists takes place, they perform dances which apparently recapture their indigenous roots. These dances, however, provide us examples of the way in which the rich and profound diversity of Andean culture is trivialised for tourist consumption.

It must be recognised that Jacchigua, Ecuador's National Folkloric Ballet, Provides employment for indigenous families. It is a show with up to 90 dancers, musicians and technicians that presents a spectacular interpretation of what they claim are the traditions and customs of Ecuador. The total company is composed of more than 350 dancers and their families and it supports a Children's Ballet, the Golden Ballet, the Young Deaf Ballet, the Ethnic Ballet and a ballet for young people with learning difficulties. It is a successful artistic endeavour that has been in existence for almost 20 years and it was set up with the fundamental objective of stimulating culture in Ecuador. It has provided Quito with 'a ballet like other important cities in the world'. In contrast to the anti-indigenous sentiments of Quito's middle classes and planners, Jacchigua is a permanent cultural investment that is presented as a part of Quito's contribution to world heritage. However, in the Historic Centre of Quito, the final destination for the indigenous marches that overthrew Presidents, the ballet emphasises unity, co-existence and a national consciousness. It recovers and maintains the memory of a 'multi-cultural' nation, 'transmitting the joy of life with values and sensitivity' ([www.jacciguaesecuador.com](http://www.jacciguaesecuador.com)). 'The spectator can enjoy, cry and ultimately feel free to create memories according to the collective memory of a diverse nation'. 'Jacchigua is humility, solidarity, colour and peace'.

It creates and sells an image of an ideal past in which there is no conflict or resistance and its relationship to indigenous culture is tenuous at best. The publicity material for the ballet says that:

The dance creates human persons that are useful, it unites families, and it creates national conscience, thus, reaching the pleasure of dance as an element of human coexistence. Jacchigua is “life with dignity”, full of colours, wrapped in necklaces and shawls, ponchos, blouses embroidered with threads wet with sweat and tears of joy, it is the reflection of a few for many. Jacchigua is Ecuador, with its feelings and sensitivity, because we have patrimony and cultural memory, inherited from *taitas* and *mamas*.

On occasions, this one-sided presentation of indigenous culture is reinforced by a dancer who is disguised as a shaman and dressed in a tiger skin, which would never happen in real life, distorting the ritual and role of a person who is of profound religious importance in the indigenous cosmology. The overall effect is to misrepresent the complexity of historical social relations in Ecuador and reinforce the inequalities of the present.

Jacchigua comes from the word “*jacchima*” in quichua. It was the festivity that the *patrón* would give to his workers in the patio of the hacienda, after having collected the grain and stored the seeds. *Husicamas* (house workers) and *hausipungueros* (share-workers) ‘would enjoy a day of festivities with the landlord and his family along with food, drinks, dance and music’. These dances, however, which in the colonial era and post -independence took place in the month of June throughout the Ecuadorean Sierra, constituted a unique moment in which, following the harvests, the rural social structure of *patron-hacendado / indio-huasipungero* was renewed and reinforced. It was only at this time that the large doors of the hacienda were opened to admit the indigenous people with their traditional indigenous dances, giving thanks to the sun, the *inti raymi*. Once a year the *patrones* permitted them to socialise with their families, giving them alcohol and food. For a brief moment, they were welcomed into the home of the boss, who would receive them with an embrace. They could walk around the grand patio, usually around the cross that was always a feature of these patios, absorbing these symbols of colonialism. The *patrón* permitted their presence for they knew that when the Indians had left the patio of the hacienda, the annual pact of servitude had been renewed for all of these Indians. This ritual, constantly renewed, permitted the continuing exploitation of the indigenous peoples and the permanence of the economic institution of the hacienda.

An alternative perspective on *huasipungo*, therefore, is that it was a relationship that bound indigenous workers to a hacienda after *concertaje* was abolished in 1918, extending debt peonage into the twentieth century. Its heritage is rooted in the enslavement and forced labour of the *encomienda* of colonial times, through which the Spanish crown gave Spanish settlers in Ecuador the right to use Indian labour and receive tribute from them. When the *encomienda* was replaced by the *concertaje*, slavery was replaced by feudal servitude. In this system, the Indian became permanently attached to and dependent on a white landowner through a system of land sharing and debt peonage, whereby they were forced to work for the land owner in exchange for a small salary, the right to use a parcel of land for subsistence production, and access water, firewood and pasture for their animals. Indians could only buy food and other supplies from the landowner’s store, which charged inflated prices and extended credit with high interest rates (Becker, 1998). It

was common for Indians to fall deeper and deeper into debt, for this debt to be passed on from generation to generation, and for the indebted Indians to be sold with the hacienda, included as part of the value of the property and listed with the cattle and other items of value. In this system, *huasicamia* was forced domestic labour, whereby the concerto and his family were required to provide personal services on a rotating basis in the master's house on the hacienda or in his main residence in what is now the Historic Centre of Quito.

This system of debt peonage continued through the period after Independence, to the debt bondage of *huasipungo*, which extended from the Liberal era to the middle of the twentieth century. Indigenous workers continued to be exploited and abused by hacienda owners and treated as a material asset in the white man's economy, more of a piece of property than a human being. In elite culture, rather than educating the indigenous peoples as the law required, they were abused and alienated from the benefits of progress. *Huasipungo* was also land-sharing system, whereby the *huasipungero* would be given a small less-than-subsistence plot and access to pasture land, in exchange for work on the hacienda for three to six days a week. The free labour of *huasicama* and the inheritance of debts were abolished but, despite the intention of the law of 1918, debt bondage continued to be an integral part of the system. Until the Agrarian Reform Act of 1964, it was a system that was at the heart of the development of indigenous ethnicity, through their historic attachment to the land, and it was an important catalyst for the nature of rural protest throughout Ecuador (Becker, 1998).

When these historical antecedents, this social and economic heritage of Ecuador, is transposed into its modern cultural interpretation, we have a folkloric ballet which takes certain music, certain movements and certain clothes, and presents them for consumption by tourists who visit the recently sanitised Historic Centre of Quito. Sometimes, through the medium of dance, a '*chola cuencana*' emerges, a folkloric mixed race character from the south of the country, who would have had no relationship with the celebration of the indigenous harvest. It constitutes a trivial presentation of Andean culture which has neither historical substance nor anthropological justification. Indigenous attachment to land, as an essential part of their ethnicity, is ignored. The struggle for land is central to Indian identity, as important as and intimately connected to their dress, language and music. Indigenous culture cannot be understood without reference to it. The folklore of Jacchigua is art and perhaps we should not expect music, costume and dance to be explicitly political, but in trivialising indigenous culture it becomes political. Presenting their dances in the contested space of the Historic Centre of Quito reinforces the political content

Trivialising culture for heritage tourists, however, does not only happen with indigenous culture. It is also evident in the interpretation of a colonial culture that has incorporated aspects of pre-Columbian belief systems. Religious ceremonies in modern Quito represent examples of this.

### *Semana Santa in Quito*

The processions of *Semana Santa* in Quito are more than four centuries old. Today, this Holy Week is celebrated across the city and in the HCQ in particular, through a variety of rituals of faith that derive from the colonial period. Religious images and icons, such as the *Señora de Dolores*, with swords driven through her heart, or the life-sized crucified Christ, which was brought from Europe by the St. Augustine

monks during colonial time, are brought out of museums to become part of the living religious culture of Quito.

On the Tuesday following Palm Sunday, the *Minga* of the Grains is enacted, in which an old tradition of bringing grains into the city for the preparation of the Fanesca soup is played out in a procession. A *minga* brings together people from the community to carry out communal work, a pre-Colombian tradition that is still widely practiced in Ecuador and which was used by the church in the 17<sup>th</sup> century to get work carried out on their properties by indigenous communities. On the Tuesday of *Semana Santa*, Jacchigua perform a dance about the entry of the '*Jocheros*' or harvesters, which supposedly recreates the bringing of the products of the recent harvest and which are used in the preparation of a dish which is enjoyed in this epoch, la *Fanesca*. This event is an element that is totally superimposed on a religious catholic ritual, which in itself has rich and important meanings of cultural significance, an adaptation of a ritual in the new world and which ought to be carefully recovered and recreated. However, the coarse superimposition of elements such as the entrance of the '*Jocheros*' trivialise the social and economic roots of this cultural display.

On Wednesday, in the medieval ceremony of the Dragging of the Cloth, a priest walks over prostrate participants to pass the virtues of Jesus to them and to remind them that, no matter what their position in life, they all have to die to live like Jesus in glory. On Maundy Thursday, following communion across the city, the churches of the HCQ display their finest treasures and the next day, following morning prayers, the great procession of Good Friday takes place. In the procession of *Jesus del Gran Poder* (Jesus Almighty), which starts and finishes in the church of San Francisco, up to 100,000 people are said to participate, acting out the roles of everyone who participated in the crucifixion – Christ, roman soldiers, penitents and thieves.

One can observe an assembly of the religious images of the colonial period and watch the procession of penitents through the streets: *cucuruchos* walking bare footed in their purple capes and faces covered in hoods that rise up into a point a metre above their heads; others flagellating their naked torsos with a variety of types of whips, carrying heavy crosses and wearing crowns of thorns that lacerate their heads. This devout declaration of religious faith includes members of all social classes and ethnicity in Quito but, repeated in towns across Ecuador, it has a high proportion of indigenous participants. In Quito, this week of deep-seated religious ritual is converted into a spectacle for tourists whose connection to it may be no more than voyeurism. The procession of *Jesus del Gran Poder* is promoted as the most important celebration in Quito and one of the most important in Latin America. The spectators, tourists without whom this would be a minor festival, watch to be enthralled and entertained by the spectacle, rather to atone for their sins. In this process, devout religiosity as an aspect of Ecuadorian culture is trivialised and reduced a spectacle of suffering and blood-letting that conveys a sado-masochistic message to the tourist.

On the Saturday of *Semana Santa*, after the death of Jesus, which in accordance with the liturgical tradition the ceremony of the Solitude of Mary is carried out and the Easter vigil is begun, the women of Ballet Jacchigua perform a procession in which they sing songs to accompany the virgin in her sorrow. This is neither a religious ceremony nor an historically based lay event, merely the trivialization of a very solemn moment in the catholic celebration of Easter.

The reduction of indigenous culture to the celebration of folkloric interpretations of a dark past and the voyeurism of *Semana Santa* serves to confirm

the 'otherness' of indigenous groups. In their performance for tourists, the dances of Jacchigua lose their indigenous cultural significance. Their form is visible for the tourists but the performance itself strips the dance of its cultural meaning. The form becomes absorbed in a new cultural context that can only be understood in relation to the international structure of wealth and power. In this context, indigenous culture is viewed as an exotic 'other' that confirms the place of the indigenous peoples as outside the elite world and/or at the bottom of the socio-economic structure. The relationship between the tourist and the dancers confirms the 'happy innocence' of the Indian and the superiority of the traveller, who has come thousands of miles to see the performance. The processions of *Semana Santa* also become reduced to performance. The performance takes on a new meaning, becomes absorbed in a new culture, is paid for by a small fraction of the tourist's accumulated wealth and, despite providing a salary for the dancers and contributions to the churches, helps to condemn indigenous peoples to their impoverished situation.

### **Tourism and economic integration**

It is assumed that the benefits of international tourism will trickle down to all sections of society. However, the integration of indigenous groups into the urban economy has been threatened by tourist development in Quito, as street traders and others have been removed from the streets into the invisibility of markets that serve local populations. Following a change of political control of the Council in 2001, this position was negotiated with the agreement of the traders by the new Mayor, General Paco Moncayo. Further conflict with the traders was therefore avoided but, as was the case during the conflicts with previous regimes, the traders did not want to be merely left to continue with their traditional trading activities. On the contrary, both residents and traders in the HCQ wanted to be involved in the new developments that were taking place in the historic centre and to participate in the benefits that would accrue from any tourism development. That is, there was a clash of cultures which was related to different material interests but, as in the case of the Maya in Antigua (Little, 2008), there was also an opportunity for the integration of the urban poor into the international tourist agenda.

Since the 1970s, indigenous integration into the global market has existed through the sale of folkloric artisan production. This integration, however, has not been without its problems. Despite the commercial success of sections of the indigenous populations, such as the Otavalan Indians who cling to their culture and sell their handicrafts throughout Europe and North America, and despite the growing cultural self-confidence of new ethnic political movements, deep-rooted racist attitudes persist. As inheritors of the hygienist ideology discussed earlier, many of the white and *mestizo* elite and urban middle classes 'use pernicious images of disease, irrationality and "dirty Indians" to characterise *indigenas* and justify their poverty' (Colloredo-Mansfield, 1998, 186). Successful entrepreneurs still get ignored or abused by the white-*mestizo* population. The old prejudices remain in spite of new wealth. In fact, the wealthiest *indigenas* are not only not accepted, but their wealth is explained away through contemptuous comments that deny the possibility that it could be based on legitimate trade. They are not seen as successful traders, but are often dismissed as 'narco-traffickers' whose success is seen as a threat to the legitimate white-*mestizo* economy. Similarly, successful traders in the street markets of the Historic Centre are classified as smugglers, illegally importing goods from neighbouring Colombia, a charge which may have historical roots but for which, as a generalisation, there is

little evidence at present. This denial of indigenous success and the racism that lies behind it reinforces their 'otherness' and promotes their exclusion from the world of the tourists, except at the margins.

Tocagón (1997, 199) laments any socio-economic integration into the *mestizo* city and the acculturation that results, particularly, but not exclusively, with the children of indigenous migrants. However, the traders themselves clearly wanted to participate in any benefits that derive from increased tourist activity - but this has not happened. The tourists are served by the expensive shops in their hotels, the shops on Avenida Amazonas and malls in the north of the city, and by the artisan markets close to the Hotel Colon. Almost all the tourist outlets are in the north of the city. Some of them have indigenous owners and almost all provide income to rural communities where the goods are manufactured. The main beneficiaries are probably the indigenous traders who provide the links between the manufacturers and the outlets in the north of the city, while the indigenous manufacturers are integrated into the bottom of the economic structure through the sub-contraction of home-based production at extremely low rates of pay (Martínez, 1994).

Indigenous labour is also incorporated into the tourist industry in low-paid jobs such as cooks, cleaners, porters and guardians. Outside of the kitchens, this labour force often dresses in indigenous dress, particularly in the most expensive hotels. This extension of domestic service pays higher salaries than the people who occupy these positions would be able to earn elsewhere in the urban economy, but their clothing, as cultural artefacts, nevertheless confirms their indigenous status as low-income servants for white elites. In satisfying the international cultural tourist's need to experience 'otherness', the socio-economic position of the indigenous group is experienced as culture.

## Conclusion

The racist attitudes that lay behind the removal of the street traders from the streets of Quito are reinforced by the trivialisation of their culture. Mistreated over centuries by landowning elites, despised by the middle and upper classes and excluded from the benefits of a developing society, heritage tourism presents their history as a happy spectacle that celebrates humility and peace. Colonial and post-colonial adaptation to the new elite religion emphasises their sins and their guilt, demanding penitence and forgiveness. International tourism reinforces this self-flagellation by focusing on colourful processions and ignoring their inhumane treatment, their resistance, and the central importance of their struggle for land as a defining feature of their ethnicity and culture. Indigenous history is removed from the heritage that is offered for consumption by the international tourists and they are made invisible.

The artistic activities that are presented for the international elites reduce indigenous culture to colourful photographs of a culture in denial. Marginalised from the economic benefits of heritage tourism and labelled negatively when they do have some commercial success, heritage tourism reinforces the myth of their separateness. This 'otherness' confirms their rightful place as an excluded minority at the bottom of the socio-economic structure in the eyes of the national and international elites. All of this produces downward pressures on indigenous expectations, but in the urban areas their aspirations are the same as other urban dwellers. Denied these aspirations, indigenous migrants to the city and others with indigenous roots join the rural resistance when it is brought to the capital as part of the modern struggle for land and other natural resources.

If, as the Strategic Plan for Tourism argues, Quito's position as a Cultural Heritage Site of Humanity ought to be city's central tourism product and the basic element of its promotion, why is it necessary to hide the indigenous contribution to this heritage? That the grand houses, churches and other monuments were made possible by the enforced labour and inhumane treatment of indigenous peoples is clearly a part of that heritage. The magnificent churches and convents were created by the wealth that was extracted from the unpaid toils of indigenous labour on the haciendas that were swept away by the Liberal revolution. Can the Church face up to this and tell this part of the heritage story? What are we afraid of? Indigenous ethnicity is defined by the struggle for land and their culture in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, as expressed in their dress, language, customs and beliefs, is intimately linked to this. The city should be honest about this history and celebrate the indigenous struggle for land and dignity. This would provide it with its 'unique selling point' as an important world destination and the 'Cultural Capital of the Andes'.

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