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# **Afro-Ecuadorian Educational Movement: Racial Oppression, Its Origins and Oral Tradition**

by

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## **Abstract**

In this paper, three objectives are presented, first, to describe the socio-historical context of Afro-Ecuadorians generally and specifically related to education. Here, it is demonstrated how colonial and nation building practices and processes have attempted to silence and make absent the contributions people of African descent have made to development of the nation. Second, the Afro-Ecuadorian social movement is considered within the local, regional and global socio-historical context, and it is argued that the Afro-Ecuadorian Etnoeducación is part of a continuous struggle for freedom and inclusion in the nation as full citizens. The third area of analysis focuses on one Afro-Ecuadorian Etnoeducación program called Afro-Ecuadorian Oral Tradition Workshops. Here, the question what are the objectives of this program through analysis of the curricular materials is answered? Next, it is demonstrated the Taller Tradición Oral Afro-Ecuatoriano (Afro-Ecuadorian Oral Tradition Workshops, aka, TTOA), an Afro-Ecuadorian Etnoeducation program is a response to the long history of oppression Afro-Ecuadorians have experienced and their particular location as colonial and national subjects within the nation. This research is based primarily on analysis of proposals and educational materials produced for the TTOA. It also utilizes an investigation of secondary sources, reports and studies that document and analyze these programs. And finally, this research builds on limited interviews and participant observation.

## Introduction

The meaning of race is changing in Ecuador. In 1998, due largely to the struggles of Indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian groups, Ecuador for the first time acknowledged itself as a multi-racial and cultural nation through a constitutional referendum. Through this new constitution Afro-Ecuadorians and Indigenous groups also gained fifteen collective rights; three of which made reference to educational practices and processes.<sup>1</sup> In 2009 through another constitutional referendum, the rights and recognition gained in 1998 were expanded upon and made more specific. Furthermore, since the 1990's a body of literature has developed that examines racial discrimination and inequality in Ecuador that previously did not exist. However, these changes in the way the nation imagines itself are more rhetorical than substantive.<sup>2</sup>

In Ecuador, the educational system has made and continues to make the contributions of people of African descent to the political, cultural and economic development of the nation, silent and or absent. Furthermore Afro-Ecuadorians continue to experience powerful forms of racial discrimination and inequality inside and outside of formal schooling. The present moment, nevertheless, represents a highpoint in the efforts of Afro-Ecuadorians to challenge their systematic exclusion from access to mainstream institutions and resources. This paper examines the Afro-Ecuadorian *Etnoeducacion* movement and claims that it is rooted in the experiences of colonialism and slavery and cannot be disconnected from the interrelated themes through which Afro-Ecuadorians have and continue organize and struggle, such as identity and ancestry/collective knowledge of Afro-Ecuadorian communities.

One of the most insightful ways Afro-Ecuadorian scholars and activists are conceptualizing their work is revealed in the terms 'casa adentro' and 'casa afuera.' 'Casa adentro' or 'in house' processes refer to addressing the impacts invisibility and absence has had on communities of Afro-Ecuadorians. 'Casa adentro' can be thought of as a reconstruction of Afro-Ecuadorian identity from the inside. 'Casa afuera' or 'out house' processes refer to efforts of formal inclusion and recognition of Afro-Ecuadorians and their contributions to the political, economic and cultural development of the nation. While analytically we can think of these two processes as separate, they, in various ways, cannot in practice be separate.<sup>3</sup>

To date there are a number of programs and schools that have implemented Afro-Ecuadorian Education programs, which are primarily oriented towards addressing Casa Adentro issues, such as racial and cultural identity and *ancestralidad*. The term *ancestralidad* here refers to the "...lived philosophies and collective memories that constantly reconstruct historical, cultural, and spiritual ties and energies and rearticulate feelings of belonging within everyday life..."<sup>4</sup> While *Casa Adentro* and *Afuera* confront difficult challenges, *Casa Adentro* has had more success in its implementation as it does not depend on collaboration with and resources from mainstream society to the same degree for its implementation. Hence, in this paper the focus is primarily on *Casa Adentro* practices and processes.

Hence, in this work I aim to describe the socio-historical context of Afro-Ecuadorians generally and specifically related to education (there are important differences characterizing Afro-Ecuadorian populations with respect to history, geography, urban/rural, and gender that help elucidate the diversity and complexity of the Afro-Ecuadorian experience) and demonstrate how colonial and nation building practices and processes have attempted to silence and make absent the history and contributions of people of African descent have made to the political, economic, and cultural development of the nation, practices that continue into the present that has resulted in the reproduction of a racial hierarchy generally, and within education. Second, I demonstrate the origins of Afro-Ecuadorian social movements in relation to education to argue that the Afro-Ecuadorian Etnoeducacion is part of a continuous struggle for freedom and full citizenship in the nation. And third the paper looks at a Afro-Ecuadorian Etnoeducation program called Taller Tradicion Oral Afro-Ecuatoriano (Afro-Ecuadorian Oral Tradition Workshops), which Juan Garcia (an acknowledged leader in the field of Afro-Ecuadorian studies) designed and implemented in the province of Esmeraldas in 2009. Here, I answer the question of what are the objectives of this program through analysis of the curricular materials, and demonstrate that TTOA is a response to the long history of oppression Afro-Ecuadorians have experienced in their particular location as colonial and national subjects.

This research is based primarily on an analysis of proposals and educational materials produced by Afro-Ecuadorian organizations and programs. I also utilize in my investigation secondary sources, reports and studies that document and analyze these programs. And finally, this research will build on limited interviews and participant observation I have conducted of one Afro-Ecuadorian educational program.

## **Racial Oppression and Education in Ecuador**

Evident in the writings of well-known European philosophers of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries such as Immanuel Kant and G.W.F Hegel are the characterizations of the people of Africa as without history, religion, laws and closely resembling animals.<sup>5</sup> These revered European thinkers associated their characterizations of dark skin African peoples with the region from which they originated, i.e., Africa. During the colonial era of Latin America, European nations developed institutional, territorial and epistemic structures through which they imposed this racial and spatial understanding of the world. The colonial system stripped African and Indigenous people of their cultural diversity and organized them into singular racial categories. This system denied the existence of knowledge structures of people of African descent and Indigenous peoples. Moreover, the colonial system justified oppression and violence upon these groups. While both of these groups experienced powerful forms of oppression it is important to understand that they were differentially located within colonial structures. Catherine Walsh and others refer to this process as the *colonialidad de poder*.<sup>6</sup>

In Ecuador and throughout much of the Andean region both within the colonial and early republican eras institutional structures were created that substantiated Indigenous identities and provided recognition of their humanity that people of African descent did not experience. Understanding the process of *Colonialidad de poder* is critical because it reveals that Latin American societies were constructed largely upon a racial hierarchy that located people of African descent as the ‘ultimate others’ or not part of the nation.<sup>7</sup> This is not to argue that Indigenous people have experienced less virulent forms of oppression, but to demonstrate that they were differentially located within the nation in relation to people of African descent and these processes continue into the present. Analysis of how national identity occurred in the region sheds more light on the particular way the racial hierarchy functions in Ecuador and much of Latin America today and in particular within institutions of education.

As is evident in the writings of primary thinkers of Ecuadorian society, they reproduced the racial hierarchy established during the colonial era, however, they also had to make a compromise as they went about the process of imagining and constructing the nation. When they looked upon their newly formed nation, they realized they could not adhere to the categorical and rigid constructions of race that formed in the United States. The majority of their populations were and continue to be non-White, thus in order to not condemn their nation to stagnation (from their perspective) the elites constructed a form of national identity that could include through racial and cultural mixture African descendant and Indigenous peoples, while at the same time exclude those that were not moving physically and/or culturally towards what is Western and White.<sup>8</sup> As a result, throughout most of Latin America the concepts of *mestizaje* (racial and cultural mixture) and the ideology of *blanqueamiento* (movement towards Whiteness or what is Western) developed as the foundations of the dominant discourses of national identity and what legitimates the exclusion of African descendant and Indigenous people from full participation as national citizens.<sup>9</sup>

While both Indigenous and African descendant people are excluded within this framework of Ecuadorian national identity they maintain different places in the racial order of society, which reflects a continuation of that established during the colonial era. Elite groups have officially appropriated the Indigenous past particularly in the Andean region, while Afro-Ecuadorian people and their contributions to the political and economic development of the nation have been rendered largely invisible.<sup>10</sup> As a result of the different locations of these two groups within the dominant discourse of national identity, *mestizaje* and *blanqueamiento*, Indigenous groups have been formally included into mainstream institutions of the nation and have been studied more than people of African descent. Within this conception of national identity Afro-Ecuadorians are not deemed worthy of study because they do not represent a separate culture.<sup>11</sup> The unique positioning of African descendant people in relation to Indigenous groups in Ecuador and much of Latin America helps to explain why the study of the educational experiences of Afro-Ecuadorians has been neglected. Additionally, as scholars have demonstrated, the practices and processes of schooling in Latin America play a critical role in the maintenance of the dominant discourse of national identity.<sup>12</sup>

In Ecuador and elsewhere in Latin America the educational system functions as a regime of equality. That is, through the silencing and erasure of racial and cultural differences and their significance, formal curricular and pedagogical practices and processes attempt to push all students to consider themselves as members of the nation.<sup>13</sup> By treating everyone as if they are equal, that is, negating the significance of what it means to be Afro-Ecuadorian, the educational system has silenced and/or made absent the contributions of people of African descent to the political, cultural and economic development of the nation and region. These absences and silences within curricular and pedagogical practices concerning Blackness and the experiences of Afro-Ecuadorians contribute to the reproduction of the racial hierarchy.<sup>14</sup>

Both students of African descent and others are provided no or little opportunity to interrogate or discuss the everyday racism that exists in their schools and in society in general.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, as a regime of equality, schooling simultaneously denies students of African descent as legitimate members of society and the critical role race plays in their lives, while compelling them to shed their racial and cultural identities for membership to the nation.<sup>16</sup> This often results in efforts of students of African descent to deny their Blackness and/or make efforts to lighten their skin or that of their offspring by marrying or having sexual/romantic relationships with someone that is of a lighter complexion.<sup>17</sup> This lack of opportunity to engage with the significance of race and racism implicates schooling in the reproduction of racial inequality. Significantly, it is only recently that racial/ethnic data has become available in Ecuador, which sheds further light on the ways schooling is implicated in the reproduction of the racial hierarchy.

Largely as a result of the struggles of Indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian people, for the first time in the history of nation people could self-identify according to racial and ethnic categories in the national census conducted in 2001. For example in Part 6 of this census called 'Population Facts' it asks how do you identify yourself: indigenous, black (Afro-Ecuadorian), mestizo, mulato, white, or other? This census and others revealed that approximately 5 to 6 percent of the population identifies as Afro-Ecuadorian, while Mestizo/a, White and Indigenous people make up 78, 11 and 6 respectively.<sup>18</sup> It is very likely that the Indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian proportions are distorted as the dominant discourse of national identity pushes many individuals to deny their African and Indigenous heritage and claim the Mestizo/a identity.<sup>19</sup> For example, a recent 2010 census calculates the Afro-Ecuadorian population at 16 percent.<sup>20</sup> This is important because it suggests that Afro-Ecuadorian or Indigenous people make-up a much larger proportion of the national population and that many more people experience discrimination and inequality than these previous censuses would suggest.

Racial inequality persists in Ecuador and is due to historical and contemporary racial discrimination in the areas of employment, education and everyday life.<sup>21</sup> The data from the 2001 census and those that have followed reveal that Indigenous people experience the highest levels of poverty, while Afro-Ecuadorians experience the highest levels of unemployment.

The greater proportion of Indigenous people living in rural areas may explain these differences, rather than being due to Indigenous people experiencing higher levels of discrimination.<sup>22</sup> Regarding racial inequality in education, Indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian people experience the highest levels of illiteracy and lowest levels of academic attainment. The slightly higher levels of academic attainment and lower levels of illiteracy of Afro-Ecuadorians compared to Indigenous people may be due again to the higher proportion of Indigenous people living in rural areas compared to Afro-Ecuadorians as urban areas provide greater access to education. Additionally, while it is beyond the scope of this study, there are indications that gender plays a role in academic achievement, where African descendant males are leaving school earlier than their female counterparts due to racialized sexism.<sup>23</sup>

In addition, Afro-Ecuadorians and Indigenous people experience various forms of racial discrimination in schools. Schooling is racially segregated in Ecuador, where Afro-Ecuadorians and Indigenous youth are disproportionately located in public, Catholic or military schools, while elite Whites and Mestizos attend private schools due to the relative poverty of students of color.<sup>24</sup> At these private schools the White and Mestizo students learn through formal and informal practices to deny the significance of and/or denigrate Afro-Ecuadorians and Indigenous people.<sup>25</sup> Public schools are noted for the general lack of access to resources, where Afro-Ecuadorians and Indigenous students are disproportionately represented.<sup>26</sup> Catholic and military schools, which have a better reputation than the public schools, are often unquestioningly hierarchical and as a general pedagogical practice based on rote memorization and discipline. These schools also, as a general rule, practice racial discrimination in their admission policies to maintain their good reputations.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, Afro-Ecuadorians and Indigenous students continue to experience physical, verbal and symbolic forms of violence inside and outside of each of these types of schools. Finally, to date the history and contributions of people of African descent to the political economic and cultural development of the colonial and republican eras continues to remain absent within the national curriculum.<sup>28</sup>

## **The Origins of Afro-Ecuadorian Etnoeducación**

The origins of the Afro-Ecuadorian educational movement or Afro-Ecuadorian Etnoeducación cannot be located in one moment but are best understood as a historical process that has its roots in colonialism and the resistance of people of African descent to this experience.<sup>29</sup> Therefore, Afro-Ecuadorian Etnoeducación cannot be located in one moment as it has existed since people of African descent arrived in the region that is now called Ecuador. In addition, Afro-Ecuadorian *Etnoeducacion* has taken and continues to take place within the larger cultural and political context of the struggles and efforts of Afro-Ecuadorians to gain full recognition as citizens within the nation.

Although Afro-Ecuadorians currently live throughout the nation, their colonial roots have concentrated them primarily in two regions: the Chota Mira Valley and the Province of Esmeraldas. While their experiences were unique due to the specific geographic, economic and political exigencies of these two regions, they are linked through the common experience of colonialism and slavery.<sup>30</sup> In Esmeraldas, for example, during the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries escaped enslaved people maintained their relative freedom from the Spanish colonial governments forming one of the longest existing maroon societies in the Americas.<sup>31</sup> In the Chota Mira Valley Region, legal enslavement was the primary experience of people of African descent. With the establishment of the Ecuadorian state in 1830 and abolition of slavery in 1854, African descendant people's struggle takes place largely within the context of sharecropping and debt peonage, which forecasts the present struggle of Afro-Ecuadorians to establish forms of territorial autonomy linked to their ancestral connection to these regions.<sup>32</sup>

Critical to understanding the era that follows the development of nationhood is that Afro-Ecuadorians do not organize formally through the concepts of race and ethnicity until the 1970s.<sup>33</sup> Part of the long history of absence in identifying and organizing through race and/or ethnicity for Afro-Ecuadorians must be linked to how national identity has been constructed in Latin America and in particular the Andean region, where elites have framed national identity as racial and cultural mixture between Indigenous and European people and *blanqueamiento*. Moreover, as was discussed previously, racial and cultural mixture or *mestizaje* inhibits development of a coherent sense of racial and cultural identity and in fact pushes many people of African descent to deny their Blackness. For example Anton notes,

Confronting it (mestizaje) the discriminated has no other option but to assume counter strategies of denial and assimilation, maybe their only instrument of mitigation and search for social acceptance, whose result reveals an aberrant process of negotiation of their own identity'' (2005: 6).<sup>34</sup>

Additionally, this notion of national identity, while not placing Indigenous peoples at a level that resembles equality in any way with White/Mestizo culture, has also located Afro-Ecuadorians at the bottom of the social hierarchy. As a result Afro-Ecuadorians struggle on at least two fronts. One is the ubiquitous silence and denigration they experience as a racialized group and the other is living in comparison to or in the shadow of Indigenous people.<sup>35</sup>

The rise of race and culture within Afro-Ecuadorian communities as an organizing principle begins to take shape in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and is an expression of the conjuncture of national and transnational forces. Afro-Ecuadorian scholars/activists highlight specific moments in the build up to the present and acknowledge the influence of the Afro-Colombian movement, which predates the Afro-Ecuadorian movement.



The development of an Afro-Colombian movement prior to that of Ecuador can be attributed to the lesser degree of Indigenous hegemony in Colombia and is evident in the ways the Colombian state acknowledged Afro-Colombians within state institutions earlier than in Ecuador.<sup>36</sup> In addition, at multiple levels the anti-discriminatory global discourse created through the independence movements of Africa and the Caribbean and the civil rights movement in the United States shaped and contributed to the Afro-Ecuadorian social movement generally, and specifically the development of *etnoeducacion*.<sup>37</sup>

Colombia in 1976 hosts the Primer Congreso de la Cultura Negra de Las Americas in the city of Cali and through Afro-Ecuadorian participation scholars and activists in Quito began what was called the Center of Afro-Ecuadorian Studies in the late 1970s. This Center represents the first systematic efforts by Afro-Ecuadorians to engage questions of identity, racism, rural/urban migrations and ways of knowing of Afro-Ecuadorians.<sup>38</sup> Relatively large migrations of Afro-Ecuadorians to Quito, the national capital, begin in the 1970's and bring Afro-Ecuadorians in contact with virulent, more overt forms of racial discrimination than they experienced in the countryside. This experience contributes to the development of an Afro-Ecuadorian identity and movement because it prompts explicit organizing through race.<sup>39</sup>

The Center of Afro-Ecuadorian Studies dissolves in the early 1980s, but its members go on to organize other institutions to continue their efforts to address the initial concerns that formed the basis of the Center. The Center of Afro-Ecuadorian Studies marks the formal moment from which Afro-Ecuadorians begin to organize through the concept of Blackness as either cultural or racial.<sup>40</sup> As result, in the 1990's various Afro-Ecuadorian organizations emerge focusing on such issues as "leadership, rights, rural urban migratory processes, and reinforcing identity through cultural means."<sup>41</sup> In addition, it is in the 1990s that the first formal efforts to develop programs that address the Afro-Ecuadorian educational experience.<sup>42</sup> The founding of both the masters program in Afro-Andean Studies in the University Simon Bolivar in Quito and the Afro-Ecuadorian Etnoeducación program in the National High School "November 19" in the Chota Mira Valley in the early 2000s are the results of this organizing that began in the late 1990s.

The next critical moment is 1998, where through a constitutional referendum, Ecuador for the first time acknowledged itself as a multiracial/cultural nation and granted collective rights to distinct racial and cultural groups—namely Indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian people<sup>43</sup>. These collective rights refer to issues of identity and tradition, spirituality, culture, language, politics, economy, territory, biodiversity and the management and conservation of natural resources in territories. Article 84 of the 1998 Constitution makes specific reference to issues related Afro-Ecuadorian Etnoeducación. For example, it states that Afro-Ecuadorians have the right "to maintain, develop and strengthen their identity and spiritual, cultural, linguistic, social, political and economic traditions."<sup>44</sup> This official recognition and opening within the political culture of the nation has helped to accelerate Afro-Ecuadorian educational efforts and demands that were already developing.<sup>45</sup>

While the new Constitution of 1998 created greater space within the political culture of the nation for recognition it also reproduced the racial hierarchy. Afro-Ecuadorians have had no formal place to identify themselves in any census until 2001, while the nation had recognized Indigenous groups since 1950 through language identification. Nevertheless, the way the new constitution included Afro-Ecuadorians as citizens reveals that they continued to be defined as secondary in relation to Indigenous groups. For example, references to Afro-Ecuadorian people's collective/ancestral rights achieved through Article 85 states that the territorial and cultural rights granted to indigenous people will be applied "to the black community in the way that it is applicable."<sup>46</sup> Hence, while there had been official acknowledgment, the racial hierarchy continued to locate Blackness at the bottom.<sup>47</sup>

The 2008 Constitution similarly recognized the racial and cultural diversity of the nation, but went further than the previous constitution by claiming that Ecuador is comprised of various national groups. In addition, the new Constitution made racism a criminal offense, reaffirmed the collected rights granted previously, and decreed that the state had the responsibility to develop affirmative action policies for Afro-Ecuadorians and other marginalized groups,<sup>48</sup> which is the first constitution in the Americas to make such a claim.<sup>49</sup> Nevertheless, as has previously been shown, these changes in the way the nation imagines itself have had little effect upon the lived experience of Afro-Ecuadorians.

The Afro-Ecuadorian *Etnoeducación* movement is rooted in the experiences of colonialism and slavery and cannot be disconnected from the central themes around and through which Afro-Ecuadorians have and continue organize, namely territory, identity, ancestry, and collective rights. There have been few formal and sustained efforts of Afro-Ecuadorian *Etnoeducación*. One of the primary thinkers and practitioners of Afro-Ecuadorian *Etnoeducación* is Juan García. He was one of the founders of the Center of Afro-Ecuadorian Studies in the late 1970s in Quito.<sup>50</sup> He has for many years been acknowledged by activists and scholars in Ecuador as a leader in the development of theory and practice concerning the experiences of Afro-Ecuadorians generally and specifically in regards to education.<sup>51</sup> There are a number of Afro-Ecuadorian Education programs that are functioning currently. They are the Simon Bolivar University masters program in Afro-Andina Studies in Quito and the high school program at Colegio Nacional 19 de Noviembre in the Chota Mira Valley.<sup>52</sup> Each of these programs has received some scholarly attention regarding the structure of the programs, their purposes and the challenges they face, although they continue to be understudied. Additionally, each of these programs have been heavily influenced by the work of Juan García as he was a primary person involved in writing the proposals for each of the programs. Besides these two programs Juan García has conducted Afro-Ecuadorian *Etnoeducación* workshops throughout regions of Ecuador where large populations of people and communities of African descent live. The focus here will be on these workshops, which to date have received no scholarly attention.

## The Afro-Ecuadorian Oral Tradition Workshops

The colonial system attempted to strip Africans of their ways of knowing and being and locate them within a racial hierarchy that served a system of social and economic exploitation. Within the nation making era and into the present these colonial processes have continued in different forms. Walsh writes concerning the continuation of colonial structures of power into the modern era in Ecuador,

Coloniality throughout the years has promoted complicit silences on the part of producers of discourse in official institutions and academia. It has also generated practices and structures of racialization that, at least in the Ecuadorian context, locate Black people, both collectively and individually, and in all of the institutions and structures of society, as the 'ultimate others'.<sup>53</sup>

The colonial structure of power has simultaneously silenced the significance of people of African descent in the development of the nation and shaped how Afro-Ecuadorians are located in and experience the world.

*Casa Adentro* work through the process of addressing the interconnected issues of identity and knowledge/ancestralidad, provides a way for Afro-Ecuadorians to reconstruct themselves in order to address the challenges they face both within and outside of their communities. Evident in the two following definitions of *Casa Adentro*, we can see how a reconstruction of both a sense of identity and ways of knowing are central to this process:

The majority emphasize the importance of strengthening identities through the recuperation of cultural knowledge and the learning of their ancestors...<sup>54</sup>

It operates and strengthens from a local level working with self-love and the development of knowledge and cultural pride that lodges within all the members of the community.<sup>55</sup>

Oral tradition has been one of the primary ways of addressing racial and cultural identity and ancestralidad/collective knowledge within Afro-Ecuadorian communities because it simultaneously affirms both. For example Walsh, Leon and Estrepo write,

Oral tradition in this whole process has played a fundamental and determining role, it is what permitted, through the co-existence of generational roles, to connect ancestry to territory and recuperate the rights to them. It is this connection that has permitted the redefinition of the process of slavery within the context of the diaspora, as well as the reaffirmation of Afro identities.<sup>56</sup>

Through oral tradition Afro-Ecuadorians have guarded and preserved their history of struggle and resistance to colonial and national structures. As Afro-Ecuadorian youth attend state institutions of education they learn little to nothing about their social and historical location within the nation. Through the collective knowledge found within oral tradition Afro-Ecuadorians can reconstruct their identities and their social and historically denied location within the nation.

In these times, where they talk a lot about what we are not and little of what we are, it is vital to maintain alive the word of the elders, as a reference of what we were, as a guide to reflect upon what we are now and support to construct what we need to become tomorrow.<sup>57</sup>

This is not a process that reconstructs Afro-Ecuadorians as static and authentic beings, but rather provides paths to understand and live in the present. Just as colonialism is shaping the experience of Afro-Ecuadorians in the present moment, so can the subaltern knowledges founded in the resistance to colonialism provide ways to live and understand the present.

Beginning in May of 2009 Juan Garcia conducted a series of eight workshops called Afro-Ecuadorian Oral Tradition Workshops (TTOA) for educators in various locations throughout the province of Esmeraldas that built on and developed the themes of racial and cultural identity and ancestralidad/collective knowledge of Afro-Ecuadorians. Each workshop focused on a different aspect of oral tradition, such as riddles, decimas (a form of poetry), stories, games and music. The overall objectives of the workshops were to develop an understanding of the importance of oral tradition as a way to revive the culture and the identity of the Afro-Ecuadorian people; revitalize and strengthen the knowledge of oral tradition in order to develop the process of Afro-Ecuadorean Etnoeducación: and appropriate understanding of oral tradition as a tool for the production of Afro-Ecuadorian knowledge.<sup>58</sup> Throughout the eight workshops Garcia provided evidence of Afro-Ecuadorian resistance to colonial and national structures, preservation of history, maintenance and development of cultural practices inherited from Africa, social and cultural adaptation to the region, and wisdom of the ecology found in stories, decimas, music and riddles that the elders have maintained and preserved through oral tradition. For practical reasons I will examine three of the eight workshop, which is sufficient to provide understanding of the overall objectives and structure of the project.

The first workshop, which took place in the northern coastal town of Muisne in the province of Esmeraldas in May of 2009, was structured around developing an understanding of the history and culture of Afro-Ecuadorians in the province of Esmeraldas and the significance of adivinanzas or riddles and decimas as forms of oral tradition that demonstrate Afro-Ecuadorians as producers and preservers of knowledge.

The history and culture of the province of Esmeraldas is important for multiple reasons. African descendant escaped enslaved people maintained relative freedom from the colonial structures in this region for a period of approximately 100 years in the form of maroon societies, which had formal recognition from the Spanish crown. African descendant people came to be the largest racial/cultural group in the city and province of Esmeraldas due primarily to the development of the region as maroon society prior to Ecuador becoming a country. During the early sixteenth century slave ships carrying their cargo between the regions known today as Panama and Peru stopped for provisions along the coast of Esmeraldas. The slaves took advantage of these opportunities to escape into the dense tropical forest of the region. Through a series of social and cultural adaptations these escaped enslaved people and their descendants became the dominant group in the region.<sup>59</sup> Knowledge of this history of resistance is not taught in schools and has been largely lost.<sup>60</sup>

In the first workshop Garcia also focuses on riddles and *decimas* as a pedagogical tool to demonstrate how through oral tradition Afro-Ecuadorians have produced and reproduced knowledge specific to the region of Esmeraldas. One riddle he presents for example, asks its listeners to guess what the following object is: Heaven above, heaven below, indispensable for food and good for curing sickness. It is the coconut. Anyone who travels to the province of Esmeraldas soon learns the importance of coconuts in the daily lives of Esmeraldeans, as it is one of the primary foundations to the diet in the region. The milk and flesh of the coconut, for example, are used in *encocado*, which is a type of stew basic to Esmeraldas. Coconut is also used to produce a type of candy called *cocada*. However, the coconut's use within the diet of Esmeraldeans represents only the tip of the iceberg of its significance in the region. For example, different parts of the coconut are used to keep mosquitos away, repair canoes and as remedies for sickness.

This riddle, which is a form of collective/ancestral knowledge, sheds light on the significance of the coconut within the economic and cultural structure of the region and how through oral tradition Afro-Ecuadorians have maintained and developed their knowledge of this important resource throughout the history of colonialism, the republican era and into the present.

If, as the education system would assert, Afro-Ecuadorians have contributed little or nothing to the development of the nation, than how as this riddle teaches have they produced and reproduced ways of being that are based on principals of ecological conservation as their use of the coconut demonstrates. Esmeraldeans are revered for their food throughout Ecuador, however, they are not consulted as ecologists to develop practices to maintain the ecosystem of the region, which is viewed primarily as an economic resource to be exploited. This workshop also presented another riddle that demonstrates that Afro-Ecuadorians have for centuries cultivated and wove cotton in the region. These riddles provide a way to reconstruct and relocate Afro-Ecuadorians as central to the cultural and economic development of the region and contest the dominant discourse of Afro-Ecuadorians as periphery and obstacles to national development.

The third workshop took place in the town of Concordia, which is in the interior of the province of Esmeraldas. The workshop was structured around two Afro-Esmeraldean stories and the function of oral narratives in general. In this workshop Juan Garcia makes reference to the function of oral tradition in West Africa and throughout the workshops he continuously demonstrated the ways that Afro-Ecuadorian culture is a continuation of this tradition within a different socio-historical context. For example, the stories of Brer Rabbit are prevalent among Afro-Ecuadorians living in the province of Esmeraldas. Brer Rabbit in Esmeraldas takes on the same role as that found in North American, that is, Brer Rabbit is small and weak, but through using his intelligence he is often able to win against much more powerful adversaries. The Brer Rabbit stories function as a response to power within colonial Latin America. Garcia's focus on the cultural continuation of Africa in the African Diaspora in Ecuador is not to demonstrate some inherent or essential aspect of African people, but to show that the Afro-Ecuadorian experience has been one of continuous change and adaptation within the multiple layers of the colonial and republican eras.<sup>61</sup>

The first story Garcia shared in this workshop explains how and why frogs came to be flattened low to the ground and have bulging eyes (Por qué el sapo es aplastado?). Previously, according to the storyteller, frogs used to walk upright on four legs like other animals. The story tells how Our Father wanted to invite all the animals up to heaven to have a Marimba<sup>62</sup> dance. Our Father asked aunt spider to build a strong staircase to heaven so all the animals could come to the dance. As the frog was a singer he asked the frog to get the other animals together that were singers for the Marimba dance. So early in the morning he went to see aunt spider, because she also was a singer. When he went to see aunt spider she was making the staircase from her web, which he was not supposed to see because how spiders spun their web was a secret of the forest. Aunt spider asked the frog not to tell anyone and he promised he would not. However, at the party the frog got drunk and in the verses he sung he told how spiders made their web. He sang "my friend the spider poops her web" over and over again. Aunt spider asked him to stop, but he would not and finally she refused to sing anymore until he stopped. The other animals carried him way to another room where he could rest. He fell to sleep and when he awoke everyone was gone and the stairs aunt spider had made were also gone. The frog saw the saints in heaven while they were cleaning up and the frog asked them how he could get back down to the forest without any stairs. Well, they just swept him over the edge and when he fell down to earth his legs were squished and his eyes popped out from hitting the ground so hard, and that is why the frog to this day has bulging eyes and walks low to the ground. According to the teller of this tale, this story is about what happens to those who disrespect nature and take for granted what it provides for humans to live and survive. Nature deserves to be treated like a treasure or a secret to be safeguarded and maintained. If we as humans diminish or forget the sacredness of our natural resources, there are grave consequences.<sup>63</sup>

The other story in this workshop tells how chickens came to eat cockroaches. Previously, all animals could talk and were more like humans the story-teller explains. Chickens and cockroaches lived and worked together. They were like a family. Also, animals did not fight among each other or eat each other like they do today. Maybe it was because they became ambitious, or because there was famine, or maybe they got too smart, but animals began to eat and kill each other like we humans do today.

The chickens used to make a type of rum and everyday they would go off to work in the mill to make the rum. The chickens would ask the cockroaches if they would like to come with them to help them grind the sugarcane for the rum and the cockroaches would respond that they were sick and could not. Well, after the chickens left to grind the sugarcane, the cockroaches would get up and start drinking the rum the chickens made and have a party.

One day the chickens realized what the cockroaches were doing. They asked the cockroaches like they always did if they would like to come and help grind the sugarcane, but the cockroaches responded like they always did, by saying they were sick and could not. As soon as the chickens left for work the cockroaches got out of bed and started drinking the rum, playing their instruments, putting on the chickens' perfume and singing and dancing, but this time the chickens were watching hidden in the forest. The cockroaches sang, danced and drank all day. At the end of the day the cockroaches collapsed in a drunken stupor. When the chickens heard it get silent they went into their house and found the cockroaches sleeping and snoring away their drunkenness. The chickens were hungry and upset from sitting in the forest all day listening to the cockroaches and when they saw them sleeping all over the house, they started eating them. After a while they ate all the cockroaches and since then the chickens and the cockroaches no longer can live together because the chickens eat them where ever they find them. The smell the cockroaches have when you smash them is from the chicken's perfume they used to put on and the black lines on their head is from the chicken's comb they used to use for the parties they would have.

According to the storyteller, the chickens and the cockroaches are like humans. Today, in the province of Esmeraldas, there are disputes between people over land rights. Previously, the storyteller explains, this did not occur. Now the biggest eat the smallest because there is no respect between them. This story like the other, treats nature and the animals that live in it like humans. This story tells its listeners to respect animals and nature in general, as it is what provides life for humans. If we lose respect for nature we very likely will destroy ourselves. The teller of this tale explains that there are animals that s/he does not kill because of their knowledge of nature. In other words, s/he respects nature and the environment. This is a story of Afro-Ecuadorian environmental conservation and challenges the dominant discourse that claims Afro-Ecuadorians are simply foragers or collectors of the fruits of nature and have no to little knowledge about how it functions.<sup>64</sup>

Participants had a number of options they could do as homework assignments for this workshop. They could plan and conduct lessons in local schools using songs, riddles or stories, which they then had to report back on how the lesson went and provide ideas about what they could have done to improve the lesson. They could summarize a cultural practice of their community and describe any challenges they faced in compiling it. Or they could organize presentations of both of the stories that were covered in this workshop and the ethical issues that were found within them. Brainstorming activities were conducted to think about how these various exercises could be implemented to make them more accessible to students.<sup>65</sup>

The sixth workshop took place in the town of Borbón, which lies approximately 20 miles from the Columbian border along the coast. Juan Garcia began this workshop by showing the movie “Ray”, which tells the story of the Black American musician Ray Charles. One of the central themes running throughout this movie is the relationship between Black American musical practices and race and racism. He uses this African Diasporic example to demonstrate that examination of Afro-Ecuadorian musical practices reveals a similar story. For example, Marimba music was illegal in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century in Esmeraldas because it was deemed sexually deviant and uncivilized.<sup>66</sup>

The Marimba, which is a type of wooden xylophone, is played in Mexico and Central and South America. There is general agreement among scholars that the marimba’s origins are African, brought either through slavery or pre-Columbian contact.<sup>67</sup> While in the province of Esmeraldas, which is the only region where the Marimba is played in Ecuador, both Indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian people continue to claim to be the progenitors of the musical form, it is unequivocally associated with Afro-Ecuadorian people throughout the nation.<sup>68</sup>

Marimba music and the accompanying dances and songs, are part of the oral tradition of Afro-Ecuadorians in the province of Esmeraldas. Among activists struggling to gain territorial rights in the province of Esmeraldas, the province is referred to as the Comarca Negra or the Black Kingdom. This name refers to the long history of struggle of the cimarrones in the region that gained and maintained independence from the Spanish crown for over 100 years during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries. La Comarca Negra also extends into parts of Columbia, which is adjacent to the province of Esmeraldas. Here, the African descendant people share common cultural traditions and history. The border between Columbia and Ecuador in this region is recognized as an artificial barrier that divides a common people.<sup>69</sup> Marimba music is one of the cultural practices that extends across this border.

In the 6<sup>th</sup> workshop Garcia uses as a pedagogical tool the story of the creation of a Marimba song. The song tells the story of a Spanish military official that visited the Columbian town of Tumaco<sup>70</sup> in the Comarca Negra. While the military official is in Tumaco he observes Marimba being performed and asks to talk to the person in charge of the Marimba.



He tells the leader of the Marimba that he wants to buy the musicians, dancers and instruments to bring back to Spain. In multiple verses the Spaniard proposes prices for what he is willing to pay for the Marimba. For example he sings,

Si hay algunas señoritas,	If there are young ladies,
También se las compró amigo,	I will also buy them friend
Traigo el dinero partido,	I bring the party money
Para poderle pagar	in order to pay you
Y por ser un hombre legal,	and for being an honest man,

**Vamos arreglando amigo.**

**Lets finish this deal friend.**<sup>71</sup>

When he finishes his verses the leader of the Marimba responds with verses that list the prices he is willing to sell the instruments, the musicians and dancers. For example, in one of the verses he sings,

Cien pesos por cada muchacho,	One hundred pesos for each child
No cobrando el justo precio,	which is not a fair price
Por una mujer diez mil pesos,	for each women 10000 pesos,
Por un hombre medio millón.	For each man half a million,
Y a los viejitos con razón,	and for the elders which is right,

**Doscientos cincuenta pesos.**

**Two hundred and fifty pesos.**<sup>72</sup>

At the end of the song, the Spanish official upon hearing the prices the leader of the Marimba requested, turns his back and returns from where he came without saying a word. The price was too high for him. According to the teller of this story, this Marimba song tells the story of what actually happened many years ago in the Comarca Negra. The Spanish official, as it was during the time slavery was practiced, believed that African people were for sell. However, as is evident from this Marimba song “people do not buy people.”<sup>73</sup>

Marimba, like stories, riddles, and games, demonstrate that Afro-Ecuadorians in the region of Esmeraldas preserved through oral tradition their political, economic and cultural traditions. These forms of oral tradition, which Afro-Ecuadorians developed in their struggle against their racialized condition and experience, served to maintain and preserve their identity as African descendant people. Today, Marimba music and song has lost much of its significance as a form of resistance and has largely become known as a part Afro-Ecuadorian folklore. With the simultaneous denigration of and erasure of Afro-Ecuadorian people and culture, the relationship between Afro-Ecuadorian cultural practices and identity have lost much of their significance. However, through analysis of this Marimba song various aspects of Afro-Ecuadorian culture can be recovered.

## Conclusion

Afro-Ecuadorian Etnoeducación today is rooted in and a continuation of the struggles and resistance that began during colonialism, i.e., a response to the negation and erasure of Afro-Ecuadorian epistemic structures and identity and enslavement. From the maroon societies that existed during the colonial era and the subsequent campesino struggles connected to the land in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries, Afro-Ecuadorians have been constructing and reconstructing the interrelated processes and practices of ways of knowing and identity. During the mid to late 20<sup>th</sup> Century with the advent of the world wide struggle against racism seen in the anti-colonial African and Caribbean struggles and the Civil Rights movement in the United States, Afro-Ecuadorians formally began their struggle for freedom based largely upon racial and cultural identity.

In the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century Afro-Ecuadorians begin to organize specifically concerning issues of education. One of the ways Afro-Ecuadorian Ethnoeducación has been conceptualized is through the terms *Casa Adentro* and *Casa Afuera*. *Casa Adentro* practices and processes address from an Afro-Ecuadorian perspective the challenges that the long history of denigration, silence and absence people of African descent have experienced throughout history within and outside of formal schooling. It is in many ways a reconstruction and reaffirmation of Afro-Ecuadorian identity through collective knowledge/ancestralidad.

Nowhere is the relationship between identity and collective knowledge more evident than within Afro-Ecuadorian oral tradition. Here, we find ample evidence of how Afro-Ecuadorians through the centuries have maintained simultaneously their identity and collective knowledge/ancestralidad. Analysis of the TTOA demonstrates that oral tradition practices challenge racial and cultural exclusion and reaffirm Afro-Ecuadorian identity and their collective knowledge/ancestralidad. Within the TTOA workshops Afro-Ecuadorians' knowledge of the ecosystem is revived and instead of being portrayed as foragers living off the land, they are acknowledged as ecologists capable of providing guidance for practices of environmental sustainability that they have developed over the centuries. Through analysis of the oral tradition of Afro-Ecuadorians they are reconstructed as key to the regions political, economic and cultural development of the nation.

*Casa Afuera* practices, which refer to the formal inclusion of Afro-Ecuadorians and their significance and contributions to the political, economic and cultural development of the nation within mainstream institutions, remain largely absent. For example, there continues to be almost no treatment or recognition of Afro-Ecuadorians in the national curriculum of public education. There have been some affirmative action policies initiated that address, education, employment and representation, however these efforts have been limited to Quito.<sup>74</sup> Additionally, the national government has developed a number of institutions that are specifically for Afro-Ecuadorians and research needs to occur on these recent *Casa Afuera* efforts.

In conclusion, one of the most important developments this research suggests is that as the Afro-Ecuadorian movement grows, the salience of the Afro-Ecuadorian identity gains traction. It makes sense. Instead of negation, denigration and absence, Afro-Ecuadorians are experiencing for the first time in the history of the nation a more coherent inclusion of themselves in the past, present and future of the nation. In no way am I suggesting that there has been a full reckoning of Afro-Ecuadorians in society, only that as more people assume this identity and others acknowledge it as legitimate largely as a result of the efforts of Afro-Ecuadorians, there remains the possibility for positive change in society. I suggest that future research should focus on how everyday Afro-Ecuadorians are experiencing the current shifts in identity.

## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> Garcia, J., and C. Walsh (2002). El pensar del emergente movimiento afroecuatoriano: reflexiones de un proceso: 325. In *Estudios y otras practicas intelectuales Latinoamericanas en cultura y poder*, ed. D. Mato, 317–26. Caracas: Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales.

<sup>2</sup> Green, Shane (2007). Introduction: On Race, Roots & Routes and Sovereignty in Latin America's Afro-Indigenous Multiculturalisms. *Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology*, 12(2), 329–355: 330; Walsh, Catherine (2012) "Other" Knowledges, "Other" Critiques: Reflections on the Politics and Practices of Philosophy and Decoloniality in the "Other" America. In *Transmodernity: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World*, 1(3): 14.

<sup>3</sup> Afro-Ecuadorian Scholar and activist Juan Garcia has ben largely credited with developing the terms/concepts casa adentro and casa afuera. He has implemented and developed programs primarily in the province of Esmeraldas that are based on these concepts. Others around the country have adopted his ideas and are implementing programs based on his ideas.

<sup>4</sup> Walsh, Catherine (2012). "Other" Knowledges, "Other" Critiques: Reflections on the Politics and Practices of Philosophy and Decoloniality in the "Other" America. *Transmodernity: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World*, 1(3): 10.

<sup>5</sup> Walsh, Katherine (2004). Colonialidad, conocimiento y dia'spora afro-andina: Construyendo etnoeducación e interculturalidad en la universidad. In Eduardo Restrepo & Axel Rojas, ed., *Conflicto e (in)visibilidad: Retos en los estudios de la gente negra en Colombia*, 332–245. Bogotá: Editorial Universidad de Cauca: 334-5.

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<sup>6</sup> Garcia, J., and C. Walsh (2002): 318; Walsh, Katherine (2004): 335.

<sup>7</sup> Rahier, Jean Muteba. "Race, Fútbol, and the Ecuadorian Nation: the Ideological Biology of (Non-)Citizenship." Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics. Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics, 2009,2010. Web. 18 Apr. 2010: 6.  
<<http://hemi.nyu.edu/hemi/en/e-misferica-52/rahier>>.  
Walsh, Katherine (2004): 337.

<sup>8</sup> Wade, P. 1993. *Blackness and race mixture: The dynamics of racial identity in Colombia*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press: 11.

<sup>9</sup> Johnson, Ethan (2007). "Schooling, Blackness and national identity in Esmeraldas, Ecuador." *Race Ethnicity and Education*, Vol. 10, No. 1, March 2007, pp. 47–70: 48.

<sup>10</sup> Garcia, J., and C. Walsh (2002): 319.

<sup>11</sup> Anton Sanchez, Jhon (2012). "El movimiento social afrodescendiente en el Sistema Político Ecuatoriano" (135-163). En *Las poblaciones afrodescendientes de América Latina y el Caribe: pasado, presente y perspectivas desde el Siglo XXI*. Universidad Nacional de Córdoba (UNC) and the Universidad de Tres de Febrero (UNTREF), Argentina: 143; Johnson, Ethan (2009a). Schooling as a regime of equality and reproducing difference in an Afro-Ecuadorian region. *Ethnography and Education* Vol. 4, No. 2, June , 147-164: 148.

<sup>12</sup> Johnson, Ethan (2009a): 149.

<sup>13</sup> Johnson, Ethan (2009a): 154; Johnson, Ethan (2009b). "Student and teacher negotiations of racial identity in an Afro-Ecuadorian region." *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, Vol. 22, No. 5, September–October 2009, 563–584: 567.

<sup>14</sup> Johnson, Ethan (2009a): 151; Johnson, Ethan (2007): 64.

<sup>15</sup> Johnson, Ethan (2009a): 155.

<sup>16</sup> Johnson, Ethan (2009a): 163.

<sup>17</sup> Johnson, Ethan (2009b): 570.

<sup>18</sup> Johnson, Ethan (2009b): 567.

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<sup>19</sup> Parlanti, Jessica Elizabeth (2007). “La Experiencia Etnoeducativa en el Colegio 19 de Noviembre en la Comunidad de la Concepción: Una Subversión Estratégica y Una Entegra Total.” La Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar: Sede Ecuador. Área de Estudios Sociales y Globales, Programa de Maestría en Estudios Latinoamericanos: 141-2.

<sup>20</sup> Walsh, Catherine (2011). Acción Afirmativa en perspectiva afroreparativa: Hacia la nueva constitucionalidad ecuatoriana: 3. (<http://catherine-walsh.blogspot.com.es/2012/02/accion-afirmativa-en-perspectiva.html>).

<sup>21</sup> Martínez Novo, Carmen & de la Torre Carlos (2010). “Racial Discrimination and Citizenship in Ecuador’s Educational System.” *Latin American and Caribbean Ethnic Studies* Vol. 5, No. 1, 1–26: 4.

<sup>22</sup> Martínez Novo, Carmen & de la Torre Carlos (2010): 4.

<sup>23</sup> Martínez Novo, Carmen & de la Torre Carlos (2010): 5.

<sup>24</sup> Martínez Novo, Carmen & de la Torre Carlos (2010): 6.

<sup>25</sup> Martínez Novo, Carmen & de la Torre Carlos (2010): 7.

<sup>26</sup> Martínez Novo, Carmen & de la Torre Carlos (2010): 6.

<sup>27</sup> Martínez Novo, Carmen & de la Torre Carlos (2010): 7.

<sup>28</sup> Martínez Novo, Carmen & de la Torre Carlos (2010): 7-8.

<sup>29</sup> León Castro, Edizon y Walsh, Catherine (2005). “Procesos afro-etnoeducativos colombianos y ecuatorianos e interculturalidad: Alianzas y estrategias entre comunidades y universidades: Hacia una integración distinta.” Presentado como parte de las CÁTEDRAS DE INTEGRACIÓN ANDRÉS BELLO – La universidad y los procesos de integración, proyecto “Estudios de la Diáspora Afro-Andina”, Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar, Sede Ecuador: 4.

<sup>30</sup> For a fuller reading on the difference between these two regions refer to Anton (2003) Sistema de Indicadores Sociales del Ecuador – SIISE-Sistema de Indicadores Sociales del Pueblo Afroecuatoriano –SISPAE-BID- ATN/SF-8095 EC.

<sup>31</sup> Johnson, E. (2012). “Race, Nation and Schooling in Esmeraldas, Ecuador”: 28-31. In *Education in the Black Diaspora: Perspectives, Challenges and Prospects*, ed. Freeman, K & Johnson, E., 27-47. Routledge Press, New York.

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- <sup>32</sup> Walsh, C., León, E. y Restrepo, E. (2005). Movimientos sociales afro y políticas de identidad en Colombia y Ecuador. Siete cátedras para la integración / Convenio Andrés Bello. Bogotá: Convenio Andrés Bello: 231.
- <sup>33</sup> Walsh, C., León, E. y Restrepo, E. (2005): 233.
- <sup>34</sup> Anton, J. 2005. Pueblos indígenas y afrodescendientes de América Latina y el Caribe: relevancia y pertenencia de la información sociodemográfica para políticas y programas [Indigenous and African descendant communities of Latin America and the Caribbean: Relevance and pertinence of social demographic information for politics and programs]. Paper presented at the Comisión Económica Para América Latina y el Caribe, April 27–29, in Santiago, Chile: 6-7.
- <sup>35</sup> Garcia, J., and C. Walsh (2002): 319.
- <sup>36</sup> Walsh, C., León, E. y Restrepo, E. (2005): 251.
- <sup>37</sup> Anton, Sanchez, Jhon (2007). Afrodescendientes: sociedad civil y movilización social en el Ecuador. *Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology*, Vol. 12, No. 1, pp. 233–245: 234.
- <sup>38</sup> Juan Garcia et al., for example, collected over 3000 hours of oral histories and 8000 photos, in which much of the collective memory and wisdom of Afro-Ecuadorians in the province of Esmeraldas concerning politics, culture and economies of the region has been saved.
- <sup>39</sup> Anton Sanchez, Jhon (2012): 148.
- <sup>40</sup> Walsh, C., León, E. y Restrepo, E. (2005): 234.
- <sup>41</sup> Walsh, C., León, E. y Restrepo, E. (2005): 234.
- <sup>42</sup> León Castro, Edizon y Walsh, Catherine (2005): 11.
- <sup>43</sup> For a more detailed reading of the historical processes that have led up to the present concerning Afro-Ecuadorian organizational efforts see Anton 2007.
- <sup>44</sup> Parlanti, Jessica Elizabeth (2007): 29.
- <sup>45</sup> Walsh, C., León, E. y Restrepo, E. (2005): 233-4.
- <sup>46</sup> Walsh, C., León, E. y Restrepo, E. (2005): 238.

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- <sup>47</sup> León Castro, Edizon y Walsh, Catherine (2005): 15.
- <sup>48</sup> León Castro, Edizon (2014). “Texturas y memorias del pueblo afro.” *El Telégrafo*, 1/22/14: 2.
- <sup>49</sup> Walsh, Catherine (2011). Acción Afirmativa en perspectiva afroreparativa: Hacia la nueva constitucionalidad ecuatoriana: 2. (<http://catherine-walsh.blogspot.com.es/2012/02/accion-afirmativa-en-perspectiva.html>).
- <sup>50</sup> Anton Sanchez, Jhon (2012): 148.
- <sup>51</sup> Walsh, Catherine (2007). “Dossier Actualidades: Lo Afro en América Andina Lo Afro en América andina: Reflexiones entorno a luchas actuales de (in)visibilidad, (re)existencia y pensamiento.” *Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology*, Vol.12, No.1,pp.200–212: 203.
- <sup>52</sup> There are very likely other programs and schools that are functioning in Ecuador that focus on the experiences of Afro-Ecuadorians, however, I have found no studies of these programs.
- <sup>53</sup> Walsh, Katherine (2004): 235.
- <sup>54</sup> Parlanti, Jessica Elizabeth (2007): 96.
- <sup>55</sup> Parlanti, Jessica Elizabeth (2007): 102.
- <sup>56</sup> Walsh, C., León, E. y Restrepo, E. (2005): 241.
- <sup>57</sup> Garcia, Juan (2009). “La Cultura Afro-Ecuatoriana en Esmeraldas: Una Aproximación.”. Lectura preparada por el PCN, para: Primer Taller Tradición Oral Afroecuatoriana. Muisne, 02-03 de mayo del 2009: 6.
- <sup>58</sup> Garcia, Juan (2009). Agenda de la Primer Taller Tradición Oral Afroecuatoriana. Muisne, 02-03 de mayo del 2009: 1.
- <sup>59</sup> Johnson, Ethan (2007): 48.
- <sup>60</sup> In my previous research for example few of the participants knew more than that Afro-descendant people were slaves demonstrating that the long history of resistance and contributions to the political and economic development of the nation has been largely lost.

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- <sup>61</sup> Garcia, Juan (2009). "Función de la Narrativa Oral." Tercer Taller TTOA: 1-9.
- <sup>62</sup> The marimba is a xylophone like instrument made of wooden keys that is used both in popular and ritual music. It is found throughout the Caribbean and Central and South America and is likely descendant from West Africa.
- <sup>63</sup> Memoria Colectiva (1983). "Por Qué El Sapo Es Aplastado." This story was compiled by Juan Garcia and adapted for the TTOA 2009 workshops.
- <sup>64</sup> Collective Memory (1983). "Por Qué Las Gallinas Se Comen a Las Cucarachas." This story was compiled by Juan Garcia and adapted for the TTOA 2009 workshops.
- <sup>65</sup> Garcia, Juan (2009). "Tarea Tercer Taller." Tercer Taller TTOA: 1.
- <sup>66</sup> Johnson, E. (2009C). "The representation of Murals and Statues in an Afro-Ecuadorian Region." *Souls*, 11: 4, 365-388: 384.
- <sup>67</sup> Johnson, E. (2009C): 385.
- <sup>68</sup> Johnson, E. (2009C): 385.
- <sup>69</sup> Garcia, J., and C. Walsh (2002): 322.
- <sup>70</sup> Tumaco is a town that is near the border of Ecuador on the Colombian side of the Comarca negra.
- <sup>71</sup> Garcia, Juan (2009). "El Precio de un Baile de Marimba." Sexto Taller TTOA: 2.
- <sup>72</sup> Garcia, Juan (2009). "El Precio de un Baile de Marimba." Sexto Taller TTOA: 3.
- <sup>73</sup> Garcia, Juan (2009). "El Precio de un Baile de Marimba." Sexto Taller TTOA: 2.
- <sup>74</sup> Walsh, Catherine (2011): 29-30.