

ENGENDERING VISIONS OF MODERNITY:
PHOTOGRAPHING WOMEN, NATIONAL ICONOGRAPHIES
AND EXCLUDED IDENTITIES IN ECUADOR, 1870-1912

By

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B.A.hon., McGill University, 1993

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
(Department of Anthropology and Sociology)

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

April 6, 1998

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Date April 28 1998

Abstract

As a contribution to ethnohistorical research concerning the social construction of gender and collective identities, I analyze how visual images of women were used within various attempts to construct images of a national identity in Ecuador at the turn of the century (approximately 1870-1912). The purpose of this essay is to reconstruct a history of image making practices in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Ecuador as a way to investigate how women's identities were visually and discursively constructed by numerous (male) photographers, artists, intellectuals, politicians and writers, all of whom were members of the dominant society. I consider not only the images produced by Ecuadorians themselves, but also the longer history of European image-making in the Andes which had a significant impact on the Ecuadorian image makers whose work is analyzed in this essay.

Throughout the essay I attempt to situate my reading of the visual materials discussed within specific historical and cultural contexts as a way to further examine the shifting construction of identities through visual representations. Whereas late nineteenth century Ecuadorian political elites embraced liberal ideologies and proclaimed universal rights for all citizens, the images of women incorporated into images of "the Nation" are suggestive of some of the ways in which "difference" was reproduced and hierarchies were maintained in spite of this shift in the dominant political discourse. In this paper I attempt to demonstrate how the visions of national identity as imagined by members of the dominant society were fraught with contradictions. These tensions are made visible when we consider the gender inequalities and "racial"/ethnic boundaries which were actively reproduced in images of Ecuador as a "unified nation" at the turn of the century.

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Acknowledgement

I would like to thank my advisor Dr. Blanca Muratorio for her encouragement and assistance throughout the course of my graduate studies. I also would like to thank Dr. Charles Menzies for his critical commentaries and advice.

Introduction

In this essay I analyse a series of photographs taken of women in Ecuador at the turn of the century (from 1870 to 1912). The purpose of the essay is to analyse the ways in which members of the political elite used photographs of women of different classes and ethnic identities to elaborate a new national identity during a period of economic, social and political transformation. Ecuador witnessed a shift in dominant political discourse beginning in 1884. At that time, a group of liberal politicians, known as the *progresistas* (progressivists) gained power within the national government. The *progresistas* challenged the dominant rhetoric of conservative politicians which historically had served the interests of the Catholic church and the land-owning classes of the highlands. This newly powerful group of politicians embraced a liberal rhetoric which proclaimed universal rights and freedoms of all citizens. In doing so, the *progresistas* elaborated a new vision of national identity in opposition to earlier visions of national identity constructed in conservative political discourse.

By historically situating the visual images used by *progresista* and later liberal politicians in their elaboration of a collective "national identity", I demonstrate certain contradictions in their attempts to reinvent a national identity at the turn of the century in Ecuador. Even though political elites proclaimed equality and individual rights and freedoms for all citizens, the visual representations of Ecuadorian citizens used within visual iconographies of "the nation" reveal the persistence of inequalities along lines of gender, class and ethnicity and "race" which shaped social relations in Ecuador at that time. I also demonstrate how the invention of a new national identity and concomitant shifts in dominant political discourse reflect the desire of Ecuadorian elites to be recognised as "civilised" and "progressive" by members of the economically powerful metropolitan centres whose neo-colonial economic interests in the Andes region increased throughout the nineteenth century.

This essay contributes to a growing literature of historically sensitive ethnographic studies situated in the Andes region (see Muratorio 1991; Platt 1983). The essay also contributes to a growing literature produced by feminist researchers and ethnohistorians investigating the ways in which state authority throughout Latin America has been structured in gendered terms (cf. Besse 1995; Silverblatt 1991; Guy 1991; Franco 1989)¹. Following Benedict Anderson's definitions of nations as 'imagined communities', Anne McClintock states that nations are "historical practices through which social difference is both invented and performed" (McClintock 1995: 353). She further argues that in spite of nationalists' ideological investment in the idea of popular unity, all nations depend on powerful constructions of gender which have amounted to the "sanctioned institutionalisation of gender *difference*" (McClintock 1995: 353).

By analyzing the uneven incorporation of visual images of women within national iconographies, I attempt to show how the production and "fixing" of difference were part and parcel of the construction of a purportedly "unified" national self (cf. Muratorio 1994c; Pollock 1994). It was on the basis of these purported "differences" that women were excluded from centres of social, political and economic power throughout the period discussed in this essay, even though particular representations of women were celebrated within visual representations of the nation as constructed by *progresista* and liberal supporters².

Recent feminist scholarship in anthropology and history illustrates that the category "woman" is historically and discursively constructed relative to other social categories which also change over time (Riley 1988: 2-3). Micaela di Leonardo argues that in any particular population major social divisions (including race/ethnicity, class, religion, age, sexual preference, nationality) will crosscut and influence the meanings of gender divisions (1991: 30). In the case of Ecuador at the turn of the century, it is also

necessary to consider the hierarchies of class and ethnicity implicit in engendered images of "the nation". The photographs analysed in this essay offer a point of entry to discuss the agency of image makers and the ideas about gender, "racial" and ethnic identity which informed their image-making practices.

My analysis is informed by several theoretical assumptions regarding the status of photographs as valid ethnohistorical documents. During the second half of the nineteenth century photography was hailed as an objective form of visual communication. Unlike other forms of visual representation, such as painting or drawing, photographs were commonly held to be "reproductions of reality", untainted by the subjective intentions of the image makers themselves (Edwards 1990). In contrast to the view that photographs reproduce an "objective reality", I analyse the photographs discussed in this essay as culturally significant documents (Scherer 1990)³. I also acknowledge that there are limitations on what can be understood from the images themselves. For this reason I consider written documentary materials from the same period, including travellers' accounts, to contextualize my reading of the images within the historical and cultural contexts in which they were produced and viewed.

In the following analysis I draw on the theoretical insights of John Tagg who argues that in order to understand the meanings of photographs we must turn our attention to the discursive systems which supply particular images with meaning (1988: 4). Alan Sekula likewise problematizes the apparent immediacy and transparency of photographic representations; he considers the meaning of photographs to be the result of an interplay between iconic, graphic and narrative conventions (1984). In a similar vein, Pierre Bourdieu argues that adequately understanding a photograph means "not only recovering the meanings which it *proclaims*, that is, to a certain extent, the explicit intentions of the photographer; it also means deciphering the surplus of meaning which it *betrays* by being a part of the

symbolism of an age, a class or artistic group" (1990: 7).

In this essay I use the metaphor of the "gaze" to analyse how identities of individuals are framed within photographs. The "lines of sight" evident in photographic images demonstrate that photographs do not simply capture of the identity of the subject photographed; in photographic images we find the intersection of many gazes (photographer, subject and viewer) (Lutz and Collins 1993: 187). Griselda Pollock argues that representation is "enacted and performed via specific appeals to vision, specific managements of imaginary spaces and bodies for a gaze" (1994: 14). However, precisely because forms of representation operate within fields of power, they are frequently "flawed, balked, disrupted and often overwhelmed" by the material they attempt to "manage" (Pollock 1994: 15). These theoretical insights regarding the status of photographs as culturally meaningful representations, and the workings of power within particular forms of representations are used to analyse the photographs discussed below. Throughout the essay I consider the political and social uses of particular kinds of photographic images, as well as the ways in which particular visual images were received and interpreted among the audiences for whom they were produced.

In the first section of the essay I discuss some of the broader social, economic and political processes which shaped Ecuadorian society at the turn of the century. In the second section of the essay I discuss a series of photographic portraits of women published in an official catalogue entitled *El Ecuador en Chicago* (*Ecuador in Chicago*) which was designed to commemorate Ecuador's participation in the World's Colombian Exhibition of 1893, during the *progresista* era in Ecuador. In the third section of the essay I discuss how the identities of indigenous women of the highlands were framed by members of the dominant white/mestizo classes as examples of "ethnic types", and *not* as citizens of the nation state. Although these photographs were not included in an official iconography

of Ecuadorian national identity, images such as the ones discussed here became important in new and controversial attempts to redefine a uniquely "Andean" national identity for all Ecuadorian citizens. In the final section I consider the image of women included in a publication entitled El Album de la Provincia de Manabí (1912) which enable us to analyse further how women of the dominant classes were represented as active participants in coastal Manabí society, both in their roles within the family and in civil society.

Part 1

Historical Context: National Consolidation and Crisis

Ecuador became an independent nation in 1830. In recent ethnohistorical accounts scholars point out that the period of national "consolidation" in Andean republics often led to increased political fragmentation and new forms of class and ethnic domination (cf. Mallon 1995; Platt 1993; Muratorio 1991; Dueñas 1986; 1991). The corporate, decentralised and fragmented character of the newly established republic of Ecuador was symptomatic of prevailing divisions within land-owning classes. These divisions were exacerbated by geographic barriers between the three major geographic regions: the coast, which contains Ecuador's largest city and chief port, Guayaquil; the sierra which contains the national capital, Quito, and the Oriente, or eastern lowlands, which occupies the eastern slopes of the Andes and extends into the Amazon basin⁴.

Garcianismo

During the early republican period in Ecuador (1830-1857), the state administration did not radically depart from its colonial predecessors with respect to ideological mandate or bureaucratic structure (Guerrero 1994: 201). The most extensive centralising project in the decades following

Ecuador's independence was carried out under the conservative president Gabriel García Moreno. García Moreno adopted an authoritarian style of government through which he sought to incorporate all regions of the country into a regime of "order and progress" (Muratorio 1991: 76). As chief executive of the republic from 1859 to 1881, García Moreno enjoyed the political support of land-owning classes in the highlands and the Catholic church which was also one of the largest landowners in the highlands. During this period known as *garcianismo*, the state relied on the ideological tutelage of the Catholic church and catholicism was declared the official religion (Lynch 1986: 576; Muratorio 1991: 76).

The extensive economic and political power of highland landowners developed historically out of the *encomienda* system of the colonial period. Through this system individual Spaniards (called *encomenderos*) were awarded land and a peasant labour force in return for paying tribute and pledging their allegiance to the Spanish Crown. Following independence, a small group of self-identified "white" descendants of peninsular Spaniards and creole landowners retained their control over resources in the highlands.⁵ These landowners continued to extract wealth from quichua-speaking indigenous majority through the hacienda system of land tenure and system of *concertaje* (debt-peonage).⁶

Progresismo

Although independence from colonial control did not precipitate significant redistribution of power to the majority of Ecuador's inhabitants, the elimination of restrictions on foreign trade which had been imposed by the Spanish crown had significant implications for members of the land-owning elite. Powerful elites in the Sierra were resistant to opening up the domestic economy to foreign trade given that it would lead to competition for their own semi-domestic textile industry. However, lifting

trade restrictions created a favourable context for the development of new economic activities in Ecuador's tropical coastal zone, such as growing and harvesting agricultural products destined for export (Cueva 1982).

Ecuador's nineteenth century political history was marked by tensions between the competing regional interests of the highland landowners and the coastal bourgeoisie. During the second half of the nineteenth century a "modern" coastal petite bourgeoisie emerged. This group of elites was composed of investors, merchants, traders and coastal plantation owners. In contrast to the highland landowners, the power of coastal elites was not consolidated historically under the yoke of the church nor the colonial administration. The antagonism between these two classes of elites was not only regional (coastal/highland), but also ideological (liberal/conservative). The economic roots of this antagonism lay in the conflicting interests of the economy of consumption, dominated by the cereal production and textile manufacturing of the highlands, and the increasingly capital-intensive agro-export economy of the coast

The ethnic composition of the coastal population also differed from that of the highlands. By mid-nineteenth century, the coastal region was predominantly *mestizo* ("mixed blood", Spanish/Indian). Whereas many highland land-owning families could trace their family lineages back to the Spanish colonial aristocracy, many of the wealthy traders and merchants in the coast were *mestizo*, a fact which mirrors the coastal history of more fluid social relations and less rigid ethnic stratification, when compared to the history of extreme colonial stratification between Spaniards and Indians in the sierra (Dueñas 1991).

During the period of *progresismo* (progressivism), a group of politicians attempted to establish the economic, juridical and cultural conditions for a new hegemony in opposition to governing

principles of *garceanismo* (Muratorio 1991: 76). Beginning in 1884, the anti-clerical and market-oriented coastal elites gained partial control of the state through supporting the candidacies of presidents Plácido Caamaño (1884-1888), Antonio Flores Jijón (1888-1892), and Luís Cordero (1892-1895). Antonio Flores was the son of the nation's first president; he was educated in France and Lima and from 1860 onward he spent much of his life abroad in the metropolitan centres of Paris, London, Rome, Madrid and Washington). His experiences outside Ecuador fostered his cosmopolitan outlook in contrast to many of his Ecuadorian contemporaries (Spindler 1987: 127). A modern intellectual of his times, Flores designed policies in accordance with current ideas of progress and laissez faire economics (Muratorio 1993: 47). He enthusiastically promoted foreign investment and the incorporation of Ecuador's economy into foreign markets (Muratorio 1993: 46). Flores also supported Ecuador's participation in the World's Colombian Exhibition in Chicago.

Progresista governments espoused a new economic role for the state as a vehicle for the emerging power of the coastal bourgeoisie and gave expression to many key ideas of nineteenth century liberal democratic ideology, including respect for individual rights and freedoms and equality of all citizens before the law (Hale 1986; Lynch 1986). Through this progressivist discourse liberal-minded members of the bourgeoisie expressed their desire for Ecuador to become a player in the international market and to occupy its proper place within the international community of "civilised" nations (Muratorio 1993: 48).

The Liberal Revolution

The period of *progresismo* ended with the "Liberal Revolution" of 1895-6, at which time an even more radical liberal faction took control of the state under the command of Eloy Alfaro (Spindler 1987: 136). At that time, coastal elites and liberal legislators attempted to represent themselves as

promoters of progress, modernity and freedom in contrast to the highland elite and the Catholic church, whom the liberals associated with Ecuador's colonial past (Clark 1998: 79). Late nineteenth century liberals throughout Latin America sought to replace the restraints of colonial society with modern secular standards in education and civil organization (Hale 1986: 368). In Ecuador, Alfaro combined populist rhetoric with a call for liberal reforms which included the official the separation of church and state, the introduction of secular education, and legislation which legalized divorce, freedom of worship, and freedom of speech. Such liberal reforms appealed to coastal commercial and agro-export elites and labouring sectors alike (Dueñas 1991).

Alfaro used liberal rhetoric in his efforts to mobilize different factions against the oligarchic state which had been controlled historically by sierra landowners and the Catholic clergy. He insisted on the "civilizing" capacity of liberal reforms, contrasting them to the "barbarism" inherent in the arbitrary power exercised by the Catholic church and the system of *concertaje* which had enslaved the rural indigenous populations who laboured on the highland haciendas since colonial times. The liberal campaign against highland powerholders was articulated around the state's role in protecting rights and freedoms of indigenous labourers. However, for the liberals, the hacienda was not only an inhumane and exploitative "survival" from Ecuador's colonial past, but also was an impediment to future progress which the liberals equated with economic success in an expanding and increasingly competitive world market (Muratorio 1994b).

Although during the liberal period a new group of coastal elites gained political representation at the national level, this group was unable to impose a project that was exclusively in its own interests as conservative landowners retained much of their economic and political power (Clark 1998: 77-78). The liberal revolution did not result in significant attempts to effect land reform of private agricultural

property for the benefit of the highland peasant population; only the Catholic church's property was confiscated by the state for the purposes of "social assistance" (Cueva 1982: 9). In spite of the reforms implemented during the liberal era, the social and economic conditions for the majority of the population did not improve significantly. Class cleavages remained strong even though a small educated middle class began to emerge at the turn of the century (Goetschel 1996). Forms of economic and social repression directed toward the lower classes continued. Throughout the liberal period, working conditions for labourers on the coastal plantations were not significantly better than the conditions of debt-peons on the highland haciendas (Dueñas 1986).

Part 2

Photographing the Nation: El Ecuador en Chicago, 1893

The purpose of this section is to look more closely at images of "the nation" created at a particular historical moment during the era of *progresismo* by analyzing a series of photographs published in *el Ecuador en Chicago* (1894). I focus specifically on the images of women included in the document as a way to explore not only the dynamics of gender but also the ambiguities of the racialized subtext which underlie the depiction of a newly emerging national "identity" during this historical period. The photographs seen here provide us with an avenue to discuss how historical actors at the turn of the century used visual images to represent Ecuador as a prosperous and progressive nation to the economic and political elites in the "civilised" and industrialised countries of Europe and North America. When read in conjunction with narrative texts from the same period we can begin to see some of the tensions inherent in this politically charged vision of Ecuador as a modern nation state.

El Ecuador en Chicago was published in 1894 for *Diário de Avisos* of Guayaquil to commemorate Ecuador's participation in the World's Colombian Exhibition held in Chicago in 1893. This world fair was held to mark the 400th anniversary of Columbus' discovery of the New World. The Chicago exhibition provided a stage for powerful members of the economic and political elites of Ecuador to display their own vision of a newly emerging national identity.⁷ Ex-president Antonio Flores supported Ecuador's participation in the Chicago exhibition as a way to make the country better known to the "outside world" (Spindler 1987: 135). When addressing congress to petition funds for Ecuador's participation in an earlier world exposition held in Paris he stated, "It should be obvious to you-- the benefits that these expositions bring to the countries involved. They become known as producers and exchanges are instituted. From this rendezvous of industry emerges a fertile movement towards economic well-being" (quoted in Muratorio 1993: 48).

Progress, Racism and the Family of Nations

For the commercial elites of Ecuador, the Chicago exposition provided an international arena in which to define their identity as participants in the global market (Muratorio 1994b). At this time the coastal elites in Ecuador welcomed the possibility of entering into the economic system of what was then considered the "civilised world" (Hale 1986: 368). The authors of the catalogue describe Ecuador as a "modern and progressive nation" which offers ideal investment opportunities for North American and European businesses given Ecuador's "openness" to ideas of modern economic development. In the introduction the reader is told that in Ecuador, liberty and justice have triumphed over the tyrannies of the past through the dedication and hard work of its best citizens (*el Ecuador en Chicago*, hereafter EC 1894: xi).

The conviction that "progress" had finally triumphed over an irrational and despotic past was a

common theme expressed throughout the *progresista* era in the dominant political discourse (Hale 1986). The authors of the catalogue cite Ecuador's "free press, excellent libraries and academies of higher learning" as other signs of progress in Ecuador. The authors also state that the government not only welcomes foreign investment in the "prospering" sectors of commerce, agriculture and industry, but also encourages foreign immigration (EC 1894: ix).

While coastal elites were looking to increase their participation in the new "imagined community" created by international markets, the organizers of the Ecuadorian pavilion were faced with the problem of how to present the economic and cultural achievements of their country to an audience which at the outset was not only sceptical of Latin American nations' ability to "modernize" or "progress", but was also sceptical of the degree of "civility" among Ecuadorians.

For the purposes of this essay, it is important to note the larger constellation of ideas concerning race, nationality and progress that shaped fairs into "coherent ideological universes" which, in turn, were used to confirm and extend the authority of the United States' corporate, political and scientific leadership (Rydell 1984: 2)⁸. For fair directors, "progress" was synonymous with material growth and economic expansion (Rydell 1984: 4). This particular idea of "progress" was laced with racist assumptions; it was through the arrangement of visual displays that evolutionary ideas about race and progress were popularized among the visiting public. Tony Bennett states that "a progressivist taxonomy for the classification of goods and manufacturing processes was laminated on to a crudely teleological conception of the relations between peoples and races which culminated in the achievements of the metropolitan powers, invariably most impressively displayed in the pavilions of the host country" (1995: 82).

Towards the end of the nineteenth century displays in international exhibitions were arranged

according to an "ideological economy" that turned displays of machinery, industrial processes, and commodities into material signifiers of progress as a collective national achievement (Silverman 1977; Rydell 1984). Separate pavilions were created for each participating country and these were arranged according to "racial" groups such as Latin, Teutonic, Anglo-Saxon, American and Oriental (Bennett 1995: 84). Following the organizing logic of exhibitions, "primitive peoples" were displayed along a "sliding scale of humanity" from the barbaric to the nearly civilized (Buck-Morss 1990: 67; Bennett 1995: 84).

At the time of the Chicago exhibition, links between race, nationality and civilization were concretized in discourses which insisted that visual markers of distinction (such as the physical appearance of a person) indicated internal traits, psychological dispositions and moral essences (Stoler 1995: 134). This assumption was common in physical studies of racial "types" which insisted that psychological and cultural characteristics could be read into physiological appearances (Banta and Hinsley 1986: 106). Visual displays at the Chicago fair made use of new "scientific" techniques for cataloguing and measuring the somatic features of racial "types". Visitors were encouraged to compare themselves to photographs of different human "physical types" that were displayed on the walls of the Laboratory of Physical Anthropology, an exhibit which gave rise to coffee-table photograph albums of the "races of mankind" (Banta and Hinsley 1986: 58).

The fiction that modern nation-states were constituted by relatively homogenous populations was widespread among European intellectuals of the nineteenth century, as was the idea that nations should encompass a unitary lineage of culture and tradition. In Romantic historiography and literature, the term "race" was used to describe "a nationality or a people developing over time, distinct from others by language, religion or geography" (Lynch 1986: 297). Gustave Le Bon, for example,

classified and ranked "races" according to psychological characteristics. In his schema the only "superior" races were Indo-European races, with the Anglo-Saxon sub-race clearly ranked above the Latin sub-race. As markers of distinction between the sub-races he cited Anglo-Saxon "individualism, liberty and sense of duty", in contrast to the Latin pursuit of "equality and dependence on the state" (Lynch 1986: 399).

Using the Americas as an example to illustrate the workings of his "racial psychological laws", Le Bon argued that the "progress and stability" of the North and the "sanguinary anarchy" and "absolute autocracy" of the South were indicative of the differences in European racial character (Anglo-Saxon vs. Latin). Nancy Leys Stepan notes that metropolitan social theorists viewed South American countries as "lacking" the necessary elements to form "proper nations", such as biological coherence. Latin American countries were often depicted as "raceless masses", incapable of great national achievements in virtue of their "radical and terrifying [racial] heterogeneities" (1991: 105). Pessimism concerning the ability of Latin American nations to "become civilized" also stemmed from the prevailing scientific strictures on racial mixing (Lynch 1986: 400). Le Bon was particularly pessimistic about the ability of Latin American countries to progress, given the predominant mixture of Latin and *mestizo* elements in the population.

It was in this climate of racial theorizing that many Latin American intellectuals looked inward to ask whether they too had a "race spirit" that defined them and gave them a national identity comparable to that of European nations. Outward-looking Ecuadorian elites were aware of the pessimistic assessment of South American republics made by theorists such as Le Bon and looked towards new definitions of a national identity which defied the labels of "mestizo-ized, Indian-ized, and mulatto-ized" (i.e. degenerate) Europeans which racial theorists had accorded them (Stepan 1991: 105-

6).

Creating a Uniquely Ecuadorian "National Self"

In the context of the Chicago exhibition, organizers of the Ecuadorian pavilion reinvented a new "national identity" while being aware of Europeans' perception of their own racial and cultural superiority vis à vis South American populations (Pagden 1987). Using the world fair as an opportunity to correct the common perception of their nation as inferior to European nations, the authors of the catalogue write,

It may seem strange that in the last decades of this century of light a book of this kind is still necessary in order to make one of the wealthiest and thriving South American republics known to the world. So rare and erroneous, however, is the information that even the most illustrious men of Europe and North America have concerning the present-day nations founded by the genius of Bolivar and San Martin, [that this introduction is necessary]. In short, Ecuador is a wealthy, progressive and honourable nation; the majority of its citizens have at their disposal the principle elements of modern civilization. (EC 1894: xii)

In the catalogue Ecuador's ports, roads, cities and cacao plantations are offered as evidence of a modern and prosperous nation. In what appears to be a somewhat eclectic array of photographs of politicians, diplomats, government buildings, haciendas, ports, central avenues and plazas, we find a series of female portraits entitled "*Flores Ecuatorianas*" ("Ecuadorian Flowers") and "*Flores del Guayas*" ("Flowers of Guayas") (see figures 1 & 2). The following considers the historical significance of including these portraits of Ecuadorian women in the Chicago catalogue, both in light of the ideologies of *progresismo*, and the intended international audience.

Flowers of Ecuador, Flowers of Guayaquil

This section elaborates how the inclusion of these female portraits performed critical "ideological work" within the context of constructing a new national identity (cf. Poovey 1988). *El Ecuador en Chicago* offered a public space in which the *progresista* intelligentsia and members of the

coastal bourgeoisie could represent themselves to an international audience as allegories of the nation (cf. Franco 1988: 93). When we analyze the female portraits in light of these particular interests, we can see how women's portraits were used by fair organizers as evidence of Ecuadorians' "civilized status"-- a status which elites of the metropolitan centres of North America and Europe frequently thought all South Americans were incapable of possessing.

It is significant that many of the women whose portraits appear in the catalogue are explicitly associated with the province of Guayas. This coastal province was the site of numerous commercial plantations and Ecuador's largest port city, Guayaquil. The central place accorded to the "flowers of Guayas" reflects the regionalist cast to the images of a new "modern" Ecuador as constructed by the editors of the catalogue. Fair organizers placed these photographs of women among other symbols of what organizers perceived to be the arrival of a new modern age in Ecuador, all of which were geographically located on the coast. These "signifiers" included a "modern" agricultural sector and new commodities for export (EC 1894: xii).

For *progresista* supporters, "modernity" was increasingly linked to the coastal region which was the site of Ecuador's export-led economy and new trade links to international markets. None of the "flowers" featured in the catalogue are explicitly associated with highland provinces or even Quito, the nation's capital. Many *progresista* supporters reinvented an image of the coast as the seat of national progress in opposition to the highlands and its "semi feudal" system of agricultural production (Cueva 1982).

These portraits are also suggestive of the "gendered" vision of national identity which fair organizers elaborated. Women are represented in this iconography of Ecuador's new "national identity" in ways notably distinct from Ecuador's "illustrious" male citizens. Whereas the men who

appear in the catalogue are individually named and identified according to the official titles which they hold (see figure 3), the "flowers" of Ecuador and Guayas remain anonymous. The ways in which women's portraits are displayed speak to the dynamics of gender and class which were embedded in images of a modern Ecuadorian nation state that organizers presented to the "world" in the context of the Chicago exhibition.

Women are associated with flowers not only in the titles of each paper where their portraits are displayed, but also in the individual photographs. Many of the women have flowers in their hair or decorating their hats. In the arrangement of portraits entitled "Flowers of Guayaquil" (figure 2), the background contains illustrations of flowers. During the Victorian era throughout Europe, women were increasingly associated with flowers. In poetry and prose written by male writers, women were praised for their "brilliant colouring", "fragility", and "fragrance". Not only were women praised for their pure, delicate and perfumed nature, but the activity of flower arranging was seen as a distinctly "feminine" task, one which enabled women to make use of their "natural" aesthetic sensibilities for the decorative arts (Davidoff and Hall 1987: 374). What is striking with respect to the portraits discussed here, is the degree of homogeneity among them, a fact accentuated by the layout of the photographs within the catalogue itself. In figure 2, seventy single portraits are arranged such that the viewer's gaze is not directed towards any single portrait (they are all the same size and similarly framed), but rather to the collection as a whole. In their choice and arrangement of portraits, the editors actively construct an particular image of feminine identity.

Nation, Race and "Feminine" Beauty

From the multiplicity of possible images of women which could have been selected to represent Ecuador at the World's Columbian Exhibition in Chicago, only a particular image of

femininity is celebrated in the catalogue. Given the homogeneity among the portraits and the careful arrangement of them in the catalogue, we can assume that this collection of photographs was deliberately chosen in virtue of a particular set of visual qualities which the portraits display. James Clifford notes how collections create the illusion of adequately representing a world by cutting objects out of specific contexts (whether cultural or historical), and making them stand for abstract wholes (1988: 220). He further states that the inclusion of objects in any collection reflects implicit assumptions and wider cultural rules governing appropriate inclusion or exclusion. Thus any activity involved with representing a culture, subculture or coherent domain of collective activity is strategic, selective and ultimately creative (1988: 230-231). We can see such dynamics at work in the collections of photographs entitled "Ecuadorian Flowers", and the "Flowers of Guayas". In contrast to racial theorists' depiction of South American republics as exemplifying "terrifying racial heterogeneity" and "racial degeneration", the visual narrative contained in this collection of Ecuadorian "flowers" is one of a singular and distinctly "civilized" feminine identity. Collectively, the female portraits are displayed as a kind of beautiful national treasure.

Like floral arrangements themselves, the portraits of these Ecuadorian "flowers" are offered as a beautiful display to be gazed at. The self-conscious pose of each photographed subject reveals a familiarity with standardized airs of late-nineteenth century portraiture⁹. The women of the Chicago catalogue are fashionably dressed by European standards and thus display a particular class identity. Collectively these portraits not only signal the commercial prosperity of Ecuador's elite classes, but also their cultural sophistication. Anne McClintock states that class identity is inevitably relational, constructed in opposition to social others and written in the language of clothes and physical signs (1995: 95). Jean Franco similarly argues that fashion developed as "the aesthetic counterpart of the

market" becoming a key system of signifiers without any reference other than social differentiation (1988: 97). For Franco, it was through beauty, fashion and "taste" that "the clothed female body [was turned] into a fetishistic object of desire" (1988: 98).

Women's dress throughout nineteenth century Europe was read as evidence of male prosperity and class status (McClintock 1995; 95; 105). In the case of the Chicago catalogue, these well-dressed women are positioned as "feminine" counterparts to the "masculine" world of commercial success. Although we do not know the names of these beautiful "flowers", their presentation of self reveals a particular class standing and familiarity with the portrait genre of photography (cf. Berger 1980; Tagg 1988). Within the frames of their individual portraits, these "flowers" are visually separated from the "public/male" world of commerce, investment, economic production and politics, yet their presentation of self is dependent on that world in order to successfully project an image of wealth and privilege.

Physiognomy, the Feminine Self and the Bourgeois Portrait

The "civilized" status of Ecuador's citizens was inscribed not only in the dress and demeanour of the women featured in the catalogue. Through the prominent display of numerous portraits, the visiting public was able to scrutinize the physiognomy of each individual photographed and thus judge for themselves the "character" of the women whose portraits appear in the catalogue. Samuel R. Wells, a prolific writer of physiognomic books defined physiognomy as "a knowledge of the relation between the external and the internal, and of the signs through which the character of the mind is indicated by the developments of the body" (cited in Green-Lewis 1991: 152). Nineteenth century physiognomy handbooks provided guides in which specific facial features and postures were read as signs of the innate moral and ethical qualities of an individual (Poole 1997: 110). In Europe, physiognomy was used to determine characteristics of "the insane" and could also be used to pinpoint

the "deviant" character of criminals (see Gilman 1982). Physiognomy linked ideas of "moral character", and "class" to physical indicators written on the body and expression of individuals. This popular science, like the racial theorizing discussed above, was based on the assumption that outward attributes provide observable conduits to inner dispositions.

Although the nineteenth century portrait, as a genre of photography, was supposed to capture the essence of the individual subject's character (cf. Tagg 1988), what is striking in the portrait photographs found in the catalogue for the Chicago exhibition is the degree of homogeneity between individual portraits with respect to pose, dress, demeanour, and facial expression. According to Deborah Poole, it was the very sameness of the photographed portraits that helped to shape the specific forms of self-imagining, the personal aesthetics and elements of style that would come to characterize the bourgeoisie (or bourgeois cultures) in different parts of the globe (1997: 112). As a document directed at convincing a foreign audience of the degree of civility among Ecuadorian citizens, we can begin to understand the significance of including portraits of this type which had an international currency.

Banta and Hinsley point out that studio portraits were an index of social success for the prospering middle classes of industrialized societies during the late nineteenth century (1986: 58). Among the Andean middle and upper classes, the act of having one's portrait taken conferred a particular status upon the photographed subject. Keith McElroy notes that the portrait form of *cartes de visite*, more than any other photographic format, reflected the desires and fantasies of the private middle class citizen of its day¹⁰. He states, "throughout the world people stood beside the conventionalized column, draperies, urns, and balustrades that had served for aristocratic portraiture in eighteenth century Europe" (McElroy: 1985: 22). As a mass produced and interchangeable

commodity form, the portrait's "standardized poses, airs and demeanours bridged distances, languages, and national boundaries" (Poole 1997: 112). It was precisely such boundaries that fair organizers wished to bridge by participating in the World's Columbian Exhibition.

The portraits of Ecuador's coastal elites displayed a collective awareness of the particular canon of aesthetic value, moral judgement, taste and distinction that constituted nineteenth century bourgeois culture in Europe and North America; it is in this historical context that we can see how the formal portraits of the flowers of Ecuador and Guayas played a critical role in dispelling the myth that South Americans were incapable of possessing a truly civilized soul or character in virtue of their "dubious racial heritage". The photograph provided a powerful visual image, and incontrovertible "proof" that Ecuador's illustrious citizens were indeed "civilized". The portraits stand as a reminder of the aspirations of the coastal bourgeoisie to be accepted as members of that "community" of metropolitan elites who dominated both the emerging world market and the globalizing culture of modernity (Poole 1997: 113).

European Images of Ecuador

It was not easy for the *progresista* fair organizers, to convince the North American and European public that Ecuador was, indeed, a modern, progressive and civilized nation. Popular perceptions regarding the recently established republics of South America were coloured by a combination of old stereotypes generated during the colonial period as well as the theories concerning national character discussed above. European descriptions of non-western peoples often reflected imperialist ambitions that posited European's racial and cultural superiority vis à vis non-western societies. Ann Stoler notes that by the late nineteenth century "race" had become the "organizing grammar of an imperial order in which modernity, the civilizing mission and 'the measure of man' were

framed" (1995: 127).

During the latter half of the nineteenth century northern European imperialist and neo-colonial expansion intensified in the Andean region. At that time, narratives of travellers were used by racial theorists as evidence to support their claims that South American countries lacked the necessary requisites for "progress" (cf. Poole 1997; Fitzell 1994). In the context of European capitalist expansion many travellers considered themselves to be ambassadors of "progress" in the Andean world (Fitzell 1994: 28). In his book, Four Years Among the Ecuadorians, originally published in 1867, Friedrich Hassaurek provides a detailed account of the people and customs he observed while serving as the United States diplomatic minister to Ecuador from 1861 to 1866 during the period of *garcianismo*. Hassaurek blames what he considers to be the "backwardness" of the country on the peculiar character "traits" of the Spanish "race" which prevent Ecuadorians from engaging in "great enterprises". He insists that defects in "character" are the cause of Ecuador's lack of commercial and industrial success over and above "the instability of governments and the frequent reoccurrence of violent political convulsions" (1967: 62).

Hassaurek fixates on the lack of infrastructure in the country. Blaming the lack of roads between the coast and sierra on the "indolent" nature of the Spanish "race", Hassaurek states, "and yet so great are the indolence and indifference of the Spanish race that such a road, although continually talked of, has never been made and will not be made for many years to come" (1967: 191). Encoded in his devaluation of the Spanish "race" is a specific vision of modernity and progress which posits "civilized" society as one integrated into the burgeoning international capitalist economy.

Hassaurek also expresses frustration at the government's resistance to "freeing up" its control over land. According to Hassaurek, "the rulers of this country have not yet realized that the

government does not need to be a landowner, and that it is not in wastelands and deserts, but in a thriving and enterprising population that the strength and prosperity of a nation consist" (1967: 192).

At the time of his stay in Ecuador, Hassaurek felt that Ecuador had yet to advance into the civilized world of modern trade, commerce and secular education which for him, like other liberal republicans of the late nineteenth century, were definitive markers modernity. The clientalist and corporatist economy of the *garcianismo* era was seen by travellers such as Hassaurek to be a continuation of the previous colonial system and antithetical to the logics of a secular society, free market and capitalist labour relations, all of which were the cornerstones of liberal visions of modernity.

With respect to the ladies of Quito, Hassaurek writes, "their natural talents are very great, but their education is sadly neglected. They are like the soil of their native country, fertile but uncultivated" (1967: 91). Hassaurek goes on to say that "the ladies of Quito can hardly be blamed for their ignorance. It is the monkish system which keeps them down, because it does not deem it convenient to awaken a taste in them for intellectual enjoyments" (1967: 91). Hassaurek also expresses his disdain for the ways in which elite women present themselves in society: "Their taste in dressing is highly primitive. They are fond of gay colours and gorgeous and ostentatious display. When they are compelled to show themselves in society, they love to wear dresses we at home would see only on the state" (1967: 89). According to Hassaurek, "those [women] who paint their faces, and a great many of them do it, have an unfortunate habit of over doing it. Meeting them on the streets of New York, Boston or Philadelphia, we would mistake them for females of easy virtue, an impression to which their gaudy dresses would greatly contribute" (1967: 89).

Travel books provide us with evidence of how Ecuador, as a recently established republic, was scrutinized by individuals who directly or indirectly contributed to the colonial enterprise in the Andes

(Salvatore 1996: 86). While authors of travelogues usually presented their writing as truthful representations of their own experience, these descriptions were interspersed with social, political and moral commentary. European travellers in the Andes often linked images of gaudy displays of wealth to a certain primitive state of the countries they visited. In the case of Peru, European travellers associated feminine extravagance with colonial mercantilism, which was considered to be a cause of Peru's economic ruin, as all family inheritance and national capital was thought to have been squandered by men on the material needs of their "gluttonously bejewelled and beaded wives" (Poole 1988: 334).

Hassaurek's disdainful judgements of the local population work to construct distance between himself as a North American observer, and the people he saw. His description of the ladies of Quito and Guayaquil reflects a high degree of ambivalence which many Europeans and North American felt with respect to the elites of the Andean republics who were "almost but not quite" like themselves (Bhabha 1994). While Hassaurek sees the potential for Ecuador as a nation to "develop", the nation, like the ladies of Quito, is at present "fertile but uncultivated". His description of the elite women stands as a critical commentary on what he perceives to be the "immature" status of a country which has not yet freed itself from the irrational despotism and decadence of its colonial past. Hassaurek, like many other travellers, cites the extravagance of the elite women as evidence of the country's intrinsically dependent, irresponsible and hence incipiently colonial status of South American nations (Poole 1988: 334).

When we take into consideration the history of the European gaze as it was directed towards Andean countries such as Ecuador, it is possible to make sense of why a small group of elites chose to represent their "nation" to audiences in the metropolitan centre of Chicago by displaying photographs

such as the "Flowers of Guayas". In the case of the Chicago exhibition, elites tried to resolve the contradictions inherent in representing a modern and "civilized" Ecuadorian citizenry in a climate in which "race" and "civilization" were intimately linked, by constructing a visual iconography of national identity using the portraits of well-dressed and wealthy Ecuadorian ladies. The respectable "character" of these ladies was written not only in their style of dress (which is far removed from the supposedly garish, primitive and ostentatious clothes favoured by the Ecuadorian ladies observed by travellers), but also (literally) on their bodies: their "white" appearance and physiognomy neatly erase any reminder of Ecuador's contemporary indigenous population and history of *mestizaje*, both of which had been used by European racial theorists to denigrate Latin American nations. By bringing the reader directly to the coastal region, which is the site of new commercial activities and new forms of "modern" agricultural production, and by including portraits of members of the coastal bourgeoisie, the catalogue for the Ecuadorian pavilion at the Chicago fair presents images, which as the written texts suggests, serve to "correct" the misguided perceptions that North American and European audiences may have of Ecuador.

Part 3

Images of "the Indian" in National Iconographies

In spite of such negative assessments of Latin American nations, outward-looking elites, including Antonio Flores, were aware of the current importance of developing a strong sense of national identity, which distanced Ecuador from its colonial past and motherland of Spain. One strategy employed by organizers of the exhibition was to include uniquely Andean images within images of their nation. Although the visual iconography of Ecuador's contemporary citizens in *el*

Ecuador en Chicago erases evidence of Ecuador's indigenous population, we find the attempt to incorporate a particular image of "the Indian" within a myth of national origins. This strategy enabled fair organizers to promote Ecuador at the world fair as a modern nation-state which nonetheless was distinguished by its own unique Andean history¹¹. By representing Ecuadorians as descendants of a "noble" and "aristocratic" race, elites reinvented and fictionalized an historical narrative that posited historical continuity with a glorious Inca past and legitimated the origins of all Ecuadorians (Muratorio 1994b: 127-128). This strategy involved the erasure of any evidence of contemporary class structures of domination between white/*mestizo* elites and the indigenous population of the highlands and reflects one attempt to represent a unified "national self" without addressing the historical realities of political and economic domination within the nation.

The Carte de Visite and the Ethnic Type

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, images of the "Indian" were key to forming a newly emerging ideology of *mestizaje* which was based on the idea that all Ecuadorians, as citizens of a nation based on a mixture of European and Indian heritage, share a common identity. However, many of the images of indigenous people produced during this period, were influenced by European strategies for representing social Others. In Europe during the industrial revolution of the mid-1800's, an artistic movement emerged which expressed nostalgic yearnings for a simpler (and quickly vanishing) rural life (Davidoff and Hall 1987: 28). The rural peasant came to symbolize the idyllic origins from whence developed modern industrialized society. Artists expanded this aesthetic vision of the rural "folk" by selecting a variety of regional and colonial settings in which to fashion exotic, yet romantic images (Pollock 1988: 410). Early paintings and illustrations of indigenous people in Ecuador made by foreign travellers bear the mark of this romantic vision which sought out the exotic

and timeless Other.

In Ecuador, like other sites of European colonial "adventure" and discovery, travellers looked for that which was picturesque in the peoples and landscapes they encountered and they often commissioned local painters to illustrate their travel writings. Many local painters and photographers internalized the traditional European iconographic dichotomy which associated the urban with civilization and the rural with primitivism (Muratorio 1994b: 150)¹². In Europe, the demand for *cartes de visite* of curious and exotic human types among the urban middle classes increased during the 1860's and 1870's, along with a general interest in travel literature and the spread of European colonialism itself (Poole 1997: 119).

The emergence of the "ethnic type" *carte de visite* was spurred on by this European demand for exotic images¹³. In contrast to the bourgeois portraits found in the Chicago catalogue, photographs of "ethnic types" were not commissioned by the photographed subjects for their own use. Photographers commonly hired women to pose for the camera in return for small sums of money and then sold the photographs in urban centres in Ecuador and abroad. Whereas the portrait stands as a miniature icon celebrating the sitter's own status and unique individuality, the photograph of the "ethnic type" is a generic image of Otherness (McElroy 1985; Poole 1997). By photographing indigenous subjects against a neutral background or a "natural" landscape, these images efface any evidence of the history of colonial and ethnic conflict within the image, and simultaneously frame the identities of subjects within a romantic trope familiar to the European imagination (Millones and Pratt 1990: 18).

As historical documents, however, it is necessary to situate our readings of these images precisely within the history of colonial relations in Ecuador-- by asking why these particular images were produced and who controlled the framing of indigenous women's identities, it is possible to begin

to analyze not only the dynamics of image making but also the broader social relations in which they are embedded. The photographs entitled "India de la Magdalena" and "India de Sangoiqui" (figures 4 & 5), were taken by the Ecuadorian photographer, Vargas, who accompanied a natural history expedition led by two German volcanologists in the province of Pichincha in 1870 (Chiriboga and Caparini 1994). In these photographs indigenous women are photographed as repositories of a local, yet picturesque culture; each photograph is labeled by region and ethnic group but it is in the markers of their dress that this "ethnic identity" is most clearly pronounced.

Jennifer Green-Lewis notes that typologies lend political and artistic coherence to photographs, which serves to intensify a sense of authorial control over the subject represented within a photograph as an "ethnic type" (1996: 141). The practice of photographing "ethnic types" thus provides a framework for interpreting the identity of the subject which is distinct from the framing of the subject's identity within the context of a portrait. Whereas the distinguishing mark of the bourgeois portrait is the presumed control which the sitter exerts with respect to the production of the image, the distinguishing mark of ethnic "type" photography is the erasure of the photographed subject's individuality and personal control over how her identity is framed.

Costumbrismo

The genre of *costumbrista* photography emerged within a broader literary artistic tradition beginning in the 1860's and 1870's and was born as a pictorial genre inspired by the detailed narrations and meticulous drawings of travelers (Muratorio 1994b: 150; Poole 1997). The term *costumbrismo*, is derived from the Spanish word for the popular customs (*costumbres*) that the *costumbristas* sought to describe in their work. Costumbrista engravings and photographs, along with other contemporaneous artistic tendencies in music and literature, expressed a newly emerging nationalism in which artists

turned their gaze towards their indigenous heritage and towards discovering their own landscapes during the second half of the nineteenth century (Muratorio 1994b: 153).

Costumbrista painters and photographers were motivated by the desire to understand and record the social customs, costumes and "local colour" of Andean societies (Poole 1997: 86-87). However, as Deborah Poole points out, this "local colour" was frequently "toned and hued to fit categories of an illustrative Other fashioned by European Colonial adventures in India, Africa and the Middle East" (1997: 87). In spite of their attention to realistic detail in terms of dress and local customs, costumbrista illustrators and photographers tended to reinscribe the identity of their subjects within a framework supplied by their own interests as artists and photographers. In many of these images, the "concreteness" of the realistic detail is superficial as it represents an extension of the photographer's own interest in the visual detail of indigenous costumes as markers of the subject's "ethnic identity" (Gilman 1982: xi). The consistency with which *costumbrista* painters concentrate on the superficial and picturesque details in the indigenous people's *trajes de costumbre* (traditional clothing) ironically works to idealize individual subjects as "ethnic types" (Muratorio 1994b: 157). In spite of the valorization of indigenous cultures implicit in many *costumbrista*-style photographs, actual indigenous communities remained excluded from meaningful participation within the national political sphere throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Furthermore, the static, de-contextualized and solitary images of "ethnic types" efface any evidence of the contemporary debate surrounding the problem of "the Indian" within national society, and represent "the Indian" as a source of ethnic identity for all Ecuadorians. Although evidence of the tensions and conflict surrounding attempts to incorporate images of indigenous people within nationalist iconography are effaced within the *costumbrista* images themselves, these tensions resurface

throughout the late nineteenth century in other visual arenas.

Ethnicity and National Identity: The "Other" Within the Creole Self

As members of the dominant mestizo society gazed inwards to the rural highlands in the search for symbols of a uniquely Ecuadorian identity, their efforts to reinscribe selective elements of local rural/indigenous cultures within the "national" culture were often contested, and at times sparked outrage from members of the dominant society. The controversy surrounding a statue that was unveiled in Quito in 1892 during the administration of Lu s Cordero, the last president of the *progresismo* era, serves as one example of the tensions surrounding the representation of indigenous women in national iconographies (Muratorio 1994b: 169-170). The statue depicts Sucre, the liberator, protecting a young indigenous girl symbolizing the *Patria* (the Nation), from a lion representing Spain. The image is a clear depiction of the broken ties that symbolize the destruction of the Spanish colonialism and the emergence of Ecuador as an independent nation. The female figure reproduces the familiar trope of a passive feminine presence in the allegory of nation building as a story of the passive acceptance by indigenous people of the "light of reason" brought to the indigenous masses by the creole liberators Bolivar and Sucre (Muratorio 1994b: 170-172).

Contemporary nineteenth century critics, such as the literary figure, journalist, and opposition politician, Juan Leon Mera, condemned the statue for suggesting a possible *mestizaje* (racial mixing of of Spanish and Indian elements) between a creole hero of the *patria* and an Indian woman (Muratorio 1994b: 170). Although the woman is represented not as an erotic figure, but as a sentimentalized receptacle of white civilization, Mera was upset by the fact that the artist used a young indigenous woman to symbolize the nation. The statue sparked such outrage in virtue of the fact that it alluded to the possibility of a union between "creole" and "Indian", and hence invoked an image of *mestizaje* as a

symbol of national identity. Many members of the mestizo middle class at this time had difficulty reconciling the historical realities of miscegenation within Ecuador and the inevitable blurring of "racial" and social boundaries that colonial laws had attempted to legislate. New attempts to incorporate images of the "Indian," (who had been constructed as "Other" in colonial discourse), within iconographies of national identity were often problematic for members of the dominant *mestizo* classes (Muratorio 1994b: 170).

Tristan Platt observes that "whereas in nineteenth century Europe, civilization tried to exorcise its fear of inner barbarism by projecting it on to the savage Other beyond the seas (or towards the inmates of its own prisons and asylums), in Andean America we find a more intimate recognition of barbarism as something internal to the civilized nation itself" (Platt 1993: 171). These tensions are expressed in Mera's own writings. Mera celebrates Ecuadorians' glorious Inca ancestry, while simultaneously maintaining that within contemporary Ecuadorian society, "the Indian" is almost "imperceptible" due to the preponderance of European elements in the population (Muratorio 1994b: 172). Mera's comments are indicative of the uneasy relationship between creoles and the indigenous population stemming from Ecuador's colonial history and the precariousness of white/*mestizo* domination over an indigenous majority. In the case of Ecuador, the theme of idealizing an Inca imperial past and the act of forgetting or denigrating actual indigenous contemporaries reflects the ambiguous relationship between white-*mestizos* and what they perceived as both an Indian Other and a mythic source of their own identity (Muratorio 1994a: 13).

In the catalogue for the Chicago exhibition there are no images of indigenous people *as* citizens and members of contemporary national society. When we compare the celebration of the "flowers" of Ecuador and Guayas to the outrage sparked by the statue of an indigenous girl representing the nation,

we can begin to unravel the dynamics of class and ethnicity which informed the ways in which images of women were symbolized in masculinist ideologies of the nation.

Photographing Race

Not all photographs of indigenous women of the highlands present atemporal and romanticized images of the Other. Many of the stark portraits of highland Indians made by late nineteenth century and early twentieth century photographers were prompted by the view that humanity was divisible into racial types on the basis of physical appearance. The photograph entitled "*para una tipología humana*" ("towards a human typology") is one such example (see figure 6). Photography itself played a large role in producing the evidence of "racial" categories. Scientists assumed that the purely visual "evidence" of photographs would reveal important truths about the laws of human physical variation (Banta and Hinsley 1986: 64).

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, Ecuadorian intellectual and political elites, who were themselves influenced by European racial theorizing, turned their gaze towards the poor, largely indigenous rural population, asking whether it was possible to blame Ecuador's social and economic problems on the inherent inferiority of the Indian "race". In European racial theories, "race" provided a purportedly scientific language through which populations could be described, classified and ranked as morally superior or inferior (Poole 1997: 16). Ideas of racial degeneration were not adopted by Ecuadorian intellectuals without reservation, given their own "dubious racial heritage" as *mestizos*. However, the language of race provided new ways to explain the persisting "backwardness" and "stagnation" of the nation's economy by referring to the "racial" character or possible "genetic deficiencies" of the largely indigenous rural peasant labour force. At this time we find debates over whether it was necessary to bring European genes to Ecuador not only to "whiten" the population, but

also to improve its genetic stock: "The idea of the degeneration of the indigenous race and the need to regenerate it through white European immigration was accepted implicitly or explicitly by the majority of intellectuals and politicians during this epoch, including liberals" (Muratorio 1994b: 173). In other Latin American countries, such as Argentina, we also find the use of racist logic to argue for European immigration and miscegenation as a means to "whiten" the population. Following such racist logic, this "racial whitening" ("*blanqueamiento racial*") would have a "civilizing" effect on the country and stimulate "progress" (Zimmerman 1992: 41). This idea was not lost on the Chicago exhibition organizers who state in the catalogue that Ecuador is open to foreign immigration (EC 1894: xii).

The narrative and visual representations of indigenous people in Ecuador constructed by members of the dominant *mestizo* society during the late nineteenth century were multiple and contradictory. In many of these discourses, indigenous people were portrayed as "lacking" something which could be supplied to them by members of the dominant class, such as the civilizing principles of Christianity, or liberal enlightenment values. In the discourse on "race", an irreversible dimension of difference was introduced; racist discourse threw into question notions of a common core of humanity and for all practical purposes introduced a fixed and absolute hierarchy between races; only generations of racial mixing would result in the gradual "evolution" of the population (Hale 1986; Thomas 1992: 367-368).

When looking at how ideas of "race" were used in individual travelers' accounts, we also find inherent ambiguities. For Hassaurek, the Indian is a symbol of Otherness, not unlike the decadent ladies of the elite classes. However, with respect to the indigenous people of the highlands, Hassaurek questions their very humanity: "[Indians] are strangers to the higher emotions of human nature. Bashfulness, hospitality, magnanimity, compassion, gratitude and all the other virtues by which good

men excel are unknown among them. They are completely imbruted; completely stupefied" (Hassaurek 1967: 106).

Hassaurek's description of indigenous women is similar to other colonial tropes which emphasize the purported "degraded condition of women" as markers of the Indian's barbarism (cf. Thomas 1992: 370). Hassaurek states, "the affection of Indian women for their husbands, who almost continually ill-treat them, is really remarkable. The Indian wife always carries the baby on her back, in a shawl or poncho tied around her breast or neck. She is generally more industrious and active than her lazy and brutal husband" (1967: 65).

Hassaurek was also preoccupied with the physical characteristics of the indigenous women he observed:

While going over the ground, I was again struck by the repulsive ugliness of the Indian women. Whether it is their habit of beastly drinking that produces the hard work which they are compelled to perform, I am unable to say. There is a general belief at Quito that the Indians of Otavalo, and especially the women, are handsomer, and cleaner than those of Pichincha, Latacunga, etc., but I have been unable to discover the slightest foundation for such an opinion. It is the same national type, and the same ugly, stupid, simpering look that distinguish them all. As far as cleanliness is concerned the difference, if it exists, is imperceptible to a foreign eye. (Hassaurek 1967: 157-158).

In deeming them "ugly" Hassaurek de-sexualizes the indigenous women in his narrative, and thus constructs their identity as alien to the ideal feminine subject of the bourgeois male gaze. This rendering of indigenous women as "unfeminine" is another trope which speaks to the ways in which "ideals of femininity" were used within a language and practice of class and racial domination.

Throughout his narrative, Hassaurek conflates "national character" and "racial type", assuming that physical characteristics are the visible counterparts, or physical expression of innate qualities. Hassaurek's gaze is drawn to the "deplorable" state of the Indian which exemplifies, for him, the

degenerate state of the country as a whole as a result of Ecuador's history of colonialism:

These poor and degraded beings were once the owners and masters of the country, and the subjects of a powerful empire. The ancestors of those who now dwell in miserable huts had built stately palaces and magnificent temples and vast treasures belonged to the race that now bends its weary neck to carry the burdens of their conquerors (Hassaurek 1967: 107).

Hassaurek states that indigenous people are so pitiful that they deserve sympathy from members of the "civilized" world: "Filthy and servile, superstitious, drunken, indolent, as they are they claim our sympathy and commiseration" (1967: 107). Hassaurek's use of racialized language in his depiction of indigenous people is inherently ambiguous—throughout his descriptions Hassaurek conflates physical appearances, "character" and "race". Carol Smith argues that European assumptions conflating race, class and culture diffused throughout the world "not simply as a cultural accompaniment to capitalism but as elements in the widespread ideological construction of modern nations" (Smith 1995: 728). With these insights in mind, it is possible to analyze how the dynamics of "race" animated new images of Ecuador as a modern nation state towards the end of the nineteenth century. Whereas images of Ecuador's "ethnic types" were reinscribed as sources of a uniquely "Ecuadorian national identity", contemporary indigenous populations were frequently seen as the cause of nation's pressing social problems. The purported "racial inferiority" or "inherent deficiencies" of the indigenous population were seen by some liberal politicians as obstacles to achieving their stated goals of national "progress" (Guerrero 1994; Cueva 1982).

Liberalism in Ecuador and Racist Ideologies

Stoler argues that "the liberal democratic presumption that all men shared certain inherent traits and values also assumed that the boon of freedom-- the right to govern oneself-- should be granted only to those who had assimilated certain internal controls" (1995: 130). Uday Mehta likewise

contends that even the most basic universalistic notions of "human nature" and "individual liberty" as elaborated by John Stuart Mill and John Locke rested on combined notions of breeding and the learning of "naturalized" habits (1990: 427). For Mehta, what is concealed behind the endorsement of these universal capacities [i.e. Lock's notion that human beings are by their nature free, equal and rational] are the "specific cultural and psychological conditions woven in as preconditions for the actualization of these capacities" (Mehta 1990: 430).

In late nineteenth century Ecuador, liberal politicians expressed the desire to free "all" citizens, and in particular the indigenous workers on the haciendas of the sierra, from the legacies of Ecuador's colonial history. Those same politicians, however, embraced ideologies which reinforced the ethnic and "racialized" borders within the "imagined community" of Ecuador. By constructing the rural "Indians" of the highlands as "pathetic" and "sorrowful" creatures in need of protection, and by entertaining the idea that indigenous people may even be "racially" inferior, white-mestizo politicians and other image makers constructed an image of "the Indian" in need of paternalistic guidance and surveillance (Guerrero 1994: 198). Some liberal politicians insisted that it was only in virtue of their own "noblesse oblige" that they treated Indians as "human beings" (Guerrero 198).

While the poverty and deplorable living and working conditions of the highland peasants were seen as pressing social problems for the country as a whole, the reason why their "plight" came to be debated and discussed at a national level is linked to other concerns of the liberal political elites who were concerned with modernizing agricultural production in the coastal region and creating an efficient and hard working labour force for the coastal agricultural sector. Coastal elites felt that indigenous labour was monopolized by owners of highland haciendas. Thus owners of coastal plantations wanted to free up sources of labour in the highlands to counter chronic labour shortages in the export

agriculture sector of the coast (Clark 1998: 79).

It is in terms of these contradictions that we need to explore the meaning of “liberalism” and “nationalism” at the turn of the century in Ecuador. The photographs of indigenous women produced at the turn of the century record a visual history of a series of social interactions between members of distinct social classes. When considered in historical context, we can begin to explore the political utility of representing indigenous women as “ethnic types” or as specimens of a distinct “race” for members of the dominant classes. The photographs enable us to see how particular visual representations were used by intellectuals and politicians to define, contain, and manage the identities of social Others, who were incorporated into the nation-state of Ecuador. When we consider the question of gender within images of the nation, the dynamics of class and “race” cannot be ignored—we can see how these dynamics animate particular constructions of women’s identity as either desirable and feminine or as “ugly” and inhuman under the gaze of male image makers. When historically contextualized we can see how narrative and visual representations of indigenous people constructed powerful myths which served to legitimate structural inequalities between white/*mestizo* and indigenous populations.

Part 4

The Album of Manabí

In this final section I analyze both the rhetoric of the written text and a series of photographs contained in *el Album de la Provincia de Manabí* (The Album of the Province of Manabí), published in 1912. Published during the liberal era, the album is an illustrated guide to the coastal province of Manabí and contains a brief history as well as statistical information about the province's economic

production. The album enables us to see how images of "the bourgeois feminine self" were used in a publication dedicated to recording the cultural achievements of Manabí's citizens and the success of its economy. The author's optimism regarding Manabí's potential for progress is captured in the following passage:

Shining is the future which awaits the province of Manabí. With the Panama Canal and the train to Quito, [Manabí] will be the most natural point of access to the [Pacific] Ocean for the people of the interior. Manabí will go forward, develop and prosper, and have considerable influence over national progress and development. (*El Album de la Provincia de Manabí*, hereafter, AB 1912).

As a local publication, the album differs in many ways from the Chicago catalogue which was intended as a vehicle to introduce Ecuador to "the world". *El Album de la Provincia de Manabí* is dedicated specifically to the people of Manabí and conveys a strong regionalist sentiment. The author's denunciation of the popular perception of Manabí in other provinces as a violent and lawless region is suggestive of the regionalist sentiment which historically shaped political life in Ecuador. In the introduction to the album, Juan B. Ceriola writes,

Generally the people from the other provinces look unfavorably on the province of Manabí. They say that in Manabí crime reigns supreme, that no one enjoys security and that one cannot count on safeguards for one's own protection. This is false, completely false. There are no more murders in Manabí than in any other region (*Introduction*, AB 1912).

Although dedicated to "the people" of the province, the members of a particular class of residents are represented as responsible for the cultural and economic achievements of Manabí society. In the album we find numerous photographs of local cocoa barons, such as Juan Polít of Chone, as well as photographs of the province's other "illustrious" citizens, including liberal ex-president Eloy Alfaro. In the introduction the editor, Juan B. Ceriola, expresses his gratitude to the Cantonal Councils of Manabí for their support in providing the relevant statistics for each of the seven cantons of Manabí.

He also thanks Antonio Segovia, the editor of the newspaper El Horizonte (The Horizon) in Portoviejo, the distinguished journalists, Vicente Becerro and Jose M. Palau for their efforts in compiling information for the album and Sr. don E. Rodenas, whose graphic art studio provided editorial assistance for the album.

In the same year that el Album de la Provincia de Manabí was published, Leonidas Plaza Gutiérrez, a native to Manabí, entered into his second presidency of the republic (1912-1916) (Spindler 1987: 211). In his first term in office, Plaza had succeeded Alfaro as president (1901-1905), and promised a continuation of Alfaro's liberal policies. With his slogan of "Liberty, Tolerance, Civilization and Progress", Plaza advocated public works programs, railroad construction, and the promotion of industry and commerce (Spindler 1987: 181, 183).

In looking at some of the photographs produced at this time, we can see that in spite of a shift in political rhetoric which denounced inherent privileges on the basis of one's social status and which championed the rights of the individual over corporatist institutions associated with the colonial period and *garcianismo*, this political rhetoric was articulated in a society which was hierarchically organized along axes of class, ethnicity and gender. In spite of a history of more "fluid" social relations when compared to the highlands (cf. Dueñas 1991), members of Manabí's elite fashioned representations of themselves and their social world in ways which would distance themselves from the lower classes. Many of the photographs of women in the El Album de la Provincia de Manabí echo the images of women found in El Ecuador en Chicago. In looking at the photographic images and narrative representations of the women of Manabí, we can see how a specific image of femininity was embraced by members of the elite which was key to the elaboration of a "modern" social order in the coastal province.

The author of the album, Juan Ceriola, states that the future of Manabí lies in its agricultural production, which is becoming "more modern" each year (AB 1912). Ceriola further writes, "the people of Manabí are hard working, hospitable, lovers of progress and staunch defenders of liberty and freedom" (AB 1912). In the album, Manabí's illustrious male citizenry are photographed in their roles in the "public" sphere. The list of distinguished resident/citizens includes current politicians (Senator Guillermo López), doctors (Dr. Alejo Lascano), writer/journalists (Jiburcio Macías), landowners (Miguel Zambrano), philanthropists (Naniel López), and military officers (Coronel José Antonio María García).

As in the publication *el Ecuador en Chicago*, women in *el Album de la Provincia de Manabí* are not individually named, with the exception of female school teachers and school directors. With respect to the women of Manabí, the author states:

The woman of Manabí combines physical beauty with a noble soul, an open, frank character and a pious, caring and patriotic spirit which she possesses in virtue of her heightened religious beliefs and sentiment. (Introduction, AB 1912)

This depiction of "the woman of Manabí" echoes a common theme found in literary and other artistic works produced throughout the nineteenth century in Ecuador and other Andean countries which involve honouring a woman in virtue of her religious purity (Goetschel 1996; Montufar 1996; Rossells 1988). A second common theme evoked in this image involves equating femininity with the embodiment of physical beauty¹⁴. In late nineteenth century literature, women were also depicted as more emotional than men, a quality which was often linked to their supposedly heightened innate aesthetic sensibilities, and which placed them closer to "nature" than men (Green 1997; Davidoff and Hall 1987). This definition of woman (as religious, emotional and a part of nature) was used to legitimate the view that she lacked the rational capacities of men (defined as active, rational, inventive,

scientific) which were required to exercise full rights of citizenship (cf. Green 1997: 27).

Historians of gender relations in Ecuador point out that in spite of the advent of the "liberal revolution" and the wave of anticlericalism challenging the catholic church during the period of *progresismo* and the early liberal period, dominant representations of women continued to legitimate gender hierarchies between men and women (G. Moscoso 1996: 88). During the liberal period, new legislation emphasized the need to achieve order and control with respect to sexual conduct while leaving open the possibility for the Church to repress and punish those who transgressed norms for sexual conduct (M. Moscoso 1996: 40). In practice, these norms had different implications for men and women.¹⁵

Since the colonial period the catholic church had stressed sexual virtue and promoted discrimination between different categories of women in sexual terms—the church penalized women who supposedly lived in mortal sin and sanctioned severe family control over the sexuality of women in order to ensure their honour and virtue (Smith 1995: 27). Whereas male lust was commonly viewed as natural and irrepressible, women were continually tested for their uprightness and virtue on the grounds of their sexuality. Throughout the colonial period, catholic teachings maintained that if women's sexuality was not controlled, women would endanger themselves and their families (Lavrin 1986: 332). A dualistic representation of woman's identity was enshrined in Hispanic and catholic gender ideologies as the dichotomy of Eve and the virgin Mary (G. Moscoso 1996: 98). Although the virtuous woman was exalted in literature as beautiful and pure, she was always, in virtue of her "nature", susceptible to temptation-- symbolized by Eve, or the fallen woman.

In spite of the rhetoric of individual rights and freedoms for all citizens which liberal politicians embraced at the turn of the century, ideological constructions of women's sexual identity attributed to

women certain qualities which threw into question their capacity to exercise the full rights which should be duly accorded to citizens¹⁶.

Many political theorists of the nineteenth century questioned women's ability to exercise their rights as full citizens, given the "nature" of the female sex, and argued that political rights should only be ascribed to women in a minimal way, and on strict conditions (Sevenhuijsen 1992: 185). Monica Juneja points out that in post-revolutionary France, the female body was denied the ethical and political investment given to the male. She states that the female body "constituted a sensual erotic image and an ideal object of desire which, however, could not at the same time function a sign of ideal subjectivity with which the male citizen of the republic could identify" (Juneja 1996: 29).

Ursula Vogel points out that the meanings of what may appear to be timeless codes of sexual morality are "intimately bound up with the historically specific and changing pattern of a society's legal and political institutions, with its religious traditions and with the interests and values of particular groups" (1992: 149). Nineteenth century European liberal political philosophy implicitly constructed the prototypical legal subject of the nation state not only as male, but as an individual in possession of a certain amount of property and sufficient rationality to recognize his interests and to govern his family (Sevenhuijsen 1993: 167). New biological arguments were used to reinforce the view that women "naturally" occupied a position different from men in relation to the nation state in virtue of their reproductive capacities which prepared them for their roles as mothers and helpmates in the domestic sphere (Comaroff and Comaroff 1991: 107). The nineteenth century scientific gaze reconfirmed in new ways "conventional wisdom" about women and converged with middle and upper class concerns to distinguish the female/domestic sphere from the male/public sphere, which was commonly held to be essential to the maintenance of virtue, progress and stability (Stoler 1996).

Throughout the colonial period and following independence, female sexuality in the dominant Andean white-*mestizo* society was closely tied to notions of family honour which was in turn tied to social class and the transmission of property (Gill 1993: 74). In spite of their crucial role in preserving class privilege, bourgeois women were placed in a precarious position within the "imagined community" of Ecuadorian citizens. Women's limited participation in political and economic institutions, the purported need for patriarchal supervision due to the "frailty of their own sex", and the continued importance of religious and cultural icons of femininity which symbolized saintly, self-sacrificing devotion and piety, are indicative of the persistence of a gender hierarchies that existed within elite classes as well as throughout national society at that time (see Pratt 1990: 51).

In Ecuador, as elsewhere in Latin America women inhabitants of newly emerging modern nations were not imagined as intrinsically possessing the rights of male citizens (cf. M. Moscoso 1996; G. Moscoso 1996; Goetschel 1996; Montúfar 1996). Women's value to "the nation" was specifically attached to, and implicitly conditional on, their reproductive capacity. Pratt states that as "mothers of the nation", women are precariously other to the nation and for this reason they are imagined as "dependent rather than sovereign" (Pratt 1990: 51).

The Women of Manabí

When we look at Manabí society in 1912 as represented in the album, we can see areas of social life in which gender division and hierarchy were actively reproduced by actors of the period. In this visual representation of Manabí's illustrious male and female citizens, their respective spheres of social activity and roles are clearly marked by gender. The *Album de la Provincia de Manabí* provides one arena in which to analyze women's own self presentation in photographs, as well as the ways in which photographs of women were used to construct a very selective vision of the coastal province of

Manabí by the editors of the album. In spite of an official national political ideology proclaiming the equality of all citizens, this iconography of Manabí "society" reveals the distinct social locations deemed appropriate for male and female citizens. In the visual images of the album women are represented as crucial to civil society not as participatory citizens in the public sphere, but rather as properly educated and beautiful companions for Manabí's illustrious male citizens.

The association between women and flowers is a central theme in el Album de la Provincia de Manabí. In the photograph entitled "Pensil de Manabí", (Bouquet of Manabí), we find women posed as beautiful subjects of the male gaze in ways that echo the representation of women in the photograph entitled "Flowers of Guayas" found in the Chicago exhibition catalogue (figure 7). In this collage of photographs, the individual portraits of young women are framed by borders made up of tiny roses. From the photographs alone, it is clear that these young women, dressed in European fashions, are members of the dominant *mestizo* culture and from families of the middle and upper classes. As in the Chicago catalogue, feminine "beauty" itself is equated with women of a particular class position and ethnic identity.

In the collage some of the young women coquettishly engage the gaze of the viewer. As the title suggests, the collection of women's photographs form a "bouquet", which evokes a symbolic connection between femininity and the properties of flowers-- fragile, delicate, beautiful, and part of nature. There is also a link between the decorative function of both flowers and women. The feminine role of providing some kind of pleasing visual display for the (male) viewer is emphasized by calling the collection of portraits a bouquet.

In another photograph, a group of young women pose for the camera as members of an *estudiantina*, or student musical group (see figure 8). One of the central reforms introduced by the

liberals was to establish a national secular education system and many of the schools which were created followed European and North American models of education. In 1905 the National Conservatory of Music and the School of Fine Arts in Guayaquil began to offer special courses to female students (Goetschel 1996: 77). The curriculum for young women was specifically designed to be "related to their sex". Subjects of instruction included the art of female adornment, sewing, needlepoint, French, art, and drawing, all of which were subjects considered suitable for the "beautiful sex" (Goetschel 1996: 68-69).

In Europe, music had long been considered an art of the emotions and thus "feminine". The study of music was a subject which was deemed appropriate for female students, and young women were encouraged to develop their talents in this area throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries¹⁷. Lucy Green notes that a main category of instruments deemed appropriate for women to play included instruments of plucked strings which are small, quiet and which enable the performer to play demurely (1997: 59). She also states that women generally played such instruments in domestic settings to accompany the voice, to entertain, and to instruct children. According to Green, the element of display involved in musical performance was seen as an affirmation of the performer's femininity, and proof that she has received an education appropriate to her sex and social standing (1997: 62).

Another set of photographs in the album is entitled "Señoras y señoritas de las familias principales" (Ladies and young women of the principle families) (see figure 9). In the photographs the women are referred to as "señoras and señoritas" of Manabí's principal families. Like the women in the "bouquet", the *señoras* and *señoritas* of the principle families are not individually named. The theme of women's role within the family is elaborated in the photograph entitled "Sr. Javier Castillo y su familia"

(Mr. Javier Castillo and his family) (see figure 10). Although marriage was a unifying institution, it accorded individuals different rights and obligations in accordance with gender and age. The family was a key symbol of social order and could be yoked in political rhetoric that sought to preserve difference, thus undermining the discourse of equality between all citizens which liberals consistently embraced.

Within the lexicon of bourgeois civility, self-control, self-discipline, and self-determination were defining features of bourgeois selves and features which were affirmed in the ideal family milieu (Stoler 1995: 8). The rigid body posture and somber facial expressions among the members of the Castillo family mark the seriousness of the occasion of posing for a formal family portrait. The distance between each family member and their symmetrical positioning mirrors the ideal of mutually exclusive male and female domains within the family, while the facial expressions of all family members convey a sense of self-control associated with bourgeois respectability.

In the album, the women of the upper classes are photographed in spheres of social life which would not place them in a position of compromising their "feminine propriety". In this collection of photographs we can see more clearly how women were active in constructing themselves as custodians of class specific prescriptions for bourgeois respectability. This particular representation of women's ideal social identity is not interpreted here as a stable or all-encompassing form of hegemony which shaped all women's self identities, nor as a definitive social norm against all women's identities and their actions were judged. Rather, what we see in publications such as el Ecuador en Chicago and el Album de la Provincia de Manabí are examples of the ways in which notions of appropriate feminine appearance and social roles are used to construct differences not only between men and women, but to assert a class-specific notion of femininity and hence to establish distance between different classes of

women¹⁸.

The photograph of the *Comité Patriótico Femenil de Chone* (The women's patriotic committee) features the members of Chone's patriotic committee (see figure 11). The members, whose dress, facial expression and pose typify Victorian matronly propriety and restraint, are photographed in a salon where the back wall is graced by the Ecuadorian coat of arms. The salon was considered to be the proper space for "cultured women" to socialize and meet-- it was here that the cultivation of self and civilization were to be achieved (Rossells 1989). We see in the photograph of the male members of the society for "unión y progreso" (union and progress) a contrasting image of men's civic participation (see figure 12).

In *el Album de la Provincia de Manabí* women of the upper classes are photographed as active in civil society but in ways which are extensions of a particular ideal of bourgeois femininity: teachers as "socializers", patriotic committee members as "mothers of the nation" or students, learning a curriculum "appropriate to their sex". Through pose, dress (high necked Victorian fashions), and setting (salon, family portrait, musical group), we find the elaboration of a "respectable" femininity. Christian ideals of modesty and propriety came to be reinscribed in a language of class and were used as a means to further distinguish a uniquely bourgeois identity in opposition to women of the lower classes.

Doris Sommer argues that "nationalist discourse staked out those sexual practices that were nation-building and race-affirming" and marked unproductive eroticism "not only [as] immoral, [but as] unpatriotic" (Sommer 1990: 135). She further argues that members of the bourgeoisie deemed their own normative gender relations, values, sexualities, as "natural" in the attempt to establish their dominance (cultural and economic) vis à vis other classes and ethnic groups in society (ibid). In the

album of Manabí we can see how photography was used to communicate a set of values constructed around masculinity, femininity and a bourgeois social order. When situated historically, we see that this elaboration of femininity is not a "timeless expression" of a general code of femininity, but the product of agency of individuals who participated in the construction of a uniquely bourgeois presentation of self in opposition to social others. Those "social others" whose lives and work were muted in the album, included women who worked on plantations, in the manufacturing industries, and as domestic workers. One photograph in the album, taken of the women hat makers of Montecristi, stands as a reminder of the selective vision of the album's editors and the contradictions contained within the ideological construction of "the Woman of Manabí" (see figure 13).

The album represents a selective vision of the province of Manabí and as such it may be better to consider the album as a record of the aspirations of particular class of individuals. As is the case with the visual images included in *el Ecuador en Chicago*, elements of society which would be considered "threatening" to the author's own vision of a "modern" and "civilized" Manabí are minimized. Pictures of the haciendas, the source of elite wealth in the coast, are typically panoramic shots which show the expansive fields of cocoa plantations from a distance; the campesinos who do figure in the photographs are too distant for the viewer to actually see any details about them. While the undesirable elements of society may be minimized or erased altogether from the visual iconographies members of the elite made of themselves, the image that emerges reveals some of the contradictions and uncertainties of a social order rooted in overlapping systems of inequalities along axes of gender, class and ethnicity/"race".

Part 5

Conclusion

With these other histories of image-making in mind, we can further contextualize our reading of the flowery image of bourgeois femininity which was used by organizers of the Chicago exhibit to present an image of Ecuador as a modern, civilized and progressive nation within the context of the World Columbian Exhibition in Chicago. By adopting European dress and standard poses found in European portraiture, members of Ecuador's coastal elites demonstrated not only their own cultural competence in a context of modernity, but by extension, the political maturity and sophistication of their country as a whole.¹⁹

We see in *el Ecuador en Chicago*, a selective vision of the "nation" constructed by the fair organizers, which emphasized certain aspects of the economy and culture of the coastal region in their depiction of Ecuador as a modern nation-state. Among the markers of modernity and civilized society selected by the editors of the catalogue are the portraits of the "Flowers of Guayas". The prominent display of these portraits within the catalogue is suggestive of the editors' desire to display the cultural sophistication of their country and Ecuadorian citizens with explicit reference to the coastal region.

The context of the world fair adds another dimension of meaning to these images. This iconography of "national identity" was elaborated by economically and politically powerful citizens of a country which was considered to be at the very margins of "civilization" and "modernity" by the economic and political elites of metropolitan centres. At a time when theories of racial hierarchies emerged as tools to legitimate the imperialist ambitions of countries such as the United States and Britain within South American countries, this series of flowery portraits of young women (who conform to a Eurocentric ideal of "beauty") counter the stereotype of the endemic social "disorder" and

chaos of South American republics resulting from the mixture of "races" (hispanic, Indian, black). In the photographs contained in the Chicago exhibition catalogue we find accommodation to these prevailing theories of racial degradation in the selection of visual images which presents an image of Ecuadorian citizens that de-emphasize any evidence of ethnic diversity or social hierarchy within contemporary Ecuadorian society by the simple exclusion of visual images of Ecuadorians who may not conform to the image which organizers wanted to display. Although the fair organizers maintain that part of Ecuador's unique cultural heritage, and what distinguishes "Ecuadorians" from others, is a common link to noble Inca ancestry, this "ethnic" component is translated into a story of mythic origins. As one commentator pointed out, the "Indian" element was "almost imperceptible" in contemporary Ecuadorian society. In this context we can see that the deployment of images of a "white" bourgeois femininity is not innocent or unrelated to the internal dynamics of class and ethnicity which shaped Ecuadorian society at this time.

The "racialized" subtext of this version of bourgeois femininity is brought into focus when we juxtapose the portraits against images of indigenous women constructed under the gaze of the dominant society during this same period. Other feminine images, such as the figure of the young Indian woman representing the nation, sparked controversy among members of the dominant mestizo society. By looking at the debates surrounding the unveiling of the statue of the lion, the liberator and "*la patria*", we can see how image making was contested and politically charged.

In contrast to the image of the Indian girl in the statue, ethnic "type" photographs were less threatening to members of the dominant class precisely because of the de-contextualized and often romanticized images of indigenous people which they contained. Thousands of *cartes-de-visite* of indigenous women photographed as "ethnic" types were produced and circulated both within Ecuador

and in Europe and North America during this time. As a genre of photography, the "ethnic type" isolates the subject of the photograph, suppressing context and the subject's individuality. The line between object of cultural fascination and scientific specimen is not always clearly drawn in this type of photography. In spite of the popularity of the *cartes-de-visite* featuring indigenous subjects and the aesthetic prestige accorded to *costumbrista* representations of local indigenous customs, these artistic movements and aesthetic valorations of "the Indian" as examples of Ecuadorian national "culture" and "identity" did not precipitate significant changes in the relations of ethnic domination and economic exploitation which shaped relations between members of the dominant society and indigenous populations at the turn of the century.

By highlighting contradictions and ambiguities in the ways in which women are represented within national iconographies, I have attempted to demonstrate some of the relations of power which animate particular images of the nation. When considered in context, these photographs enable us to see the different locations accorded individuals in relation to the nation state, in virtue of subjects' "ethnic identity" and class and gender specific criteria. During the liberal period, members of the Ecuadorian elite drew their own internal frontiers, in spite of the emergence of a new political rhetoric which proclaimed autonomy, freedom and dignity for all citizens. Although a uniquely "bourgeois feminine self" was celebrated both in local and national iconographies constructed by male members of the elite classes, we can see how this image is constructed in ways that do not trespass on the gender-specific privileges of Ecuador's propertied male citizens. Women are represented as symbols of elite privilege and custodians of bourgeois respectability. In the album of Manabí, women's roles as socializers and virtuous women within the patriarchal family are emphasized-- it is in these capacities that women were constructed as integral to the building of a truly "civilized" national society.

capacities that women were constructed as integral to the building of a truly "civilized" national society. In many nineteenth century discourses, women were seen as crucial to civil society not as participatory citizens in the public sphere, but as "guardian angels" of the domestic sphere, entrusted with the responsibility of raising and educating future generations of citizens. Women's role within the nation state was seen as providing the "natural and moral foundations" for civil life (Stoler 1995: 131-132).

Although their presentation of self, communicated through dress, posture and facial expression, locates "the women Manabí" as bearers of class privilege, the anonymity of these "flowers" and their apparent "decorative" function within the context of the album speaks to further contradictions within liberal rhetoric of citizenship. In the context of the album of Manabí, portraits of young women are offered to the viewer as the alluring objects for a voyeuristic male gaze, and not necessarily as citizen-subjects themselves. The visual association between women and flowers evokes an image of women as beautiful yet fragile creatures, and in this way their identity is located in opposition to ideals of (male) citizens, and outside the "masculine" world of political and economic power.

In other contexts, anthropologists and other researchers argue that during the late nineteenth century women were commonly represented as precariously "other" to the nation in so far as their citizenship was defined by their marital links to male citizens and they were valued for their biological capacity to produce future citizens (cf. Pratt 1990; Sevenhuijsen 1992). Anthropologists who study the gender politics involved in the building of nation states converge on similar observations including the fact that female members of the dominant classes experience the cleavages of racial dominance and internal social distinctions very differently than men precisely because of their own economically privileged, yet ambiguous position, given their social subordination to men of their own class (cf. Stoler 1989; C. Smith 1995; Stolcke 1991).

In her discussion of women in nation states, Irene Silverblatt notes that one of the challenges for ethnohistorians lies in "capturing the historical consequences of the overlapping and opposing social relations constituting men and women in states, the intricacies of women's potentialities in states at particular times and places and in heeding the contradictory positions with which cross-cutting political and economic forces imbues them" (Silverblatt 1991: 164). By juxtaposing narrative and visual images of women from this period, we are able to see more clearly the different ways in which women's identities were constructed during a particular historical moment within dominant discourse and by members of the dominant society. In spite of an increasingly inclusive rhetoric of universal citizenship and the liberal call to dismantle systems of exploitation symbolized by the hacienda and the historic powers of the Catholic church, the visual iconographies of women of different class positions and ethnic identities invite us to critically assess the official discourse of *progresismo* and liberalism in Ecuador at the turn of the century. The narrowness of the *progresista* national vision, rooted in the desire of (male) coastal elites to promote their own interests as economic and cultural innovators, reflects a particular historical moment when an increasingly powerful group of individuals within the dominant class attempt to assert their own vision of a modern Ecuador.

The photographs presented here provide a starting point for analyzing the different strategies used by individuals to represent themselves and to represent Others in the process of nation building. The representations of women's identities contained in these images are inextricably linked to the historical realities of domination which structured relations between subordinate and dominant classes within Ecuadorian society at the turn of the century. My purpose has been not only to juxtapose different kinds of images in order to highlight the distinct "discursive" and social locations occupied by women of different ethnic identities and class positions at the turn of the century. My purpose also has

been to provide a context, however partial, within which to analyze the image-making practices of members the elite classes during the *progresista* and liberal periods. This was a time when many areas of the country were undergoing major social, economic and political transformations, shaped by divergent local interests and Ecuador's increasing incorporation into international economic systems. Photography was one medium in which individuals invented (or reinvented) their identities in accordance with historically-specific beliefs about who they were and their place in society. At this time, photography was also used in the project of constructing myths of the Other—we see this most clearly in the genre of “ethnic” and “racial” type photography. Although an emergent ideology of *mestizaje* drew on certain romanticized and mythologized images of indigenous peoples as signifiers of a national Ecuadorian identity, the resulting images of a “collective” identity are inevitably contradictory when read within the historical context of continued relations of domination between members of the dominant society and indigenous peoples. By looking at how unevenly women of different ethnic and class identities were incorporated into images of “the Nation”, we can begin to see more clearly the contradictions and tensions inherent in the project of forging a collective national identity within a society structured by deep social inequalities.

Endnotes

1. See also Ann Stoler for a discussion of the ways in which state authority has been structured in gendered terms in the context of colonial southeast Asia (1989).
2. For further discussion of women's subordination in relation to men within the dominant society in Ecuador during this period see M. Moscoso (ed) Y el Amor no Era Todo... (1996).
3. There is a growing interest in using photographs as documents in ethnohistorical research (see, for example, Poole 1997; Edwards 1990; Scherer 1990; Geffroy 1990).
4. The social and political history of the Amazon lowlands of Ecuador is, in many ways, distinct from the histories of the sierra and coastal regions. The focus of this essay is limited to questions of Ecuadorian national identity as it was constructed in visual and narrative forms in the coastal and highland regions. See Muratorio (1991; 1993) concerning the history of colonial and neo-colonial intervention in the Oriente, as well as the symbolic invention of the noble savage and infidel in dominant representations of the Oriente, and within national iconographies. See also Taylor (1994) and Rival (1994).
5. During the sixteenth century, Spanish colonial legal tenets were designed to classify members of colonial society in the Andes within a caste system based on purportedly "racial" characteristics (Seligmann 1989: 696). The categories of "creole", "*mestizo*", and "Indian" originated in Spanish colonial law which asserted fundamental and inherent differences among people who fell within each of these categories; the privileges accorded to those who were categorized as "creole", "*mestizo*" and "Indian" varied significantly (Nugent 1997: 15). The term "creole" was used to denote the descendants of peninsular Spaniards who were born in the Americas. Positions of economic and political authority and power were reserved for these "white" male elites of Spanish descent. Under colonial law individuals categorized as Indian, *mestizo* (individuals of mixed Spanish/Indian ancestry), and women of all social classes were categorized as "legal minors" (ibid). Any individual who was more than "half-Indian" was legally defined as "Indian" and was thus required to pay tribute to the Spanish Crown (Seligmann 1989: 696). The individuals categorized as "*mestizo*", who belonged neither to a "pure-Indian" nor a "pure-Spanish" caste not only presented thorny problems for colonial bureaucrats but were also viewed pejoratively by "white" creole elites because they threatened the socially constructed distance that colonial authorities attempted to legislate between individuals of European ancestry and individuals of indigenous ancestry (Seligmann 1989: 697). Although interracial mixing blurred biological distinctions between indigenous and non-indigenous populations throughout the colonial period, the landed elite and colonial officials continued to sanction the legal system in which different rights to economic privileges and social prestige were accorded on the basis of "race". It is precisely this history of constructing boundaries and privilege on the basis of "racial" characteristics that progresistas and liberals challenged by appealing to enlightenment liberal political philosophy.
6. For a more thorough discussion of Ecuador's early republican period and *garciánismo*, see Lynch 1986; Hale 1986; Muratorio 1991; Spindler 1987; Cueva 1982.
7. There is a large body of literature concerning the historical significance of world fairs (see

Silverman 1977; Rydell 1984 and 1993; Breckenridge 1989; Bennett 1995; Haddow 1997). Rydell states that by the turn of the century world fairs created an "exhibition culture" which promoted an ever-widening consensus of support for business culture and the culture of material abundance (1993: 15-20). Fairs also presented new mediums of entertainment and opportunities for "vicarious travel in other lands" and had a significant impact on the development of ideas surrounding tourism and leisure (Rydell 1984: 2).

8. Rydell argues that at the time of the Chicago exhibition, U.S. citizens were engaged in their own "search for order", experiencing outbursts of open class warfare and racism as industrialization increased. Rydell suggests that the appeal of the expositions among North American elites lay in the drive to organize experience and to offer fair goers the opportunity to "reaffirm their collective national identity in an updated synthesis of progress and white supremacy" (Rydell 1984: 4).

9. John Tagg observes that in the standard pose of the nineteenth century photographic portrait, the subject reflectively looks away from the camera and towards an unseen object or horizon. Thus the vision of the subject is not contained in the image or constrained in the act of being photographed. Tagg contrasts the subject of the bourgeois portrait to photographs of criminals who appear either in profile or as looking directly at the camera, in which case the subordination of the individual to the photographic process, is made manifest. Such differences also hold for the photographs of "racial types" discussed below (1988: 35-36).

10. Disderi patented a new photographic format in 1854, which he called the *carte de visite*, or "calling card" (Poole 1997: 197). Poole states that the advantages of this photographic format were its small size, ease of manipulation and printing, and the possibilities for mass production (ibid). The middle classes in Europe collected these small portraits in albums and exchanged them among friends as a way to demonstrate the breadth and quality of their circle of acquaintances. According to Poole, *cartes de visite* penetrated the very heart of nineteenth century bourgeois culture and stood as visible iconic traces of social relationships (1997: 109). In Paris the popularity of the *carte de visite* reached a high point in the 1860's while the popular pursuit of trading and collecting miniature portraits gained momentum in South America throughout the late nineteenth century.

11. See Muratorio (1993) and (1994b) for a discussion of the specific images of "the Indian" incorporated into the display at the Ecuadorian pavillion at the World's Columbian Exhibition in Chicago.

12. A common theme in mid-nineteenth century paintings in Europe is the image of the peasant as "a man with his own customs and traditions, all of which were different from those of the civilized' urban man, but which comprised his culture nonetheless" (Brettell and Brettell 1983: 62). Thus the peasant, while distant from the modern, civilized world of the city, was nonetheless transformed into a symbol of the "culture" belonging to civilized urban-dwellers.

13. Ethnic type *cartes de visite*, as a genre of photography, are distinct from the portrait-style *cartes de visite* discussed above. Whereas members of the upper and middle classes frequently commissioned portraits of themselves for their own consumption, the ethnic type *cartes de visite*

were produced to meet the demand for exotic images of Others within the dominant society in Ecuador and in Europe and North America as well. Many *cartes de visite* of ethnic types were sold as postcards for tourists in the Andes and these included romanticized images of highland indigenous peasants which were also sold in Europe. McElroy points out that in Peru during the second half of the nineteenth century, "*tips de antaño*" ("types of yesteryear") became a common inspiration for photographic images. He states that "type images" frequently represented the interaction of the two often conflicting strains within the culture—national heritage and international fashion" (McElroy 1985: 28).

14. See Beatriz Rossells (1989) for a discussion of the symbolic construction of woman in romantic poetry as the object of men's adoration in nineteenth century Bolivia.

15. See Montúfar (1996) and Goetschel (1996) for further discussion of the "double standard" with respect to the enforcement of moral regulation among men and women in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Ecuador.

16. Carole Pateman explains these contradictions in liberal social contract theories by arguing that the 'social contract' or the free covenanting of rational beings that gives birth to civil society, is predicated on a prior 'sexual contract' in the form of marriage which, by institutionalizing the 'natural' unfreedom of women, deprives them of access to the political sphere (1988: 3-18).

17. Parisian bourgeois culture and fashion were highly influential among elites of Andean countries throughout the nineteenth century. Many members of the bourgeoisie travelled to France, wore French fashions and read French novels (see Rossells 1989; Poole 1997).

18. This specific ideological construction of "femininity" must be considered in historical context, as social prescriptions for women differed between classes. Furthermore, Catholic gender ideologies were understood and used very differently within different sectors of Ecuadorian society. For a discussion of the interpretation of Catholic gender imagery among the Napo Quichua women of the Oriente see Muratorio (1995).

19. For a comparison of European portraits, see (Green-Lewis 1996).

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Appendix 1.





FLORES DEL GUAYAS.

figure 2



General Juan José Flores.
Dn. Vicente Ramón Roca.
Dr. Gabriel García Moreno.
G'ral Ignacio de Veintemilla.

Dn. Diego Noboa.
Dn. Jerónimo Carrión.
Dr. José Ma P. Caamaño.

G'ral José Ma Urvina.
Dr. Javier Espinosa.
Dr. Antonio Flores.

Dn. Vicente Rocafuerte.
G'ral Francisco Robles.
Dr. Antonio Borrero.
Dr. Luis Cordero.

figure 3



23
"India de La
Magdalena"
Pichincha, 1870
Fotógrafo: Vargas

figure 4.

28
"India de Sangolquí"
Pichincha, 1870
Fotógrafo: Vargas

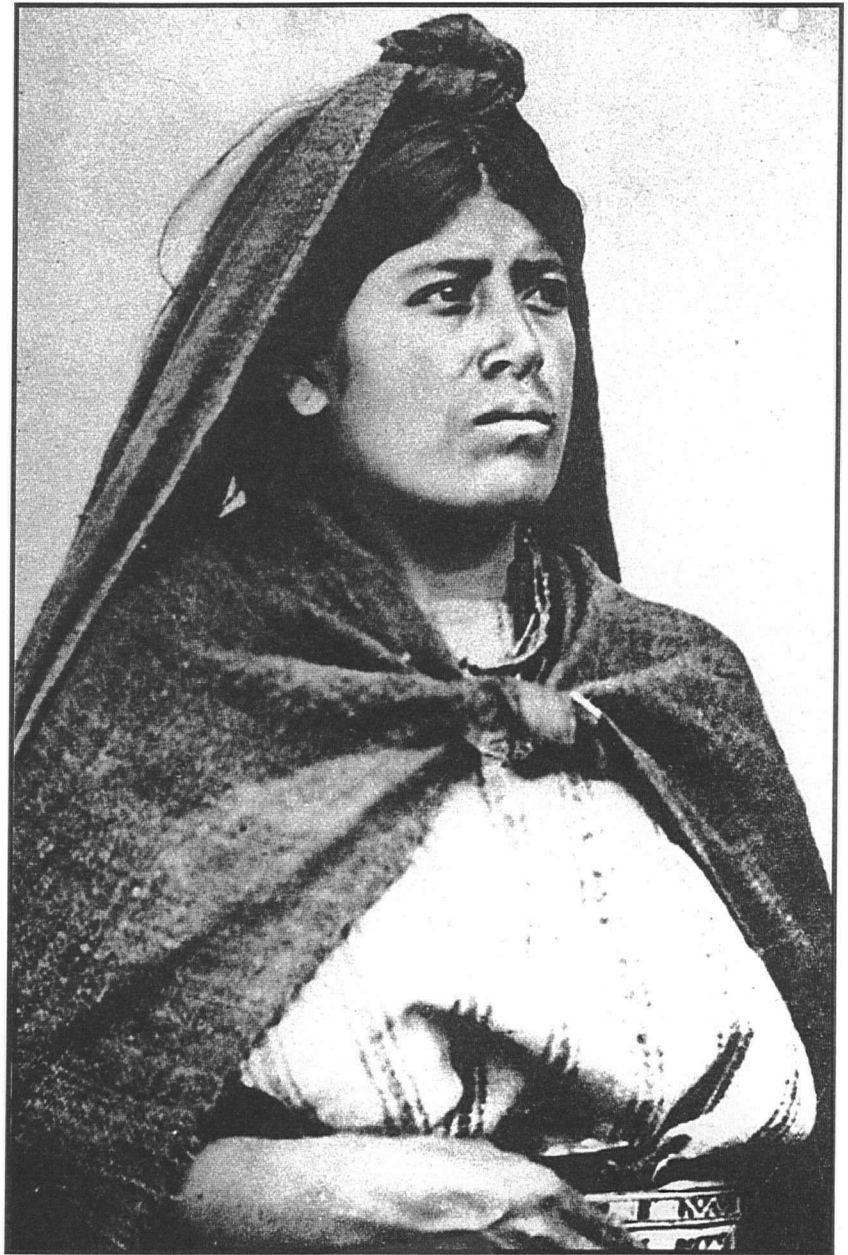
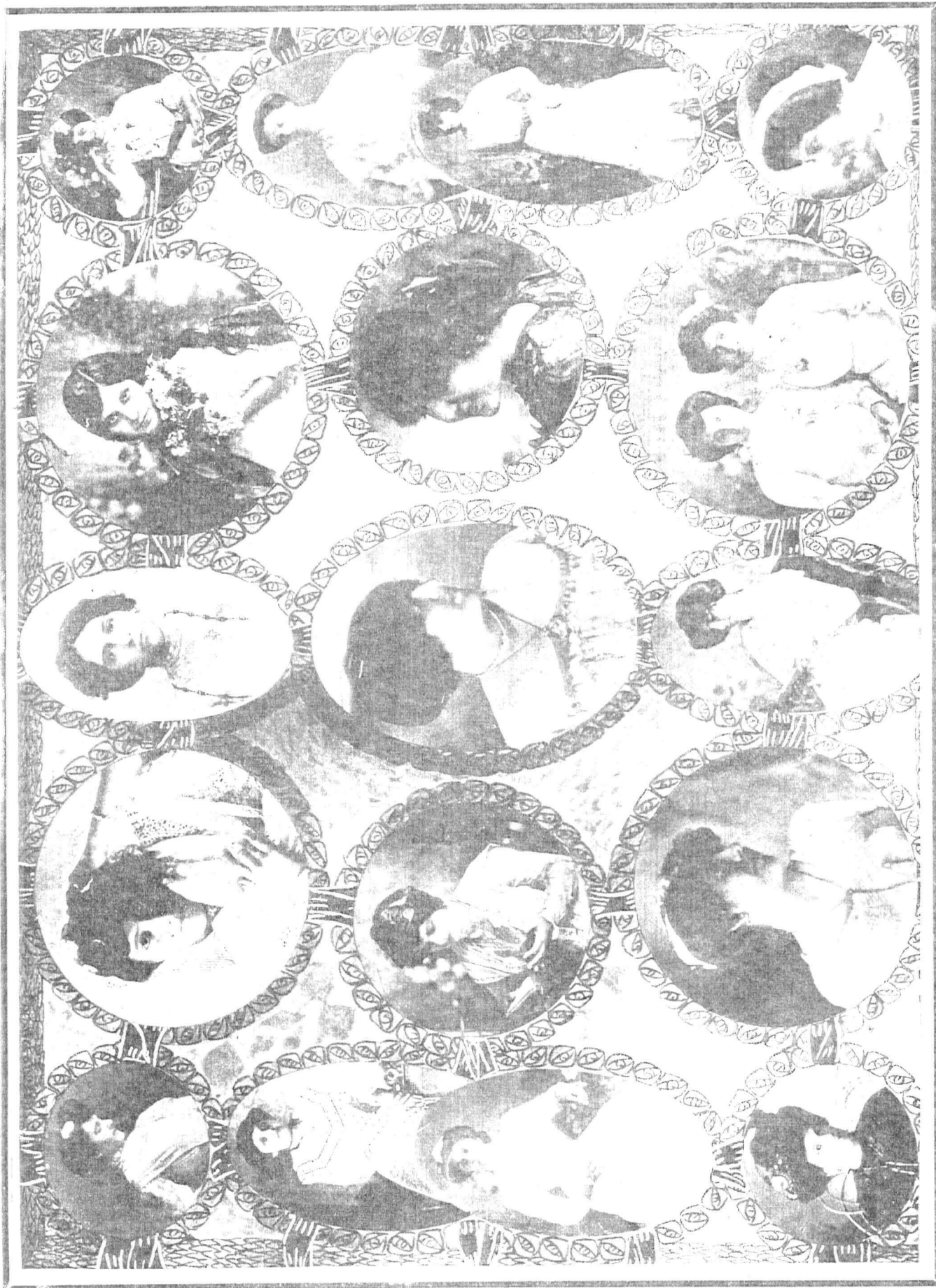


figure 5



figure 6

27
 Para una tipología humana
 ca. 1890
 Fotógrafo no identificado



Pensil de Manabi.

figure 7

Publicado por J. M. Bosch y Galdames.

Exhibidos en el Museo de Historia de E. Rodriguez.



figure 11



figure 8

res de Artes Gráficas de E. Rodenas.

Fotografía de José Menéndez.

Comité Patriótico Femenil de Chone.
 76
 Estudiantina formada por señoritas de Chone.

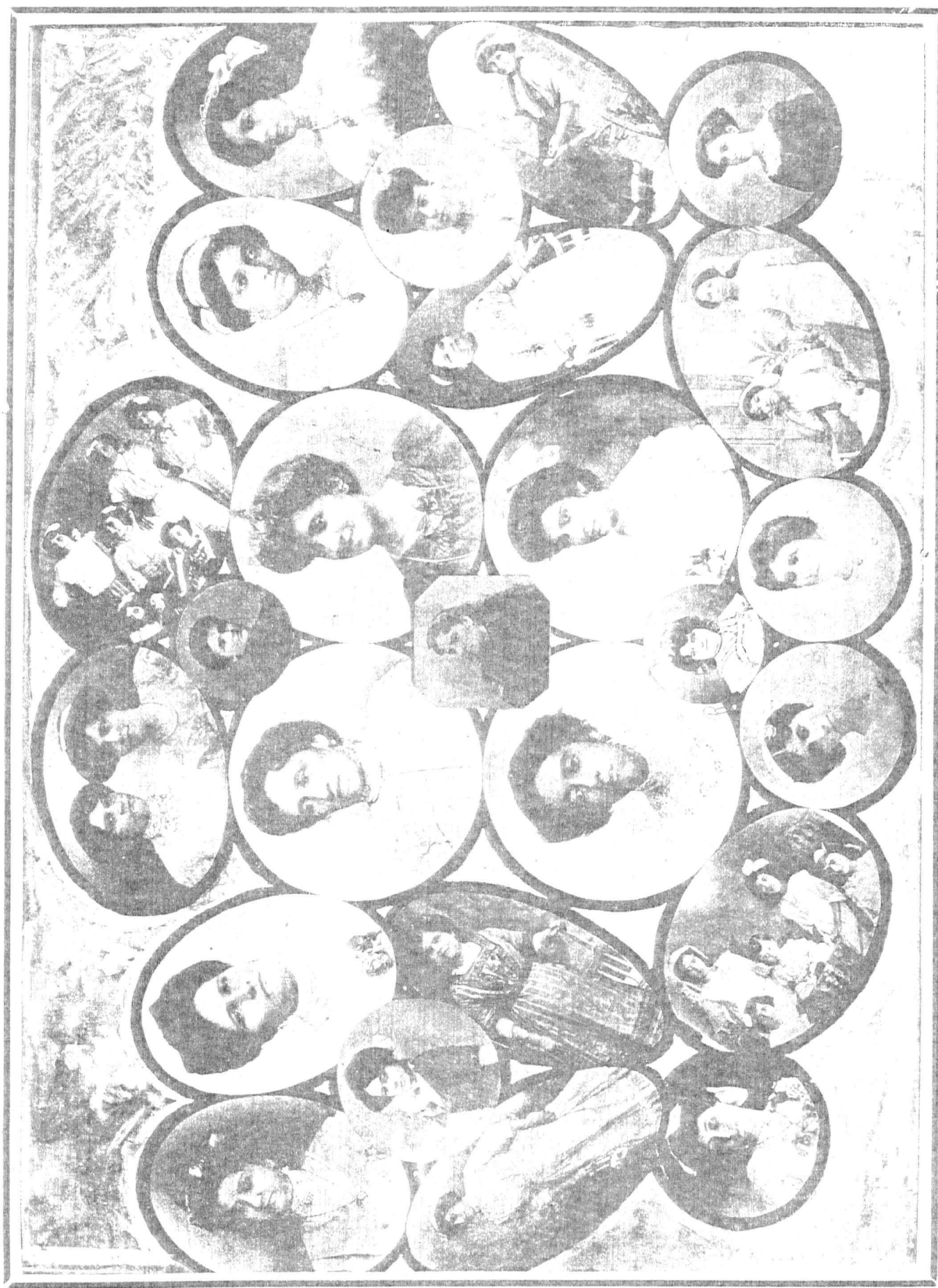


figure 9

Señoras y Señoritas de las principales familias de Manabí.

Fuente: de Armas y Armas de E. Rodenas.



figure 10

es de Artes Gráficas de E. Rodenas.

Fotografía de E. Jacobo AVILES D.

Jipijapa.—Un Pic-Nic, en la "Virginia",
Quinta del Sr. Gonzalo Lourido.

Cavo.—Sr. Francisco Javier Castillo y su familia.



figure 12

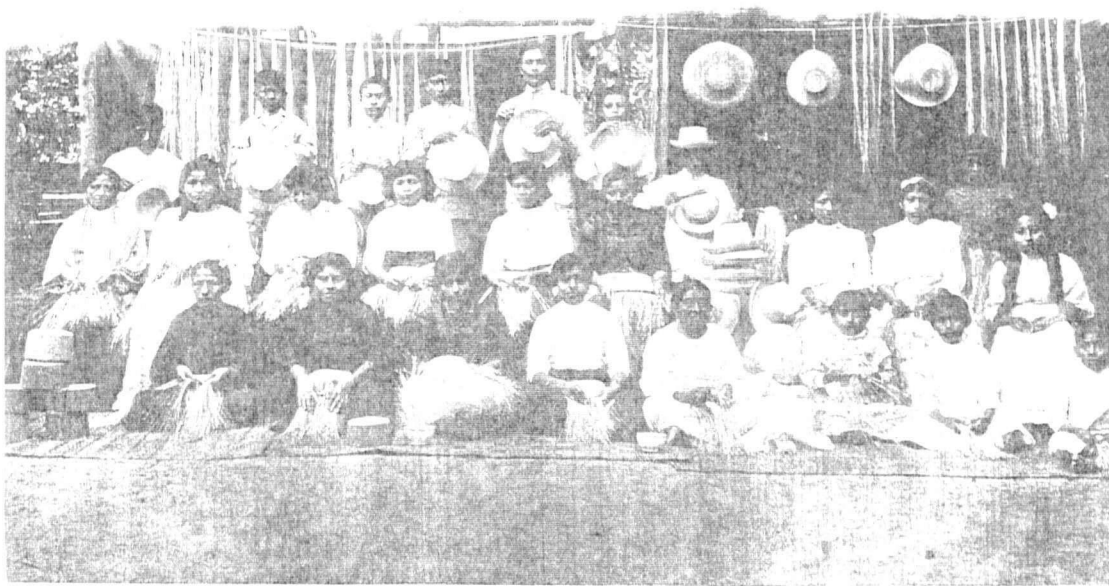


figure 13

Talleres de Artes Gráficas de E. Rodenas.

Fotografía L. Jacobo Avilés G.

Salón de lectura de la Sociedad "Unión y Progreso".
Industria de sombreros de paja toquilla.