SEEKING BUEN VIVIR: RE-IMAGINING LIVELIHOODS IN THE SHIFTING POLITICAL ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE OF CANGAHUA, ECUADOR

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ABSTRACT

Malena Rousseau: Seeking Buen Vivir: Re-imagining Livelihoods in the Shifting Political Economic Landscape of Cangahua, Ecuador (Under the direction of Rudi Colloredo-Mansfeld)

In 2008 the constitution of Ecuador was rewritten by its new president—Rafael Correa—to make buen vivir, or good living, the framework from which the government operated. The new constitution resulted in a national plan for good living/living well, El Plan Nacional de Buen Vivir, based on the Andean indigenous cosmovision of sumak kawsay, or living well. This plan is an ambitious attempt to improve quality of life in the nation by improving the accessibility and breadth of government-sponsored social programs dedicated to improving the livelihoods of Ecuador’s marginalized populations. At the same time, the structure and culture of historically marginalized communities in Ecuador are rapidly changing as their local economies increasingly engage with the global marketplace. My dissertation research examines how residents of Cangahua, a rural impoverished parish located an hour north of Quito, pursue lives of buen vivir while maintaining a resilient local culture despite limited prospects for economic prosperity and increased immersion in the global economy. I use a combination of interviews with parish residents and stakeholders, a household survey of 126 heads of household, and participant observation to examine how buen vivir programs and ideology promote wellbeing in the everyday lives of Cangahua residents. Despite challenges to living well, Cangahua residents have developed and maintained several avenues of collective resilience to create wellbeing and protect themselves from the uncertainties of the shifting environment. This research contributes to buen vivir literature by investigating the on-the-ground effects of buen vivir policy.
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Sunday afternoon is a popular time for residents of the most distant villages of Cangahua, a rural parish in the northern Andes of Ecuador, to travel to the barrio central to complete their grocery shopping. The barrio central—also named Cangahua—is the seat of the parish government and the largest town in the parish of Cangahua. There are no supermarkets in the parish but in the barrio central there are several bodegas that sell nonperishable foodstuffs and dairy products, a produce store, a “butcher” that sells cheap cuts of meat purchased from markets outside of the parish, and a bakery. Cangahua residents who live in the upper altitudes of the parish or in communities adjacent to the barrio central usually purchase their food at these shops to preclude a much longer and more expensive trip to the supermarkets of the nearby city of Cayambe. Over 94% of the parish residents live outside of the barrio central, which can result in a roundtrip trek of 26 to over 60 kilometers between their villages in Cangahua Parish and the city of Cayambe (INEC 2010).

One Sunday afternoon I was passing time by conversing with the customers who came to the bodega inside the home of my host family in the barrio central. As is typical for those who live in the most rural reaches of the parish, the older adults were primarily dressed in the traditional indigenous attire of the Kayambi. Generally, residents under 40 years old wear “western” fashions such as jeans, t-shirts, and sweatshirts. On this particular day a young mother who appeared to be in her mid-twenties came to the shop with her toddler daughter in tow. A mother and child shopping at the bodega is not unusual, however, the attire of the mother and daughter was a causing a murmur of commotion in the store. The young
mother was dressed in slim-fitting blue jeans, a red sweatshirt with the misspelled name of a popular United States clothing brand emblazoned on the chest, and dingy white sneakers. Her waist-length hair flowed loosely down back. Her toddler, on the other hand, was dressed in traditional Kayambi indigenous attire for females. On her feet were black linen espadrilles (*alpargatas*), a fuchsia pleated skirt with colorful embroidery along the hemline, a white blouse with puffy sleeves and embroidered detailing along the neckline, a small black fedora with a fake peacock feather pinned to the black ribbon just above the brim, and a *chalina*—a lightweight wool textile worn as an additional layer over the skirt for warmth. The child’s just beyond shoulder-length hair was gathered into a ponytail that was covered in a gray and blue *cinta*, or woven ribbon that is tightly wrapped along the length of the ponytail.

Adherence to traditional attire in Cangahua is decreasing as the population becomes younger and more engaged with the “global village” (Appadurai 1996). It is not uncommon for parents to dress in the traditional style yet outfit their children in Western attire. This discrepancy in parent-child style of dress is most commonly seen during Sunday shopping in the barrio central and when riding the bus between Cangahua and Cayambe. Young adults, adolescents, and children almost universally wear jeans, sneakers, and sweatshirts outside of school, which requires uniforms, and special occasions for which traditional clothing is expected. It was strikingly out of place for an ostensibly “modern” young woman in Cangahua to dress her daughter in traditional clothing outside of a special occasion where such attire is expected. The consternation among the other customers in the store was palpable because of the discrepancy in the attire of the mother and her daughter. When all of the customers left, a member of my host family remarked “How ugly!” (“¡Que feo!”) regarding how the mother dressed her child. That comment was not directed towards the styling of the toddler’s outfit, but in the perceived audacity of the child’s mother to dress her in traditional attire while she wore jeans. Upon asking why this was unacceptable, I was told
that the reason why it was wrong was hard to explain beyond the fact that parents who choose a Western style for themselves do not use a traditional style for their children as everyday attire. It is just something that is not done.

Conflicts in local ideas about proper and improper expressions of traditional and “modern” behaviors and beliefs are rife in contemporary Cangahua. These conflicts are apparent in many aspects of everyday life in the parish as the mostly indigenous population struggles with rapidly changing patterns of growth and development in Cangahua, which has resulted in new ideas, technology, communication, and institutions that, at times, seem at odds with the traditional expectations of everyday life in the parish. The current model of growth and development in the parish is dependent on floriculture, which is the flower-growing export industry, and President Rafael Correa’s post-neoliberal reforms that are based upon the reimagined indigenous cosmovision1 of sumak kawsay2 (buen vivir), or good living. The commotion in the bodega described in the vignette above was caused by the juxtaposition of the unspoken rules of when and for whom traditional attire is appropriate and the current conflicts in the ideologies, behaviors, and aspirations of Cangahua residents, particularly for young adults and juveniles. Despite conflicts between traditional and contemporary ways of living, the younger generations of Cangahua are simultaneously adapting to contemporary (i.e., globalized) social, political, and economic forces while steadfastly choosing to maintain what they deem to be the most important aspects of local culture and traditions. Consequently, the meanings of Cangahueño/a identity and livelihoods are rapidly changing in part due to the institutionalization of buen vivir as a life goal and as a framework for government programs designed to improve lives by adopting the

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1 Cosmovision is the Spanish interpretation of the German concept of Weltanschauung, or philosophical worldview and cognitive understanding of the world as interpreted by Karl Mannheim (1923) “On the Interpretation of Weltanschauung”.

2 “Buen vivir” is the Spanish translation of the Kichwa phrase “sumak kawsay.” Kichwa is a dialect of the Quechua indigenous language family of South America.
socioeconomic standards of North America and Western Europe. In the following dissertation I further explore the tensions between the traditional and the contemporary in everyday life in Cangahua by focusing on how younger generations adapt their livelihoods, family, health, community, and future aspirations as a part of the 21st century iteration of buen vivir living in Cangahua, Ecuador.

Figure 1. Map of Ecuador

Cangahua Parish

The Development of Cayambe Canton and Cangahua Parish

Cangahua is a rural parish in the canton (county) of Cayambe, which is located in Pichincha province. After an approximately 70km northeastward drive up the Pan-American Highway from Quito, the capital city of Ecuador, you pass through a toll complex announcing that you have arrived in the parroquia, or parish, of San José de Cangahua. As you continue another couple of kilometers you make a sharp right turn at a road marked by an approximately ten foot long by seven foot high white-trimmed brick wall decorated with a
mural of the Cayambe volcano looming in the bright sun, a message of welcome (Bienvenido
a Cayambe), and an announcement that you have arrived at “the middle of the world” (la
mitad del mundo), 0°0” latitude (i.e., the equator). This road, which steadily climbs to almost
3200 meters (1.9 miles) above sea level, travels through the communities that make up
Cangahua Parish as it winds towards the páramo of the Cayambe-Coca Ecological Reserve.

Cangahua is located in the heart of Ecuador’s floriculture, or flower-growing, export
industry. Founded in 1790, Cangahua is the oldest parish in Cayambe and has a rich history
beginning with the pre-Inca Kitu-Kara cultural group (GADPC 2014). These ancestors of the
present-day Kayambi, the primary indigenous group in Cangahua, spent relatively little time
under Inca control due to the arrival of Spanish conquistadors, who defeated the Incas and
divided the lands into private, Roman Catholic, and state-owned haciendas that operated via
compulsory labor from the local indigenous population. These laborers, or huasipungueros,
worked on the haciendas where they were subject to strenuous labor demands, racial
discrimination, and various other abuses in exchange for a small plot of land on which they
lived and tended crops to feed their families (Becker and Tutillo 2009). Throughout the
colonial period the Kayambi staged numerous uprisings against the Spanish patrons and
priests who owned the haciendas, but none were successful in overturning the hacienda
system. The Ecuadorian land reforms of the 1960s and 1970s ultimately led to the demise of
haciendas in Cangahua and elsewhere in the nation (Becker and Tutillo 2005).

The hacienda system transformed the Cangahua-Cayambe area from one of agrarian
isolation into a center of agricultural production for the regional and national markets. The
primary agricultural products produced in Cangahua-Cayambe during the colonial era were
barley, wheat, potatoes, and onions; Pilsner, the national beer of Ecuador, was created and
brewed in the Cayambe region to take advantage of the local grain production (Becker and
Tutillo 2009). In the early 20th century, agricultural production in the region shifted to focus
on livestock. In 1919 Holstein cattle were introduced to the area, which transformed the
canton of Cayambe into Ecuador’s center of dairy production (Becker and Tutillo 2009).
Haciendas expanded their livestock holdings dramatically during this time. By 1940
haciendas were “dedicated primarily or exclusively to dairy production” (Becker and Tutillo:
52). When the hacienda system officially ended following the agrarian reform laws of the
1960s and 1970s, most hacienda lands were redistributed to the ex-huasipungueros. Almost a
decade later, a new system of industrialized agriculture took over many of the former
hacienda lands in Cangahua and further changed the social, economic, and cultural landscape
of the parish.

The first flower plantation was established in 1983 at the Hacienda Guachalá in
Cangahua (Krupa 2005). The development of floriculture in Ecuador was stimulated by the
United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and its Non-Traditional
Agricultural Exports (NTAE) program in 1984 (Korovkin 2005; Sawers 2005). This program
encouraged floriculture as a means of developing and diversifying non-traditional agricultural
products to boost Ecuador’s struggling economy. By 2003 cut flowers were the third largest
Ecuadorian export, with the United States followed by Western Europe and Russia as the
largest consumer markets for Ecuadorian flowers (Sawers 2005). According to the parish
government of Cangahua (GADPC 2014), there are over a dozen small-scale, primarily
family-operated, flower farms and almost a dozen industrial flower plantations that provide
the primary sources of wage labor in Cangahua. Many Cangahua residents work for flower
plantations in nearby Cayambe as well. The Cangahua junta parroquial, or parish
government, views the proliferation of flower plantation employment as both a negative and
a positive for young adults in Cangahua. In the 2014 Plan de Desarrollo y Ordenamiento
Territorial (Development and Land Use Plan), the government of Cangahua described the
flower plantations as “modernizing relations of exploitation of labor” and providing a
“momentary solution” of work for young people³. The report laments that young people in Cangahua turn to work in the plantations rather than pursuing university education.

Ecuador’s Buen Vivir Government

In addition to the local changes that accompanied the growth of flower plantations in Cangahua, the anti-neoliberal national reforms instituted by the current president of Ecuador, Rafael Correa, in 2008 is transforming the social, economic, and cultural aspects of lifestyles and livelihoods in Cangahua. President Correa’s “Citizens Revolution” (La Revolución Ciudadana) sought to improve the lives of all citizens by providing equal access to government institutions and promising the good life for all. President Correa envisioned the Citizens’ Revolution as the creation of a plurinational Ecuador where “the citizens are in

³ The full quote from the report is “Actualmente las haciendas se han convertido en empresas productoras de flores, donde se han modernizado las relaciones de explotación de la mano de obra, convirtiéndose en las primeras actividades económicas que dan empleo, principalmente al sector de la población joven, ante lo cual generado ‘la solución’ momentánea de trabajo, pero consideramos que es una de las causas de conformismo de está población joven, ya que la misma no se dedica a seguir estudios universitarios (GADPC 2014:2).”
charge, not capital. Under President Correa’s direction, the 2008 incarnation of the Ecuador constitution guaranteed all citizens the right to a good life. Consequently, President Correa directed his federal government to create a national plan for good living—El Plan Nacional para el Buen Vivir—based on the indigenous concept of sumak kawsay, the Kichwa term for living well.

However, sumak kawsay/buen vivir as used in the Ecuadorian Kichwa tradition is a multifaceted concept that has several meanings and applications that have no direct English translation. The literal translation of buen vivir into English is “good living,” although several scholars have noted that the traditional meaning of buen vivir is much broader. For example, Radcliffe (2012:241) described buen vivir as a “life of plenty” or a “fulfilled life” while Walsh (2010:16) conceptualized buen vivir as “collective wellbeing.” Gudynas (2011:442) built upon these definitions by noting that sumak kawsay/buen vivir means “a fullness life in a community, together with other persons and Nature.” The Ecuadorian government integrated the above conceptualizations of buen vivir to create a new constitution and society based on rights and entitlements guaranteed to all citizens.

Hidalgo-Capitán et al (2014) conceptualized the Ecuadorian government’s buen vivir policy as an amalgamation of 3 different ideas: 1) 21st century Latin American socialism, 2) an imagined utopia created from a postmodern collage of contributions from “indigenists, campesinos, socialists, ecologists, feminists, pacifists, unionists, liberation theologists, etc. (p.35-36)”, and 3) an indigenous cosmovision of harmony with nature, or sumak kawsay. Buen vivir was written into the latest iteration of the national constitution and operationalized as a series of inalienable rights and goals deemed necessary for ensuring individual fulfillment and collective wellbeing for all citizens, including the natural environment. Rights

guaranteed under the banner of sumak kawsay/buen vivir include: health, shelter, education, food, environment and so on (Gudynas 2011). According to the 2009 National Plan for Buen Vivir, *buen vivir* can be defined as follows:

“The satisfaction of needs, achieving a dignified quality of life and death, to love and be loved, the healthy flourishing of all people, in peace and harmony with nature and the indefinite prolongation of human cultures. Good Living implies having free time for contemplation and emancipation, and freedom, opportunities, capacities, and real potential of individuals to expand and flourish in a way to allow simultaneous achievement of what society, territories, different collective identities and each other—seen as a human universal and in particular at that time—valued as a desirable goal of human life (both material and subjectively without producing any kind of domination to another.)” (El Plan Nacional para el Buen Vivir 2009-2013 English version)

Under this definition the national government created buen vivir initiatives designed to improve the personal welfare of its citizens. In other words, according to Gudynas (2011:443) “…the Ecuadorian approach requires that the economic, political, social, cultural and environmental areas should be arranged to guarantee the sumak kawsay.” With these requirements in mind, all buen vivir initiatives were developed using twelve objectives defined by the government as necessary for improving the lives and wellbeing for the citizens of Ecuador. In total more than 75 articles of the constitution emphasized buen vivir with respect to “water and food, nature, education, health, labour and social security, housing, culture, social communication, science, technology, ancestral knowledge, biodiversity, ecological systems, alternative energy, and individual and collective rights of historically unprotected groups, among other areas (Walsh 2010:18).” Examples of buen vivir initiatives

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5 The national government has a website dedicated to the Plan Nacional de Buen Vivir, its objectives, programming goals, and future plans. http://www.buenvivir.gob.ec
included the addition of populist government programs such as universal healthcare, compulsory basic education, and expanded social services for underserved populations.

Further, the Ecuadorian government promoted its new buen vivir-based policy as a socioeconomic alternative to the neoliberal, capitalist development of the prior 30 years that left the country in socioeconomic despair due to factors such as indebtedness to foreign entities, mismanagement of the natural resources that serve as export income, and drastic fluctuations in the national economy. Instead, buen vivir is a critique of Westernized models of growth and development that rely on unfettered capitalism (Gudynas 2011). According to Gudynas (2011:446), “buen vivir rejects growth as the means of development.” Alternatively, buen vivir as economic policy reimagines development by resisting the incessant drive for economic growth, and instead focusing on post-capitalist economies that mirror European socialism (Gudynas 2012). Further, buen vivir is multidirectional and diverse in that development can be top-down or vice versa. This multidirectional application allows for buen vivir to provide a voice for marginalized communities and nature while allowing for a pluralist existence that seeks to privilege all voices (Gudynas 2012). However, although in theory buen vivir is post-capitalist and post-socialist, in practice buen vivir policy as applied in Ecuador selectively chooses aspects of each (i.e., equal resources and materialism) to assure that rights expressed under buen vivir are met (Gudynas 2011).

Similarly, Radcliffe (2012) argued that buen vivir as imagined by the Ecuadorian government referred to movement away from capitalist and neoliberal principles by uniting economic development and social policy under the guise of improving wellbeing through good living. The government sought to accomplish this task by increasing access to and participation in the national economy by populations historically excluded or subjugated by neoliberalism through the creation of a “plurinational” and “intercultural” society that decentralized power away from the metropoles and augmented the voices and desires of
populations that were historically at the margins of Ecuadorian socioeconomic considerations (Radcliffe 2012). This reorientation of government policy was designed with the end goal of a “socialism of sumak kawsay” (Radcliffe 2012:241) via decolonization, decentralization, and deconcentration of the government (Walsh 2010).

In practice, buen vivir policy focused on increased investment in social programs to uplift the most vulnerable populations in Ecuador. Together the programs would create “a new society based in equality, fraternity, solidarity, complementarity, equal access, participation, social control and responsibility (Walsh 2010:19).” These programs were charged with a Sisyphean task; the government wanted to create a populace that was freed from the social and economic hierarchies that hinder the achievement of the lifestyle that an individual desires. In other words, buen vivir is an ambitious attempt to improve quality of life in the nation by improving individual engagement with the national economy and social programs administered by the national government. The economically and socially vulnerable residents of Cangahua Parish represent a target population for buen vivir initiatives designed to improve livelihoods and quality of life.

**Contemporary Cangahua Demographics**

According to the 2010 national census the population of Cangahua was approximately 16,200 with a projected growth of over 2,000 by 2015. Residents of the parish are spread throughout roughly twenty villages and the barrio central. The proportion of males and females in Cangahua is ostensibly even at 49% and 51%, respectively. Over 84% of residents self-identify as indigenous and about 15% self-identify as mestizo; the remaining 1% include self-identifications as Afro-Ecuadorian or black, montubio, mulatto, and white. About 80% of the indigenous residents claim their ethnic identities as Kayambi, Kitu-Kara, or Kichwa. Many residents in Cangahua do not speak Spanish as their primary or sole language, although Spanish is the language of business and education in the parish. As of the 2010 census, 45%
of the population spoke Kichwa, the indigenous language of highland Ecuador. The number of Kichwa speakers in Cangahua is decreasing, primarily among those under age 30. The parish government views this as disconcerting because it threatens the indigenous heritage of Cangahua (GADPC 2014). The population is young with about 13,500 (83%) under age 45. Most households earn money by selling their livestock and crops to traveling brokers or in local markets; typically items are sold as monetary needs arise rather than as a regular, steady source of income. Almost all of the adults who do not farm their own land work for flower plantations. A handful of families, primarily in the barrio central, operate small businesses within their homes.

Poverty is widespread in the parish, although it is decreasing. INEC, the Ecuadorian census bureau, determined relative percentages of poverty and extreme poverty in Cangahua using an “unmet basic needs,” or Necesidades Básicas Insatisfechas (NBI), index (Feres and Mancebo 2001). This index estimates relative household poverty in circumstances where fiscal status is not the best measure of relative wealth, such as in Cangahua where poverty is endemic. The NBI index is based upon five domains: 1) economic capacity; 2) basic education; 3) raw material construction of the dwelling; 4) access to basic services such as clean water and electricity; and 5) overcrowding in the home. Using the 2010 national census, INEC calculated that 95% of Cangahua households were impoverished and 63.9% were extremely impoverished. Despite these high numbers, poverty in Cangahua fell between 2001 and 2010. Poverty in 2001 was 97.4% and extreme poverty was 82.4%; these are decreases of 2.4% and 18.5%, respectively (GADPC 2014). These statistics suggest that neoliberal policies and Western-style development failed the people of Cangahua. Further, these statistics demonstrate that the people of Cangahua exemplify the types of marginalized communities—based on rural location, wealth or lack thereof, and indigenous ethnicity—that President Rafael Correa’s Citizens’ Revolution and buen vivir government reforms targeted.
with the goal of improving quality of life in the name of personal fulfillment and collective wellbeing.

Research Aims and Methods

I began this study as an investigation of how floriculture affected health and wellbeing in Cangahua Parish. As I continued with my fieldwork, I realized that understanding health, wellbeing, and livelihoods in Cangahua required a broader perspective of life in Cangahua. In order to understand health and wellbeing in the parish it was first necessary to explore how political and socioeconomic pressures create tensions between traditional expectations and globalized desires in the lives and livelihoods of Cangahua residents. I reoriented my focus to households and communities as the foundations of health and wellbeing in Cangahua, which is likewise influenced by economic and political factors such as floriculture and globalization. Consequently, I reimagined my dissertation as a study of how resilience affects health, wellbeing, and livelihoods in Cangahua as the populace struggled with the dual pressures of an increasingly globalized landscape and buen vivir social policy.

My research aims were threefold. First, I explored how the intersection of neoliberal development (i.e.- floriculture and globalization) and post-neoliberal reforms (i.e.- the national plan for buen vivir) affect health, households, and wellbeing in Cangahua. In other words, how do transitional political and socioeconomic institutions—flower plantations, the cash economy, buen vivir programs, and collective action—affect life and livelihoods in Cangahua? The second research aim explored uses of collective resilience as adaptations to political, social, and economic change in Cangahua. The final research aim was to explain what the modes of adaptation and resilience in Cangahua reveal about the population’s aspirations and hope for the future of the parish.
This study provides a contemporary snapshot of life in Cangahua following the rise of floriculture and introduction of neoliberal ideals in the parish at the beginning of the 21st century. Krupa (2005) examined industrial flower plantations as neoliberal “proxies” of the state that perpetuated historical relationships of subjugation and exploitation in Cangahua. My research represents a progression of Krupa’s work in that it explores how the intersection of neoliberalism in the local economy coupled with contemporary post-neoliberal social policies in Ecuador impact livelihoods in Cangahua. Further, there are few in-depth studies of the applications and effects of buen vivir as government policy in the populations for which the programs are targeted. I provide an on-the-ground survey of buen vivir initiatives in Cangahua and examine the extent to which these programs result in tangible outcomes of living well. Finally I provide an interpretation of how people and households think of themselves and their lifestyles when confronted with the conflicting pressures of maintaining tradition and embracing the modern.

Theoretical Orientation

I approach my analyses from a critical medical anthropology (CMA) theoretical framework. Critical medical anthropology arose as a synthesis of critical theory and the political economy of health (PEH), which frames how broad social and economic processes influence social, cultural, and environmental conditions at the local level (Leatherman 2005; Singer et al 1992). Baer (1982) argued that PEH provides a foundation for explaining how localized health and healthcare in the capitalist world system is subject to and influenced by historical, social, economic, and cultural forces. In developing nations such as Ecuador, PEH employs dependency theory to explore how “the development of the advanced capitalist countries is to a considerable degree at the expense of the masses of people in the underdeveloped nations (Baer 1982: 15)”. In other words, the capitalist world system disproportionately affects health in underdeveloped nations by dismantling indigenous
foodways, traditional medicine, and defenses to endemic and newly introduced health problems. Singer et al (1992:100) explained critical medical anthropology as a theoretical lens “to unmask the ways in which suffering, as well as curing, illness behavior, provider-patient interactions, etc., have levels of meaning and cause beyond the narrow confines of immediate experience”. Thus in order to understand the proximate causes of individual behaviors and illness, it is first necessary to understand these problems in the context of increasingly broader levels of political-economic systems and how they influence social relations with respect to health, vulnerability to illness and disease, and constrained life choices.

Over the past two decades critical medical anthropology has evolved into several lines of inquiry, however I focus on three of these topics for my analyses. One of the most prevalent applications of CMA in both academic and popular anthropology is structural violence. Farmer (2003) and Bourgois (1995) have explored the various ways that political economic circumstances affect how marginalized populations navigate constrained life choices. For example, Farmer argued that the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Haiti is not the result of cultural or individual sexual immorality, but a consequence of impoverishment and lack of government infrastructure to prevent desperate individuals from engaging in risky behaviors in exchange for extra income or material goods. Similarly Bourgois (1995) followed Latino crack dealers and users during the 1980s crack epidemic in inner city New York. He used ethnography to illustrate how systemic racism, cyclical poverty, and poorly conceived social welfare programs limit the behavioral options and life choices available to marginalized communities; as a result community members turn to illegal activities to earn quick money and obtain cheap highs to distract them from the misery and suffering in their everyday lives. A second application of CMA uses a feminist approach to examine reproduction and the body in the context of the prevailing political economy, cultural traditions, and medical technology
(e.g., Rivkin-Fish 2013; Roberts 2012). A well-known example of feminist CMA that also applies the CMA of suffering is Scheper-Hughes’s (1992) ethnography of a Brazilian favela where poverty, lack of infrastructure for the poor, and institutional disregard for the health of suffering mothers resulted in a seemingly cruel approach to motherhood that triages infants for favored attention while those deemed weak are allowed to die. However, Scheper-Hughes (1992) demonstrates that these mothers were neither callous nor heartless; they were making strategic decisions for survival given the political, social, and economic limitations of favela life. The third orientation of CMA is concerned with how marginalized populations interact with health policy and health institutions (Singer 2012).

In this study I use critical medical anthropology to examine how political and economic relationships from the mid-20th century to the present impact health and wellbeing in Cangahua. I draw from all three of the above applications of CMA. First, I examine how national and local political economic structures and institutions limit health and wellbeing while simultaneously motivating Cangahueños to adapt to their environment through resilience. In chapters 2 and 3 I employ feminist CMA critiques to examine how political economic pressures to change traditional modes of household composition, reproduction, and family planning are changing livelihoods for younger generations in Cangahua. Finally, I use CMA to analyze health reforms designed to maximize buen vivir for marginalized populations in Ecuador. I broaden my focus beyond concerns of illness and wellbeing to also understand how the movement towards the cash economy and globalized socioeconomic interactions in Cangahua influence culture and social relationships in communities and in the parish as a whole. I employ a critical medical anthropology lens to examine the status of livelihoods and wellbeing among Cangahua residents. From this I will explore how Cangahueños adapt and rebound from conflicting political and economic pressures.
Methods

While conducting fieldwork in Cangahua I lived with a family in the barrio central. The mother operated a bodega in their home and the father owned a small flower farm in a nearby village, but the family was neither rich nor poor by Cangahua standards. I was able to gain access and legitimacy in Cangahua through my host family by creating a social network in the parish via their friends and family members who live in various villages. I was particularly grateful to the male members of my host family who accompanied me to the most traditional villages in Cangahua where the residents are suspicious of outsiders and frown upon unaccompanied young women. I believe that I was, for the most part, well-received in the parish because I was a curiosity. Cangahua residents are used to an influx of American students each summer due to an archaeological field school focused on the Pambamarca ruins in highland Cangahua. I stood out in comparison to the undergraduate field school students because I was comparatively modest and reserved and, unlike the overwhelming majority of the students, I am not white. In that sense I was an oddity because, in the minds of Cangahueños, Americans are white and my existence complicated their stereotypes. Further, I believe that because I am of mixed heritage and do not have the typical phenotypic traits of Afro-Ecuadorians, which are ostensibly identical to the phenotypes of African-Americans in the United States, I was not subject to the overt racism and suspicion that many residents of Cangahua have towards much darker-skinned people.

I conducted fieldwork in Cangahua for almost eleven months from 2012 to 2015. This fieldwork schedule was not ideal but funding limitations necessitated several visits over the course of three years. In July and August 2012 I spent six weeks in Cangahua conducting pilot interviews and observations to assess to feasibility of my research. At that time I also received approval from the parish president to conduct my research, which is a necessary formality in Ecuadorian indigenous communities. From June to August and October to
December 2013 I conducted an in-depth household survey throughout the parish. I also interviewed relevant stakeholders in Cangahua including representatives of the parish government, religious leaders, and healthcare workers. Finally, from January to March 2015 I completed ethnographic interviews with 20 heads of household. I also interviewed and, in some cases, re-interviewed relevant stakeholders including parish government officials, school principals, healthcare workers, and small business owners. All surveys, interviews, and conversations were conducted in Spanish. Some Kichwa words and phrases are common in the local vernacular regardless of the speaker’s primary language; in those cases my male fieldwork escorts assisted me with interpretation, as they were bilingual speakers of Spanish and Kichwa. Otherwise, all translations are my own. Translations of the consent statement, household survey items, and interview guide were verified by an Ecuadorian native Spanish-speaker who is also fluent in English.

The household survey included 126 heads of household via a door-to-door canvas of fifteen communities within the parish. I used purposive sampling in that I walked around the villages and invited those who were already outside to participate. I used this strategy because it is considered poor manners to approach someone’s property without first calling out for permission (¿Se puede?). This sampling method was not a hindrance to finding participants because most households had at least member outside during daylight hours to work in the fields, tend livestock, cook, or wash laundry by hand. After reading an introduction to my research aims and a statement of privacy and ethics as required by the UNC-Chapel Hill Institutional Review Board (UNC IRB Study #12-1387), approximately one-third of the households I approached declined to participate due to unavailability of the head of household, distrust of my intentions, or because they simply did not want to participate. For those who did agree to participate, I read each survey item out loud to each participant and recorded responses on a hard copy of the questionnaire. I used this method
because illiteracy and low literacy are widespread in the parish; 24% of the Cangahua population over age 16 is illiterate (GADPC 2014). Also, many Cangahua residents speak Spanish as a second language and their verbal skills in Spanish are better than their written skills.

The household survey consisted of six sections that took between 15 and 30 minutes to complete. The first section of the survey consisted of demographic and socioeconomic questions that were used in the 2010 Ecuador National Census. The second section included questions concerning financial status and monthly expenses, healthcare access, and health behaviors. These questions were compiled from various government sources, social science research databases, and scholarly publications that were used in similar social science research settings. In the third section I used the Cohen et al. (1983) Perceived Stress Scale to obtain a non-diagnostic measure of perceived psychosocial stress. Typically this scale is conducted twice over several weeks but I only administered it once due to time limitations. For the fourth section I used a hope scale (Abler et al 2016) to explore perceptions of hope and future aspirations. The fifth section consisted of the SF-12v2, which is a non-diagnostic survey of perceived physical health, mental health, and subjective wellbeing (Ware et al 1996). Finally, I presented a picture of a ladder with ten rungs as part of the MacArthur Scale of Subjective Social Status (Adler and Stewart 2007). Participants selected a rung of the ladder to show their perceived socioeconomic position in comparison to their peers; the top rung represented the most privileged and wealthy and the bottom rung represented the poorest and most oppressed. I used the MacArthur ladder to assess subjective social status at both the “community,” as defined by the respondent, and national levels. Prior studies have confirmed the validity and reliability of the Perceived Stress Scale, hope scale, SF-12v2, and MacArthur Ladder in various cultural and international contexts.
During my last phase of fieldwork I conducted in-depth ethnographic interviews with twenty heads of household selected from participants in the household survey. I chose informants by randomly selecting communities and inviting prior survey participants from those communities to be interviewed. I was limited to twenty interviews due to time constraints. The interviews were semi-structured in that I used an interview guide to prompt and guide conversation but I also encouraged informants to speak freely about topics germane to my interests. Topics covered in the interviews included: perceptions of social, cultural and economic change in Cangahua from the informants’ childhoods to the present day; notions of family and community; personal definitions and beliefs regarding health, wellbeing, and buen vivir; opinions of social services and healthcare in Cangahua; perceptions of wealth and poverty; how socioeconomic status affects livelihoods and communities; and aspirations for their and their children’s futures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Cangahua Household Survey Descriptive Statistics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average household size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household size range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous ethnicity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practices religion (i.e., Roman Catholic or Protestant)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can read and write</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No formal education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed secondary school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachillerato</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed post-secondary school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No paid employment outside of the home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farms family land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works for flower plantation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interviews with various key stakeholders in Cangahua focused on topics relevant to the position of the informant. For example, interviews with school officials focused on the
state of education and education policy in Cangahua. I interviewed healthcare workers to evaluate health services, health education, and health status in Cangahua from the perspective of medical professionals. My interviews with government officials focused on gleaning more information about Cangahua history and culture; understanding how parish, cantonal, and national government policies affect life in Cangahua; determining political needs and priorities in the parish; and learning more about the challenges faced by the local government. Interviews with other key informants focused on issues related to their positions in the parish. Finally, throughout my fieldwork I observed and engaged with Cangahua residents by hanging out in popular public spaces, assisting families with daily chores, participating in community events and festivals, and accepting invitations for various social activities.

**Significance**

This research is significant in that it contributes to anthropology and Andean studies in two key ways. First, I apply a new use for the concept of community or collective resilience by arguing that resilience is a means of practicing wellbeing in marginalized populations. I define resilience as collective actions that assert shared identity and traditions while empowering individuals to adapt to current socioeconomic conditions. Through this form of resilience, communities form additional layers of protection against vulnerabilities such as economic uncertainty, the influence of globalization that encourages the dissolution of culture and identity, and an unstable political environment. Second, buen vivir is a relatively new government policy that has been embraced by Ecuador and Bolivia to the point of incorporating buen vivir into the national constitutions of both countries. There is a plethora of research and theoretical papers on buen vivir as a cosmovision and buen vivir as post-neoliberal government policy, however there are few studies of how applications of buen vivir affects lives at the local level. This dissertation examines how and why residents are
choosing (or not) to actively engage with institutions and programs implemented under the banner of buen vivir. I explore how and whether expanded social services, symbolic emblems of buen vivir ideology, and grassroots programs that appeal to indigenous tradition, inspire citizens to embrace buen vivir as defined by national and local governments.

**Limitations**

There were a few notable limitations to this study. As previously mentioned, time and funding constrained various aspects of my fieldwork. Also, the support of my host family was essential for helping me build social networks in the parish, but their support was an occasional hindrance. I was unable to access those with whom my host family were not on good terms and sometimes informants declined to answer my questions because they were worried that others in the community would learn about their personal affairs via my host family. Another limitation was a sense of “research fatigue” in Cangahua, especially in the barrio central and its adjacent communities due to the mini-ethnographies that are required of the archaeology field school students each summer. A few key stakeholders and potential survey participants complained that American students come every year and ask the same questions. Additionally, residents were generally wary of voice recorders. Only the parish president, director of the health clinic in the barrio central, and two interview informants allowed me to record our conversations. Otherwise I took detailed notes during conversations and wrote key quotes and information verbatim but, inevitably, some nuances were lost when reconstructing interviews from my notes.

**Map of Manuscript**

This manuscript details the myriad of ways in which the convergence of encroaching globalization, buen vivir as an indigenous worldview, and buen vivir as government policy have affected life in the parish of Cangahua, Ecuador. Chapter 2 begins by describing the political-economic history of Cangahua from the turn of the twentieth century onward. From
there I detail how the geography of the parish is political in that it influences livelihoods, wellbeing, reputation, and identity in Cangahua. Chapter 3 discusses the current state of family and households in Cangahua. Specifically, I examine family and family planning from the perspective of the Ecuadorian government and the perspective of Cangahueños. I also examine the politics of family in terms of household structure, reproduction, and changing attitudes surrounding what it means to have an ideal family unit in contemporary Cangahua.

In Chapter 4 I consider health and healthcare policies in the era of buen vivir social reforms. I also detail how residents of Cangahua received the new policies that provide free access to biomedical healthcare, which is often in conflict with traditional practices for maintaining good health. Chapter 5 examines Cangahua as a resilient community that uses collective action to assert traditional culture and identity as parish residents simultaneously cope with the changing socioeconomic landscape. I also briefly consider hope and the aspirational horizons of youths in Cangahua. I examine how contemporary young adults struggle with reconciling the desires of their parents to live a traditional Kayambi life as the lure of technology and the global community pulls youths in different aspirational directions.

Finally, I conclude the manuscript in Chapter 6 with an epilogue considering the current state of socioeconomic, political, and environmental challenges facing Ecuador and Cangahua during the six months prior to completing this dissertation manuscript.
As the hoe swung into the soft, rich black volcanic soil I desperately scrambled around on my hands and knees, collecting potatoes before they rolled down the slope into a steep crevice that extended deep into the Andean mountainside. After rushing to pick up the potatoes, I dumped them into a 50 kilogram rice sack that I dragged through the rows of short green leafy plants that grew from the recently sprouted potatoes at the tips of their roots. The septuagenarian woman dressed in traditional Kayambi attire laughed at my ungraceful plodding through the field. She thought it unfathomable that I had gone through my entire life without ever having to crawl around a field to acabar las papas (dig up potatoes). Her son and grandson plowed the plants with wooden-handled hoes while I moved around the slope below them on my hands and knees, helping her daughter-in-law and granddaughters collect the potatoes that fell from the roots as each plant was thrown aside. In four hours we managed to fill three 50 kg bags of potatoes. During the drive back to the barrio central I marveled at how strenuous the work was and how, typically, the elderly woman would dig and gather the potatoes without assistance; she only asked for help on this occasion because she had a cold and was too tired to dig for potatoes.

The above experience of gathering potatoes with my host family in the high-altitude backcountry of Cangahua Parish is an example of how the majority of households in the higher altitudes of present-day Cangahua rely on their small farms for sustenance while remaining at the outskirts of the cash economy. These subsistence farmers earn
money on an as-needed basis by selling their crops and livestock in area markets or to local brokers. On the contrary, families living at the lower altitudes of the parish tend to be wage laborers who support their households by working for industrial flower plantations that grow roses and other varietals for export to the United States, Western Europe, and Russia. Some flower plantation positions are higher skilled and higher wage jobs, but most Cangahua residents are employed in low-skilled manual labor positions. A few families, primarily residing in the barrio central of Cangahua (the town seat of the parish), are shop owners or earn income by working for the parish government—the junta parroquial, as drivers for the local truck taxi cooperative or the Transportes Cangahua bus company, or as temporary day laborers for local construction projects. These jobs are the relatively higher income employment opportunities in the parish; however, these families are still poor by national standards although they are considered relatively wealthy by Cangahua standards. Of the families with members who do have higher salary employment, many also own land in the outer reaches of the parish and either rent the land to extended family or hire tenants to tend crops and livestock for the landowners. A handful of these “middle class” families have pooled their resources to develop small-scale flower-growing operations for international export. Such families are the exception in Cangahua.

These varying socioeconomic landscapes in contemporary Cangahua are the direct consequences of the twentieth century geopolitical history of the parish. At the beginning of the twentieth century Cangahua was the southern agrarian outpost in Cayambe Canton that was known for its dairy and wool production industries. The parish was primarily comprised of one hacienda, Guachalá, which touts itself as the oldest hacienda in Ecuador (Bonifaz 1995). After a series of land reforms in the middle of the twentieth century, the majority of the territory was returned to the indigenous campesinos who were previously bound to the hacienda. The history of Hacienda Guachalá during the past century largely explains how and
why current residents of the parish make a living and think about life in the parish. Not surprisingly, the geopolitical patterns towards work and wellbeing in contemporary Cangahua are directly related to the recent history of Hacienda Guachalá.

Subsistence strategies in Cangahua are changing, although this largely depends on where in the parish a family lives. Subsistence farming is the primary means of work at the higher altitudes of the parish while the lower altitudes are well entrenched in the cash economy and wage labor for sustaining their households. This division in lifestyles and livelihoods at different altitudes of the parish are due to over 150 years of socioeconomic changes in Cangahua as it went from a parish dominated by coerced indigenous labor in the hacienda-huasipungo system to a globalized landscape that plays a crucial role in the transnational cut flower supply chain. The agrarian reforms of the middle twentieth century directly influenced the current socioeconomic geography of Cangahua due to the state prioritization of redistributing land from Church- and State-owned haciendas, which were located at the higher altitudes, to the rightful indigenous owners. The land was not necessarily the most arable in the parish but it was better suited for living a self-subsisting lifestyle than the sloped and rocky terrain of the lower altitudes of Cangahua. Further, the lower altitude lands were primarily property of Hacienda Guachalá and not subject to the same pressures and obligations of redistribution to ex-huasipungueros. The ability of the Bonifaz family, the most recent heirs to Hacienda Guachalá, to maintain national political influence and retain ownership of the prime real estate owned by Guachalá allowed the family to continue its influence over indigenous livelihoods in the lower altitudes of Cangahua with the introduction of floriculture. The following chapter explores the history and patterns of work, modernization, livelihoods in Cangahua Parish and how events of the recent past resulted in divergent identities and lifestyles at different altitudes in the parish.
Hacienda Guachalá and Agrarian Reform in Cangahua

The geographic and socioeconomic distribution of how and why Cangahueños live, work, and view life in contemporary Cangahua Parish is inextricably linked to the history of Hacienda Guachalá. In 1647 the Spanish crown gave the land title for what became Guachalá to Francisco de Villácis (Becker and Tutillo 2009; Bonifaz 1995). In their chapter that details the history of Guachalá, Becker and Tutillo (2009) noted that the original site of the hacienda chapel was placed on top of an Incan temple and the main structures of the estate were built in the immediate vicinity. The hacienda expanded during the 17th and 18th centuries as it became a major producer of wool and exporter of raw materials for textile production in Otavalo. By the early twentieth century Guachalá, as with other estates in Cayambe Canton, became a major dairy producer (see Introduction Chapter). At its peak from 1700-1947, Guachalá covered the majority of Cangahua Parish and over 12,000 hectares (ha) or 120 km², or over 9% of the arable land in Cayambe Canton (Becker and Tutillo 2009). During this period Guachalá became a site of national political importance as it was owned by and associated with presidents and other prominent figures in Ecuador (Becker and Tutillo 2009; Bonifaz 1995).

Guachalá’s rise in importance was influenced by its land area and its large and diverse agricultural and textile productivity. Guachalá managed a higher productive capacity relative to neighboring haciendas because it encompassed a range of altitudes (2500 - 4100 meters above sea level) that form the three primary ecological zones in Cangahua, from the “humid valley” (valle húmedo) to the highest altitudes of the páramo (Ramón Valarezo 1987; Salgado 2012). The breadth of the Guachalá landscape allowed for exploitation of all available arable and grazing lands in order maximize production of barley, maize, onions, wheat, potatoes,

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6 Although Guachalá was the largest hacienda in Cangahua, there were 23 other haciendas in the parish in 1958. Two were owned by the government (Carrera and Pisambilla) and 21 were private holdings (Salgado 2012).
wool, and dairy products. The hacienda lands also included several hectares of unproductive lands at the upper altitude reaches of the páramo (Becker and Tutillo 2009; Salgado 2012). Exploitation of these ecological zones factor heavily in the functioning of Guachalá as an economically productive hacienda after the land reforms of the 1960s. The effects of these land reforms in turn shape the contemporary geopolitical and socioeconomic landscapes of Cangahua Parish.

The recent history of Guachalá and its transitional period in the middle of the twentieth century begins with the Bonifaz family’s control of the hacienda (Becker and Tutillo 2009). Neptalí Bonifaz Ascáubi inherited Guachalá in 1926 and sought to modernize production using the latest technologies including “automobiles and color photographs” (Becker and Tutillo 2009: 174). Bonifaz Ascáubi eventually owned six haciendas in Cangahua: Pambamarca, Guachalá, Chumillos, Perugachi, Josefina, and Quinchucajas (Salgado 2012). He also was vice-president of the National Society of Agriculture (La Sociedad Nacional de Agricultura or SNA), a group of hacienda owners who promoted capitalism and privatization as a method of bringing Ecuador out of poverty (Salgado 2012). The SNA tried to achieve their goals by—unsuccessfully—legislating policies that would bring the indigenous population into the capitalist economy via formal education and destruction of indigenous cultural traditions. Before his death in 1952, Neptali Bonifaz Ascáubi divided his hacienda land holdings amongst his four children. Those lands that were not already haciendas became smaller haciendas around the periphery of Cangahua Parish. The oldest son, Emilio, received lands that became Porotog; daughter Maria received Pitaná in highland Cangahua and part of the main hacienda home; son Luis Ascáubi took lower altitude lands known as La Josefina; and Cristóbal Bonifaz received lower altitude
Pambamarca. According to Becker and Tutillo (2009:176), “This was the beginning of the end of the greatness of hacienda Guachalá.”

The division of Guachalá occurred in the wake of a national economic shift towards multinational capitalism and indigenous uprisings in Cayambe Canton that ultimately led to the demise of the hacienda system of forced and indentured labor in the following decade. The precapitalist hacienda economy was originally devised as a symbol of status and influence rather than economic production and profit (Lyons 2006). This resulted in an unequal distribution of land ownership and inefficient use of land, especially for land with the potential for high productive yields (Zevallos 1989). The national move towards an economy based on agricultural exports during the 1950s necessitated a change in how land was appropriated and used (Becker and Tutillo 2009). Initially the national government tried to

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7 The original Spanish-language text is: “Este fue el comienzo del fin de la extensa hacienda Guachalá.”
circumvent agrarian reform to achieve its economic goals by championing colonial expansion into the Oriente, or Amazon region of Ecuador. Colonization of the Oriente failed due to land conflicts with local indigenous groups and inability to adapt known agricultural practices to the rainforest environment (Becker and Tutillo 2009). Also during the 1950s and early 1960s hacienda laborers were increasingly protesting poor working conditions and violations of their human rights. The indigenous uprisings further precluded the governmental push towards modernization and capitalist expansion of the economy. The final factor pushing Ecuador towards agrarian reform was the Cold War and the United States’ fear of an expanded Soviet sphere of influence in the Americas following the Cuban Revolution during the 1950s (Becker and Tutillo 2009). In 1961 President John F. Kennedy championed the “Alliance for Progress” (Alianza para el Progreso) with Latin American nations to “prevent other ‘disasters’ similar to the Cuban Revolution inside of its sphere of influence” ((Becker and Tutillo 2009:211). The application of this program in Ecuador was due to the US Central Intelligence Agency determining that indigenous uprisings could increase communist sympathies in Ecuador. In response the United States provided financial aid and support to help Ecuador develop agrarian reforms and expand its agricultural production for the international capitalist market.

The Post-Reform Neoliberal Landscape

On July 11, 1964 Ecuador passed the Agrarian Reform and Colonization Law (La Ley de Reforma Agraria y Colonización) and created the Ecuadorian Institute of Agrarian Reform and Colonization (IERAC, el Instituto Ecuatoriano de Reforma Agraria y Colonización), an agency to oversee the reforms, to encourage estates and non-profitable haciendas to transition to capitalist for-profit agriculture (see e.g., Becker and Tutillo 2009; Handelman 1980; Hess 1990; Lyons 2006; Zevallos 1989). The primary purpose of the law was to increase agricultural production by redistributing land among the populace and maximizing the use of
available arable lands in order to expand Ecuador’s participation in transnational agricultural markets (Becker and Tutillo 2009; Hess 1990; Lyall 2010; Zevallos 1989). However, the reform law also led to the destruction of haciendas by requiring dissolution of the huasipungo, concertaje, and yanapero systems of forced and indentured labor for estates by the end of 1965 (Becker and Tutillo 2009; Lyons 2006). The law also required cessation of indebted labor relationships within twelve months. The newly independent peasants were given rights to access to natural resources, receive cash payments for their labor, and earn wages in accordance with national labor laws. These actions were implemented under the pretense of the first article of the 1964 Agrarian Reform Law, which decreed improvement in the “distribution and utilization of the land” as a way to improve agricultural production; however, improving working conditions and peasant livelihoods were not mentioned until the fifth article (Becker and Tutillo 2009: 211).

The 1964 agrarian reforms included several provisions for limiting land hoarding by large estates (latifundias) and increasing land redistribution to peasants in order to create smaller and more productive farms (minifundias), although the implementation of the reforms were characterized by loopholes and unintended consequences. Under the law, latifundias in the sierra were allowed to retain up to 1800 hectares (800 ha for agriculture and 1000 ha for pasture); however, those whose lands were deemed sufficiently exploited were exempt from the limits and adherence to the limits were not enforced (Handelman 1980; Zevallos 1989). Peasants who were indebted laborers to the haciendas were given rights to land titles depending on payment of debts and amount of time worked (Handelman 1980). In other words, peasants had to purchase their land titles, which owners limited to the least desirable land. The average title was for 3.5 hectares and was typically located on steep slopes that were hard to farm and/or in the upper altitudes with lower quality soils (Zevallos 1989). In all, from 1964 to 1970 about 10% of highland families received land titles and IERAC
redistributed 8.5% of lands confiscated from large estates (Becker and Tutillo 2009). However, the new land owners (minifundistas) who previously had “free” access to water, seeds, livestock, and farming equipment as part of the huasipungo system no longer had access to these resources and could not afford the necessary capital investment to create productive minifundias (Becker and Tutillo 2009; Handelman 1980; Zevallos 1989). Local employment was scarce and many families were broken as men left to pursue employment in Quito or in the burgeoning oil industry in the Oriente. In Cangahua, Guachalá reallocated 80% of its lands, which were primarily located on slopes and in the upper altitudes bordering the paramo, to its formerly indebted laborers (Becker and Tutillo 2009). As a result of the reform rural poverty increased while haciendas were able to retain their most productive resources (Becker and Tutillo 2009; Handelman 1980; Zevallos 1989).

In the midst of an oil boom and new military government, Ecuador increased investment in the agriculture industry and passed a new agrarian reform law in October 1973 with the purpose of increasing the role of agriculture in the national economy to bring about “an orderly change in the economic, political, and cultural aspects of the rural structure” (Handelman 1980: 10). The Ecuadorian government had increased agricultural expenditures from 1.4% to 7.5% of total expenditures and was in the midst of encouraging innovation and growth in the agricultural sector (Zevallos 1989). These new reforms sought to increase production for inefficiently exploited lands that were not slated for redistribution. Article 25 of the law allowed the state to confiscate lands deemed “inefficient” in that: 1) less than 80% of the land was used for agriculture or grazing by January 1976; 2) productivity did not exceed a pre-determined government average for the area; or 3) the landowner did not have the infrastructure needed to develop the land for economic production (Zevallos 1989). In a process called “affectation” the government seized these lands and redistributed it to

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8 Unattributed direct quote from the Ecuadorian government.
cooperatives, indigenous organizations, associations and other official groups who were then charged with dividing the land among their constituencies; individuals could not receive land directly from the government (Hess 1990). Similarly, Hess (1990) noted that article 30 led to the process of “reversion,” which required landowners to live on the farm or be subject to seizure by the state. Also, the state threatened confiscation of lands in areas with “great demographic pressure” and for those that did not adhere to labor laws as a part of the reversion decree (Zevallos 1989: 49). In both affectation and reversion the seized lands tended to be located at the highest altitudes and/or had poor soil quality (Handelman 1980; Hess 1990; Zevallos 1989).

In practice, the agrarian reform laws failed to fully reach the goals of widespread land title transfers to peasants and maximized productivity for the over 6.9 million hectares of available arable land outside of the Oriente (Handelman 1980). The 1964 and 1973 agrarian reform laws aimed to redistribute over 1.9 million hectares, which is 27.5% of all agricultural and pastoral land, to 171,000 families in the coast and sierra (Handelman 1980); just under 85,500 families received land titles as result of this reform law. From 1964 to 1970 about 10% of peasant families in the sierra received reallocated lands (Becker and Tutillo 2009). This amounted to redistribution of 5% of the arable land in the sierra (Zevallos 1989). At the same time IERAC confiscated and redistributed 8.5% of land from haciendas greater than 500 hectares (Becker and Tutillo 2009). In all, from 1964 to 1985 only 8% of lands promised for redistribution throughout the country were allocated to almost 100,000 families (Zevallos 1989). This resulted in only about 20% of the peasant class receiving tangible benefits from the agrarian reform laws (Handelman 1980).

Geographies of Agrarian Reform in Cangahua

In Cangahua, Guachalá reallocated about 80% of its unproductive lands due to the land reforms, which resulted in a widespread proliferation of minifundias throughout the
parish (Becker and Tutillo 2009). The subsidiary haciendas of Guachalá that were given to the Bonifaz descendants were also largely redistributed to the former huasipungueros. The subsidiary haciendas at the highest altitudes of Cangahua essentially redistributed all of their landholdings to the local peasants (personal communication, Presidente de Parroquia Cangahua). As in other locations, the haciendas in Cangahua sold land at the highest altitudes, on the steepest slopes, and with the poorest soils. Overall these patterns of land allocation in Cangahua, as in other areas, contributed to an increase in rural poverty and migration into urban areas and the Oriente (Becker and Tutillo 2009; Tutillo 2003; Zevallos 1989).

Geography played a large role in the relative agricultural success of Cangahua during the post-reform era (Becker and Tutillo 2009). According to Salgado (2012) there are four primary ecological zones in Cangahua that are distinguished by altitude and soil characteristics. The valley has an altitude of 2700-2800m and consists of low plains with rich volcanic soil that is best for growing cereals and maize. There are also abundant grasslands for grazing animals such as sheep, cattle, pigs, goats, and horses. The main Guachalá residence, which is now a hotel, and the majority of flower plantations are located in this ecological zone. The cangahua or erosion ecological zone is located at 2800-3300m altitude and is characterized by steep slopes and deep ravines. The clay soil is mixed with the remnants of volcanic sedimentary intrusions, or cangahua. The slopes are difficult to farm due to high levels of erosion. The barrio central of Cangahua Parish is located in this sector. The Suprandina or Transandina Watershed (3300-3600m) is a perennially cold, high altitude region with very moist black volcanic clay that is best for growing tubercles, onions, and cereals. The páramo, which is located at the highest altitudes of the parish, (3600-4225m) lies above the tree line but below the snow line of the Andes. The páramo is a grassy plateau with

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9 Interview conducted with Manuel Maria Ulcuango Farinango on June 24, 2013.
very little shrubbery, cold temperatures, and high rainfall that depletes soil nutrients. The páramo is not conducive to successful subsistence agriculture. Additionally, due to the equatorial location of Cangahua Parish the microclimates within the ecological zones typically remain stable throughout the year. The environmental qualities of the four distinct ecological zones resulted in divergent strategies of land use and exploitation throughout Cangahua, which subsequently led to divergent lifeways at different altitudes in the parish.

Cangahua residents living at the páramo and Suprandina ecological levels tend to remain isolated from the bustle of the barrio central and lower altitude communities. Livelihoods in the páramo usually focus on pastoralism (Salgado 2012). Residents rarely venture to lower altitudes; however, there are opportunities to interact with “outsiders” via the Mojandas company’s tourist buses that run between Cayambe and the páramo village of Oyacachi in the Cayambe-Coca Reserve. The daily buses stop along the way on demand—from either bus riders or páramo residents—as it travels the scant road from the Pan-American Highway that winds upwards and past the highest reaches of Cangahua Parish into the outskirts of Oyacachi Parish. In 1999 Oyacachi turned its hot springs into a tourist destination for fishing, enjoying pools with varying levels of heat, and showcasing indigenous wares and culture¹⁰. The only way to access Oyacachi is from Cayambe via Cangahua. Similarly, the only way to access the Cangahua Suprandina zone is from the road that winds from the Pan-American Highway upwards into the highest altitudes of the parish. Those living in the Suprandina have relatively higher quality soil than the other ecological zones of the parish (Salgado 2012). Thus, the Suprandina region is home the majority of minifundistas who practice subsistence agriculture and live more “traditional” campesino lifestyles (Becker and Tutillo 2009). The modest plots of land cover an average of 2.5 hectares per household (GADPC 2014) although extended family members tend to live in

adjacent homes and share land and crops. According to my interviews with families who live in this part of the parish, households subsist almost entirely on potatoes, maize, and haba, or fava beans. Those who live closest to the paramo also have access to grasslands that are good for pastoralism (Becker and Tutillo 2009). Further, in addition to consuming a more traditional Andean diet, I observed that those living in this ecological zone are more likely to wear traditional attire, speak Kichwa as their primary or only language, and are less likely to venture to the barrio central and beyond outside of holidays and festivals.

Livelihoods in the cangahua and valley ecological zones depend on a mixture of farming and wage labor. In the cangahua zone a large proportion of residents in the barrio central run small businesses from their homes that range from informally selling medicinal herbs to owning an internet cafe or bodega. Students from primary and secondary schools and flower plantation employees returning home in the evenings form the primary consumer base for these businesses. There is also an influx of customers from the more rural areas of the parish on weekends and during festivals located in the central plaza of the barrio central. Those families that do not own small businesses usually earn income from working in the flower plantations located between the barrio central and Cayambe or via temporary labor in construction or other forms of unskilled labor. Similarly, households in the communities adjacent to the barrio central depend on wage labor from at least one household member. Most of these households also have minifundias of less than 1 hectare. However, due to poor soil quality and steep land that is prone to erosion, these plots are not as large or as productive as those in the Suprandina zone. Similarly, households in the valley zone between the current lands of Hacienda Guachalá and the Pan-American Highway depend on wage labor in the adjacent flower plantations for their livelihoods and household agriculture to a lesser extent.
Geography as Economics in Cangahua

Overall, subsistence strategies in Cangahua are changing, although households in the Suprandina and páramo ecological zones are slower to transition to the cash economy. Subsistence farming and cash crop farming are the primary means of work and income generation in the higher altitude communities above the barrio central of Cangahua Parish. Catholic Church-owned haciendas, which were government priorities for land redistribution during the agrarian reforms (Becker and Tutillo 2009; Zevallos 1989), were located at these higher altitudes so the ex-huasipungueros of these haciendas received the bulk of the land slated for minifundización during the 1960s and 1970s (Krupa 2012). Families engaged in subsistence farming tend to grow potatoes as the staple food for their households with onions and habas as cash crops. The farming families living at higher altitudes that I interviewed reported that they rarely eat meat; when they do eat meat they slaughter pigs for fiestas or cull their household supply of guinea pigs (cuy) or chickens, which are kept by almost every family in the parish. Occasionally families will also fish for freshwater trout in the streams that run throughout the mountainsides of Cangahua. Many high altitude families also keep cows, goats, and sheep to sell at the market when they need cash. This type of farming is not lucrative and most families cannot afford transportation to markets in Cayambe, Quito, or Otavalo so they sell their wares at lower prices to brokers who regularly visit the communities. For example, according to an informant in the community of Paccha, market prices for potatoes and onions are about $0.30/lb, small or medium habas earn $0.40-$0.60/lb, and large habas sell for about $1/lb. Pigs, sheep, and goats can be sold for $80-100 each depending on where and when they are sold. Cows sell for around $115-125 although dairy cows fetch higher prices. According to my informants, traveling brokers who visit the communities may offer as much as 50% less than the average market price. In addition to these cash crops and livestock sales, some families are beginning to pool their resources so
they can operate modest rose-growing operations on their land as well. A family in one of the highest altitude communities in Cangahua had a family-owned rose greenhouse that they claimed was of average size for such operations. This family had a modest one hectare greenhouse that was capable of growing 20,000 bunches of roses—one bunch is a dozen stems—per year at the price of approximately $0.55/stem during the busy seasons of Valentine’s Day or Mother’s Day. In slower seasons roses may sell for as little as $0.20-$0.25/stem. However, as with their cash crops, families with such small operations sell their roses at low prices to brokers who then sell for a profit in larger flower markets in nearby Tabacundo or in Quito.

Cangahua families living at lower altitudes below the barrio central were primarily subject to privately owned Hacienda Guachalá during the pre-capitalist era, so they received minimal benefits from government-mandated land redistribution requirements after the agrarian reforms. Also, compared to higher altitude land in Cangahua there was less available land for redistribution to former huasipungueros (Krupa 2012). The Guachalá-owned land in this area that was adequately productive remained in possession of the Bonifaz family (Becker and Tutillo 2009). The unproductive land in this zone was located on steep slopes with high soil erosion, which precluded successful agriculture (Becker and Tutillo 2009; Krupa 2012). Predictably, the peasants who received land titles from Guachalá received lands that were inadequate for intensive agriculture; thus they were unable to subsist solely on agriculture. The lack of arable land compelled families in this area to engage in wage labor and rely on markets for food and other necessities (Becker and Tutillo 2009). However local employment opportunities were lacking and there was not enough available land for families to parcel to their heirs. As a result several households had family members migrate outside of the parish in search of employment.
During the 1980s and 1990s households in the valley and cangahua ecological zones of the parish began depending on the burgeoning floriculture industry as the primary source of wage labor. Bonifaz (1995) claims to be the first landowner in Cangahua-Cayambe to take advantage of flower-growing as Ecuador’s newest non-traditional export (Korovkin 2005; Sawers 2005) by starting a flower plantation on hacienda property in 1983. Soon afterward wealthy private land owners in the area converted their lands to flower plantations or sold land to large corporations that then converted the land into flower plantations. Consequently, those living at the lower altitudes in contemporary Cangahua engaged with the floriculture industry from its inception. Due to early and intensive integration with the capitalist system via the floriculture industry, ways of living and lived experiences changed more dramatically for lower altitude households than higher altitude households in Cangahua. These lower altitude communities became integrated into and dependent upon the cash economy—via floriculture—for survival. The resulting differences in socioeconomic pursuits for low and high altitude households in Cangahua manifests in various ways including differences in livelihoods, lifestyles, language, attire, demeanor, and desires.

Floriculture and Life Below the Barrio Central

The arrival of the flower-growing industry in Cangahua had a significant impact on the lifeways of those living in the lower altitude, cangahua ecological zone of the parish. The establishment of the floriculture industry in the Ecuadorian highlands reflects the intersection of several historical factors. First, the hacienda system of highland Ecuador created a legacy of plantation-style farming operations in which local indigenous laborers worked the land for wealthy outsiders who typically were disconnected from everyday life on the land. Second, a deep recession of the Ecuadorian national economy in the 1980s after the oil boom of the 1970s left the nation indebted to the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (Korovkin 2005). Also during the 1980s, the United States was in the midst of a
crack/cocaine epidemic that depended on Andean coca farmers to grow and smuggle illegal
drugs into the United States (Bourgois 1995). One solution for rescuing the Ecuadorian
economy was to introduce non-traditional agricultural exports as new industries (Korovkin
2005; Sawers 2005). Colombia’s floriculture industry was thriving and, with economic and
technical assistance from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID),
Ecuador sought to mimic the success of its northern neighbor. USAID created the Non-
Traditional Agricultural Exports (NTAE) program in 1984 to assist the Ecuadorian economy
by encouraging the development of new agricultural products for export. Industrial flower
plantations began to pop up in the sierra just north of Quito around Cayambe and, eventually,
to the south in Chimborazo. The central sierra has a climate that is perennially mild due its
high altitude and rainfall is on the lighter side of moderate (GADPC 2014). Cayambe, known
as the “middle of the world” (*mitad del mundo*) because of its location directly on the
equatorial line, has particularly fertile volcanic soil due to its namesake Cayambe Volcano.
Together these factors make Cayambe Canton and Cangahua, a parish within Cayambe, an
ideal location for growing export-quality roses. For example, the equator is the only place in
the world where vegetation grows at a 90 degree angle to the sun (Korovkin 2005); high
altitude moderates temperatures to a perennial spring-like climate despite the equatorial
location; high altitude also extends the period of rose germination and growth, which results
in larger blooms\(^\text{11}\); and the cold nights result in variegated petals that are highly sought in
international markets. Additionally, in an effort to counteract the illegal drug trade from
South America the United States introduced a series of laws that eliminated tariffs and
provided economic incentives for agricultural imports from South America. The 1991 United
States Andean Trade Preference Act (19 U.S.C. §§ 3201-3206) and its 2002 revision, the

\(^{11}\) International Trade Centre (ITC), a joint agency of the World Trade Organization and the United Nations. Ecuador’s flower industry stands out, but faces challenges. *Market Insider*, April 20, 2015,
Andean Trade Promotion and Drug Eradication Act (title XXXI of the Trade Act of 2002, Public Law 107-210) further encouraged the growth of floriculture in the Cayambe-Cangahua region. The South American floriculture industry directly benefitted from these trade incentives and, as a result, from 1987 to 2002 fresh cut flowers went from comprising 0.2% to 9% of all non-petroleum Ecuadorian exports (Sawers 2005). By 2003 cut flowers were the third largest Ecuadorian export after petroleum and bananas, respectively. As a result of these trade policies the United States is now the leading consumer of Ecuadorian fresh cut flowers by accounting for almost $360 million in sales, which accounts for 44% of Ecuador’s flower exports.\(^{12}\)

Since Hacienda Guachalá was the earliest Ecuadorian business to take advantage of the favorable economic policies and convert to floriculture, Cangahua became a focal point of the burgeoning industry (Bonifaz 1995). The floriculture industry quickly expanded so that today the greenhouses in which flowers are grown dot the landscape below the barrio central of Cangahua. Currently there are ten large-scale flower plantations (GADPC 2014) and about a dozen small flower-growing operations located in the lower altitudes of the parish (personal communication, Presidente de la Parroquia Cangahua\(^{13}\)). There are a total of 384 hectares or 1.2% of agricultural land in Cangahua that is dedicated to floriculture for export, exclusive of smaller family-run flower farms in the parish (GADPC 2014). The community of Buena Esperanza, which is located just outside the gates of Hacienda Guachalá, accounts for over 365 hectares of the roses cultivated in Cangahua Parish (GADPC 2014).

The larger flower plantations employ several hundred workers while the smaller operations may be run by as little as two or three people. However, both anecdotally and according to the parish government of Cangahua, flower plantation employment is widely

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\(^{13}\) Interview conducted with Manuel Maria Ulcuango Farinango on June 24, 2013.
available but not ideal employment; additionally, the residents of Cangahua have a dubious perception of the plantations. In its long term development plan the Cangahua parish government laments that floriculture work is only a “momentary” solution for young people and it results in “conformity in the population of young people, now they will not dedicate themselves to university studies (GADPC 2014: 2)”. Almost all of my informants who were flower plantation employees earned minimum wage salaries, as set by the national government, however there were few opportunities for raises. The average work day began around 6am and ended around 4pm with minimal breaks in between. The plantations required intensive physical labor and were widely believed to be the source of poor health in the community. For example, many of my informants in a community located between Buena Esperanza and the barrio central attributed soil and water contamination, skin ailments, and respiratory problems to chemical exposure from the flower plantations. One female informant, age 22, who lived in a community just south of the barrio central reported that employees were not supposed to enter greenhouses for six hours after fumigation but her employer required her to enter after only two hours. She said she now has a chronic cough as a result. A 25 year old female living in the barrio central told me that she is no longer able to work because of pesticide exposure while working at a flower plantation. She showed me scars on her hands that she said were chemical burns from pesticides. As a result of the chemical burns she had limited mobility in her hands, which prevented her from doing household chores. I heard several similar stories of injuries and illnesses attributed to plantation employment while collecting interviews and engaging in casual conversation with people who were interested by my presence in Cangahua. However, despite the drawbacks of floriculture employment my informants overwhelmingly expressed appreciation for the plantations as a source of employment and means of providing “good lives” for their children.
The ubiquity of the flower plantations at the lower altitudes of Cangahua significantly affects life and livelihoods in the parish in several tangible ways regardless of whether a household has a family member employed with the flower plantations. In addition to being a primary source of wage labor, the flower plantations sponsor several public services in the parish that increased the direct and indirect engagement of residents with the flower industry. For example, the plantations help fund parish-wide celebrations, such as the annual Inti Raymi fiesta. The floriculture industry also sponsors special events in the plaza central of Cangahua, construction and maintenance of public facilities including the new building for the parish government, and other social services not provided by the government. Another community investment from the flower plantations is transportation service throughout the parish, even in villages not served by the regular public bus service. Anyone can use the plantation vans (recorridos), which are meant to transport workers between their homes and work, provided that they pay a small fee per ride. Cangahua residents who do not normally benefit from bus services in their communities use the recorridos to travel to the barrio central and Cayambe when otherwise the distance and cost of such trips would prohibit frequent travel away from their homes. School children use the recorridos as transportation to and from school rather than walking several kilometers each way. Also, many of my informants who were current or past plantation workers reported using the on-site healthcare services offered by their employers. A twenty-three year old man from a community just south of the barrio central said he went to the plantation nurses for his healthcare needs because the Cangahua Subcentro, a government-run free clinic, is “not open when I [the informant] need it and you have to wait too long.” The majority of my informants saw these investments as positive although they increase the dependence of the parish and its residents on the flower plantations in order to sustain their livelihoods.
Perhaps the most significant influence of the flower plantations in Cangahua is the acceleration of the modernization process in lower altitude communities. Most plantations are owned by American and Western European corporations that brought capitalist and “modern” ideals and expectations from the North American-Western Europe metropoles into the local workplace culture, which was then passed from employees into their households. The industry attracted foreigners to purchase land for plantations, supervise local employees, and develop new breeds of flowers for the global market. Employment opportunities in floriculture also resulted in migration to Cangahua-Cayambe from other parts of Ecuador. These migrants tended to be 15 to 24 years old and have less education (GADPC 2014), which is the ideal demographic for flower plantation work from the perspective of employers. The influx of new people and ideas in Cangahua led to exposure to “non-local lifestyles,” material goods, entertainment, and leisure activities that disrupt traditional ways of being (Dressler 2011: 125). This led to residents, especially at the lower altitudes of Cangahua, being more immersed in globalized ideals and aspirations because of the direct and indirect effects of working in floriculture and living near plantations.

Another way in which floriculture indirectly led to globalized ideas and desires was by creating a consumer base for new media and technology, which helped introduce new sociocultural epistemologies to Cangahua. Wage labor allowed households to afford luxuries such as prepaid satellite television from DirecTV, cheap bootleg DVDs of American movies dubbed into Spanish, and $0.60 per hour of time at the internet cafes that are seemingly on every corner of the barrio central. Consumption of these globalized forms of communication exposed residents to new ideals and imagined ways of being; it has particularly inspired youth and alienated older adults in Cangahua. Imported desires and ideas from foreign television and movies are evident amongst the local youth. Children wear clothing and have school supplies bearing the images of their favorite Disney characters. A few weeks before
Christmas 2014 a man in his forties lamented to me that, because of toy commercials on channels such as “Disney Junior” and “PBS Kids,” his children want the latest American toys for Christmas. He hated the commercials because it hurt him to know that he could not afford the toys even if it were possible to buy them locally. Also, one Sunday in my host family’s bodega a group of older women in indigenous attire gossiped about their distaste for the mohawk hairstyle of a young man who had just left the store. They felt that his hairstyle represented poor morals because it did not adhere to their perceptions of proper presentation for a young man. Similarly, internet cafes are changing perceptions and behaviors for Cangahua youth. Adolescents are heavy users of the internet cafes and, like their Western counterparts, are avid consumers of social media such as Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter as a way of sharing their lives and learning more about the lives of others in distant locations. However, not all adults in the parish see increased internet usage as a positive. Padre Roberto Nepas, the parish priest of the main Catholic church in Cangahua during my summer 2012 visit to Cangahua, expressed concern about the widespread internet use amongst parish youths. He felt that it exposed them to negative images and encouraged behaviors that were incongruent with the traditional culture and mores of Cangahua.

Prolonged interactions with globalized media and technology have also led to lower altitude residents in Cangahua being considered poorer, which others in the parish consider the source of their reputation for belligerence in comparison to their purportedly docile higher altitude counterparts. The perceived greater poverty of those living in the cangahua ecological zone is due to a lack of arable land, significantly lower agricultural productive capacity, and heavy dependence on wage labor from flower plantations and construction. Most lower altitude households keep small crops of maize, beans, and other cereals for household use but the size and quality of their crops pale in comparison to those at the higher altitudes of Cangahua. The mean plot size is 2.5 hectares, which is deceptively skewed
upwards by large landowners; about 41% of those in the UCICAB\textsuperscript{14} have zero or less than 1 hectare of land (GADPC 2014). Land possession is tied to local perceptions of the temperament of residents at the lower altitudes of Cangahua. Those living at lower altitudes have a reputation of being more hostile to outsiders both within and external to the parish. On more than one occasion residents of the barrio central, Suprandina communities, and even residents of these lower altitude communities themselves described their neighbors as belligerent, or \textit{agresivo}. Being \textit{agresivo} is in contrast to the indigenous stereotype of having a docile, deferential, and modest disposition (Becker and Tutillo 2009). When I asked a young woman in her late teens from San Pedro, the community on the southern border of the barrio central, as to why she referred to her neighbors as \textit{agresivos} she shrugged and suggested it was because outsiders were always trying to exploit their land and labor. On the contrary, when I asked a friend why he called the lower altitude residents \textit{agresivos} he gave a more confident answer. He lived near the high altitude community of Paccha and was sure that the lower altitude residents were belligerent because they did not have productive land that could support their families, which was in contrast to the larger and more productive minifundias in the Suprandina. He \textit{knew} (emphasis added) that the larger and more productive plots in the higher altitudes made its residents happier and more peaceful.

**Economic Perspectives in Cangahua**

The idea that land possession and subsistence farming over wage labor and material wealth as the key to living a better life is reflected in how Cangahua Parish residents think of their relative social standing in comparison to their neighbors. I asked residents to rank

\textsuperscript{14} UCICAB stands for Unión de Comunidades Indígenas de Cangahua Bajo, or Union of Indigenous Communities of Lower Cangahua. According to the UCICAB 32.4% of residents have less than 1 hectare, 21% have 1-3 hectares, 9.2% have 5+ hectares of land, and 8.6% do not own their own land. (GADPC 2014)
themselves in terms of wealth and wellbeing in comparison to others in their “community”15 and in the nation (“in Ecuador”) using the MacArthur Scale of Subjective Social Status (Singh-Manoux et al. 2003). The scale consists of a pictorial representation of a ten rung ladder on which the respondent places themselves at one of the rungs to denote how they perceive their socioeconomic status (SES) in comparison to others. The bottom rung represents the lowest SES and the top rung represents the highest. In my use of the MacArthur Scale, residents of the lower altitude communities consistently placed themselves at the lowest rung in comparison to others in their community and to others in Ecuador. There was more variation in the responses for those living in the higher altitude communities (range= 1 to 5) when comparing themselves to others in their community, although the majority of the high altitude residents still placed themselves at the lowest rung compared to the rest of the community. However, all of the informants regardless of location placed themselves at the lowest rung of the ladder when asked to rank themselves in comparison to others in Ecuador.

I could infer from the results of the “community ladder” MacArthur Scale that having a longer and more intensive exposure to floriculture and external socioeconomic pressures led to a perceived lower social status for those at the lower altitudes of Cangahua parish compared to those at the higher altitudes. According to Singh-Manoux et al. (2003), having a belief of lower positioning in the social order maps on to objective SES. In other words, perceived socioeconomic status tends to parallel actual socioeconomic status. In the case of Cangahua, the widespread perceptions of low socioeconomic status for lower altitude residents suggests that residents are aware of their economic impoverishment—as defined by national standards—but view relative poverty differently when approached from the

15 I directed informants to define community however they saw fit. I did not analyze or interpret the varying definitions of community. When asking informants to define their status in comparison to the nation I specifically directed them to use Ecuador as the definition of nation.
indigenous context of living a fulfilled life from living and working the land. According to
the 2010 National Census of Ecuador (INEC 2010) 95% of Cangahua Parish is impoverished
and 63.9% is “extremely impoverished” according to an “unsatisfied basic needs analysis”
(GADPC 2014). The unsatisfied basic needs index (Necesidades Basicas Insatisfechas or
NBI in Spanish) is often used in Latin America to define poverty in place of a monetary-
based poverty assessment (Hicks 2000). Instead, the NBI used in Cangahua relies on census
data regarding: household economic capacity, education levels, household structure, access to
“basic services” such as electricity and running water, and overcrowding (GADPC 2014). If a
household was lacking in at least two of these factors they were deemed “extremely
impoverished”. These factors allow for more accurate assessments of relative poverty
because the NBI can “serve as a proxy for income; indicate non-monetary aspects of poverty;
or indicate deficiencies in basic service ability (Hicks 2000:104)”. The INEC (2010) results
of the NBI seem paradoxical in Cangahua when compared to my household survey results for
the MacArthur Scale. The NBI data suggests residents at the lower altitudes of Cangahua are
more socioeconomically sound because they are more engaged with the cash economy; tend
to always have cash on hand; are more likely to have “basic services” such as indoor
plumbing and garbage pickup services; and have more access to material goods in
comparison to their higher altitude peers. However, the MacArthur scale results in Cangahua
demonstrated that perceived wealth in Cangahua is not related to money or meeting certain
“basic needs.” Instead Cangahueños view wealth in terms of land possession and household
agricultural productivity. This perception of wealth in Cangahua is based upon an indigenous
definition of wealth based on land possession and productivity. In other words, despite the
encroachment of globalization and globalized ideals, Cangahueños still define wealth using a
traditional indigenous worldview that values land access over material possessions. Using an
indigenous interpretation of wealth likewise accounts for geographic differences in livelihoods and self-perceptions within Cangahua.

The distinction of low altitude residents as more land impoverished in relation to their higher altitude peers, despite no geographic difference in economic impoverishment, results in a negative reputation of living untraditional Kayambi lifestyles. The failed promises of prosperity in the cash economy has withered self-perceptions of wellbeing, wellness, and happiness in the lower altitudes of Cangahua. In my interviews throughout the parish, residents repeatedly identified working and having the ability to work as their source of happiness and wellbeing. However in the lower altitude communities residents lack access to traditional sources of labor—i.e., farmland—so they rely on low wage, high stress jobs in the flower plantations. A 70 year old woman living in a community just below the barrio central lamented that when she was young her parents worked for the hacienda but they had land and food; they were poor but they had work to keep them busy and that was a good thing. In reference to life in her community today she said, “There is no work in the community…Life is sad. We are not happy with anything because we are poor.” A 28 year old man from a neighboring community said that when he was a child “people were natural” and happier but now life has changed because there are not enough jobs, no potable water, nor improvement in how he and his neighbors live. However he still described life in his community as “Bueno!” because he had his family despite material and economic shortcomings. In contrast a 41 year old woman living in a higher altitude community noted that she and her neighbors “…live well, we have everything we need to live.” She did describe herself and her neighbors as poor but said that they had land, animals, and family, which was all they needed to live well. She said that flower plantations were “not good” and led to bad changes after life temporarily improved in Cangahua when the haciendas ended. Other informants from higher altitude communities had descriptions that were in line with this theme. Although these
examples do not necessarily speak for all, they do describe common themes from my formal
interviews and informal interactions with Cangahua residents from throughout the parish.
This commonality suggests that Cangahueños have strong associations with living the
traditional indigenous agrarian lifestyle as an essential component of wealth, wellbeing, and
happiness.

One example of how, in addition to increasingly dire economic conditions, failing to
live a traditional indigenous life results in a lack of wellbeing in Cangahua is the case of
alcohol consumption. According to my informants there is a perceived greater incidence of
alcoholism and laziness amongst the lower altitude residents. This stereotype furthers
geographic differences within the parish while supporting the idea of virtuous indigenous
subsistence in the highlands versus a modernist lifestyle in the lowlands. Traditionally
alcohol consumption had a ritualistic significance in Andean society but economic and social
factors associated with modernity have hampered indigenous attitudes towards
overconsumption of alcohol outside of celebratory occasions (Allen 2009; Butler 2006).
Alcohol overconsumption in Cangahua is discouraged outside of fiestas and celebrations
because it correlates with socioeconomic problems such as increases in domestic violence
against women and children, debt, and low labor production (GADPC 2014). According to
my household survey of the parish there is no empirical geographic difference in regular
alcohol consumption although there is a stereotype that residents of a few particular lower
altitude communities are chumados, or drunks. In reality alcohol consumption among
residents is moderate at best; most adults that I conversed with or observed in social
situations were teetotalers except during fiestas and family celebrations. Adults that regularly
consumed alcohol avoided expensive store bought spirits and instead relied on homemade
beverages such as guarango fermented from local trees of the same name or canelazo, a
fermented drink made from citrus juice, cinnamon, and a type of moonshine called
aguardiente. Therefore alcohol consumption is not cost-prohibitive in Cangahua because consumers prefer drinks that are home brewed. Nevertheless the parish government and the local branch of the national police force are cracking down on alcohol sales in the parish by strengthening oversight of businesses that sell spirits and ensuring adherence to laws governing alcohol sales. This is a self-defeating strategy since most alcohol consumed in the parish is not store bought. However, the perceived pervasiveness of drunkenness and shiftlessness in the lower altitudes persists and foments attitudes of these residents being ill mannered, lazy, and poor—or less indigenous—than their highland peers.

Conclusion

The socioeconomic transformations of Cangahua during the past 150 years continues to progress yet remain hindered by elements of the past. In the words of the authors of the most recent Cangahua Plan for Buen Vivir (GADPC 2014:1), “We are conscious that in the past the lack of planning generated inequitable and unjust development, which enlarged the gaps between rural and urban sectors [in Cangahua]…the previous practice depended on the political patronage system of the authorities of the time, or the ‘godfathers’ who local authorities could have arrange benefits for their land16.” In other words, in the past those with power, the hacendados, created unequal and unjust livelihoods for the indigenous residents of Cangahua in order to suit the needs of the hacendados. The legacy of these inequalities continue to influence life in the parish by creating divisions of rural versus urban (i.e. - the barrio central) and also within these sectors as seen in the differences of rural livelihoods at different altitudes of the parish. The junta parroqial, or parish government, acknowledges this problem and vows to rectify them by declaring “…we see the opportunity to build and to define a development strategy that agrees with civil society, which will enable us to optimize

16 Original text is as follows: “Estamos conscientes que en épocas pasadas la falta de planificación generó un desarrollo inequitativo e injusto, que agrandó las brechas entre el sector rural y urbano, e inclusive dentro del mismo sector rural y urbano, ya que la práctica anterior dependía del clientelismo político de las autoridades de turno, o de los “padrinos” que las autoridades locales podían tener quienes tramitaban obras para sus territorios.”
public investment, through the definition of projects that generate real positive impacts on the economic, environmental, social and cultural development, with the aim of achieving the SUMAK CAUSAY [buen vivir or good living] of our population (GADPC 2014:1). “This optimism for the future is operationalized under local and national efforts to create a better future and continues under the banner of Sumak Kawsay/buen vivir by working towards a guarantee of the good life for all despite the injustices of the past.

17 Original text is as follows” le vemos como la oportunidad para construir y definir una estrategia de desarrollo consensuada con la sociedad civil, que nos permita optimizar la inversión pública, mediante la definición de proyectos que generen verdaderos impactos positivos en lo económico, ambiental, social y cultural, con la finalidad de alcanzar el SUMAK CAUSAY de nuestra población.”
CHAPTER 3: BUEN VIVIR THROUGH FAMILY AND CONTROLLING REPRODUCTION

“What!?” (¿¡En serio!?) I exclaimed as the barrio central’s primary school director told me that it is not uncommon for students as young as twelve years old to become pregnant. I was sure that I misunderstood what he said. He repeated that he has had students as young as twelve become mothers. He said that while twelve was a bit on the young side, most girls in Cangahua fell pregnant prior to finishing secondary school. I was dubious about this information so I went to the barrio central’s secondary school director to ask about teen pregnancy in his school. He was reluctant to discuss adolescent pregnancy statistics for the school but did admit that some of the female students dropped out of school due to pregnancy. I was determined to find out how common adolescent pregnancy was in the parish so I also questioned the people who I knew would be the most forthcoming with information—my host family. They confirmed that it was perfectly normal and acceptable to have children before finishing secondary school. According to my host family, young women in Cangahua have always married and had children while in their teens; adolescent pregnancy was not a big deal to the average Cangahueño. However, the Ecuadorian government has pathologized adolescent pregnancy as a social problem that must be overcome in order to achieve buen vivir. Significantly reducing adolescent pregnancy in Ecuador has become a government priority in the name of creating a buen vivir society in which adolescents—especially young women—can pursue their desired education, job opportunities, and lifestyle choices without the limitations of early parenthood. Strong family ties are crucial for achieving buen vivir as both an indigenous cosmovision and as a government initiative for
good living. Similarly, in Cangahua strong familial bonds are viewed as essential for living well, good health, and socioeconomic prosperity. For example, my informants in Cangahua often cited having family around as a source of happiness and wellbeing while a lack of family support was often named as a cause and symptom of ill health. Family positively influences households in Cangahua by providing extra sources of income and material goods, social support, labor, and community integration and assistance. The traditional family unit in Cangahua is composed of adult parents, children, and possibly an elderly relative and/or grandchildren. It is not uncommon nor culturally unacceptable for teenagers and young adults in the household to have children as well. However, adolescent pregnancy has a substantial impact on contemporary life in Cangahua because it can affect the social and economic status of the entire household. In most families women provide valuable labor on family farms or provide second incomes from wage labor. Pregnancy, particularly adolescent pregnancy, can lead to reduced labor output from women and financial hardships due to having more people to care for in the household. Cangahua, as in many parts of rural Ecuador, is experiencing a socioeconomic conundrum regarding early reproduction because poverty and low education puts youths at risk for adolescent pregnancy and at the same time adolescent pregnancy increases the likelihood of young mothers living in poverty and not completing basic secondary education.

The national government of Ecuador is actively trying to change this dynamic to align with North American and Western European mores regarding ideal family structure. Ecuador has one of the highest rates of adolescent pregnancy in South America and, while overall fertility is declining for Ecuadorian women, fertility is increasing for adolescents (United Nations 2013). As a part of the Citizens’ Revolution and National Plan for Buen Vivir, the government of President Rafael Correa has introduced several initiatives to reduce the prevalence of adolescent pregnancy. The proximate reasons for reducing adolescent
pregnancy include preserving the health, education, and economic futures of young women. However, the unstated broader goals of these initiatives are to pathologize adolescent pregnancy in order to strengthen the economic stability and future of young families and, ultimately, the state. It is still too early to assess the effects of these campaigns but it is possible to see how these initiatives are taking effect in communities such as Cangahua. The following chapter examines family, adolescent pregnancy, and their effects on sociocultural and economic livelihoods and wellbeing in Cangahua.

**Family and Motherhood in Cangahua**

At the household level, both family size, composition, and ways of living in Cangahua parish are undergoing change. According to my household survey, household size is essentially remaining stable but the composition of households are different. For example, 66% of households headed by survey participants age 45 or older had four members compared to 63% for those under 45 years old. For households with six members, the percentages were 89% and 92% respectively. This indicates that there is not a generational difference in household size, thus this aspect of households in Cangahua is seemingly stable. I use 45 years old as the cut point for assessing generational change because it is roughly the age at which adults would not have experienced hacienda life as children nor would they have reached adolescence when the flower plantations became the norm in Cangahua. In other words, 45 years old is the approximate age at which an adult would not have personally participated in the most significant changes in the socioeconomic environment of Cangahua during the past fifty years. Adults who are roughly 45 years old are ostensibly the generation whose lifespans mirrored Cangahua’s transition from a rural location that was largely ignored during the years of neoliberal policy to its current status as the starting point of a globally-connected supply chain (i.e., roses and other cut flowers).
Despite the lack of change in household size, household composition is undergoing change in contemporary Cangahua. Households in which the head was under 45 years old were more likely to include children and extended family members. In a few cases this was due to older parents moving in with their adult children but, in most cases, the household members who were not part of the nuclear family included cousins, nieces, and nephews who were younger than the head of household. Households with older heads were more mostly comprised of the nuclear family unit. Also, households headed by older adults were more likely to rely on subsistence farming. The adults worked the land by themselves with occasional help from extended family during planting and harvest seasons. An older woman who lived in a higher altitude community explained to me that farming was what her family had always done and that she was too old to work in the flower plantations where the labor was grueling. All but two of her children were adults who lived separately with their own families and she and her husband were healthy enough to farm, so they were fine living alone. This family’s situation likely explains why families headed by older adults have a similar composition. Households headed by adults over age 45 were more likely to engage in subsistence farming while those with younger heads of household were more likely to have adult members who engaged in both wage labor and subsistence farming. The reason for older adults being more likely to live as subsistence farmers is largely due to demographic pressures creating a crisis of minifundización in Cangahua. Minifundización is the tradition of dividing a portion of the family land to adult male offspring so they can take care of their families (Arellano et al 2000; Lyall 2010). This crisis resulted from the small parcels of land given to ex-huasi-pungueros after the agrarian reforms not being large enough to support more than one or perhaps two generations of minifundización until there was no longer enough land to divide. Therefore older adults in contemporary Cangahua have benefitted from
minifundización while their offspring have been forced to find other sources of income to sustain their families.

However, there is no one overarching reason for why household composition is changing for younger families in Cangahua although economic pressures are likely the root factors. My informants stated that it is tradition for young adults to live with their parents until they have their own families. In the case of teen pregnancy, young mothers continue to live with their parents even when they marry; they do not leave the home until the new couple has said enough money to live as a nuclear family. As it becomes harder to live off of the land alone, there is a greater need for younger residents of Cangahua to engage in wage labor. The typical minimum wage is not sufficient to quickly save enough money to support a small family. Therefore young adults are living with their parents for longer than usual. Also, as life expectancy increases there is a greater need for younger generations to care for the elderly once they are unable to care for themselves. I encountered several households throughout the parish that included an elderly member who may or may not have been related to the nuclear family. Additionally, fertility remains high for rural Ecuadorian women even as it becomes more difficult to support large families with limited land resources and few opportunities to earn a sufficient income. To alleviate overcrowding families often send some of their children to live with relatives who have more space and/or resources. There are several other factors that contribute to blended households among younger generations in Cangahua but the above reasons are the most common.

Adolescence and Young Mothers in Cangahua

Another significant way in which families are changing in Cangahua relates to young motherhood and narratives regarding reproduction. In the 2010 Ecuador National Census (INEC 2010) 18% of women in Cangahua reported having their first child between the ages of 12 and 17, a total of 691 young women. Of these young women, 53% had their first child
at ages 16 or 17. In Cangahua it is not uncommon to encounter women in their late twenties or thirties who have an older child with a man from their youth and who have younger children with their current husband or long-term partner. This pattern is so ubiquitous that it is ostensibly the normal childbearing pattern for women in contemporary Cangahua. There is no apparent stigma for women who have children as teenagers then marry later and start families with their husbands. In general, early motherhood does not seem to limit a young woman’s prospects for marriage and long-term relationships in the future.

For example Mariana\textsuperscript{18} is the mother of three children. Her oldest daughter at the time of my fieldwork was a teenager that Mariana gave birth to while she was completing her bachillerato during her penultimate year of secondary school. At that time she was living in the Oriente, or Amazon region of Ecuador, with a family member who had migrated to work in the petroleum extraction industry. Mariana fell in love with a young man in his early twenties and became pregnant. She completed her studies then moved to the Cayambe area to be closer to her extended family. Mariana worked for various flower plantations until she met and ultimately married a co-worker with a supervisory position. Mariana and her husband’s household consisted of their two children and her oldest child. All three children are treated equally by her husband and the teenage daughter viewed her stepfather as her own father since she never lived with her biological father, although she was in contact with him via cell phone and Facebook. The teenage daughter referred to her stepfather as papi (daddy) and he referred to her as mija (my daughter). Based on my interactions with the family, there is no preferential treatment for the children based on paternity and their neighbors seemingly do not view their blended family as unusual or scandalous.

Unlike Mariana’s family, Angela lives outside of the barrio central; however the two women are similar in that not all of their children share a biological father. Angela was 26

\textsuperscript{18} Names changed to protect privacy.
years old when I first met her and her eight month old daughter. She was a part time housekeeper for my host family who came to the house on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at 8am to start her chores of sweeping and mopping, emptying trash, making beds, decluttering the house, and washing laundry by hand. Angela’s husband worked full time at a flower plantation located between Cangahua and Cayambe and she opted for domestic work as a way to earn money while not having to rely on strangers or extended family for child care. Her family lived in a small two-room house with electricity but no indoor plumbing in a community that was within a short walking distance to the barrio central. When I first met Angela she had an eight year old son, a four year old son, and a two year old son in addition to her infant daughter. The elder son attended primary school in the barrio central and the younger boys attended one of Cangahua’s sixteen *Centros Infantiles de Buen Vivir* or *CIBV* (Children’s Centers for Good Living), which are preschools for children ages 1 to 4 (GADPC 2014).

Angela rarely talked to me while she was working other than asking if I wanted her to mop my bedroom; however, she invited me to her home for what ended up as an extended interview one day when she saw me walking around her community to find participants for my household survey. I returned to Angela’s home during my last fieldwork trip to Cangahua to catch up with her and the children since she was no longer employed with my host family. The visit resulted in an extended conversation about her family life, her perceptions of her current lifestyle, and her aspirations for her family in the near and distant future. It was during this visit that I learned that Angela’s oldest son was not the biological son of her husband. I was surprised by that information and even more surprised that Angela was very matter of fact about her oldest son’s paternity. She ignored my surprise and reiterated that it was not an issue for her husband and she did not believe it was an issue for his family. Angela believed that everyone in her community was aware of her children’s different fathers and
that no one cared. According to Angela, this was a very common scenario in Cangahua and everyone was aware of mixed paternity families. These families were neither shameful nor controversial. At that moment I realized that many of the families that I regularly interacted with in Cangahua were likely mixed paternity families.

The Andean Household

Circumstances such as Mariana’s and Angela’s in the prior section are neither temporally nor geographically unique to contemporary Cangahua. Prior to modernization, Quechua culture in the Andes did not consider marriage necessary to begin cohabitation or sexual activity (Rodriguez Vignoli 2008). Bearing children was necessary for household harmony, labor production, and social reproduction. Thus early reproduction and marriage were encouraged. The culturally defined ideal marriage age was between 15 and 25 years old (Rodriguez Vignoli 2008). In many indigenous cultures this was the age at which adolescents transitioned into recognized, contributing members of society (González Vélez and Londoño Vélez 2003). Premarital sexual relations in adolescence were considered “normal” and those who engaged in these behaviors were not stigmatized (Weismantel 1988: 170).

Consequentially, adolescent pregnancy was not stigmatized and adolescents and their children became incorporated into their parent’s households. Adolescent relationships in the Andes are ephemeral, as in many cultures including the United States, yet having children at an early age does not diminish prospects for later marriage and long term relationships.

Fertility is traditionally high for Andean women so most households have several children, especially those households that rely on smallholder farming for subsistence and income. Weismantel (1988:170) noted there is a belief that “no home should be without children” because children are a source of wellbeing—life, happiness, and minor labor. Children are beneficial to the household because they confer adult social status to their parents and because they provide the levity and basic tasks that older adults need to manage a
household. Further, Andean households tend to be multigenerational units centered around middle aged adults as the heads of household, their children and grandchildren, and sometimes elderly relatives who are no longer able to independently support their own land and households (Hamilton 1998). Despite the multigenerational composition, extra children are not necessarily a burden for others in the home. Younger children welcome extra playmates, adults welcome the extra labor as the child grows, and the elderly get to assist with childcare when they are no longer able to work outside the home. Childcare provided by older generations is beneficial to the elderly since labor is a source of health and self-worth in the Andes and because raising children is revered labor (Weismantel 1988).

Children are so desirable that it is not uncommon for families to “loan” their children to relatives or to “adopt” children from relatives or strangers. Weismantel (1988:170) referred to this practice as the “redistribution” of children to those who lacked or had too few children and to those who were infertile. Such systems were necessary because having “strong, flexible kinship systems” are necessary in marginalized communities where household hardships are common (Weismantel 1995). I observed this pattern often in Cangahua, even in the home of my host family. The heads of household of my host family raised a niece and nephew in addition to their own three children. Both the niece and nephew were young adults who lived elsewhere for university and work; however they typically returned to the household on weekends, holidays, special events, or just because they felt like doing so. I was always shocked at how their random appearances seemed mundane as they settled into the household as if they lived in the home full time. I also observed informal adoptions of the elderly and disabled in Cangahua households. The elderly adoptions were cases where families cared for widows who were not relatives because it is taboo for widows to live alone. Adoptions of the disabled were necessary in cases where the person could not work and did not have immediate family to support them. The above examples of the system of fictive and
extended kinship in the Andes is understood as a part of the system of compadrazgo, where consanguinity is not necessary for creating a household or family unit (Weismantel 1995).

Because of the widespread practice of opening homes to others, Weismantel (1988) argued that indigenous Andean definitions of “family” and “household” are fluid. The 1998 Ecuador Constitution declared that “…nuclear families are household units.” The indigenous systems of compadrazgo were considered at odds with the idealized families preferred by the government and religious leaders because they were deemed an “impediment to development” and barrier to embracing modernity (Weismantel 1995:689). However, Weismantel (1988) defined the traditional Andean family as those who shared meals together rather than consanguine or marital relations although those who entered the household via marriage were still considered outsiders to the family. Weismantel (1988) observed that a daughter or son-in law who lived in a household with their spouse’s family were still not considered family, which is relevant because young couples rarely moved out of their paternal homes upon marriage or having a child. Most young couples, despite being in a committed unions or marriages, remained in their natal homes until their children were roughly school age (Weismantel 1988). At that point the couple left the natal household and made a new household for their own family. Occasionally young couples would live together in one of their natal households; however, the non-natal mate was usually not considered a part of the household unit. Additionally, in these situations, the non-natal mate would often return to their parent’s home for short periods of time to assist with household labor and reassert themselves as members of the household. When young couples did leave to begin their own households, they often received a portion of their parent’s land—minifundización—on which they build a home and maintain close familiar ties to relatives. These patterns remain true in contemporary Cangahua; young adults with children or who are in informal or formal marriages tend to live with their parents until they are much older and
established as their own family unit. Further, the Ecuadorian government finally acknowledged indigenous and alternative households in the 2008 iteration of the constitution. The new constitution acknowledged the fluidity of family by recognizing “diverse families” that included various social, geographic, and compositional arrangements (Lind 2012:537). This included families separated by domestic and transnational migration, non-consanguine families, and other non-heteronormative familial units. The expanded definition of family fit with the government transition towards buen vivir in that the 2008 constitution acknowledged that Ecuadorian families come in many forms and must be recognized as a means of promoting good living.

Additionally, although many of Weismantel’s (1988) observations of the Andean household during the 1980s remains true in places such as Cangahua, gender relations and roles in the households are changing, which can affect reproduction. Women’s contributions to the economic and domestic spheres are changing how households operate. This is especially true for poorer women who are responsible for childbearing and childcare, household chores and maintenance, agricultural work, and social duties (Lind 2005). Agricultural work is becoming “feminized” in that it is also becoming a part of the female sphere as development increases (Hamilton 1998). Agriculture is not lucrative in an economy that increasingly depends on cash so men are often expected to leave the home for wage labor opportunities. Theoretically this negatively affects fertility because family farming is economically disadvantageous and productivity decreases as women of reproductive age become pregnant and have children. Also, increased family planning services and awareness should limit family size. However, Hamilton (1998) suggested that women were not aware of or were uninterested in contraception. I observed awareness of contraception among women in Cangahua but indifference to its use. Thus, despite recent socioeconomic changes to
women’s roles that should affect reproductive trends in rural Andean Ecuador, these changes are not occurring.

Young Motherhood as a Contradiction to Buen Vivir

Yenifer’s Story

While early motherhood is considered normal in rural Andean life, the consequences of teen pregnancy in contemporary life can complicate the livelihoods of young mothers in places such as Cangahua. The example of Yenifer\(^{19}\) is typical of many teenage girls in Cangahua who become pregnant before completing secondary school. Yenifer was a 16 year old who lived with her parents in the barrio central in a household that was considered wealthy by Cangahua standards. She fell in love and “married” via an informal union to a young man who was seven years her senior. Her parents were against the relationship so Yenifer moved in with her spouse’s parents in a community that is located about 5km from her parent’s home. Yenifer became pregnant within a month after leaving her parents’ home but broke up with her partner and returned to her childhood home when she was 6 months pregnant. Yenifer confided to me that she left her spouse because she learned that he was simultaneously in an informal marriage to another young woman with whom he had fathered a daughter. When I asked about her feelings regarding her husband’s (informal) bigamy, Yenifer was resigned to the mundaneness of the situation. She said, “Young men [in Cangahua] often have more than one wife. Young women will not have sex unless they are married so they marry their boyfriends to have sex. Many girls get pregnant and drop out of school. Their families will help them with the baby. This is normal.”

However, adolescent pregnancy is risky for the health of mother and child. According to Dillon and Cherry (2014:9):

\(^{19}\) Names changed to protect the privacy of the informant.
“Globally, stillbirths and infant death in the first week of life are 50% higher among babies born to mothers 10–19 years of age than babies born to mothers 20–29 years of age. Deaths during the first month of life are 50–100% more frequent if the mother is an adolescent versus older mothers; the younger the mother, the higher the risk. The rates of preterm birth, low birth weight birth, and asphyxia are higher among the children of adolescents. All of which increase the chances of death or a future of avoidable health problems for the baby.”

Prenatal care is available in Cangahua via mobile women’s health trucks, but these services only provide a basic level of monitoring as opposed to the advanced screening techniques that are considered the norm for high risk pregnancies in developed countries. Despite these risks, Yenifer’s pregnancy was relatively smooth and she delivered the baby at the public hospital in Cayambe a few days before her estimated due date. Yenifer's baby was born at full term but at clinically low birth weight; the baby was 2.5kg (5 lbs. 8 oz.), which is the upper cut point for the clinical definition of low birth weight (Kramer 1987). Having a baby with clinically low birth weight is more likely for mothers under age 17 and for mothers lacking proper prenatal care. In Ecuador 8% of adolescent mothers give birth to babies with clinically low birth rate (INEC 2010). Yenifer received basic prenatal care but was unaware that she was at risk for a low birth weight baby. Despite the health risks to the baby, Yenifer and baby left the hospital three days after she gave birth with instructions to return to the hospital clinic in one week to monitor the baby’s growth. In the interim, Yenifer attempted to nurse her son but she struggled with a low milk supply. Her mother, who successfully nursed three children, tried to help by making Yenifer drink teas concocted from local herbs and by restricting her diet to soft foods.

At the one-week follow-up visit in the hospital clinic, the baby weighed 2.7kg. Yenifer was instructed to purchase formula and use it as a supplement to breast milk. An
appointment was made for her to return to the clinic the following week. Yenifer's mother, who accompanied her to the clinic, decided that formula was unnatural and refused to buy it because she felt it would harm the baby. Yenifer's mother was unable to attend the second follow-up visit to the clinic so I accompanied Yenifer and sat in the exam room during the doctor’s examination of the baby. The baby remained at 2.7kg. When the doctor questioned Yenifer about her use of formula, Yenifer insisted that she was following the doctor’s orders, as her mother instructed her to say, although in reality she never used it. I stood quietly in the corner of the exam room as the doctor berated Yenifer for being a “typical teenager [mother]” who lacked morals and was ignorant of proper parenting. The doctor continued to prattle on, almost yelling, as she warned Yenifer about all of the health risks and dangers her baby faced because of his failure to thrive due to being underweight. Yenifer was almost in tears by the time the doctor finished her lecture. Later, when Yenifer told her mother what the doctor said, her mother told her “do not worry, doctors don’t know anything about medicine even though they went to {medical] school.” However, Yenifer's mother purchased a canister of formula that evening and Yenifer began to supplement her breastmilk with formula. A few days later Yenifer's mother asked their part-time housekeeper, who was nursing a nine month old daughter, if she would fill a bottle with her breastmilk in exchange for $1 USD. Yenifer's baby readily accepted the foreign breastmilk so Yenifer's mother gave the housekeeper two more bottles to take home and offered to pay her a dollar for each full bottle of her breastmilk. Yenifer ceased to use baby formula in exchange for the housekeeper’s supplemental breastmilk. Yenifer's third follow-up appointment went well as the baby gained a modest amount of weight after a week of supplementation with formula and breastmilk from the housekeeper.

I followed up with Yenifer when her son was 14 months old. He was in the normal ranges of weight and height for his age and met all developmental milestones (e.g., tooth
eruption, walking, first words, etc.) at the appropriate times. Yet Yenifer’s life was full of uncertainty. She did not return to school and had no desire to complete secondary school and earn a *bachillerato*. She had reconciled with her son’s father, who was making a strong effort to be a good partner and father by purchasing clothing and food for Yenifer and the baby. However, their relationship was not stable and they were prone to occasional short-term break ups. Yenifer primarily lived with her parents but often spent several days at a time at the three room home that her partner was building next to his parent’s onion crops. Yenifer did not work and was completely dependent on her parents and her partner to provide for her and her baby. While talking to Yenifer during my final fieldwork visit to Cangahua, she confided that she was unsure about whether her relationship would last and was considering paid employment to start saving money in case she and her son needed to start a new life by themselves. Yenifer was a talented seamstress and knitter, but she would have to go to Cayambe or Imbabura—which is internationally renowned for the artisans of Otavalo—to find reasonable employment as an artisan; that was not a realistic option for her. She was conflicted because her parents loathed the flower plantations but, with a child and incomplete education, her employment options in Cangahua were limited. By the time I completed my fieldwork Yenifer was still unsure about where her life would lead.

**Adolescent Pregnancy in Cangahua and Beyond**

Stories such as Yenifer’s are typical for young mothers in Cangahua yet the government of President Rafael Correa views adolescent pregnancy as a threat to the goal of creating a nation of buen vivir. In Latin America, fertility for ages 15 to 19 between 1970 and 2005 showed no significant trend of decline; adolescent pregnancy decreased only 6% while overall fertility decreased 30% from 1975-2005 (ORAS CONHU 2009). Ecuador stands out in Latin America because of its higher overall fertility rates and its particularly high fertility rates for adolescents. Ecuador had the highest adolescent fertility rates in South America
during the 1970s (ORAS CONHU 2009). During the 1990s fertility increased for adolescents and there was a marked increase in adolescent fertility during the 2000s (Rodríguez Wong 2009). For girls age 10 to 14 the percentage of all live births from this age group rose from 0.2% in 1996 to 0.6% in 2009 (INEC 2010). For girls aged 15 to 19 these percentages rose from 16% in 1996 to 20% in 2009 of all live births. Between 2007 and 2012, the adolescent fertility rate for girls aged 15 to 19 in Ecuador was 111. This means that on average there were 111 live births per 1,000 young women ages 15 to 19. According to INEC, In the 2010 national census over 17% of young women in Ecuador between ages 15-19 had given birth. Additionally, the rates of adolescent pregnancy in Ecuador is increasing. During the Ecuador Encuesta Demográfica y de Salud Materna e Infantil 2004 (Ecuador Demographic and Maternal and Child Health Survey) or ENDEMAIN, 38% of women aged 40 to 49, 41% of women aged 25 to 39, and 43% of women aged 20 to 24 reported being pregnant as adolescents (González-Rozada 2011). In other words, women are increasingly having their first child during their teenage years. According to the 2010 Ecuador National Census, 2.4% of women had their first child between ages 12 and 14, 44.1% of women had their first child between ages 15 and 19, and 35.2% had their first child between ages 20 and 24. By 2013 Ecuador had the third highest adolescent fertility rate in South America behind Guyana and Venezuela, respectively (UN 2013). The 2012 Ecuador Encuesta Nacional de Salud y Nutrición (ENSANUT), or Ecuador National Survey of Health and Nutrition, found that 22% of adolescent girls aged 12 to 19 were mothers (Freire et al. 2014). Of these young mothers 38.4% lived in the sierra, or highlands, of Ecuador and 4.3% identified as indigenous. Teenage pregnancies tended to occur within the confines of romantic relationships; 71.5% of adolescent mothers were either married or in civil unions while 20.2% were single (Freire et al. 2014). Of the adolescent mothers in committed relationships, 78% were indigenous, which was the highest amongst all racial and ethnic identities in Ecuador.
It has been well documented that adolescent pregnancy (e.g., Dillon and Cherry 2014; ENIPLA 2011; González-Rozada 2011; UN 2013) is both a cause and an effect of low education and poverty. In Ecuador, on average, women in each category of poor, indigenous, and primary school or less education have more children than women who are not in these categories (INEC 2010). Early pregnancy is also associated with marginalized identities and living in rural areas. Living in a rural or isolated area and having insufficient access to healthcare are essentially the same risk factor. In other words, those in rural areas are less likely to have accessible healthcare options. Rural indigenous women in Latin America have higher rates of pregnancy at all ages and the same holds true for adolescents ages 15 to 19, for whom fertility is 4.9 compared to 3.1 for mestizo adolescents (ORAS CONHU 2009). In Ecuador adolescent fertility is 30% higher in rural areas than urban areas and 30% of adolescents in the lowest quintile of income are parents compared to 10% for those in highest quintile of income. Coming from a low socioeconomic status (SES) is particularly risky for teenagers. González-Rozada (2011) found that adolescents with a low SES were more likely to have sex before age 16 (30%), than those of medium SES (19%) and high SES (12%). The same study found that adolescents from low SES backgrounds were more at risk because their parents were less likely to provide sex education and that both the parents and the teenager were less likely to know about contraception and how to obtain it. This is important because 89% of Ecuadorian adolescents who had sex before age 17 did not use a condom the first time they had sex (González-Rozada 2011). More than 40% of women who had a child between ages 15 to 26 had the child before marriage and 37% of these mothers said they never thought they would get pregnant from their sexual activity (CEPAR 2005). Similar to having a low SES, pregnancy rates were highest for those with less than secondary school education. About 11% of young women who completed secondary education were mothers...
while 43% of those who did not complete secondary school were mothers (CIPEA 2008). Finally, experiencing abuse at an early age made girls susceptible to early motherhood.

In the case of Latin America, adolescent pregnancy has historically been the norm; however, the rise of industrialization, neoliberalism, protestantism, and foreign non-governmental organization (NGO) influence led to a denunciation of adolescent pregnancy (ORAS CONHU 2009). The Organismo Andino de Salud - Convenio Hipólito Unanue (2009), or ORAS CONHU, noted the cycle of teen pregnancy and poverty is only problematic in an industrialized capitalist society. Rodriguez Vignoli (2008) explained that “technology and the liberty of modernity explosively link with described historic, cultural, socioeconomic, and institutional factors, generating powerful incentives for early sexuality and no protection for adolescents, that then increases the probability of reproduction before 20 years old.” Essentially, this means that external social, cultural, political, and economic forces render adolescents more vulnerable to engaging in early and risky sexual activity. The United Nations (2013) also noted that fertility rates for adolescent girls aged 15 to 19 are strong indicators of the relative status of women in an area because adolescent pregnancy results in lower education and fewer employment opportunities for women. Higher educational attainment is an important component of facilitating the empowerment of women through employment and financial independence (UN 2013), which is low in Cangahua (Lyall 2014). Therefore adolescent pregnancy is a significant social concern.

Low women's empowerment and reduced prospects for completing education and finding lucrative employment make adolescent pregnancy particularly risky for the futures of young women in Cangahua. Studies show that there is a high likelihood that adolescent girls who become pregnant will discontinue their formal education (Dillon and Cherry 2014). Secondary education rates in Cangahua Parish are low in general; in 2014 over 68% of 1855 adolescents age 15 to 19 did not complete secondary education. In my household survey of
Cangahua, none of the 92 female respondents who had their first child before age 20 completed secondary school. Overall, approximately 100 female students per year drop out of school in the largest secondary school in Cangahua (personal communication, director of Colegio Cesar Tamayo\textsuperscript{20}). Almost all of the young women who dropout of secondary school leave due to pregnancy while young men leave to find work for various reasons. This leads to “low human capital” for the children of adolescent mothers, creating a generational trend of poverty, low education, and risk for early parenthood (ENIPLA 2011). This cycle is such that poverty and low education are the primary causes of adolescent pregnancy while adolescent pregnancy leads to incomplete educational attainment, which in turn limits employment options and creates poverty. This cycle is increasingly problematic in Cangahua as the parish transitions to increased dependence on the cash economy.

For women over age 45 in contemporary Cangahua, roughly the age at which people grew up as adolescents without the influence of the flower plantations, beginning motherhood in adolescence was less likely than it is today. Similar to the national trends for adolescent pregnancy, young women are giving birth to their first child at younger ages than they were prior to the introduction of floriculture in Cangahua. My household survey of Cangahua included 92 women who provided demographic information. Of these 92 women, 47% had their first live birth before age 20. Women over age 45 began motherhood, on average, at age 24 while women under age 45 began motherhood at the average age of 19. These average ages at first birth are statistically significant (p<.005) so, overall, women in Cangahua over age 45 delayed childbearing for an average of five years longer compared to women under age 45. The exact reasons why the age at first birth are on a downward trend are unclear.

However, there is an indirect relationship between the increased influence of floriculture and the lower ages of pregnancy. This relationship cannot identify causation or whether external

\textsuperscript{20} Interview conducted with Jorge Moya, Rector del Colegio Nacional Cesar Augusto Tamayo on January 16, 2015.
factors are at play, but it does suggest that the transition to wage labor and the introduction of globalized ideals via the establishment of industrial flower plantations led to behaviors that increased rates of teenage pregnancy in Cangahua. Additionally, though education levels have improved since the demise of the haciendas and the trend towards globalization, improved education does not appear to be a protective factor against adolescent pregnancy in Cangahua where education levels are low in general. Of 38 women over age 45 in the household survey sample, 21 (55%) were unable to read or write compared to 17 (45%) under age 45. These data are statistically significant (p<.001), which means that education attainment has improved since the introduction of floriculture. Women over age 45 were also less likely to have at least completed secondary school; 37 of 38 women in the sample did not complete secondary school. Of these 38 women over 45 years old, 25 of the women did not attend school at any point in their lives. These discrepancies in education, however, more likely reflect increased access to education and the more recent laws that make school attendance mandatory.

Additionally, the pervasiveness of low education among adolescent mothers in Cangahua is a problem because there are few high skill, high wage jobs in the parish, thus there are few opportunities for socioeconomic advancement for young women. Due to the lack of labor options in Cangahua, having less education or being burdened by an unplanned pregnancy at an early change further disadvantages young women’s opportunities to obtain the few available jobs in the parish. Additionally, the socioeconomic consequences of adolescent pregnancy reduce women’s empowerment and autonomy. Reduced options for autonomy and empowerment for young women are a major drawback to early motherhood as they create socioeconomic vulnerability at the start of adult life. Adolescent pregnancy is highly correlated with inequality, violence, and lack of power, especially when there is a large age difference between partners (Rodriguez Vignoli 2008).
Further, gender inequality and lack of personal autonomy for adolescent girls result in higher levels of dependency by the young mother. Adolescent mothers are largely dependent on their parents or their partner’s families for financial support and childcare. In most cases this created a greater economic burden to the household by having to support additional members. This also increases the length of time that adolescents are dependent upon their parents. Further, young motherhood creates a dependency on the father of the child to provide financial support in the cases where the father chooses to remain a part of the child’s life. This dependency can result in less opportunities for empowerment such as seeking skilled job opportunities and the ability to participate in society as an independent adult (ORAS CONHU 2009). Additionally, depending on childcare availability, having a child may be a barrier to working. As a result young mothers are often limited to low skill, low pay jobs.

**Buen Vivir through Delayed Reproduction**

At the start of the 21st century the Ecuadorian government created a series of government initiatives and programming to counteract the increasing trend of adolescent parenthood. The Ministry of Health outlined the various programs created to stem rates of teen pregnancy; these programs were largely unsuccessful. On September 23, 2005, Ecuador declared September 26 as the annual Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Day (*Día de la Prevención del Embarazo en Adolescentes*)\(^1\), which coincided with World Teen Pregnancy Prevention Day as a means of bringing adolescent pregnancy awareness to the forefront of conversation in everyday life. This was the beginning of a series of government schemes to address and reduce adolescent pregnancy in Ecuador. Upon the election of President Rafael Correa in 2007 the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion approved the Childhood and Adolescence Social Agenda (*Agenda Social de la Niñez y Adolescencia* or ASNA). One of

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the goals of ASNA was a 25% reduction in the national rates of teen pregnancy by 2010; this initiative was to be implemented at the cantonal level (CIPEA 2008). Although this goal was not met, according to the Ministry of Health between 2010 and 2011 consultations for preventing unwanted pregnancies increased 16.18% and consultations for family planning increased 9.58%\textsuperscript{22}. The next strategy to prevent adolescent pregnancy was the Plan Nacional de Prevención del Embarazo Adolescente or PNPEA (National Plan for the Prevention of Adolescent Pregnancy) that functioned from 2007 to 2009 (CIPEA 2008). The PNPA was published following an agreement reached between the Ministries of Health of Andean nations to reduce adolescent pregnancy in their respective countries. Ecuador created the CIPEA, or Comité Interinstitucional de Prevención del Embarazo Adolescente (Interinsitutional Committee for the Prevention of Adolescent Pregnancy) to implement the PNPEA by improving information, education, and access to sexual and reproductive health services for youths in Ecuador (CIPEA 2008). According to PNPEA, their approach was different because they viewed adolescent pregnancy “as a social problem” (CIPEA 2008). The PNPEA claimed that: ”When a teenager becomes pregnant, the entire society must mobilize, because it affects the development of female and male adolescents, insofar as they are doomed to new situations that shorten or change their life plans, especially around studying, recreation, professionalization and achieving their personal goals\textsuperscript{23}” (CIPEA 2008: 6-7). The ultimate goal of the PNPEA was to strengthen health, education, and social services regarding adolescent pregnancy through inter institutional support and “active participation” by the citizenry (CIPEA 2008: 10). However, the PNPEA was ultimately unsuccessful for


\textsuperscript{23} The full quote in Spanish is: ”Cuando una adolescente se embaraza, toda la sociedad debe movilizarse, porque afecta el desarrollo de las mujeres y hombres adolescentes, en tanto se ven abocadas/os a nuevas situaciones que truncan o modifican sus proyectos de vida, en torno especialmente a estudiar, recrearse, profesionalizarse y realizar sus metas personales.”
many reasons which included lack of inter-institutional cooperation and leadership, low active participation from adolescents, using adult-centric campaigns, failing to account for cultural differences, and inefficient planning for differences in needs for rural and urban populations.

As a part of the National Plan for Buen Vivir, President Rafael Correa proclaimed that his Citizen’s Revolution had a “woman’s face” (Lind 2012). This meant that the government would dedicate itself to reducing violence against women, and increasing access to education, healthcare, and work. Part of this focus included the creation of the Estrategia Nacional Intersectorial de Planificación Familiar y Prevención del Embarazo en Adolescentes (ENIPLA PEA)—the National Intersectorial Strategy for Family Planning and Prevention of Adolescent Pregnancy—which is one of the initiatives created to increase quality of life according to the tenets of the Plan Nacional de Buen Vivir. The ENIPLA PEA was created in 2011 through a collaboration between the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion, and the Ministry of Social Development. According to the Ecuador Ministry of Education (2013), the stated objectives of the ENIPLA PEA are to “ensure permanent access and effective information, education about sexuality, counseling, counseling on health and inclusion and protection services to victims of violence, in order to ensure free and informed decision-making about sexuality and reproduction, and the full exercise of sexual and reproductive rights." Through integral sexual education the MOE developed programs to prevent adolescent pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, and sexual violence in order to increase secondary school attendance and completion. The programs under the ENIPLA (2011) umbrella target young men and women to improve education, access, and quality of care surrounding family planning and contraception options. These programs were

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designed according to the two main goals of ENIPLA: first, to reduce undesired pregnancies by 25% for women who are impoverished and have low education and second, to reduce adolescent pregnancy 25% by 2013 (CEPAL 2012). According to CEPAL (2012) the expected outcomes of the ENIPLA PEA are to reduce maternal mortality, reduce infant mortality, reduce abortions although they are illegal, and improve educational opportunities for women, which combined should lead to the final outcome of improved labor opportunities for women.

The Ministry of Health has published annual figures regarding the outcomes of the ENIPLA PEA programs. The following information in this paragraph includes information from the 2013 report, which was the most recent report at the time of this writing. In 2011 over 1 million adolescents accessed an ENIPLA PEA program, resulting in a 19.28% increase in use of these services. There was also a 10.48% increase in family planning consultations from women of fertile age between 2011 and 2012; by 2012, over 1.2 million adolescents used an ENIPLA PEA service. ENIPLA PEA operated over 250 programs and 58 mobile units to improve access to sexual and reproductive health care. Additionally, some of ENIPLA’s most visible campaigns included direct outreach to young adults in Ecuador. This included having over 2000 free dispensers of male and female condoms in over 1600 hospitals and clinics operated by the Ministry of Health. The “Habla en Serio” (Speak Seriously) program included various direct outreach and conversations with targeted populations to provide sexual health education and reduce violence against women and children. This included a toll free hotline for asking anonymous questions about sexuality; about 34% of calls to this hotline were from adolescents in 2012. ENIPLA also produced free

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comic books that discussed issues around sexual violence, contraception, and government services for the sexually active.

However, at the local level the implementation of ENIPLA has not been as effective as planned. For example, the initiative to provide education and access to family planning services would seem to reduce incidences of adolescent pregnancy. However, adolescents are less likely to use contraception even when it is available because it would imply intent to engage in sexual behavior and a neglect of expectations of abstinence due to age and religion (Dillon and Cherry 2014; Rodríguez Wong 2009). In Chile, Delva et al (2014:233) found that about 30% of adolescents attributed their sexual activity to “being irresponsible.” Further, applying a moral and behavioral judgement on sexual behavior further drives adolescent neglect of contraception use (Dillon and Cherry 2014). In Ecuador 97% of adolescents reported knowledge of contraception but only 56% reported using contraception (Dillon and Cherry 2014). The same authors noted that religion also played a role in adolescent motherhood prevention as religiosity was inversely related to contraception use. Further, there are also mundane barriers to contraception usage that could reduce adolescent pregnancy in Ecuador and, specifically, Cangahua. Cangahua is a relatively small parish with one health clinic, the government-run Subcentro. Young women must see one of the few doctors at the clinic to request hormonal or invasive contraception. Yenifer told me that she and her friends do not obtain contraception because there is a risk that the clinic staff or other patients will gossip about the reasons for young woman’s visit to the clinic. Therefore it is better to avoid seeing doctors for contraception out of a fear of becoming the target of local gossip. Additionally, within the Cangahua Subcentro, male and female condoms are available for free from a dispenser placed next to the patient registration desk. In order to access the condom dispensers, a person must walk to the front of the waiting room, where chairs for waiting patients face the registration desk, and use the dispenser in full view of everyone. I
was told by waiting patients and clinic staff that no one uses the machines because it is too embarrassing; however, the clinic staff did not express an interest in moving the dispensers to a more discreet location. Finally, in the majority Roman Catholic nations of South America, including Ecuador, abortion is illegal (Delva et al 2014). The above reasons can partially explain the high teenage pregnancy rates in Cangahua and demonstrate why the good intentions of government programs such as ASNA, PNPEA, and ENIPLA have not been effective.

In response to the ineffectiveness of prior government initiatives to reduce adolescent pregnancy, President Rafael Correa announced the end of ENIPLA in March 2015 and replaced it with the Plan Familia Ecuador (Ecuador Family Plan), which would be overseen by the Ministry of Buen Vivir. Correa is a devout Catholic who opposes abortion, same sex marriage, and governmental emphasis on adolescent sexuality (Lind 2012). Correa criticized ENIPLA for overly relying on the healthcare system and removing parents and family from conversations concerning adolescent sexuality. He also felt that ENIPLA focused too much on “hedonism” and pleasure. The director of Plan Familia Ecuador, Monica Hernandez, decided that the new initiative would be based on abstinence and a return to morality and values. The overall intention of Family Plan Ecuador is to place an emphasis on family and center conversations surrounding sexuality and family planning in the context of family values without direct government involvement. The effectiveness of Family Plan Ecuador remains to be seen, although abstinence-based education has largely failed to prevent

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adolescent pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections in countries such as the United States (Kohler et al 2008).

An Accomplished Life as a Young Parent is Possible

Although the negative effects of adolescent pregnancy are manifold from the individual, social, and economic perspectives, it is possible to overcome the hardships of early parenthood in Cangahua. The lives of Manuel and Paula\(^{28}\) demonstrate that it is possible to continue education, work full time, live independently, and manage parenthood at a young age. I met Manuel during my very first trip to Cangahua and we often talked because he was very interested in the concept of conducting research and research methods. Manuel is the sixth child of nine children. Although his parents lived in a small village at one of the highest altitude areas of Cangahua, he and two of his siblings were raised by his father’s brother and wife in the barrio central. I never received a definitive answer as to why Manuel and his two siblings were not raised by their parents. When I first met Manuel he had just finished his bachillerato at the Collegio Cesar Tamayo secondary school in the barrio central. He was working for a security company in Cayambe to earn money for university, where he planned to study medicine. Paula, Manuel’s girlfriend was a couple of years younger and lived in Tabacundo, a large floriculture-based town on the opposite side of Cayambe. She planned to become a nurse after completing secondary school. During my second visit to Cangahua I learned that Paula was pregnant and I met their infant son during my third fieldwork trip.

In many ways Manuel and Paula were atypical for young parents in Cangahua. They had a formal marriage and moved into a small rented home to live by themselves. Paula returned to secondary school to complete her bachillerato and Manuel worked graveyard shift at the security company so he could provide childcare during the day while Paula was in school. Manuel was a doting father to their son and was very proud of his abilities to manage

\(^{28}\) Names changed to protect the privacy of my informants.
childcare as a young man without help from female relatives, which is a rarity in Cangahua. When Paula completed secondary school the couple decided that Paula would enroll in university to study nursing while Manuel continued to work at night and care for their son during the day. Manuel explained to me that medical school would take longer to complete so it made sense for Paula to complete her shorter nursing program first and then he would enroll in university once she found permanent work. Paula’s family helped pay for her education expenses and Manuel’s salary was sufficient for their basic living expenses, so this arrangement was not a major financial burden for the couple.

The case of Manuel and Paula show that becoming parents at a young age in Cangahua does not preclude being able to achieve your educational and career goals. In many ways they were fortunate because Manuel worked at a relatively well paying job with a schedule that accommodated the needs of his family and because Paula’s family was able to pay for her education expenses. However, the young couple was determined to achieve their goals and arranged their lives to fit their needs. They made personal sacrifices in a way that is contrary to normal gender roles in Cangahua. For example, it is not true that young fathers in Cangahua do not care for their children as much as Manuel, but Manuel was atypical in that he took on the traditionally “female” nurturing role for his son. Other young fathers in Cangahua prefer to care for their children via financial support rather than investing in direct childcare. Paula chose education over being the primary nurturer of their son, which is very rare for women. Instead most women in Cangahua prefer to sacrifice their education and careers in order to care for their children.

Surprisingly, Manuel and Paula’s neighbors did not seem to have strong opinions about the young couple’s lifestyle. The young couple was well liked in the community and their neighbors felt that Manuel was a “good man” (hombre digno) for his unique—in Cangahua—approach to fatherhood. Similarly, their neighbors seemed to admire Paula for
her commitment to becoming a nurse, although one older woman did express sadness that
Paula was sacrificing motherhood for her career. Paula, on the other hand, felt like she was
being a good mother as a result of her life choices. She expressed that continuing her
education and getting a job with a salary that is higher than the básico (minimum wage) was
the best thing she could do as a mother and wife.

Conclusion

The Ecuadorian government has been concerned with early reproduction in
adolescents for several decades, however, none of the government initiatives to decrease rates
of adolescent pregnancy have proved successful. Some argue that indigenous traditions of
early marriage and parenthood contribute to contemporary rates of adolescent pregnancy
while others, such as President Rafael Correa, attribute adolescent pregnancy to loose
morality and a focus away from the family as the center of social life in Ecuador. Regardless
of the reasons for increasing rates of adolescent pregnancy in Ecuador over the past several
decades, young motherhood is problematic for both mother and child in the current
globalized society. The Ecuadorian economy is becoming more reliant on educated and
skilled labor and adolescent pregnancy reduces the availability of such laborers. Young
mothers overwhelmingly fail to complete secondary education and are thus unable to work in
high skill, high salary jobs. This starts a cycle of poverty due to a dependence on low paying
employment, which results in a low socioeconomic status household. The cycle of poverty is
damaging for all sectors of Ecuadorian society but can be disastrous for a place such as
Cangahua, which is transitioning from an economy based on household agriculture to one
based on wage labor and that has an economy that is dependent on the global marketplace. In
most families women provide valuable labor on family farms or provide second incomes
from wage labor. Families in Cangahua that depend on wage labor instead of household
agriculture are rendered socioeconomically vulnerable in instances of young parenthood
because they are unable to access higher wage, skilled employment. Also pregnancy and
gynecological problems, of which Dr. Moreira, director of the Cangahua Subcentro in the
barrio central, lists in his top three health problems in the parish, can lead to reduced labor
output from women and financial hardships in the case of having more children. Such
households are at increased risk for violence and increased risk for adolescent pregnancy in
the next generation, which continues the cycle of poverty.
CHAPTER 4: OVERCOMING A LEGACY OF PRECARIOUS HEALTH THROUGH BUEN VIVIR?

Health for indigenous populations in post-contact Ecuador has always been precarious. A general estimate is that up to 90% of the indigenous population of the Americas succumbed between 1492 and the eighteenth century (Montenegro and Stephens 2006). In Ecuador the descendants of those who survived the violence and pandemics brought by Europeans were then subject to precarious health and wellbeing via the hacienda system during the colonial era. In the post-colonial years following the demise of the haciendas, Ecuador switched to a neoliberal system for Westernized biomedical healthcare in which those with wealth and access were able to receive benefits. Health and healthcare in Ecuador became a de facto two-tiered system; overall health in the nation improved with the introduction of biomedical health care systems but only for those with the financial resources to access care (Waters 2006). At the same time health for the most vulnerable and impoverished populations remained stagnant or, in some cases, worsened as they remained without access to the biomedical healthcare system.

The introduction of President Rafael Correa’s Citizens Revolution in 2008 led to significant improvements in health access, infrastructure, and services in an effort to provide universal healthcare. As a part of the National Plan for Buen Vivir, all citizens were guaranteed access to the tools needed to achieve good health and were guaranteed the right to free, high quality healthcare. However, the implementation of a universal healthcare system has not been uniform nor has it changed how people relate to the healthcare system. In places such as Cangahua, the population is considered vulnerable due to its endemic poverty, rural
location, and majority indigenous ethnicity; thus, the population is considered high risk for poor health and poor access to the healthcare system. President Correa’s reforms to the national health system were designed to improve health for vulnerable populations, but the operationalization of the reforms has not been the panacea that the Citizens Revolution intended. Despite Correa’s reforms, recent histories of inadequate provisioning of healthcare and tenuous relationships with the healthcare system have made Cangahueños wary of the latest iterations of institutional health systems. Instead contemporary Cangahueños rely on medical pluralism to manage their health and to reduce chances of negative interactions with the national healthcare system. Their strategies of adapting to the available biomedical health resources and concurrent usage of traditional health systems are acts of resilience that allow for health management when knowledge, money, and services are lacking. The following chapter explores how contemporary Cangahua residents manage their health despite socioeconomic vulnerability, a legacy of precarious healthcare availability, and patchwork health reforms.

Health as a Foundation of Good Living

Institutions of health pre-Citizens' Revolution

Modern biomedicine in Ecuador came into existence in the 1970s as haciendas were phased out due to land reforms and the national economy coalesced around capitalist production. Prior to this time the indigenous population relied on traditional medicine for their healthcare needs. However in the late 1960s and early 1970s, healthcare in Ecuador became concentrated in areas that fueled development and growth in the capitalist system; in other words, health resources were almost exclusively concentrated in urban areas where the capitalist machine was centered (Madero 1983). Likewise health policy became centralized and politicized during the 1960s and 1970s.
During the transitional post-hacienda period the national government created the Ministry of Health\textsuperscript{29} (MOH) in 1967 as a subdivision of the Ministry of Social Service and Labor (\textit{Ministerio de Previsión Social y Trabajo}) to create, implement, and plan for national health policy (Madero 1983). At its founding, the MOH was charged with administering health services in all provinces and increasing coverage of health resources in the nation. One of the primary goals was to stem epidemics and eliminate communicable diseases. In 1972 the ministry decided to concentrate services in Quito to focus on modernizing the healthcare system. These initiatives were to be funded by profits from the petroleum export industry, which further integrated the nation’s health policy into the capitalist machine. However, the ministry was subject to political inefficiency and corruption which Madero (1983: 51) argued “limited expansion and development of health[care] in the country.” The disorder in the MOH characterized the first four decades of its existence as its leadership changed between 15 national presidents and 31 ministers, each with an average term length of 14 months (Sola 2004).

The disarray in the MOH from its inception led to an overwhelming failure to meet the needs of those outside of urban areas. As a result health policy in rural areas of Ecuador became localized and resulted in sporadic, low-quality healthcare and poor health due to inadequate funding, low expertise, and lack of resources (Madero 1983). Unsurprisingly the largely indigenous rural populations of Ecuador continued to rely on traditional medicine rather than engaging the biomedical system. This trend continued throughout the 1980s as public spending on health remained insufficient as a part of the “liberal revolution” to decentralize the health system (Madero 1983; Sola 2004). The goal of decentralization was to move from a national system towards a system of local control and proportioning of health

\textsuperscript{29} The full name of the agency in Spanish was \textit{Ministerio de Salud Pública y Bienestar Social} (Ministry of Public Health and Social Wellbeing). Today the agency is known as \textit{Ministerio de Salud Pública} (Ministry of Public Health).
resources (Sola 2004). This resulted in reduced coverage, low quality, and user dissatisfaction of healthcare for most people (Puertas and Starr 2003). The biomedical healthcare system became mostly exclusive those in urban locations and with the financial means to access care (Sola 2004). For example, in 1980 over 72.5% of doctors and 99.3% of nurses were located in urban areas and 7.3% of national budget was allocated to the MOH (Madero 1983).

Decentralization and neoliberal policies that defunded the public health sector during the 1980s and 1990s led to a biomedical health system of inequality and failed policy in Ecuador. From 1990 to 1993 national spending on health decreased 37% (Puertas and Starr 2003). By 1998 only 4% of the national budget was allocated for health services while 45% was earmarked for external debts. As a result, access to disease prevention and curative services during this time were dismally low, especially for poor and rural areas (Lopez-Cevallos and Chi 2010). As with economic indicators, the health system suffered from inequality in access, usage, and care during this time. In the late 1990s 30% of the population had no access to health care (Sola 2004) and 66.8% had no insurance (Sasso 2011). The government attempted several insurance schemes to control costs but they did not work because people preferred to pay at time of services rendered rather than paying in anticipation of need. Additionally, those in the lowest quintile of income, who were the most vulnerable to ill health, were the least likely to access healthcare services (Lopez-Cevallos and Chi 2010). They also spent a greater proportion of their income on health; in 1997 the poor spent about 40% of their income on health-related expenditures. Thus those with vulnerable socioeconomic circumstances were largely excluded from the biomedical healthcare system in the late twentieth century. By 2000 national funding for health in Ecuador reached a low of 0.6% of the national budget (De Paepe et al. 2012).
Healthcare to achieve the good life

When President Rafael Correa took office in 2007 he guaranteed “the good life” for all in Ecuador, which included transforming the healthcare system by providing free, quality healthcare to all regardless of citizenship status (De Paepe et al. 2012; Rasch and Bywater 2014). The *Modelo de Atención Integral de Salud* (MAIS), or integrated healthcare model, reasserted that all citizens had a right to health and focused on health at the level of family, community, and culture (Ministry of Health). The national government made a substantial investment in improving healthcare access for citizens, especially for those who live in rural areas. The 2008 constitution guaranteed social security to all regardless of whether they were salaried employees or relied on self-subsistence farming (Sasso 2011). Article 449 of the Constitution also assured access to healthcare, protection from loss of income from illness, protection from workplace health risks, the right to retirement and access to retirement income, and protection in times of financial uncertainty. As part of these reforms, the budget for the Ministry of Health increased from $615 million USD in 2007 to $1.047 billion in 2008 with a mandate to increase the budget annually by a 0.5% increase of GDP (De Paepe et al. 2012). The budget was divided into a three pronged investment in infrastructure improvements, construction of new public hospitals, and physician recruitment (Rasch and Bywater 2014). Also, as part of the 2008 health reforms teams of community health promoters, *Los Equipos Básicos de Salud* (Basic Health Teams) or EBAS, were sent to provide in-home care to reach those in rural areas and marginalized communities (De Paepe et al. 2012). The success of this plan was seen immediately as health care visits increased by 50% by the end of 2008.

Increased government expenditure on health-related services and programs has been concurrent with increased utilization of government-provided healthcare services. The funding increases were dramatic following Correa’s election; the MOH received a $1 billion
USD funding increase between 2007 and 2012 (Yánez 2013). This resulted in an annual investment in healthcare rising from $606 million USD in 2007 to $1.6 billion USD in 2012. In the same time frame per capita spending on health rose from $43.1 USD in 2007 to $112.8 in 2012. Likewise public expenditure on health increased from 44.8% in the period between 2006-2010 to 52.3% between 2011-2015 (World Bank). This includes funds from national and local budgets, international sources, non-governmental organizations, and health insurance funds. Concurrent with the health expenditures the number of Ecuadorians accessing the health care system increased from 16 million in 2006 to 34 million in 2012 (Yánez 2013). Thus increased public expenditures on health had a positive effect in terms of bringing patients into the biomedical healthcare system.

Another improvement in healthcare brought about by President Correa was refocusing the MOH to promote “social medicine,” which according to Rasch and Bywater (2014), “moves beyond the limited scope of the biomedical model and posits that social, economic, and political conditions are important contributing factors to widespread disease.” This framework of social medicine fits within the critical medical anthropology approach of contextualizing health and healthcare beyond the body by understanding how the social, physical, and economic environments affect health. By incorporating social medicine the MOH developed social and environmental initiatives to reduce health risks such as widespread installation of sewage systems in impoverished areas and increasing education about the risks of adolescent pregnancy and tobacco use. Social medicine has also included, since 2013, requiring healthcare professionals to work for one year in a rural health center (Año de Salud Rural) or in a marginalized urban area prior to receiving full licensure (Ministry of Health). This program was conceived as a means of providing quality accessible healthcare to vulnerable populations. The MOH also instituted an “intercultural health”
program (*Salud Intercultural*) to integrate traditional medicine and traditional healers into the national health system.

As expected, creating a national system of universal healthcare after decades of defunding health expenditures required more medical professionals and facilities to accommodate new patients. Due to low salaries and lacking infrastructure many Ecuadorian doctors found work internationally during the neoliberal period. In March 2012 the MOH introduced the *Ecuador Saludable, Vuelvo Por Ti* (Healthy Ecuador, I Return for You) initiative to entice healthcare professionals back to Ecuador. Benefits for those returning included monthly salaries ranging from $986 USD to $2,967 USD, relocation per diem of $354, and 10-20% salary bonus for working in “inaccessible” areas of Ecuador; however, doctors were still required to complete a year of rural health service upon their return (Ministry of Health). Within the first three months of the program 1,434 Ecuadorian nationals and 63 foreign nationals registered for the program and, by October 2012, 204 health professionals returned to work in Ecuador. Of the initial applicants 717 of the applicants were in Cuba and 557 were in Spain. In addition to recruiting additional healthcare professionals, the MOH also capitalized on its funding windfall by increasing and improving the nation’s healthcare facilities. Between 2012 and 2016 the MOH remodeled and retrofitted 381 hospitals and health centers with new technology, built 851 new health facilities, and outfitted 151 health facilities with computers for integrated health records maintenance (Ministry of Health). Also, 600,000 scholarships were created for healthcare workers and 17,000 current employees received salary improvements.

However, a study by Rasch and Bywater (2014) showed that the MOH is still failing to meet expectations of providing quality healthcare in rural, indigenous areas, primarily because of a continued reliance on the supremacy of biomedicine as the model for health care delivery. The findings of Rasch and Bywater (2014) reflect the health care needs and
inadequacies in Cangahua. A major factor influencing health in Cangahua is that the population on average has many marginalized identities in that it is rural, ethnically indigenous, undereducated and overwhelmingly impoverished. The rural location affects health in that there are a lack of options for formal (i.e.-Western biomedicine) medical care—there is one primary Subcentro, which is a government operated health clinic, in the barrio central and one auxiliary Subcentro that is located in the rural highlands that can only support basic first aid care; one pharmacy owned by a family with no formal medical or pharmaceutical training; and the closest hospital is in Cayambe, which is over 15km away or further depending on where in Cangahua a person lives. Additionally, the number of health care professionals for the parish is dismally low. In Cangahua there are only 3.7 doctors per 10,000 inhabitants (INEC 2010). The high levels of poverty reduce the ability of residents to access the formal medical system. Most communities in Cangahua parish are located over 5 kilometers from the primary Subcentro and pharmacy. There is a public bus transportation system but it does not serve every community in the parish and can be costly for families with few financial resources. Families can hitchhike, hire taxis, or use an ambulance to reach the clinic but these options are not free. Nineteen percent of the participants in my household survey indicated that they walked to the Subcentro and 53% said they hired a taxi or called an ambulance when they required medical care from a doctor; only 3% had access to a private car and the remaining 24% relied on the bus system for transportation to healthcare. On average, 45% said that their travel time to the Subcentro took between 30 minutes and an hour each way. Also, healthcare is free at the Subcentro but medication is not. The only pharmacy in Cangahua, which is run by a local family with no pharmaceutical training, is considerably more expensive than the chain store pharmacies in Cayambe and for many residents in Cangahua travel to Cayambe is not an option. Finally, indigenous ethnicity and low education levels can hamper a patient’s trust of and adherence to biomedical treatments.
None of the healthcare workers except for two trainees at the main Subcentro in Cangahua are indigenous nor are they originally from Cangahua. Both patients and healthcare workers admitted to me that cultural misunderstandings inhibit the effectiveness of treatments at the Subcentro. For example, a doctor noted that patients may not take medicines as prescribed because they do not trust them and a patient confided to me that doctors do not always understand the “real” (i.e.- according to indigenous beliefs) causes of illness. Having a population with low education levels results in similar difficulties because patients may not always understand or carefully follow the instructions of doctors.

Carlos’s Story

Carlos’s story is typical for what happens when a person in Cangahua experiences a health emergency and demonstrates why healthcare delivery remains a problem in rural locations and vulnerable populations such as Cangahua. He was twenty-four years old and, as the eldest son, he lived at home and worked the family onion and potato fields although he had other aspirations for his life. One night, Carlos woke up with severe pain in his upper back. His parents called his uncle, who owned a truck, to drive him to the hospital in the middle of the night. After several hours of waiting at the public hospital in Cayambe, he was diagnosed with indigestion and prescribed an antacid to take at home. The pain returned the following evening so his uncle drove him to the hospital in Cayambe yet again. This time, a different doctor diagnosed him with gastritis of an unknown cause, prescribed antibiotics and more antacids, and ordered Carlos to follow a diet of bland foods. After several days the prescribed treatments did not work and he returned to the hospital a third time. It is unclear whether Carlos followed the medication regimen as instructed but that would prove to be beside the point. Carlos was sent to a more advanced hospital in Quito for further testing. His parents, an impoverished indigenous couple who lived in one of the highest altitude

30 Name changed to protect the privacy of the informant.
communities in Cangahua, packed clothes and food into a large woven rice bag and boarded a
bus to accompany Carlos to Quito. They could not afford a hotel or restaurants while in Quito
so they ate the food they brought with them from home and camped out in the hospital.
Carlos was diagnosed with gall stones and scheduled for surgery to remove his gall bladder
the next day. However, his parents were subsistence farmers and did not have the disposable
income available to pay for the surgery. They called a relative and had him arrange to sell one
of their cows—which can fetch up to $500 at the market—to finance Carlos’s surgery. The
cow was sold for around $300, which was just enough to cover the hospital expenses.
Carlos’s uncle with the truck drove to Quito to deliver the money to his parents. The surgery
was successful and Carlos and his parents returned to Cangahua two days later.

In Carlos’s case, misdiagnoses from hospital doctors in Cangahua caused a strain on
his family that, undoubtedly, would have occurred regardless. The trip to and from the
hospital in Cayambe took almost 45 minutes each way, which was expensive and
inconvenient because his uncle expected compensation and fuel costs for the long trips. The
care at the hospital in Cayambe was free but the quality of care was not optimal as evidenced
by multiple incorrect diagnoses. The misdiagnoses were partially due to a lack of appropriate
diagnostic equipment. I am not sure of the nature of the interactions between Carlos and the
doctors or of how well Carlos followed their treatment protocols, but Carlos expressed
dismay with the doctors when recalling his examinations at the Cayambe hospital.
Ultimately, seeking treatment in Quito was unavoidable but it provided further financial
strain on his family. Carlos’s example exemplifies why simply providing universal basic
healthcare coverage remains insufficient in Cangahua and for many in Ecuador. Access and
quality of care are hindrances to receiving healthcare in rural areas. Further, this example
shows that universal healthcare can still cause major financial burdens for patients, which is
particularly detrimental to those who are already impoverished. Carlos and his parents
believed that had this happened prior to the current healthcare regime, the financial consequences for their family would have been more dire. However, as I sat on their porch while Carlos napped after his surgery, his mother sighed and proclaimed that the national healthcare system was not meant for people like them, that is people who are campesinos in isolated communities.

**Agents of Health and Healthcare: Cangahua Health in Context**

The current public healthcare system in Ecuador is divided into three sectors in addition to a smaller private sector of healthcare and insurance. Prior to 2008 national health services were provided through the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Instituto Ecuatoriano de Seguridad Social (IESS), which is the social security system for workers and employees (Lopez-Cevallos and Chi 2010). The IESS was supported by taxes on employers and employees, but many evaded or contributed less than their share by underreporting the number of employees and/or salary amounts. Currently, public health services in rural areas are administered by the Ministry of Health (MOH), the IESS, and the Seguro Social Campesino (SSC) for those in legally recognized peasant organizations (De Paepe et al. 2012). De Paepe et al (2012:220) succinctly note that, “the poor are served by the MOH and the formally employed by the IESS, while the upper middle class and the rich use private services. The SSC aims at the rural poor and in this sense overlaps with MOH rural services, although the SSC only enrolls families through legally recognized peasant organizations. Urban IESS affiliates contribute a small part of their insurance premium to finance the SSC.”

The MOH operates 17.6% of the country’s health care services, the IESS covers 19.2% of the population, and the SSC covers 9.2%. Private corporations, charities, and NGOs offer 15% of Ecuador’s health services. Only 3% of the population uses private insurance yet the private sector remains a significant and stable aspect of the healthcare system due to perceived inadequacies and 20% longer wait times for the public health system.
In Cangahua the Ministry of Health, Cangahua Subcentro, and the Ministry of Education (MOE) are the primary providers of healthcare and health education. In addition to providing various forms of ambulatory care, these units actively promote health education to improve the uptake of healthcare resources by Cangahua residents. Cangahua Subcentro physicians and nurses are expected to provide health education as a standard part of their healthcare consultations (Dr. Schuberth Moreira, Medical Director of Cangahua Subcentro, personal communication\(^31\)). Also, the Cangahua Subcentro has an in-clinic health education program called *la charla de espera* (Chat of Hope) in the mornings just before the clinic begins accepting patients at 8am. The program provides medical counseling, education, and an introduction to basic biomedical healthcare tools and practices (e.g., how a sphygmomanometer measures blood pressure and why blood pressure is measured at every visit). However, a person must take the initiative to go to this program at the clinic, which is often too far for those who do not live in or adjacent to the barrio central, and advertisement for the program is limited to being informed of it at the clinic or by word of mouth. The MOH compensates for the narrow reach of the Subcentro by providing mobile health outreach services throughout the parish. These mobile units operate independently of the Cangahua Subcentro and often arrive in Cangahua without giving advance notice to the Subcentro. One of the mobile units is a reconfigured ambulance that drives throughout the parish once a month to provide basic healthcare and preventative screenings. There is also a mobile unit for women’s healthcare via tractor-trailer trucks that are divided in exam rooms. These trucks offer mammograms, women’s well care exams, and ultrasounds for pregnant women. However, because of poor roads and difficult access to the most remote areas of Cangahua parish, the trucks park in the central plaza of the barrio central. Stationing the trucks in the barrio central, less than one block from the Subcentro, reinforces the problems

\(^{31}\) Interview conducted at the Cangahua Subcentro in the barrio central on February 3, 2015.
of healthcare accessibility for those in the outer reaches of the parish. Despite the limited mobility of the mobile women’s care clinic compared to the MOH mobile units, it provides valuable screening services and equipment that are not available at the Cangahua Subcentro and allows women to avoid trips to the public hospital in Cayambe for specialized women’s health care.

In addition to the subsidiaries of the national health system, the Ministry of Education is also charged with delivering health education and services in Cangahua, which is a feature of the National Plan for Buen Vivir. According to the MOE, buen vivir and education are related in two ways. First, “education is necessary to achieve buen vivir by developing human potential” and, second, education is key for “guaranteeing equality of opportunity for all people.” The government’s rationale for education centered on buen vivir is that it creates active citizens and promotes values and knowledge that further the development of the country. For example, good living through good health benefits the state because preventative care helps reduce the costs of healthcare for major illnesses in the future. Additionally, these programs ensure an adequately healthy and educated populace, which is essential and necessary for nurturing the future workforce that will support the state’s economic activities. Thus, as a part of promoting buen vivir, the education system is expected to educate students to value six central tenants: peace, democracy, equality of opportunities, health, sexuality, and the environment. To implement these goals, the MOE introduced an educational model for “buen vivir schools” to complement the básica (basic) general educational curriculum. Over 2,400 schools in Ecuador now participate in this program, including the schools in the barrio central of Cangahua, which are the largest in the parish.


With regards to health and the buen vivir curriculum, students receive comprehensive health education at the primary and secondary school levels that include basic anatomy, nutrition, hygiene and disease prevention, and an introduction to biomedical theory and practice. Health education programs are implemented as a part of the government-standardized curriculum for each grade level. For example, personal hygiene is one of the “subjects” in which students are graded at schools in Cangahua. Additionally, as a part of the Citizens Revolution reforms, in 2009 schools in Cangahua began offering a free nutritionally balanced breakfast and free nutritional supplementation at the preschool and primary school levels to combat child malnutrition via the School Nutrition Program (El Programa de Alimentación Escolar). Preschool, or initial education, students are given fortified milk, fortified sandwich creme cookies, and colada powdered drink mixes; students at the basic education level, roughly ages 5 to 14, receive colada, two types of fortified cookies, cereal bars, and fortified milk. These snacks are formulated to provide 90% of the calories and 85% of the protein that is recommended to nourish a child throughout the school day (Ministry of Education). However, not all children consume these snacks at school. In one family that I interviewed, the child in primary school brings the snacks home and they are eventually thrown away because the family deemed them unpalatable. For another, much poorer family, the children trade with their classmates for extra snacks so they can bring them home as extra food for the rest of their family.

Also, once a month doctors and dentists come to the schools to provide preventive and curative health care for all students in the básica general educational curriculum. Students at all grade levels are given vaccines at school, including an annual influenza vaccine. The parents are notified when this will occur, but according to the primary and secondary school principals in the barrio central, almost no parents are opposed to their children receiving vaccines or other preventive medical services (personal communication,
directors of Unidad Educativa José Acosta Vallejo and Collegio Cesar Tamayo). Dental services are also offered at least once a year during the school day. This includes cleaning and checkups although more complicated cases are referred to specialists at the Subcentro or in Cayambe. Again, almost no parents reject these services although children are occasionally so afraid of the dentist that they scream and cry to the point where the dentist refuses to examine them. At the secondary school level, students receive comprehensive sexual education, including preventive education for violence against women and children as part of the National Strategy for Family Planning and Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention (ENIPLA PEA). Secondary school students cannot obtain contraception from the school or agents of the Ministry of Health who provide healthcare services for the schools, but the students are instructed on where to obtain and how to use contraception. Additionally, the largest secondary school in Cangahua, Collegio Cesar Tamayo, has an on-site infirmary where students can receive first aid and minor healthcare services outside of those offered in school via the Ministry of Health.

The collaboration between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health make schools a proxy for childhood preventative healthcare in addition to being sources of comprehensive health education. Receiving preventative healthcare in childhood is essential for ensuring proper growth and development. Although the government partially achieves this through social welfare programs such as the Bono de Desarrollo Humano (BDH), which in the case of impoverished mothers provides a monthly cash transfer in exchange for meeting conditional requirements such as regular vaccinations and healthcare for their children. Providing healthcare services in the schools ensures that children are receiving the adequate care and nutrition necessary to avoid preventable negative child health outcomes. Additionally, these services eliminate parental barriers to obtaining child healthcare as the services are delivered directly to the child in school, for which enrollment is mandatory at the
basic education level. However, these programs allow the state to efficiently achieve its ultimate goals of reducing healthcare costs and improving the overall health and wellbeing of the populace.

Balancing the Traditional and the Modern

However, initiatives to improve health via the MOH and MOE in Cangahua are complicated by indigenous cultural norms regarding health, which often are often ignored by the government. The majority indigenous population of Cangahua tends to prefer traditional healing as an alternative to the biomedical system. This “informal” system of traditional medicine in Cangahua competes with the formal system and, in some cases, is incompatible with biomedicine (Fassin 1992). This informal system includes medicina popular, which is local knowledge of traditional means of healing; curanderos, who usually use cuy (guinea pigs) to divine the nature of illness or remove the agents causing the illness; and brujos, which means “witch” but is better described as shaman. Use of traditional medicine for illness is not necessarily a detriment and Fassin (1992:41) notes it is important to “give legitimacy to local medicine; do not treat it as low value nor underestimate its efficacy without recognizing practices that pertain to indigenous culture”. In other words, indigenous culture has relied on traditional healing techniques for centuries and there is often an empirical component to traditional treatments. Even the MOH argues that it is culturally elitist to delegitimize traditional medicine because it does not fit into the Western biomedical model of medicine.

Traditional medicine is usually a first line of treatment among Cangahua residents whether they self-identify as indigenous or mestizo. The formal, biomedical system is usually used as a last resort. During interviews all of my informants stated that they preferred to use traditional medicine prior to using the Subcentro or other MOH services. All also stated that they have had good results with using this approach. Their reasons for using traditional
medicine as their first option included traditional medicine being something they learned from their parents, herbs are cheaper than pills, and distrust and dislike of biomedical health professionals. However, one informant’s rationale for using traditional medicine first succinctly described the other informants’ reasons—“it is part of being Kayambi.”

Further, it is not uncommon for Cangahua residents to integrate biomedical and traditional methods of healing. This is not unique to Cangahua as Fassin (1992) observed many instances where herbal concoctions were mixed with ingredients such as Coca-Cola and aspirin as part of a “traditional” treatment. A few informants who admitted to using both types of treatment concurrently cited availability of healing treatments and prior success with combining traditional and biomedical treatments as their reasons for integrating the methods. When questioned about patient practices of using traditional medicine first and mixing formal and informal medical techniques, the Cangahua Subcentro medical director, Dr. Schuberth Moreira, who is from Quito and is of mestizo identity, did not necessarily view the primacy of traditional medicine in Cangahua as a bad thing. He did not believe that traditional methods were destructive or any less efficacious than the interventions he learned via Western biomedical training. He also appreciated that patients were being proactive about their health. Dr. Moreira said that, similarly, the Subcentro staff is aware of and sensitive to the fact that most of their patients use traditional treatments prior to visiting the clinic. However, Dr. Moreira did note that using biomedicine as a last resort often made diagnosis and treatment more challenging for his doctors.

Despite Dr. Moreira’s support of integrating traditional and Western biomedicine, it is risky in a low education, high vulnerability environment. Overall, the people of Cangahua are fairly well-versed in traditional healing techniques using herbs and cuy. For example, pain and general malaise are treated by rubbing a raw egg on the affected areas to “capture” the causal agent of the illness. The egg is then discarded by throwing it outside to break the shell,
which releases the illness-causing agents away from the household. Another treatment for general malaise is to lightly whip the affected areas with branches of stinging nettle (ortiga), which is believed to release illness from the body. To relieve a self-diagnosed gastritis infection one elderly woman that I talked to said that she bathed away the illness by scrubbing herself with a baby cuy. The cuy died during the process because, according to the woman, she transferred her illness to the cuy. Other common treatments among my informants in Cangahua included using local herbs to make teas or medicated bath water. Even when these treatments did not work, some said they still preferred to see a curandero rather than a medical doctor because they had more trust in traditional medicine.

In general the use of traditional medicine in Cangahua is not problematic for minor ailments that involve well known and well understood local treatments. However, there are times when urgent care from the biomedical medical system can be a better option for rapid relief and to avoid complications or further harm. In these cases, there is a widespread lack of understanding of situations when biomedical interventions may be easier or more effective than traditional remedies. For these circumstances the problem is not the use of traditional medicine but a lack of knowledge of the pros and cons of traditional medicine versus biomedicine. Lower education levels in Cangahua exacerbates these conditions because there is not a widespread understanding of how biomedicine can prevent, soothe, or cure ailments. Instead, biomedicine has acquired a reputation of causing harm or even death because using biomedical treatment as a last resort often leads to presentations of advanced illness that require advanced treatments or that may be too far advanced for curative treatment.

Mariana’s Story

Mariana's story is an illustrative example of how indigenous beliefs, low education regarding the pros and cons of traditional versus biomedicine, and distrust of the biomedical system often complicates health and healthcare for individuals in Cangahua. Mariana had
been having pain when she went to the bathroom for a couple of months. She decided on a two-pronged approach—one treatment to provide immediate relief and soothe her pain and a long-term remedy to treat the illness itself. Mariana treated her pain with herbal teas that she concocted from the herb patch in the backyard. She also rubbed her abdomen with a raw egg every evening then threw it outside to help release the illness from her body. Her long-term approach was to create an herbal mixture for daily bathing by boiling herbs in water then using the liquid to cure whatever was causing pains in her lower abdomen. Although she did not seem to heal completely, she continued her herbal treatments for several weeks because her symptoms did not worsen. She also did not seek treatment from a medical doctor because she was sure that her traditional healing techniques were sufficient for healing her ailment.

One day Mariana woke up during the night with excruciating pain in her abdomen and lower back. Her husband, who owns a truck for his small flower-growing business, rushed her to the public hospital in Cayambe. After two days of testing in the hospital (Mariana went home each evening), Mariana found out that she had a severe kidney infection that led to complications including dehydration and severe electrolyte imbalance. The doctors told her that the kidney infection was the likely result of a mild urinary tract infection that could have been cured with a short round of antibiotics. Since the bacteria that caused the infection were not eliminated, the infection spread to her urinary tract. This caused a bladder infection and, ultimately, a kidney infection. A simple round of oral antibiotics would not be sufficient to cure her compounded infections. Her doctor decided that she would need several doses of intravenous fluids and antibiotics to treat her infections. The doctor hooked Mariana up to an infusion pump (i.e. - IV machine) in the hospital to deliver the first dose of medicine intravenously. However, the doctor decided that her illness did not warrant being admitted to the hospital, which was only equipped for “basic” urgent care according to the Ministry of
Health, so Mariana was sent home with instructions to return to the hospital in 24 hours for further evaluation and treatment.

Mariana is a shopkeeper in the barrio central and her husband is a smallholder flower farmer. Unlike most families in Cangahua, they can afford private healthcare and prefer private providers over the public facilities run by the Ministry of Health. Mariana and her husband did not trust the diagnosis of the doctor at the public hospital, which they consider an inferior quality of healthcare although it is the only 24 hour facility within a reasonable driving distance, so she went for a consultation with a private doctor in Cayambe immediately after leaving the hospital. The consultation took several hours because the doctor did not have laboratory facilities in his office and Mariana's husband had to drive her urine and blood samples to a private laboratory in downtown Cayambe, wait for the results, then bring the paperwork back to the private doctor. In the interim Mariana remained at the doctor’s office, where she was hooked up to an IV drip to address her dehydration. When Mariana's husband returned with the independent laboratory results, they learned that the hospital diagnosis was correct regarding Mariana's advanced bacterial infections. The doctor added antibiotics to her IV drip. When the IV finished, Mariana and her husband went home with instructions to return in 12 hours. Mariana and her husband never returned to the hospital for a follow-up visit with the doctors there.

At Mariana's next visit with the private doctor, her husband had to repeat the process of taking her urine and blood samples to an independent laboratory and waiting to bring the results back to their private doctor. The infection was still active so Mariana received another round of intravenous antibiotics and was sent home with instructions to return in 24 hours. The process was repeated at the doctor’s office the following day, however, the doctor decided to try a different type of antibiotic that evening. He made arrangements to come to Mariana's house and administer the IV in her home instead of making her come back to the
clinic. Around 5pm that evening the doctor came to Mariana's house in the barrio central and rigged the IV bags to hang from the headboard of her bed. She was told it would take approximately four hours for the bags to completely empty. By then, it would be too late for the doctor, who lived in Cayambe, to return and remove the IV. None of the Subcentro staff live in Cangahua. Mariana's husband asked me to come over and speak with the doctor. Since I worked as a trained phlebotomist prior to graduate school I felt comfortable with the task of removing Mariana’s IV; I agreed to remove the IV for Mariana when it finished that evening. The doctor gave me a few instructions about the particular IV he chose and left for his home. I hung out around the house while Mariana laid in bed and watched television during the IV drip.

When I asked Mariana's husband about her health, he told me the story of her illness. When I asked about the costs of getting confirmatory treatment from a private doctor, her husband said, “When it comes to health, money does not matter. My family is more valuable than money.” As mentioned above, Mariana and her husband represent an atypical Cangahua family in terms of their financial resources; however, in many ways they are typical of Cangahua residents. Mariana and her husband, who are in their mid-thirties and mid-forties, respectively, self-identify as indigenous; Mariana had her first child at age 16 with another man who now lives in the Amazon as an oil worker; Mariana graduated from high school and her husband is literate yet was only educated up to the primary school level (fourth grade); and they have a skeptical relationship with biomedicine. Mariana's mother died shortly after giving birth to her, which was one of the first births in her community that was done in a clinic with a medical doctor instead of in the home with a traditional midwife. Mariana's father gave her to his sister to raise shortly after her mother’s death, as she was his only daughter and he was reluctant to raise an infant alone.
According to Mariana, the story of her mother’s death at the clinic spread rapidly in her town and created a fear of the clinic and Western medical doctors. People believed that you would die if you undertook the treatments offered at the clinic, so the clinic became stigmatized in the community. Such rumors and beliefs furthered distrust of biomedicine and elevated the status of traditional healers and remedies despite government messaging that encouraged biomedicine as modern and, therefore, better. Situations such as the circumstances of Mariana's birth also explain why many in Cangahua believe clinics and hospitals are places that make people sick and/or places where people go to die. Negative experiences with biomedicine are emphasized over the positive and become fodder for local gossip. This increases the stigma surrounding biomedicine. Fast forward several decades, and the story of Mariana's birth explains her insistence on using herbal treatments to cure her pain rather than going to a doctor. It also explains why her interactions and treatments with the hospital and private doctor were particularly dire; she waited so long before seeking biomedical treatment that her infection had spread and complications developed while a simple round of antibiotics at the beginning of her discomfort could have cured the illness.

Mariana's story is not meant to privilege Western biomedicine over traditional medicine. However, it does highlight an example of how more awareness and education about biomedicine is required before it can make a tangible impact on health in rural indigenous areas such as Cangahua. Simply making biomedical facilities and medical staff more accessible is not sufficient for improving health and wellbeing in vulnerable populations. There must be an education component regarding biomedical praxis and an understanding that preventative medicine and early treatment are best in some circumstances. The current practice in indigenous areas, such as Cangahua, of using biomedicine as a last resort makes biomedicine less effective and results in fear and negativity about its curative abilities. Health education in schools teaches youths about the mechanics and benefits of
biomedicine, yet these students also learn *medicina popular* (traditional medicine) and receive conflicting information about biomedicine in their homes. Stories such as Mariana's highlight the need for improvement in the national health and education systems for addressing the conflicts between traditional and biomedicine and for creating significant change in the health of vulnerable populations.

**Health in Cangahua**

When asked to define health, in addition to responses related to the absence of illness, most Cangahua residents listed things such as having enough food and water, cleanliness, happiness, socializing, and the ability to do work. Similar responses were given to describe what one must do to be healthy. Most residents described health and wellbeing in the context of being able to move and work. This suggests that the ability to act and move is the ultimate indicator of good health for Cangahua residents. Likewise, when asked to define ill health, residents said things such as laziness, inability to do work, not having enough food and water, and not having friends or family. Many felt that the elderly had more instances of ill health because their living conditions are generally meager and many live alone and do not have as many friends. Good health was believed to be more common in the young because they have more vibrant social lives and are in better physical condition, which allows for doing strenuous labor. The young also have less physical limitations to working so they have more access to health via healthy actions. When I asked informants if they believed that they and the members of their households were in good health, their answers reflected that they were judging health in terms of the ability to work or the quality of their social lives. Those who defined themselves as having poor health cited reasons such as work injuries that prevented productivity, not having enough potable water because it has to be retrieved from springs and canals, social isolation, and limited mobility due to advanced age. All of the informants I interviewed cited their children as the healthiest in their households because they were active,
enjoyed playing with others, could complete physical chores, and had access to better diets via their schools. Surprisingly, none of the informants believed that being rich, however they chose to define rich, resulted in better health. They also did not believe that being male or female influenced health. Further, none of the informants mentioned health in a biomedical context; rather mentions of disease and illness in a biomedical sense were most often cited when asked about sickness and disease. Thus illness and health are separate, unrelated concepts for Cangahua residents. Health is an action and a way of being in the larger community whereas illness defines the status of proper bodily functioning.

To quantitatively measure perceived health among my informants, I used the SF12v2 as a global, non-diagnostic survey of general physical and mental health (Ware and Sherbourne 1992; Ware et al 1996). The SF12v2 is a reduced version of the Medical Outcomes Study 36 Item Short Form Survey (SF36) that measures perceived mental health, physical health, and wellbeing based on six dimensions of health—general health, physical functioning, bodily pain, vitality, social functioning, and emotional and mental health. Of the 126 residents who participated in the household survey, 120 agreed to complete the SF12v2 health questionnaire. The results of the SF12v2 indicated low to moderate variability of self-reported health among my informants. When asked about their current health, 69% of those surveyed described themselves as being completely or somewhat sure that they have excellent health, 16% were not sure, and 15% believed it was completely or somewhat false that they had excellent health. Eighty percent of those surveyed indicated that they always or almost always had high energy during the last month. Two-thirds (66%) felt that their activity had not been limited and 70% did not have interruptions in their daily activities during the past month due to poor physical health. Similarly, 80% did not have regular bodily pains that prevented them from completing their usual chores and work during the past four weeks. These data indicate that the majority of residents perceive themselves to have good overall
physical health. According to the official manual for the SF12v2, these data show high scores on the domains of vitality, physical functioning, and bodily pain, respectively. The results were similar regarding emotional and mental health. Sixty-one percent reported that they had not felt sad all or most of the time during the past four weeks and 75% felt calm and tranquil most of the time in the past four weeks. These percentages indicate that those surveyed had overall good mental health status. With regards to emotional health, 68% indicated that emotional problems neither limited their ability to complete their daily tasks and work nor did it limit their ability to focus on the important things in their lives. Finally, 62% of the survey respondents felt that their physical and mental health did not interfere with their typical social activities during the past four weeks.

For the most part, the above data reflect positive changes in perceived health in Cangahua during the past couple of decades. Cangahua residents overwhelmingly link the current state of health in their families and communities to overarching social and economic processes. Those interviewed felt that their and their family’s health improved over time and that these improvements are directly related to the availability of healthcare and social welfare services. All of the informants described the health of themselves and their families during their youths as with words such as “bad” (mala), “worse” (peor), and “less than now” (menos que ahora). My informants cited improvements in their family’s health as functions of economic and social improvements. For example, almost all of the informants noted that household infrastructure improvements such as installing internal plumbing or gaining electricity as specific incidents were the cause of improved health in their households. One informant specifically stated that the addition of indoor plumbing and electricity was the turning point for health in their household because they were guaranteed access to potable water and technology, such as radios and televisions, the improved their happiness and wellbeing. Such additions are significant in Cangahua because most residents over age 30
grew up without indoor plumbing in their homes and many outside of the barrio central do not have indoor plumbing. Household infrastructure improvements occur incrementally as the family saves money, thus each economic and infrastructure gain is associated with an improvement in household health and wellbeing. Informants who lived abajo, that is down the mountain from the barrio central, cited development due to floriculture as a contributor of improved health in their households. The abajo communities are more dependent on floriculture as a source of income. All of the informants from these communities worked for or had worked for a flower plantation at some point and all viewed the plantations as positives in the sense that they provided the income necessary to achieve good health for their households. For example, several expressed that floriculture employment improved their household’s health because it allowed them to purchase luxury items and afford utilities such as water and electricity. Similarly, others said having more and better food choices due to more disposable income improved their health. Many also cited having wage labor opportunities, particularly at the flower plantations, allowed them to have healthy lives because it provided them a means to provide their families and neighbors better health through sharing. With regular income they could upgrade their housing, buy more and better food, and use buses or private transportation to access healthcare and social events. These cited improvements in health were distinct from complaints of illness associated with floriculture employment. One informant said that the plantations give her family better health even though she suffers from respiratory problems from pesticide exposure. She believed that her sickness due her employment at a flower plantation was worth a better life for her family.

Those who lived arriba, or at higher altitudes than the barrio central likewise linked health to economic status. Floriculture employment is less common arriba, instead most families are subsistence farmers who do not receive regular wages. These families earn money as needed by selling crops and livestock. Thus it is not surprising that those who live
informants who lived arriba were also more likely to name transportation as a cause of improved health. Bus service is less frequent and serves fewer communities at higher altitudes. Thus residents rely on taxis, friends, and family with cars or motorcycles to travel to the barrio central or Cayambe, where they can buy diverse foods and visit the Subcentro. In other words, isolation is associated with an inability to access resources needed to achieve good health.

Conclusion

Health and healthcare in Ecuador have significantly improved as a result of the reforms of Rafael Correa’s Citizens Revolution and National Plan for Buen Vivir. Increased funding for the national health system has expanded services, encouraged access, and upgraded facilities and education so that all citizens of Ecuador can receive healthcare when needed. As a result, access to free and quality healthcare services has reached unprecedented levels even for those in the most isolated and impoverished parts of the country. Further, by linking the Ministry of Education to the Ministry of Health, the government ensured that one of the most vulnerable segments of the population—children—would have an opportunity to grow and develop without the threat of malnutrition and preventable illness.

However, in Cangahua these reforms have neither been uniform nor have they resulted in the citizens having a trustful relationship with the healthcare system. Traditional medical practices are largely the first line of healthcare for those in the parish. Providing preventative healthcare in schools has been successful for improving child health but nutritional supplementation in schools is not always enthusiastically embraced in the way it was intended by the children that it is meant to benefit. Thus the state of health in Ecuador
and Cangahua has improved but there is still work to do to reach the goal of buen vivir through good health. In a broader sense these reforms are also serving the social, political, and economic goals of the national government. Protecting the health of citizens generates continued political support, strengthens social and familial ties, and ensures a population capable of providing the productive labor needed to drive the national economy in the present and the future.
CHAPTER 5: RESILIENCE AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES AS BUEN VIVIR

Almost a year after my last fieldwork visit to Cangahua I received a frantic email from a friend in Cangahua. Andres was having a personal financial crisis and wanted to know if I could wire several hundred dollars to him as soon as possible. He explained that Ecuador was undergoing a financial crisis and he had acquired some debts with the bank. He mortgaged his house to help pay the loans but apparently he was behind on mortgage payments because he said the bank was threatening foreclosure. His email even went as far as saying that he was willing to illegally sell a kidney for money if it meant keeping his family from living in the streets.

Andres and his family live in the barrio central of Cangahua where they live a relatively middle class life compared to others in the parish. He owns a two hectare flower growing operation in a community just below the barrio central and his wife runs a bodega out of the front room of their home. Their two story house has three bedrooms, a fully finished basement with a converted bedroom that they rent to travelers, and a large open space accessed by stairs from the street front that they rent to aspiring entrepreneurs who usually close their shops usually within six months. In other words, Andres and his family have an ostensibly financially self-sustaining household.

When I first read Andres’s email I was in shock because it always seemed that his family was financially stable notwithstanding the normal capitalist desire for more money in order to get bigger and better things such as a tablet for the kids or a new pickup truck with a double cab that can comfortably seat the entire family inside. Further, Andres and his siblings
owned several hectares of land that they received as reparation from a defunct state-owned hacienda in one of the highest altitude communities of Cangahua located just below the páramo. A small parcel of the land is used for subsistence agriculture, another small parcel (<1 hectare) is used by Andres’s older brother and nephew to grow roses for the cut flower market, and the rest of the land is unused. Several times while riding with Andres in his pickup truck to visit his family he would tell me about his dream to build cabanas on the empty land and market it as a destination for foreign tourists looking for a relaxing getaway. He would often make not-so-subtle hints that he needed help from a foreign investor he trusted (i.e., me) to make his dream come to fruition; I would respond by either ignoring the remarks, feigning incomprehension, or changing the subject. I note all of this to show how bewildered I was to hear about Andres’s financial woes and the extremes to which he was willing to go to get out of debt. In the end I did send a much smaller amount than he requested and Andres began reluctantly selling land and other possessions to eliminate his debts. He was able to avoid foreclosure. It seems that Andres’s family is back to living their middle class (for Cangahua) lifestyle.

As prior chapters have noted, Cangahua is a community undergoing significant socioeconomic and cultural transitions due to the encroachment of ideas, behaviors, materials, and aspirations from the capitalist metropoles of the United States and Western Europe. The forces of globalization have introduced different ways of living, new desires and wants, and altered expectations for what it means to live well. The incursion of these new ideals is leading to anomie in the behavioral norms and desires of Cangahua, especially in younger generations. In pre-capitalist times, life in Cangahua was based on interdependent vertical and horizontal relationships, but the current influence of Western ideals encourages individuality and lifestyles centered on the nuclear family unit. Further, the adoption of a Westernized way of life increased the potential for catastrophic shocks to individuals and
households in the new socioeconomic landscape of decreased interdependency. This means that families in Cangahua, even those that are subsistence farmers, are now vulnerable to economic crises or natural disasters (e.g., problems with health, environment, weather, etc.) that can seriously disrupt or destroy their livelihoods and wellbeing.

However, various factions within Cangahua are pushing back and reasserting traditional ideals as a means of protecting the culture and identity of Cangahua from the threats of individualism, conformity, socioeconomic vulnerability, and sudden shocks that can have disastrous outcomes for individuals and households. These strategies use collective power to promote interpersonal relationships, improve public infrastructure, and develop a local economy that keeps the flow of money and resources within the community. I argue that Cangahua residents, acting as a community, have developed several avenues of resilience and resistance against the various socioeconomic forces that are disrupting traditional life and livelihoods in Cangahua. By maintaining cultural traditions and creating new avenues of economic advancement, the residents of Cangahua parish are forging their own ways of adapting to, and in some cases, resisting the changes associated with rapid culture change. These actions of resistance become acts of resilience. In turn, resilience becomes a method of maintaining wellbeing in the midst of uncertain times. The following chapter briefly examines the vulnerabilities faced by Cangahua parish and examines how collective action is a type of resilience that promotes wellbeing by counteracting the pressures that are pulling Cangahueños towards homogenization and away from traditional livelihoods.

**Vulnerability and Resilience as a Community**

According to Dressler (2011:120), modernization, in a biocultural sense, is the “transition of societies from predominately agrarian and non-industrial to urban and industrial.” Cangahua is a parish with a strong agrarian and indigenous heritage that is undergoing rapid social and cultural changes due to increased contact with transnational ideas
and material goods via the growth of the floriculture industry. Throughout the twentieth century Cangahua was in contact with outside forces due to its production of dairy and wool for the national economy; however, the rise of floriculture just before the new millennium was the starting point for rapid change due increased “outside” contact with national and international actors. The arrival of the flower plantations introduced new forms of “friction” to the lives of Cangahua residents (Tsing 2005)—new interactions between the global and the local as a result of new people, ideas, labor, and economy in the parish. This led to a subsequent change in expected ways of living and daily lived experiences in Cangahua. Definitions of typical livelihoods in Cangahua continue to change as global and modernized ideas flow into the parish. These changes are occurring in all aspects of daily life yet they are having a mosaic effect on how the people of Cangahua adapt their cultural and social lives to these outside forces.

The introduction of globalized ideals to new communities reduces horizontal interactions between community members while creating vertical interactions that occur via increasingly larger scale forces. In other words, traditional communities tend to move from sharing and cooperative interactions towards those based upon differences in status and wealth in its various forms (e.g., money, materials, natural resources, etc.). This process is what Tsing (2005:5) refers to as friction—“heterogenous and unequal encounters [that] can lead to new arrangements of culture and power.” Similarly, there is movement away from a community based on traditional social capital to a community based on economic capital, which discourages traditional subsistence and encourages “interconnected dependency” (Wilson 2012: 1226) through wage labor, market integration, and other forms of capitalist practices. Additionally, the economic and material outcomes of this capitalist shift sends more resources out of the community than into the community, which creates a disruption in the community’s environmental capital. Although these changes increase individual
economic capital in the community, it simultaneously decreases the social, cultural, economic and environmental capital of the community as a whole. This results in social and cultural change in the community because contact with external ways of being “shifts attitudes and behavior towards one’s own and other communities” (Sonn and Fisher 1998: 462), usually so that the external ways of being are privileged over the traditional. This is a continuous process creating and breaking interactions and their outcomes which, in turn, creates shifts in the local culture (Tsing 2005). In return, this shift creates stressors in the community in which the only ways to respond are to assimilate into the external—usually dominant—way of being, integrate the new ways with the old, separate and isolate the community as a rejection of change, or surrender as a marginalized community in the new system. However, even in cases of capitulation and isolation communities can still adapt to the threat of interference by creating and reinforcing narratives of identity and being (Sonn and Fisher 1998).

The adoption of new ways of thinking and being creates vulnerability as a result of disruptions to traditional lifeways. According to Daskon (2010:1086) “vulnerability is the degree to which a system or unit is likely to experience harm due to exposure to perturbations or stress.” In the case of Cangahua I contend that the primary source of vulnerability in the contemporary socioeconomic landscape stems from rapid, drastic changes due the global interconnectedness that creates a standardized global identity. The default standardized identity is one based on the Global North’s capitalist desires for material and monetary wealth (Appadurai 1996). According to Appadurai (1996), new cultural information is transmitted by cultural flows of information via five distinct “landscapes”: migration (ethnoscapes); media and entertainment (mediascapes); technology (technoscapes); economic exchanges (finanscapes); and politics (ideoscapes). Appadurai (1996) argues that this loss of local identity leads to “rootlessness, alienation, and psychological distance between individuals and groups (p.29)” due to “disjunctures between economy, culture, and politics
(p.33).” In other words, embracing a new globalized identity results in inter- and interpersonal conflicts from trying to reconcile the incompatible desires and lifestyles of traditional versus globalized living.

There are two distinct examples from Latin America that illustrate these conflicts or “awkward, uneven, unstable, and creative” frictions (Tsing 2005: 4) between the traditional and the modern. The indigenous artisans of Otavalo, Ecuador are known worldwide for their handcrafted woven textiles, which resulted in widespread economic prosperity for Otavaleños. Colloredo-Mansfeld (1999) provided an intensive analysis of how the traditional textile belt worn by indigenous Otavalo women, the *faja*, was transformed into a symbol of economic success. Women used new clothing materials and belt placement to transform a traditional marker of ethnicity into a symbol of cosmopolitanism and wealth while maintaining traditional expectations of appropriate attire. The fashion choices of successful Otavaleño women reflect what Appadurai (1996:32) referred to as “indigenized” applications of the “Americanization or… commoditization” of local cultures in the process of global cultural homogenization. In comparison, Lewellen (2002) recounted how the Aymara living on the Peruvian shores of Lake Titicaca were pressured into the globalization process due to the instability of maintaining a traditional subsistence farming lifestyle. Population growth, land reform, and parcelling of land to heirs forced young Aymara men into migrant labor in the rice fields of the coastal desert. On average men sent about 60% of their earnings back home, resulting in an increase of “manufactured household possessions” such as tin roofs and radios (Lewellen 2002:220). This led to the phenomenon that Lewellen (2002:221) described as having “one foot in the countryside and another in the national economy.” Instead of becoming more “mestizo” Lewellen (2002) observed that kinship ties became stronger and land became more culturally valued. However, despite the encroachment of capitalist materials and ideas into the indigenous cultures of Otavalo and the Aymara of Lake Titicaca,
neither group showed an outward desire to become mestizo or Americanized. Instead, they found ways to integrate new ideologies and materials into their traditional culture and worldview. These examples demonstrate how indigenous collective resilience works to achieve a balance between integration in and separation from the globalized world in response to pressures to change.

Similarly, the most noticeable evidence of modernization is in the attire and public presentations of Cangahua youths and young adults. As noted, most residents are of the Kayambi ethnicity and dress accordingly. For women, this entails black linen espadrilles (alpargatas) or flat leather dress shoes, a bright pleated skirt, a white blouse with puffy sleeves and embroidered detailing along the neckline, a dark colored bowler hat with a feather, and a lightweight bright-colored wool textile (chalina) worn as a sash or additional layer over the skirt for additional warmth. Men have a simpler style that includes dark trousers, a white or light colored linen or cotton blouse, a wool poncho—usually red—during cold weather, dark shoes, and a bowler hat with a feather. Hairstyles are conservative in that men wear their hair close cropped above their ears and necks while women wear their long, often waist length, hair in a single braid that is sometimes wrapped along its length with a strip of embroidered cloth (cinta). It is not uncommon to walk around the parish and see men and women dressed in these traditional styles; however, this does not hold true for the children and young adults of Cangahua. Adherence to traditional attire is decreasing rapidly with each new generation. It is not uncommon for parents to dress in the traditional attire yet outfit their children in outfits that mimic popular styles in the United States. However, style of dress is not the only manner in which “modern” ways of being are infiltrating the culture of Cangahua. Another superficial example is hair styling. Mohawks and other asymmetric and gravity-defying hair styles are currently popular for young men. Traditionally, girls and women grow their hair very long. However it is increasingly common for teenage girls to
wear their hair in lengths above their shoulders and/or wear their hair loose or in messy buns. Not surprisingly, hair styles can be a large source of tension between older generations and adolescents in Cangahua. Several of my more traditional informants remarked that changing attitudes about personal presentation are some of the biggest and most threatening indicators of cultural change in the parish.

**Community Resilience to Promote Wellbeing**

Despite the encroachment of new frictions into the livelihoods, expectations, and desires in Cangahua, parish residents are not passive bystanders amidst the forces of change. Just as segments of Cangahua are embracing new ideas and ways of being, Cangahueños continue to actively indulge in traditions and practices that reinforce the unique culture and identity of the parish. Rather than transforming Cangahua into a Westernized outpost, parish residents are selectively favoring aspects of the new frictions while ignoring or resisting the ideas and intrusions deemed unappealing. Further, Cangahueños are repurposing the new ways of living and being gained from these frictions into a style that is uniquely Cangahua. I argue that these actions of selective adaptation and synthesis of traditional and globalized ideas are acts of resilience.

Sonn and Fisher (1998:458) defined resilience as “successful adaptation to stressful events, oppressive systems, and other challenges of living” that depends on biological, psychological, and social ability to respond to these pressures. Almedom (2008:S1) further elucidates that resilience is “the capacity of individuals, families, communities, and institutions to anticipate, withstand and/or judiciously engage with, withstand, and/or judiciously engage with catastrophic events and/or experiences; actively making meaning out of adversity, with the goal of maintaining normal function without losing identity.” However, anthropologists focused on health and wellbeing have recently re-conceptualized resilience as an active process rather than a personal attribute or static way of being (Panter-Brick 2012;
Ungar 2008; Ungar 2011). Ungar (2008) operationalizes resilience as processes of “navigation” and “negotiation”. Navigation is having the agency to find and use available resources and negotiation is consuming resources (e.g., education, healthcare, infrastructure) in ways that are culturally meaningful and contextually useful (Ungar 2008: 225). Further, resilience manifests in culturally and contextually distinct ways (Ungar 2008). Panter-Brick and Eggerman (2012:369) noted “cultural values are the ‘bedrock’ of resilience: they underpin the meaning attributed to great suffering, hope for the future, and a sense of emotional, social, and moral order to ordinary and extraordinary aspects of life.” Wexlar et al (2009) argued that culture is an important component of resilience because it gives meaning to resilient actions and behaviors within a community.

Resilience as a collective, especially at the community level, is a dynamic process that involves power, policy, and culture (Luthar et al 2000; Rival 2009). Community is a contested concept but for the purposes of this discussion, I refer to community as “a social network of shared identity that is bound by a particular entity or cause” (Chaskin 2008: 65). Collective resilience as a community is necessary where there are unpredictable changes in one or several aspects of the social, economic, environmental, and cultural conditions of the community (Wilson 2012). Such unpredictable changes include stressors, which are persistent pressures that cause disruptions, and shocks, or sudden events that upend the current environment (Daskon 2010). These changes are most common in communities undergoing unforeseen and unpredictable transitions, which can be anthropogenic or forces of nature that require a collective resilience to adapt and survive. Actions of resilience, in turn, minimize the impact of external forces of change.

The concept of resilient communities incorporates aspects of how cultural traditions and collective action minimize the disruptiveness of stresses and shocks to the community and promote the wellbeing of all of its members. Community resilience thus works best in
place-based communities where the collective has the physical ability to connect and act as a unit (Berkes and Ross 2013). Similarly to the concept of community, resilience is a contested term with varying definitions based on academic discipline. In this chapter I use the definition proposed by the Canadian Centre for Community Renewal (2000:1-5): “one that takes intentional action to enhance the personal and collective capacity of its citizens and institutions to respond to an influence the course of social and economic change.” Berkes and Ross (2013:6) refer to community resilience as “the capacity of its [the community] social system to come together to work toward a communal objective.” According to Magis (2010), “the most resilient communities are those that are well developed and balanced in all aspects of their social, economic, cultural, and environmental capital.” Additionally, communities are greater than the sum of their parts and affect livelihoods and wellbeing at various levels of the community from individuals to households and even stakeholders external to the community (Berkes and Ross 2013). Further resilience at the lower levels of a community affects resilience at higher levels of the community and vice versa. Consequently, community resilience is best evaluated in terms of how well individuals, households, and stakeholders adjust to disruptions in the existing socioeconomic landscape (Wilson 2012).

In resilient communities there also is a social resilience, which is the “ability of groups or communities to cope with external stresses and disturbances as a result of social, political, and environmental change” (Adger 2000: 348). This allows the community to maintain its identity and wellbeing despite the external threats to the community’s livelihood, or “social stress” (Adger 2000). This can occur via structures and activities that are “community provided opportunities to experience security, stability, belongingness, and psychological relatedness” by providing new avenues to construct and maintain the group identity (Sonn and Fisher 1998: 466). In turn, these shared experiences lead to mutual internal meanings and understandings that create solidarity and connectedness. Thus the
social institutions of the community ultimately determine the extent to which the community is able to be resilient (Adger 2000). Social institutions are also subject to vulnerability due to pressures of economic and political change. However, a socially resilient community protects the collective from external pressures and stressors in a way that provides a safety net and promotes the overall wellbeing of the community (Chaskin 2008).

An analytical lens that operationalizes resilience as an active process is useful in cases of communities undergoing socioeconomic, political, and/or cultural change because it demonstrates how the collective works together to preserve and redefine their wellbeing (Panter-Brick and Leckman 2013). Similarly, understanding collective resilience allows for questions such as “how is resilience defined, normatively, across cultures?” (Panter-Brick 2014:442). In other words, what may seem to be a maladaptive action in one context is actually a form of resilience in another. For example as discussed in Chapter 3, in Cangahua teenage mothers are the norm and are culturally acceptable although the national government strongly discourages adolescent pregnancy in order to improve educational achievement and career opportunities for women, amongst other religious and moral reasonings. However, in the Cangahua context early motherhood may be a form of resilience that strengthens social ties within and between families in an impoverished community where dependency on extended familial networks is advantageous for personal wellbeing. Further, in a changing and unpredictable socioeconomic climate, collective resilience allows “social groups [to] build themselves anew in the wake of sweeping economic and political challenges (Panter-Brick 2014: 419).” Cultural traditions are signifiant actions of resilience because they form a protective layer against disruptions and vulnerabilities to livelihoods (Daskon 2010). Thus cultural traditions allow for coping via the safety and familiarity of tradition, shared knowledge, and the embracing of family and community. Additionally, culture and
community reinforce resilience by providing a protective outlet for reinforcing collective identity and empowerment.

In turn, culture and community influence wellbeing in two ways. The first is via the structure and environment of the community and the second is via “the mechanisms and networks” that allow the community to function such as social capital, institutions, and daily lived experiences (Chaskin 2008: 68). Stressors to the community and how it is able to respond to change are due to unpredictable changes in policy, technology, demographic change, the private sector, natural forces, and globalization. However, a resilient community actively works to build institutions, structures, and behavioral norms that allow the collective to adapt and thrive when under pressures to change (Berkes and Ross 2013). This typically occurs in one of three ways—by regrouping, re-developing, or resisting in response to stressors and shocks in order to minimize risks to the human, social, and organizational capital of the community.

**Vulnerability and Resilience in Cangahua**

One benefit of community is that it can serve as a source of identity, which provides a protective buffer from intensive pressures to change the way in which individuals within the community think, act, and interact. Dressler (2011) refers to these buffers as “resistance resources,” such as social networks and other sources of social support, that allow adaptation to stressors and shocks by preventing the negative effects of sudden change. Cangahua residents have endured rapid socioeconomic transitions and pressures to change since the beginning of the twentieth century. Despite the changing social landscape, Cangahua remains a parish that has managed to adapt to change while maintaining the cultural hallmarks of its Kayambi identity. However, the introduction of floriculture, an industry centered on globalized production and trade relationships, brought a wave of capitalism and Western
ideologies to the parish. The new ideologies promoted consumerism, individualism, and conformity, which are all contrary to the traditional indigenous mores of Cangahua.

The forces of modernization and globalization are the most persistent sources of stressors and shocks in contemporary Cangahua for individuals, households, and the community at large. Modernization and globalization both positively and negatively impact resilience by changing and developing relationships within the community via stressors in the economic and natural resource landscape (Adger 2000; Wilson 2012). This is especially important depending on the cultural and historical context of the community (Adger 2000). On the positive side, according to Wilson (2012: 1224), “globalization is further associated with global harmonization and uniformity of human processes”. In this sense globalization and modernization increase community resilience by improving access to technology, education, healthcare, natural resources, and various forms of social and economic capital via national and transnational networks. However, globalization and modernization are also negative for communities because they are marked by “slow-onset disturbances” (Wilson 2012: 1224) to communities that discourage the continuation of distinctive local character, beliefs, and actions, which results in a loss of “community integrity and social capital” (Wilson 2012: 1225). This includes a loss of the collective identity of the community via the loss of traditions, culture, social capital, and internal systems of power and resource distribution. In other words, the introduction of globalization and modernization can lead to the dissolution of traditional agrarian communities, which results in increased social, political, economic, environmental, and cultural vulnerability for the community (Adger 2000).

According to Dressler (2011:120), modernization, in a biocultural sense, is the “transition of societies from predominately agrarian and non-industrial to urban and industrial.” Cangahua is a parish with a strong agrarian and indigenous heritage that is
undergoing rapid social and culture change due to the pressures of globalization and modernization via the introduction of the flower-growing industry in the 1980s. The parish culture remained centered on a locally-based agrarian economy throughout colonization and just after the agrarian reforms of the mid-twentieth century; however, since its inception, the floriculture industry in Cangahua has been the starting point for the global value chain for fresh cut flowers. The arrival of the flower plantations brought “friction” (Tsing 2005)—new interactions of the global and local via people, ideas, labor, and economic practices into the parish. This led to a subsequent change in the customary and expected ways of living and daily lived experiences in Cangahua. Traditional Kayambi indigenous dress, language, subsistence, mores, and beliefs became outmoded for the younger generations and a source of cultural conflict and resistance for the older generations. This can be seen, for example, on the roads of the parish as it is not uncommon to see parents in traditional Kayambi clothing walking with their teenage sons sporting mohawk hairstyles and their daughters wearing jeans and t-shirts with the logos of American clothing companies. Further, the definitions of traditional livelihoods in Cangahua are actively changing as global and modernized ideas flow into the parish. These changes are occurring in all aspects of daily life yet they are having a mosaic effect on how the people of Cangahua adapt their cultural and social lives to these outside forces.

Kleinman and Kleinman (1999) stated that the integration of transnational media into the social life of previously isolated areas has infused the global into the local, resulting in a rapid vehicle of sociocultural change. Not surprisingly, the influx of entertainment media is a primary example of how transnational flows are threatening the traditional culture of Cangahua. Families that have televisions usually have DirecTV satellite television as well; in my household survey of 126 households, 29% of families had satellite television service in their homes. Instead of the prepaid subscription services that are the norm in the United
States, satellite television in Cangahua is prepaid in that families pay for a certain amount of hours of television. Upon payment they receive a unique code for the allotted time. They then use their television remote to enter the code into their satellite receiver boxes. Children are the primary consumers of satellite television in households. Cangahueño children with television access have become heavy consumers of cartoons and children’s programming from the United States that are dubbed into Spanish on channels such as Disney Junior, PBS Kids, and Discovery Kids. As a result, Cangahua children with Directv are also exposed to commercials that advertise toys, clothing, music, and other materials that are popular in the countries from which Disney en español programming originates—the United States and Argentina. This translates into desires for toys and other items with their favorite characters including backpacks, clothing, notebooks, and other sundries. Similarly telenovelas produced in Mexico, Colombia, and the United States (i.e., by Telemundo and Univisión) and television programs featuring foreign music videos are popular among young adults and teenagers in Cangahua. Hip hop and emo music are the preferred musical genres of Cangahua youths, which aurally clashes with the traditional music (música nacional) that emanates from stereos in the storefronts of the barrio central. At the high school, young men group into gangs according to their preferred music tastes, which can lead to the occasional scuffle during and after school. Together, international television and music entertainment consumed by the youths of Cangahua are significant vehicles of global influence that not only contribute to the current dissolution of local culture but also threaten to influence future generations as television ownership becomes more widespread in the parish.

As mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, economic changes are major sources of vulnerability to individuals and households in Cangahua. An example of how a sudden change in income can drastically affect the livelihoods of the entire household is apparent in the case of Yenifer. She is currently 18 years old and the middle child of three children. Her
parents grew maize, primarily for family use, and kept a small herd of goats for future sale in local markets when income is needed. Their land is too small and too poor quality to graze the goats so Yenifer’s mother herds the goats a couple of kilometers from their village to the cemetery in the barrio central each morning so the goats can eat enough grass to maintain a decent weight. Neither parent is literate and Yenifer’s father suffered an unidentified injury due to alcohol use several years ago that prevented him from working at a flower plantation. Yenifer describes her parents as drinkers of “too much” chicha and feels that their alcohol consumption primarily harms her ability to succeed. She desperately wants to complete secondary school but is over two years behind where she should be in her schooling. Her father was injured when she was 14. At that time Yenifer’s older brother was already married and living elsewhere in the parish with his wife and child and her younger sister was too young to work the family land. The responsibility for the household fell on Yenifer so she dropped out of school to help her parents. After a year of working her family’s land, she got a job as a live-in nanny for a family in the barrio central. Yenifer gave her earnings to her parents. Her new employers insisted that she return to school, so she re-matriculated into secondary school. However, after a few months in school Yenifer dropped out again because she said school was “too expensive” to be worthwhile. According to Yenifer “…for school you have to pay for notebooks, pencils, and uniforms\(^{34}\) and other tasks that need money. It was too much, too expensive. It was better to use my money on other things…like food.” Yenifer’s employers were not happy with her decision to leave school so she moved back home. When I asked her employers for their perspective, they said that they “rescued” her from a family that was too poor and drank too much alcohol and that Yenifer was not serious about school. They saw themselves as her saviors and were hurt that Yenifer was not taking advantage of the opportunity for improvement that they offered her. Yet, the family re-hired

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\(^{34}\) Uniforms for public school students are now subsidized by the national government to encourage school attendance as an initiative of the National Plan for Buen Vivir.
Yenifer the following year because there was a new baby in the household and they needed assistance with childcare. In order to regain her employment, Yenifer had to promise to stay in school; this was an easier task at the time because President Correa’s buen vivir education reforms eliminated many of the barriers to attending school, such as no longer having to buy uniforms or books. Yenifer kept her promise to stay in school but is now two years behind her peers in completing her bachillerato. Further, she is still expected to use her education to get a job that can financially support her and her parents regardless of whether she marries and/or has a child of her own.

Despite the above examples of ways in which engaging with the globalized world increases vulnerability in Cangahua, parish residents have responded to these pressures via resilience by integration and resistance. For example, the flower plantations have expanded and thrived in part because of a community acceptance of the cash economy, wage labor, and market integration as opposed to traditional subsistence farming. Also traditional festivals and gatherings have survived by integrating new ideas and technology into cultural expressions of collective action. However, Cangahua as a community has also expressed resilience by opting to reorganize and resist in order to protect its Kayambi cultural and social identity while simultaneously submitting to elements of socioeconomic and political change. The community has reorganized in part by finding ways to survive using new forms of technology, knowledge, and wealth to maintain and reimagine cultural traditions. This includes preserving sacred Kayambi cultural traditions as expressions of resistance. Elements of resistance to change has taken root with all age and socioeconomic levels in the community and reinforces Kayambi identity and values. In other words, as stated by Appadurai (2004:67), “…as the poor seek to strengthen their voices as a cultural capacity, they will need to find those levers of metaphor, rhetoric, organization, and public performance that will work best in their cultural worlds” in order to “have local cultural
force.” The remainder of this chapter highlights the ways in which Cangahua acts as a resilient community by expressing their local cultural force through resisting, regrouping, and re-organizing (Chaskin 2008) against the contemporary stressors and shocks associated with entering the “global village” (Appadurai 1996).

**Asserting Cangahua Identity Through Community Resilience**

One example of resistance to culture change is the maintenance of the community-wide *minga*, a Kichwa word that refers to regular gatherings of cooperative work parties in a community, which is derived from a historical tradition of reciprocity (Guevara 1957). The *minga* is a distinctive feature of Andean culture that is particularly common in the highlands of Ecuador. Mingas began during prehistoric times as a means of calling upon delayed favors from neighbors when agricultural labor needs exceeded the manpower of the household in a subsistence farming lifestyle (Faas 2015). According to Guevara (1957:22) “mingas are labors of indisputable social cooperation” that date back to the beginnings of Andean culture. At its essence, the minga represents three types of cooperation: between the individual and family, between the family and community, and between the individual and community (Guevara 1957). Consequently there are three types of mingas: “delayed reciprocal labor exchange,” support of the desires of local “big men,” and a form of “labor tax” that represents an “in-kind” contribution to the community or government (Faas 2015: 53).

Increasingly, however, mingas in highland Ecuador have taken the form of a labor tax in which a community provides labor in the service of the national government or non-governmental organizations in exchange for supplies and funding (Colloredo-Mansfeld 1999).

Cangahua mingas take the form of labor taxes that help ensure the survival of the community by building structures for common use, sharing of food and natural resources, and ensuring all have access to the means necessary for survival. This cultural mandate of
cooperative labor creates a shared bond between community members and a collective sense of obligation to the shared uplift and survival of the community by its constituents. In Cangahua, each community meets regularly to set the dates for mingas, usually once every 4 to 6 weeks, and the themes for the minga projects. Each household is required to send at least one person to participate in the minga; if a household fails to participate they are issued a fine as pre-determined by the community; these fines help with the financing of future projects. However, “rich” families regularly and willfully buy their way out of minga participation by paying the penalty fee (Colloredo-Mansfeld 1999). In the case of families that cannot afford to be in arrears, as noted by Foucault (1977), punishment is a means of preventing disregard and protecting the status quo. Foucault (1997) argued that punishments must act as deterrents and must be specific, related to the crime, and serve as a public means of deterring others. Accordingly, in Cangahua the act of paying a fine in a parish with widespread impoverishment is a strong deterrent to shirking minga participation. The community-based nature of the minga further demonstrates Foucault’s point, as the punishment is enacted by the community in a way that is quite public. The community sets the fine and the public nature of minga planning and implementation provides a conspicuous forum of public ridicule for failure to participate.

The typical minga in Cangahua involves manual labor projects such as digging trenches for potable water pipes, construction projects to improve the structures of buildings, or moving soil and rocks to facilitate road maintenance. However, some mingas also involve education and public outreach initiatives. For instance, in February 2015 the barrio central held a minga with the theme of public health. An entire Saturday was dedicated to health education in the form of community outreach led by the Subcentro staff and health promoters from the Ministry of Health. The minga consisted of tables decorated with balloons and informational posters in the central plaza, just outside of the Cangahua Subcentro government.
The healthcare professionals offered free basic health screenings and distributed pamphlets about safer sex and family planning to passersby. There were also special health education tables for children that gave away snacks, balloons, and personal hygiene items such as toothbrushes and toothpaste. Residents of the barrio central were charged with promoting the event to neighbors and nearby communities and helping distribute pamphlets about healthy living and healthcare services at the Subcentro.

The practice of collective action to improve the state of the community reinforces cultural pride and cooperation. The requirement that each household provide a member for minga participation ensures the longevity of mingas as a cultural tradition across generations, as adolescent male household members are more likely to participate due to the physical nature of most minga work and the lack of time constraints due to employment or parenting responsibilities. The practice of sending younger household members also acts to transmit the cultural ideals of cooperation and collective action in pursuit of the common good. In this sense, mingas provide a layer of protection against the pressures of culture change. At a broader level, the persistence of the minga as a cultural institution in Cangahua represents resilience via collective resistance against the pressures of culture change. When I asked residents what it meant to have a good or productive job, Cangahua residents overwhelmingly answered jobs that required working together and working with friends and family. Of twenty interviews I conducted with households in the parish, every person responded that participation in a minga or working together in groups was the ideal of a satisfying job. Residents also indicated that participation in communal activities inspired a sense of wellbeing and togetherness that provided harmony in the community. These sentiments were expressed by residents representing a variety of ages ranging from 18 to over 60 years old.
The Buena Esperanza Women’s Cooperative

On the contrary, an example of Cangahua residents showing community resilience through regrouping is exemplified by the women’s agricultural cooperatives that formed in direct response to strenuous and unfulfilling work at flower plantations. The BioVida women’s cooperative and specifically, the Aprocuyc division of BioVida in the Cangahua community of Buena Esperanza, is another example of collective resilience. BioVida is a network of agro-ecology producers from the Aprocuyc, Ucicaq, and Conmujer cooperatives that together form a larger women’s cooperative started with assistance from the “Casa Campesina” non-governmental organization (NGO) based in the nearby city of Cayambe\(^5\). The Casa Campesina Foundation is a project of the Salesian Society, a Catholic organization dedicated to uplifting children and the poor. The NGO espouses the values of solidarity, equality, and justice (Casa Campesina). As an organization that “promotes sustainable integral human development of the poor and excluded,\(^6\)” Casa Campesina provided a microfinance loan to a group of women in Buena Esperanza community of Cangahua, all of who are former flower plantation workers, that were interested in starting their own agricultural cooperative. Together, these women have mostly escaped from the industrialist forces of the local flower plantations to create their own means of agricultural production and trade.

I first met with Isabel, a leader of the Aprocuyc cooperative in August 2012 in conjunction with an undergraduate student from Foothills College in Los Altos Hills, CA who

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was writing a research paper about the history and workings of the cooperative. Isabel is a self-described poor indigenous woman who worked for the flower plantations for 11 years, during which she met her husband and began a family. She described the work as grueling labor in which she often worked from 6am to 7pm, and sometimes as late as midnight during high seasons in preparation for international holidays. One day Isabel heard a radio advertisement that Casa Campesina was looking for women to train and financially assist in setting up their own *cuy*, or guinea pig, breeding farms. She joined the program and opened a cuy farm in order to quit her employment with the flower plantation.

In 2000 Isabel and a small group of like-minded women began the land buying process for the cooperative. It ultimately took about 8 years to successfully obtain one hectare of land from the nearby defunct hacienda. The hectare was divided into 50 meter by 20 meter plots of land for each member to purchase. At that time each plot cost around $900 but plots now cost over $5000 each due to inflation. Anyone, regardless of where they live, can purchase as many plots as they can afford to participate in the cooperative. (Isabel owns three plots.) Isabel’s cuy farm has since grown into an agricultural and cuy farming cooperative with over 50 women as members. In addition to growing vegetables and breeding cuyes, the women also operate a cuy restaurant in the city of Cayambe.

The goals of the cooperative include tenets such as economic solidarity to promote fair and just development, agro-ecology to support sustainable and environmentally sound agriculture, advocacy for land rights and empowerment of small producers, and gender inequality to support the uplift of campesino women. The cooperative was established as an alternative means of capital and income from working as employees of the local flower

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37 Information about the women’s cooperative was obtained with the assistance and cooperation of Sally Packham, undergraduate student from the 2012 Pambamarca Archaeology Project, in preparation for her final paper for the field school.

38 All monetary figures are in United States Dollars (USD), which is the national currency of Ecuador.
plantations. The women in the cooperative individually tend their own crops and cuyes, but they pool their money to buy land, pay fees to sell at markets in Cayambe, and support the administrative operations of the cooperative. Profits earned from the cuy restaurant likewise are invested back into the cooperative. There is also a cooperative plot of land where the women grow maize for sale and alfalfa as food for their cuyes. The members are all responsible for the upkeep of the cooperative plot. Additionally, by participating in Aprocuyc members are eligible for microcredit loans through the cooperative, which are financed in part by the $130 monthly fee that each member pays to the cooperative. Through the microcredit program women can obtain $300-500 for a 9 month term, $100-200 for a six month term, or $50 for a three month term. Most women of the women who apply for microcredit opt for the full $500 credit payable over nine months.

Aprocuyc is the cuy-raising arm of the women’s cooperative. It is made up of members from six communities in the Cayambe canton. The central board is comprised of a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and parliamentarian, with smaller sub-committees for each community. In order to join a member must pay a $1200 entry fee and agree to set up a cuyera—an area for raising and breeding cuyes for the cooperative—in their home. Each cuyera must produce at least forty cuyes per month that weigh at least 1250 grams. The entry fee is steep and, for a woman earning minimum wage working at a flower plantation, it can take over a decade to save enough to pay the entry fee. Every week a different community in the Aprocuyc cooperative must contribute their cuyes to the restaurant in Cayambe. Additionally, two women from the cooperative work in the restaurant each day. The restaurant sells approximately 300 cuyes a month, primarily to tourists.

At the establishment of the cooperative there were 86 members but dozens left because raising the required numbers of cuyes to the ideal size proved too costly and difficult. Almost all of the women who left the cooperative returned to flower plantation employment.
For those that remained in the cooperative, the monthly profit is approximately $500 per month per member, which exceeds the national minimum wage of $320 per month. Although the startup costs can prohibit participation in the cooperative for many women in Cangahua, those who are able to participate are able earn more than they would working by for the flower plantations. In other words, as noted by Isabela, with cooperative membership she earns more money with less labor compared to her peers who engage in flower plantation employment. Further, she is able to lead a “natural” and enjoyable lifestyle by engaging in the effortless, for her, labor of tending cuyes.

In addition to providing a means for local women to financially support themselves while building capital, the cooperative is actively working to expand. They plan to open a second restaurant to cater to the local market. The restaurant will be larger, located further from the hubbub of Cayambe, and ideally be productive enough to employ four women per day. The ultimate goal for opening a second restaurant is to increase the annual revenues from both restaurants to over $10,000. Using a national government grant for $53,000, the cooperative purchased land for the second cuy restaurant just outside of Cayambe, in a location that was chosen to target the local market. However, the cooperative was required to match the government funds as a stipulation of receiving money from the grant. Over the course of three years the cooperative has only managed to raised $12,000 toward the grant; at the time of our conversation Isabela stated that the members were unable to access additional sources of funding. The cooperative leadership petitioned the provincial government for additional funding to complete the restaurant construction; the outcome of the petition was still pending at the time of my fieldwork. Most recently, the women received a loan to buy more land and, although the loan does not cover the full cost of the land, the women are still allowed to farm it. They are using the new lands to add barley to their agricultural portfolio and have plans to eventually build a school that will be “better” than the existing schools in
Buena Esperanza (personal communication with Isabel). However, the major roadblock to their plans is the ever-increasing cost of land. The current landowners are asking for one million dollars but the cooperative has only saved about half of that amount so far. The cooperative is in continuous negotiations regarding the land sale because they feel that the price is unfair for land that is hilly and steep with few acceptable areas for intensive agriculture.

The Aprocuyc division of the BioVida women’s cooperative is a prime example of resilience through re-organization. The cooperative represents a type of community resilience that allows campesino women to circumvent the predominant means of income in Cangahua—flower plantation employment—while simultaneously accumulating profit, capital, and property using the collective power of the cooperative. This form of community resilience also allows rural women to maintain the security and knowledge of living a traditional agrarian lifestyle. Notwithstanding the large startup costs of joining the cooperative, successful members have forged a new model for succeeding in the capitalist economy by sharing labor and resources to support themselves individually and collectively via the capitalist marketplace. Further, the collective aspect of the cooperative allows members to pool their resources and use their collective buying power to expand their influence and profits as a community. This system helps cooperative members achieve a profitable alternative to wage labor while working towards the cooperative’s tenets of gender equality and economic solidarity. In that sense, the cooperative is an alternative means of engaging in productive labor for women. However, the most important aspect of cooperative membership is that it allows women to own their means of production rather than working as proletarians who are the means of production.

Isabel’s real name was withheld to protect her identity so she could speak freely about the cooperative.
Buen Vivir as a Community?

The Ecuador National Plan for Buen Vivir is another means by which collective resilience is encouraged for the citizens of Cangahua and the nation at large. The various government initiatives for improving wellbeing via a symbolic reversion to the nation’s indigenous roots while simultaneously integrating the people and nation into the globalized world capitalizes upon ideas of progress and wellbeing for the people and by the people. Therefore, at their cores, applications of buen vivir policies are exercises of collective resilience. Examples of these forms of resilience include institutions such as compulsory basic education and socialized healthcare to prepare citizens for the demands of the modern living; investing in and promoting the indigenous roots of the nation as a means of building a successful “plurinational” nation; and rebuilding a national government that speaks to the inalienable rights of all citizens, including those who have been historically marginalized. In this sense the application of buen vivir policies is the essence of community resilience.

Consequently, these policies and intents have filtered into local governments and ideologies, thus creating new avenues for community resilience at the local level.

During a year away from my fieldwork in Cangahua between December 2013 and January 2015, buen vivir became an omnipresent mantra in the parish. Even though the national buen vivir initiative was several years old, when I arrived in Cangahua shortly after the new year in January 2015 I noticed that “buen vivir” was a ubiquitous rallying cry in the parish. The favorite radio station of my host family and of most young Cangahua residents, Radio Inti Pacha, ran advertisements with jingles promoting buen vivir during commercial breaks. The Cayambe cantonal government touted the slogan “together for a good life” (juntos por un buen vivir) to advertise government services and the government’s presence in general. The cantonal slogan appeared on radio, public transportation, uniforms, banners, and anything else sponsored by the Cayambe canton government. Similarly, the parish
government of Cangahua repeatedly mentioned buen vivir during public gatherings and events in the barrio central. School textbooks, which are part of the national education curriculum, also made overt references to buen vivir in ways that I had not noticed during prior fieldwork. However, whether the slogans actually translated into buen vivir for residents is debatable. Regardless, the organization of a farmers market in Cangahua is a prime example of the simultaneous integration of the three types of community resilience—resisting, regrouping, and re-organizing—proposed by Chaskin (2008).

On January 11, 2015, the barrio central of Cangahua hosted its first ever Feria Agroproductiva Mushuk Kawsay, which was essentially a local farmers market. Mushuk kawsay is a Kichwa phrase that means “new life” in English or “nueva vida” in Spanish, which fit the fair theme of celebrating local agricultural products for a healthy life and healthy community. A stage was set up in the main plaza to showcase local bands and other local dignitaries in recognition of the inaugural farmers market. Representatives from the parish government were given front row seats in front of the stage and many gave speeches praising the agricultural heritage of Cangahua and touting the importance of eating healthy by consuming the agricultural treasures brought forth from the Pachamama, the goddess of Mother Earth. A DJ from Radio Inti Pacha was on hand to provide live coverage of the event. Perpendicular to the stage was a long tent where rows of tables were set up on either side with a long walkway going down the middle. At the tables mostly indigenous women in traditional dress, sold vegetables, fruits, meats (lamb and chicken), and one stand sold jewelry and embroidered cloths. In between band sets the DJ went over to the tables and asked the merchants their names, locations, what they were selling, and what the festival meant to them. Most of the merchants were from Cangahua or Cayambe but the woman selling jewelry was from Imbabura. All spoke of health, organic products, pure air, nature and fertile land when talking about why they were at the fair and when praising their products. All
of the merchants emphasized that their food was healthy (sano) and organic (organíco) when asked to describe their wares to the DJ. The merchants gave several praises to Pacha Mama for the healthy food and fertile land. Additionally, directly across from the stage and also perpendicular to the dignitary tent were three large white tents displaying the Pichincha Province logo and a slogan of solidaridad económic a, or economic solidarity. Grills were set up under each tent where women in blue aprons cooked cuy, corn on the cob (choclo), and fried potatoes (papas). The fanfare of the stage, bands, live radio, and dignitaries were reserved for the inaugural event but in the weeks afterward an agricultural market took place every Sunday in the main plaza of the barrio central of Cangahua to affirm the parish’s commitment to buen vivir through the promotion of local organic agriculture and healthy traditional foods.

The initial and subsequent farmers markets were a success for the parish. The market was intended to provide a venue for local women to engage in commerce as a means of womens empowerment. I visited the market every week for ten weeks and there was no discernible decline in the number of vendors or customers. Although the inaugural market was the most popular of those that I attended, residents enthusiastically shopped at the market each week. Customers were primarily from the barrio central or adjacent communities but the vendors were usually from the more isolated higher altitude communities of Cangahua, where household agriculture is the primary means of production. When I asked various customers why they shopped at the local market as opposed to other stores or markets the responses were varied but usually related to relief at having consistent access to produce without having to travel to markets in Cayambe or its environs. Many of the customers felt that the prices at the Cangahua market were on par with other markets and stores, if not slightly cheaper. Several customers suggested that the food at the Cangahua market was of better quality and healthier because it was locally grown. The vendors expressed similar happiness that they did
not have to travel as far to sell their goods nor did they have to rely on brokers and middlemen, which resulted in less profit. Given the positive reviews of the market from both vendors and consumers, the market seemed to successfully reach its goal of providing “buen vivir” for all involved; local women were empowered through entrepreneurship and local residents receive easier access to reasonably priced local produce.

In addition to the weekly market as an expression of buen vivir, technology improvement is another sign of buen vivir promotion in the parish. In 2014 the main plaza and central park of the Cangahua barrio central became free wifi hotspot zones. All of the lampposts in the park advertised the service with banners proclaiming “¡la tecnología es buen vivir!” (technology is buen vivir). In addition to the slogan, the banners sport one of two photos—a smiling middle-aged woman in traditional indigenous attire sitting in front of a desktop computer or a group of children sitting and standing in front of a desktop computer with expressions of awe on their faces. When I asked the president of the parish about the wifi service and its usage, he said that free wifi was part of the national government initiative for buen vivir. Funding was provided by the national government but maintenance of the service was the responsibility of the parish. According to the parish president, the stated rationale for the free wifi was to create an area for students to use the internet as a means of furthering their education. In reality, however, very few residents in Cangahua own portable electronics that have wireless capabilities. Students generally have no access to personal computers outside of school computer labs or commercial internet cafes. Likewise, smartphones and tablets with wifi capabilities are rare in Cangahua due to the high costs of the devices and data services. Not surprisingly, the free wifi hotspot is not heavily used and when passersby take advantage of the wifi hotspot, they rarely used for its intended educational purpose.
Providing free and easily accessibly internet access is important in a contemporary society that is becoming increasingly integrated with globalized media and communication. The intention of providing a free wifi zone for the benefit of students is a well-intentioned goal that was seemingly implemented without addressing other more fundamental problems. In a sense, the government put the proverbial cart before the horse by not addressing the foundational problem of lack of access to equipment that uses the available technology. The residents most likely to use the wifi are the few who are already economically capable of affording personal computers, tablets, and smartphones. However, the overwhelming majority of residents do not own the necessary personal electronics to enjoy the free wifi. While introducing free internet access to Cangahua is one way to address the technological aspects of the government’s buen vivir plan, it is not being used to its full potential. A better way to address the technology deficit in Cangahua is to provide free and widespread access to computers with internet connections outside of schools and internet cafes. School computer use is limited to students and to usage during the school day while internet cafes are too expensive to use regularly for the average Cangahua resident. The residents do need access to technology and the internet to remain on par with their global peers but merely providing free wifi access is insufficient, however, the addition of the wifi hotspot does not adequately address the technological buen vivir needs of Cangahua residents.

A final example of a buen vivir in action is promoting community resilience for the benefit of the natural environment of Cangahua. On an uneventful Sunday in March 2015 four large statues of endangered species native to the Andean region—the spectacled bear, Andean condor, South Andean deer, and Andean mountain cat—were permanently installed in the main plaza of the barrio central. Stunned residents stopped in their tracks upon noticing the statues as they gathered for the weekly farmers market. By the time word of the statues reached me, several residents with access to cameras on their cell phones had already...
gathered to wait for their turns to pose for “selfie” photographs in front of the statues. However, the question of who put up the statues and why remained a mystery for those that I spoke with that morning. The following week I visited the junta parroquial building that housed the parish government to inquire about the statues. I was told that they were a gift from the government to the people of Cangahua. The purpose of the statues were to raise awareness for the native species of the land and to remind citizens to be cognizant of how they interact with the natural environment. Essentially, the statues were a conservation awareness project. They provided symbolic reminders of how it was the community’s collective responsibility to protect nature despite temptations and solicitations to exploit the environment in ways that can harm the environment. The statues represented the power of collective responsibility, pride, and action when it comes to maintaining the natural treasures of the Cangahua landscape. In other words, the statues of endangered species were vehicles of cultural preservation that empowered Cangahua residents of their capacity to be resilient as a unified community.

Inti Raymi as a Celebration of Cangahua and Kayambi Identity

Despite geographic, historical, and socioeconomic differences and increased pressures of the encroaching “globazlied village” (Appadurai 1996), Cangahua remains a parish united in a shared culture history as evidenced through events such as the annual Inti Raymi festival that dates to the pre-Incan era. Inti Raymi is so entrenched in the culture of Cangahua that even the statues at the entrance of the barrio central depict a man and woman in traditional Inti Raymi celebration attire. Inti Raymi roughly translates from Kichwa as “the path of the sun” (Guaña et al. 1992). According to the official 2013 Cangahua Inti Raymi celebration guide, Inti Taita, the sun god, and Pacha Mama are honored during this festival, which also marks the beginning of the maize harvest season. The festival is a means of asking for agricultural abundance from the gods who are most instrumental in ensuring a successful
harvest. The official celebration begins at solstice on June 21 and continues throughout the final two weeks of June and the first week of July. The Spanish conquistadores syncretized Catholicism with Inti Raymi and turned it into a three week celebration of the feast days of San Juan (Saint John) on June 24, San Pedro (Saint Peter) on June 29 and San Pablo (Saint Paul) on June 30 (Guaña et al. 1992). In Cangahua the Inti Raymi festival season is colloquially referred to as “San Pedro” by Catholics and non-Catholics alike. The festival is particularly notable in Cangahua because the parish has maintained one of the oldest and most traditional celebrations of Inti Raymi in the Andean sierra.

The Cangahua celebration of Inti Raymi is notable for the traditional costumes worn by the celebrants, which reflect traditional Kayambi attire from the not-so-distant past, with newer incorporations of symbols borrowed from the Spanish conquistadores. Most residents inherit Inti Raymi costumes that have been passed down from several generations since the traditional clothing has not changed in over a century. Males wear yellow scarves draped around their “pinch front” style cowboy hats with colored streamers attached to the brim, white long sleeve shirts, and zamarro, furry chaps made from the goat skin and fur decorated with bells and other colorful leather fringe. Men also carry long whips with handles of cured goat, horse, or burro hooves. Women wear colorful attire that consists of: brightly colored pleated skirts; black woven belts with bright embroidery along the length of the belt; white blouses with ruffled sleeves and embroidered flower patterns around the collar; bright-colored shawl draped around the shoulders; and black canvas espadrilles. Women style their hair into a long, textile-wrapped braid topped off with a black or green fedora tilted slightly off-center. In addition to traditional indigenous clothing, many young men wear colorful yet grotesque masks with faces on each side, called diablo-huma or diabloma, which means “devil head” and represents the head of the sun god; the devil symbolism comes from a syncretism of Spanish Catholicism and Kichwa mythology (Guaña et al. 1992). The diabloma
mask features 12 horns arranged from ear-to-ear for each moon of the calendar year (Guaña et al. 1992; Villacis Estevez 2007), semicircular tubes for the ears and nose, and circular cutouts for the eyes and mouth. The purpose of the diabloma is to scare away evil spirits that seek to destroy the upcoming harvest. Finally, some children and adolescents dress as clowns in variegated jumpsuits and conical hats, which is another way of scaring away evil spirits that was introduced as an artifact of Spanish culture (Guaña et al. 1992). The celebratory clothing is worn for the duration of the three week long Inti Raymi festivities.

The actual celebrations of Inti Raymi in Cangahua are choreographed events according to tradition yet the celebrations also include impromptu expressions of revelry and community bonding. The opening event of Inti Raymi always begins with la chamiza, the ritual burning of branches in the main plaza of the celebration, the evening before the celebrations begin (Guaña et al. 1992). During the chamiza people tie the branches of local bushes to their backs and march from their villages to the main plaza of the barrio central for the sacred fire. The following day the festivities begin with local band concerts and speeches by government officials and dignitaries. There is also an official Cangahua Inti Raymi band, La Banda, that provides background music throughout events of the three week celebrations. After the opening events, celebrants have nightly dances in the main plaza of the barrio central for the three week festivities. The following week there are daily parades, called la gana de la plaza, through the main thoroughfare of the barrio central. Each parade has a theme such as celebrating Cangahua schools or celebrating women. The parade participants serenade onlookers with traditional music while other parade participants throw rose petals and fruit to the crowd. There are also various cultural exhibitions during day throughout the three week celebration, including displays of local art, food, and textiles. Inti Raymi ends with bullfighting during the final weekend of the celebration; however, Cangahua bullfights do not result in killing bulls because they are “too valuable to waste,” according to the father
of my host family. Anyone can jump into the ring at any time but the bullfights primarily consist of young men filled with machismo pride—and alcohol—jumping into the bullring to taunt the bulls by screaming and throwing trash in the bull’s direction. However, the “matadors” immediately run and jump over a chest-high fence as soon as the bull turns its attention towards them.

The hallmark of Cangahua Inti Raymi is the communal celebratory atmosphere that allows residents to indulge in the indigenous culture of the parish. The provisioning of food and drink to the celebrants is considered a minga, which harkens back to a tradition of collective cooperation (Guaña et al. 1992). As mentioned above, there are daily organized parades; however, the main celebration and parade is always on June 29 for the San Pedro feast day. On this day almost all of the communities in Cangahua line up on the thoroughfare that leads to the arriba communities of the parish. The communities are typically accompanied by a community float and a hired band that rides in the back of pickup truck, serenading the procession as they walk the parade route. The parade terminates in the central park of the parish for an event called la toma de la plaza, during which each community is acknowledged from the main stage and briefly allowed to lead the singing and dancing. This event is often the only time that residents from communities in some of the furthest reaches of the parish travel to the barrio central. Thus, Inti Raymi is an event that can unite communities across the parish under the guise of shared identity despite the disparate lifestyles and livelihoods of those residing in different parts of the parish. Coming together to express community pride as a part of a broader celebration of Cangahua tradition is a bold act of resilience that reinforces bonds within the parish while asserting the shared identities and traditions of Cangahueños.

Mars (2011) refers to Inti Raymi as a “cultural right” for the indigenous peoples of the Northern Andes. It is also a form of social reproduction in that it revitalizes and “rebirths” the
Kayambi community (Villacis Estevez 2007:27). Inti Raymi is the largest festival of the calendar year in Cangahua and is the epitome of cultural resilience and resistance in the parish. Almost everyone participates in the celebrations regardless of how much or how little they embrace indigenous attire, language, and lifestyle in their daily lives. It is a time when even the most “modernized” families in Cangahua celebrate the Kayambi roots of the parish and honor the persistence and perseverance of the Kayambi over the centuries. Additionally, the festival unites Cangahua in that it brings together residents from all over the parish, many of whom never commingle outside of Inti Raymi. Inti Raymi is often the only time that those living in the outermost reaches of the parish come to the barrio central.

In many ways the modern Inti Raymi celebration is the ultimate minga in that it cannot happen without community and working together for the common good of the parish. The Kayambi considered Inti Raymi a minga in that everyone had a role to fulfill in order to have a successful feast, celebration, and harvest (Guaña et al. 1992). Coming together as a community reaffirms identity and a sense of cooperation that is necessary for carrying out a successful festival that lasts for several weeks. The festival celebrates pride in shared indigenous identity and the ability to continue Inti Raymi with few changes to the nature of the celebration from colonial times to the present. At the same time, the Inti Raymi celebrations are an example of resilience by integration due to the encroachment of globalized influences. The people of Cangahua have enhanced the celebrations by incorporating new industry, technology, and symbolism into their celebration. For example, the local flower plantations financially sponsor a large portion of the Inti Raymi events including the concerts and some of the larger parades. Plantations supply the roses from which rose petals are thrown by parade participants to lookers-on, often at a reduced cost or for free in the case of plantation-sponsored events. Similarly, local businesses participate by selling food and beverages to the crowd while artisans spread blankets on the sidewalks as
makeshift stalls for selling their wares. With the exception of the *La Banda* official band that plays traditional music, the bands hired to provide the soundtrack for revelry play a range of music genres that includes rock and hip hop music from the United States. Further, the events are now semi-professionally recorded and preserved on YouTube and the official Cangahua Twitter account. This integration of technology of and community allows for digital preservation and distribution of the events and culture of Cangahua for the world to consume provided that they use the correct internet search terms. As a whole, while Inti Raymi in Cangahua is known for remaining truer to the original traditions of the celebration in comparison to other parishes, it has still managed to integrate, re-organize, and adapt the celebration to take advantage of the beneficial aspects of the current sociocultural landscape.

**Expressing Resilience Through Hope**

Although Cangahueños express themselves in a variety of ways that asserts their resilience against the pressures of the outside world, they are not immune from the lure of possibilities and desires resulting from increased exposure to globalized ideologies. In the midst of the volatile socioeconomic environment of modern-day Ecuador, younger generations in Cangahua, as with the rest of the nation, are pushing past the traditional expectations of carving out an agrarian livelihood and instead are seeking new possibilities for their futures. Evidence of this generational transition is evident in things seemingly as minor as opting for new ways of individual self-expression to dreams and aspirations beyond traditional campesino living. These aspirations in turn influence “wants, preferences, choices, and calculations” (Appadurai 2004: 67). As Cangahua youths become more exposed to global communications and entertainment, such as through social media and American films, they become more aware of the types of livelihoods that are possible. Their aspirational horizons broaden with respect to their material, interpersonal, and lifestyle desires (Chua 2014). However, having the ability to aspire is rarely sufficient to overcome your station in life in
order to pursue new ways of being (Fischer 2014). The impoverished, in particular, are limited in their ability to achieve their aspirations even as exposure to the possibilities of greater aspirational horizons seemingly become more tangible (Appadurai 2004). Youths in these circumstances find often themselves in the ironic position of being further marginalized and impoverished by the same forces of globalization that stimulate aspirations for different livelihoods (Appadurai 2004). Further, Fischer (2014) noted that the pull of familial obligations and expectations are strong in poor and rural contexts. In these cases youths are faced with the paradox of seeking their aspirations to the detriment of their family and, sometimes, community; this scenario plays out regularly among the adolescents and young adults Cangahua.

Antonio is the oldest son of eight children. His parents are subsistence farmers in one of the higher altitude communities of Cangahua; they once spent the greater part of an afternoon telling me about life as the children of huasipungueros for the hacienda that is the namesake of their community. Antonio’s parents never received formal education and remain unable to read or write. According to Antonio, he was an eager learner who attended school and performed well despite his parents’ indifference to formal education. Antonio completed his bachillerato and desperately wanted to attend university so he could become an engineer and move to Cayambe or Quito. He never lost his love of learning and spent his spare time finding reading material and building electronic gadgets from scrapped tools and appliances. He constantly asked me about my research and what it was like to attend to university. One day Antonio expressed frustration that, because he was the oldest son, his parents depended on him to take care of the family plot and become the eventual heir to their minifundia. He felt a sense of obligation to his parents and their commitment to an agrarian lifestyle but he aspired to do more with his life. Antonio was conflicted because he had lofty aspirations but could not face the familial and social consequences of failing to live out the expectations
placed on the oldest sons of subsistence farmers in Cangahua. Situations like Antonio’s are not uncommon in rural highland Ecuador; however, notwithstanding the aspirational conflicts facing youths and young adults in Cangahua, the ideals of family, cooperative work, and shared culture remain entrenched in the local culture despite the current wave of rapid cultural change.

The prior chapter detailed how Cangahua residents have found ways to be collectively resilient in the face of pressures to adapt or change but individuals aspire to achieve more for themselves and their families. How individuals respond to these changes affects their aspirations for the future. Given the broadened awareness of life beyond agrarian living, how do Cangahua residents view their prospects and aspirational horizons for the future? I explore answers to this question using the concept of hope as a means of exploring wellbeing because it depends on having a positive outlook for the future. Thus having an understanding of hope in Cangahua allows for understanding the aspirations and assumptions that Cangahua residents have for themselves and future generations.

Hope is a contested term within the social sciences that is best described by its attributes rather than a definition. Hope is temporal in nature in that relates to the future in terms of goals, aspirations, and stability (Barnett and Weston 2008; Crapanzano 2003; Miyazaki 2006; Zigon 2009). Hope can also be thought of as a moral concept; hope is living well and making choices that move towards a positive (Crapanzano 2003; Zigon 2009). The concept of hope is also an action that can be passive or active (Crapanzano 2003; Miyazaki 2006). It is passive because it depends on another actor (Crapanzano 2003) but hope is also active because it involves preparing for and directing actions towards future aspirations (Barnett and Weston 2008). Hope depends on an external factor or factors (Crapanzano 2003; Miyazaki 2006; Zigon 2009). Zigon (2009:257) conceives of hope as actions “toward continuity, stability, or living sanely.” Hope is inextricably linked to the concept of
hopelessness and the ability to possess control over what happens in the future (Crpanzano 2003; Miyazaki 2006). Finally, Barnett and Weston (2008) and Miyazaki (2006) believe that the status of hope and hopelessness within communities are thrown into disarray with capitalism and its expansion.

Capitalism and its counterparts of globalization and modernization can have drastic, disruptive effects on the hopefulness and hopelessness of communities. The expansion of capitalism, globalization, and modernization in previously isolated communities can cause abrupt, and often rapid, social, cultural, and economic change. These changes cause people to lose sight of the future and expectations in the midst of rapid social, cultural, and economic disruption (Barnett and Weston 2008). Hope wavers due to socioeconomic and cultural change because the disarray precludes a clear view of the future and aspirations for what is possible and/or desirable. At the same time, in changing landscapes hope can increase possibilities as capitalism expands because capitalism provides increased opportunities for future outcomes (Miyazaki 2006). Miyazaki (2006) argued that capitalism, especially neoliberal policy, inspires hope for more and better things and in cases where hope is lost, there is a secondary hope and desire beyond capitalism to pursue something better. In the case of Ecuador and Cangahua in particular, such an argument suggests that hope should have decreased during the economic downturns in the 1980s era of neoliberal reforms while hope should increase in the current era of leftist economic policy.

In Cangahua hope is a useful concept because hope, when viewed as an action, affects present behaviors and actions, it directly impacts wellbeing at a particular point in time. Hope drives decision-making in the present when it comes to choices and actions regarding economics and life trajectory (Miyazaki 2009). However prior studies show that hope and hopelessness often depends on one’s status in society (Barnett and Weston 2008). Those at the margins have less hope than those who enjoy higher social status. Not surprisingly, lack
of hope is most associated with being female, having a low socioeconomic status, and having a minority ethnic or racial identity. People with higher education have higher hope. Those who report higher levels of distress tend to have less hope. Thus, similar to perceived stress, hope is a useful proxy for evaluating feelings of disarray and disorder within a community undergoing transition.

I interviewed twenty Cangahua residents to explore what they were hopeful about and how their hope translated into their own future prospects and their hopes for their children. Residents were overall most hopeful that their families would remain nearby and supportive of their endeavors in times of need. When prompted to be more specific, residents cited being hopeful about receiving familial support if, for example, they fell ill, did not have enough food, or needed money. I asked several of my informants if they were hopeful about their health in the future. All but two, who were elderly women, agreed that they were hopeful that they would have good health into the future. The two elderly women were already suffering from various ailments and were not hopeful that their health would improve. For the informants with children, I asked about their hopes for their children when they become adults. All agreed that they wanted their children to complete the basic education curriculum. All desired to have their children remain in or near Cangahua but they also wanted their children to have good jobs that paid a lot of money, which at this time is incongruent with living and working in Cangahua. Also, all of the informants desired that their children would get married and have many children of their own. Finally, all of the twenty informants hoped that, above all, their children would be happy in the future.

This hope is displayed in the recent and contemporary history of Cangahua. The parish overcame centuries of oppression from the hacienda system by playing a large role in the indigenous uprisings that helped lead to the fall of the system. Many residents were able to capitalize on the repatriation of native lands and live the sumak kawsay life of good living
by harmony with nature. Others turned to floriculture and entered the cash economy. While from an outsiders perspective the benefits of this transition are mixed, my informants felt that the positives outweighed the negative aspects of living and working in the land of roses. As the political and economic direction of the nation became more interconnected on globalized networks, life in Ecuador—including Cangahua—changed in response. There have been conflicts such as in how the government is encouraging a transition towards individual and family structure that fits the standards of the US and European metropoles. However, Cangahua has not completely bought into the rhetoric and expanded social agendas. Cangahua has fought to maintain its core culture and reimagine itself as a community of individuals who accept the new socioeconomic landscape on their own terms. This includes mixing traditional practices with imported materials and ideas, creating families according to their own ideals, and (re)-asserting their cultural heritage through collective acts of solidarity and celebration. Cangahueños are most resilient when they act as a community and this resilience will continue to guide the parish as it continues its evolution through the constantly-changing Ecuadorian socioeconomic landscape.

However, while rural locations such as Cangahua do feel the effects of the whims of the national economy, debt, and natural environment, Cangahua’s sociocultural legacy of resilience provides layers of protection against drastic swings in the national socioeconomic climate. For instance, the fact that so many residents of the parish have the option of subsistence farming or are closely related to households that practice subsistence farming allows for some degree of protection against downturns in the market. Several of my informants stated that even when times were hard they were confident that they would be able to survive by relying on extended family and neighbors to share resources and provide temporary shelter for their children, eking out a living on the land, or even emigrating as a
last resort. Further, the local culture is centered around strong familial bonds, sharing, cooperation, and collective action.

Conclusion

The arrival of floriculture in Cangahua resulted in processes of globalization and modernization that have created changes in the culture of the parish. While the stimuli for culture change was primarily economic in nature, the effects have touched many more aspects of life in Cangahua. Not surprisingly, these changes are primarily affected the youngest and oldest segments of the population. The youth are increasingly interacting with global media and emulating the popular culture that they consume using new technology and media. The oldest segments of the population have endured many changes and are exposed to new ways of thinking and living that disrupt traditional notions of good living. They have gone from living as huasipongueros working hacienda lands in their youths to watching their children and grandchildren grow up with previously unknown or unimaginable ideals and aspirations for themselves and their families. This is reflected in a tendency for increased distress and decreased hope amongst those of advanced age. Yet despite the social, cultural and economic changes of the past 30 years, Cangahua has also proven itself to be a resilient community. The residents of the parish continue to maintain and uphold centuries-old traditions that reinforce the Kayambi identity of Cangahua such as mingas and the annual Inti Raymi festival. Overall, contemporary Cangahua is a community that is learning to adapt and is doing so in a way that seemingly integrates traditional culture into their version of a new modern way of living well.
CHAPTER 6: ASPIRATIONS FOR A FUTURE OF BUEN VIVIR

One weekend afternoon I was sitting in front of a slightly aged desktop computer at an internet cafe on the main drag of Cangahua at the cost of a penny per minute (USD), trying to write an email to my family in the United States but I was having trouble concentrating. In one corner of the room two tween-aged boys who had paid for an hour of play time on the Sony PlayStation, which the owners of the internet cafe claimed was the only one in the parish, were causing an uproar amongst the other boys who were watching them play. The two boys operating the controllers were staring intently at the flat screen television mounted on the wall as their fingers frantically pressed buttons on the controller while their friends looked on, shouting and cheering at the game playing out on the television screen. At the desktop computer beside me, a teenage girl perused Facebook while her friends crowded around the monitor and directed her link clicking. On the other side of me the preschool aged son of the internet cafe owner played games on the Disney Channel website with the volume turned up its highest level. All the while, a small group of primary school students stood at the door and watched everyone else in the internet cafe. Scenarios such as this are now the norm in internet cafes throughout the parish, particularly in the barrio central of Cangahua when the school day ends. The parish residents—especially the youth—are becoming connected in a newer, faster, cheaper way than in the past and the increased connectedness to global ideas and desires is simultaneously increasing sociocultural conflict and resilience among Cangahua residents in response.

The above scenario is a long way from life in Cangahua just one to two generations ago when the parents and grandparents of today’s youths were subject to obligatory labor as
huasipungueros for haciendas such as Guachalá. Over the past five decades the way Cangahua residents live, work, and pursue their aspirations has drastically changed. The most obvious change is that all residents are now “free” to construct their own livelihoods and strive for diversified life goals beyond laboring on large estates. However, freedom from the haciendas did not free the population from various forms of oppression and marginalization that ostensibly limit the vast majority of Cangahueños to life in the fields whether it be on family-run minifundias or in large-scale flower plantations. While almost all of the former hacienda owners have fled the parish for other pursuits, economic power and political influence in Cangahua remains in the hands of wealthy outsiders via foreign-owned flower plantations and government policies enacted by the political elite in Quito. The local and national government solutions for minimizing the marginalization of communities such as Cangahua was buen vivir through increased connectedness to the global village and institutionalized buen vivir programming. This manifested in Cangahua through initiatives such as free wifi hotspots in the center of the barrio central, compulsory universal education as the starting point for economic prosperity, and increased breadth and availability of social welfare programs. However, these initiatives did not become the envisioned panacea to the socioeconomic woes of Cangahueños due to poor execution and lack of understanding of what Cangahueños need and want to pursue their self-defined notions of the good life.

Contemporary Cangahua remains a parish of widespread poverty, socioeconomic oppression, and alienation from internalized ideals for good living. The overwhelming majority of residents are economically impoverished and, increasingly, they are also becoming land impoverished due to land division within families from minifundización. Local cultural traditions regarding pregnancy and family composition have become pathologized by the government in the name of building a socioeconomically sound citizenry that will keep Ecuador economically competitive in globalized industries and international
markets. However, the ubiquity of early reproduction and blended families in Cangahua endure due to mixed messages of morality and sexuality from family and friends, healthcare workers, and government and religious institutions. Similarly, although more youths are attending school and literacy rates in Cangahua are increasing, universal education and the encouragement of aspirations beyond agrarian living have created conflicts in what Cangahua youths desire for their own futures versus pressures to maintain family landholdings and remain in Cangahua with their families, where the economic opportunities are limited to low wage employment in construction or flower plantations. Despite the various pressures to abandon local traditions and Kayambi ideals of good living in favor of government-prescribed buen vivir Cangahueños have turned inward to reassert their identities and find new ways of fitting traditional ideals into the new socioeconomic landscape, such as mingas for improving parish infrastructure or the establishment of a women’s cooperative that combines agrarian livelihoods with capitalist pursuits. In other words, Cangahua residents are navigating the rapid changes in their socioeconomic, political, and cultural environments by using cultural pillars and collective modes of resilience to adapt and to change while maintaining the standards and expectations of life in the parish.

Ecuador in Crisis

On April 16, 2016, a couple of minutes before 7pm the ground shook violently in the small city of Pedernales, Ecuador. The 7.8 magnitude quake would end up as the strongest earthquake in Ecuador since 1949 and be the nation’s deadliest earthquake since 1987. The hardest hit areas were in the province of Manabí on the north-central coast although all coastal provinces were affected, including the major metropolitan area of Guayaquil on the southern coast. Weeks later the final tally of the casualties from the earthquake included over

650 deceased, more than 27,700 injured, and over 29,000 residents displaced from their homes. In the aftermath of the earthquake, President Rafael Correa became the nation’s comforter-in-chief and biggest advocate for securing financial resources to aid in the recovery of affected areas. Instead of the usual marches for workers’ rights on the internationally-recognized day of workers’ solidarity on May 1, President Correa declared that on May 1, 2016, citizens in unaffected areas of Ecuador should vacation at the coast to provide desperately-needed support for the ravaged local economies. Those in the nation who had the means to vacation responded by traveling in droves to coastal resort towns. President Correa also quickly began seeking financial support from international lending agencies to help Ecuador with the over $3 billion in losses as a result of the earthquake. This included seeking almost $1 billion in emergency lines of credit from the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and the Inter-American Development Bank. Later, President Correa would blame some of the destruction and financial losses on poor infrastructure and builders cutting corners and failing to follow updated building codes in the wake of the Haiti 2010 earthquake.

The April 2016 Ecuador earthquake is symbolic of how, despite the positive strides made towards improving the socioeconomic landscape of the nation, the country remains vulnerable to major shocks that can disrupt the economy and infrastructure of the nation. The earthquake struck at a time when the nation was in the midst of a moderate economic downturn because oil revenues, the country’s primary source of income, were on the decline. In 2015 there was a 42% decline in oil exports and an overall 8.2% loss in the nation’s next

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largest export industries—seafood, bananas, and cut flowers\textsuperscript{43}. This was devastating for Ecuador since about 50% of its annual budget revenues come from petroleum exports. Further, the drilling and extraction of oil is more expensive than the cost of exporting oil, leading to an almost $10 net loss per barrel of oil drilled\textsuperscript{44}. These losses have caught up to President Correa’s excessive spending on “buen vivir” policies such as universal healthcare, resulting in the national budget operating with an increasingly larger debt; there was a projected 1.7% decrease in the national economy for 2016. Consumer confidence was down to 28.4% by July 2016\textsuperscript{45}. Further, the Ecuadorian economy was partially floundering from currency depreciation while neighboring countries were experiencing appreciation, resulting in reduced competitiveness for Ecuadorian products in international markets.

Despite the woes of the national economy, President Correa continued to push his anti-neoliberal economic agenda. This included continuing to invest in the social programs of the National Plan for Buen Vivir at stable levels with the rationale that the national budget will reach solvency in 2018 when the nation recovers its return on investments for a series of hydroelectric projects\textsuperscript{46}. However, President Correa is simultaneously juggling environmental crises due to deforestation of the rainforests in the Oriente and the aftermath of the April 2016 earthquake. In particular, President Correa faced severe criticism after opting to open portions of the Yasuní National Park to oil exploration and extraction in 2013 after promising


to conserve the park, which is one of the most biodiverse areas in the world. However, he was in part forced to open the park for prospective oil extraction in order to save face after failing to persuade wealthy nations to pay Ecuador $3.6 billion in exchange for not [emphasis added] drilling for oil in Yasuni\textsuperscript{47}.

I detail the current spate of economic and environmental woes at length to beg the questions of: “What does the near future hold for Ecuador?” and “How well can the national government meet its stated goal of buen vivir for all citizens?” At the time of this writing the immediate and possibly near future for Ecuador seems to be bleak on the economic and environmental fronts. Since the major earthquake in April 2016 there has been a string of moderate-strength earthquakes in the central and western regions of the country that are not aftershocks of the major earthquake\textsuperscript{48}. Almost three years after opening the Yasuni to oil extraction, Correa made a deal to allow Chinese petroleum companies to conduct oil exploration in an additional 500,000 acres of the national park\textsuperscript{49}. Meanwhile, as the national government continued to push for an economy centered on the oil industry and increased spending on social programs, the national poverty rate has remained mostly stagnant over the past 5 years. As of March 2016 the national poverty rate was 25.35% and the extreme poverty rate was 10.05% with poverty levels of 43.96% and 19.53% in rural areas, respectively\textsuperscript{50}. In


comparison, the national poverty rate was 28.6% in 2011\textsuperscript{51}. Further, while converting the national currency from the Ecuadorian \textit{sucre} to the United States dollar in January 2000 provided an added layer of protection against drastic swings in the value of its currency. However, linking Ecuador’s economy to that of the United States has its limitations. The Ecuadorian government has no control over the valuation of its currency and is thus dependent on status the United States economy. This has proven difficult for Ecuador to navigate financially during times, such as the present, when the United States economy is on a moderate upswing while the Ecuadorian economy falters, resulting in an increased value of the dollar at a time when Ecuador cannot afford it. Together, factors such as those listed above have resulted in an-all time low in President Correa’s approval ratings and public dissatisfaction with Correa’s handling of various government concerns such as the economy and environment are threatening his presidency and his signature promise of delivering buen vivir to the populace.

President Correa’s ability to implement buen vivir is largely dependent on the national economy, thus a faltering economy is a threat to the future of buen vivir as public policy in Ecuador. Buen vivir programming is a top down endeavor in Ecuador with the policy, funding, and planning originating with government officials who then implement the programs at the local level. For example, the buen vivir plan to make healthcare universal in Ecuador required significant increases in the government budget for healthcare in order to recruit trained professionals, update existing infrastructure and technology, and create new health resources. In order to make buen vivir initiatives possible the national government dramatically increased the national budget and shifted monetary resources to favor domestic spending over loan repayment to international creditors. During his presidency, Correa’s

government spent more than the previous 30 years combined. The government’s ability to spend is directly dependent upon oil exports and the international oil markets. The depression of the oil market at the time of this writing is, consequently, a threat to the creation and maintenance of buen vivir initiatives.

Further, since oil is a finite nonrenewable resource and President Correa becomes term limited out of the presidency in 2017, the long-term success of buen vivir as public policy is uncertain in Ecuador. Rather than relying on the top-down implementation of buen vivir it is possible for communities to maintain the legacy of buen vivir by working from within. The essence of community resilience is maintaining stability and familiarity as a form of protection against threats such as the changing economy, the ephemeral availability of government support, and other threats to the traditions and cohesiveness of the community. Cangahua has shown how its collective resilience is beneficial in times of uncertainty by relying on cultural hallmarks such as mingas and other forms of cooperation ranging from neighbors offering rides up the mountain to passersby struggling to walk up the side of the rocky roads to sharing food and lending livestock to struggling neighbors. The ability of Cangahueños to work as a collective and rely on community during times of need is the true meaning of good living through buen vivir.

Conclusion

At times life in Cangahua seems worlds away from the environmental dilemmas in the Oriente and the politics of the international oil market; however, national and international events ultimately filter into the parish and create indelible marks on the socioeconomic, political, and cultural landscapes of Cangahua. These events can have major impacts on lives in Cangahua such as creating new lifeways and desires through increased

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interactions with the tools and ideas of the global village. They also affect how Cangahueños choose to interact with changes that were designed to improve their lives. From the perspective of my Cangahua informants, making these choices and expressing their values are the essence of buen vivir. In Cangahua happiness and living well come from family and community rather than material things and government institutions. While the programs associated with the National Plan for Buen Vivir are welcome additions to the parish, Cangahueños do not need them to carve out their share of the good life. For in Cangahua, being surrounded by family and living in harmony with the nature is to live a life of sumak kawsay.
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