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Indigenism in Ecuador and its influence on artistic manifestations

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Abstract---Indigenous is undoubtedly one of the artistic and social movements of great importance in Ecuador, being a process that continues to have ramifications to this day. The objective of this article is to publicize the influence of indigenism through its artists and how they have influenced the social evolution of the perception and treatment of the indigenous ethnic group. For the development of this research, the descriptive bibliographic review method has been used since it allows the presentation of concepts or ideas in relation to a topic. The development of this theme evidences the importance and influence of this movement starting from the 20th century, analyzing various points of relevance during the social - cultural current and how it has been framed today.

Keywords---indigenism, Eugenics, Arts.

Introduction

Today, due to the social changes we have undergone, the perception of the indigenous people has improved to a great extent, however, there is still a certain

population that rejects these people; although it can be considered that it has been decreasing over time. Being the indigenous people one of the most representative artistically, and sociocultural, the visibility they have had for years has been reduced to a people without identity with simplistic artistic manifestations. This is how Ecuadorians put aside a whole worldview and a set of important indigenous beliefs to understand the people and their traditions.

However, a eugenic process took place in Ecuador, which consisted of a bombardment of racial ideals and miscegenation, for which the emergence of an artistic movement arises as a result, which shows the indigenous in the foreground, with their customs, reality, and importance. Within the country, presenting the figure of the indigenous person with a great contrast, considering the positions and movements presented previously, which showed the indigenous person as an object and an ornament for the work as such.

Indigenous represents the people in their traditions, not as an ornament, not accompanying, not serving the bourgeoisie, rather as a protagonist. Represented with his work, his dances, or simply the indigenous being himself. One of its most representative artists is Egas, who represents the indigenous with specific landscaping and colors, however, he was not the only one to participate in indigenous, Jorge Icaza was also present at this time, using a non-plastic artistic language, occupying writing to represent, with his famous work entitled *Huasipungo*, a novel that portrays the reality of indigenous people and their direct relationship with labor exploitation, which is why it has been chosen to study the influence that this has had on the artistic manifestations of Ecuador.

Materials and Methods

This writing is a review article, since it intends to present the opinion of different artists in relation to indigenism, this with the intention of consolidating both the positive and negative influence that the movement has had in the country. His review is descriptive, since as previously mentioned, it seeks to present concepts or ideas in relation to a subject that is constantly changing (Vera, 2009).

It will be presented in brief paragraphs that will analyze painting, literature, eugenics and how all this has currently resulted in a gray matrix for the indigenous people, likewise a table will be presented with different opinions of the authors cited in this topic; Finally, all the names of the authors can be found in the references, in case the reader is interested in a specific quote.

The topics addressed also work as a chronology, since it was this order in which indigenism took power and established itself as a popular artistic movement in Ecuador, the cited articles were investigated and compiled using the library of the UNAE university (National University of Ecuador) and through Google Scholar, a useful tool to find information with verifiable sources. As a final point, it should be noted that this article may present variations in the future in the event that the situation of the indigenous person changes abruptly or research is found that may vary what is presented in this scientific article.

Analysis and Discussion of Results

Eugenics: A problem of discrimination and an imposition impregnated at present

Eugenics is an act manifested for years as "social hygiene", often used as a contradictory determinant of diseases, pests and discomforts specifically in an area. Many times, it has been seen as a social process that countries with too much multiculturalism must go through as a solution to the great problems of racism, ethnophobia and contemplating different deficiencies that can be found in the systematization of the country, such as example:

Educational problems, not being able to cover the needs of the sociocultural contexts of a student, falling into problems of discrimination and pedagogical malpractice, cultural labor problems, considering that each ethnic group has its epistemology and worldview, one can fall into discrimination by not consider their traditions, since, in an office job, the availability of time and efficiency as such are sought.

Therefore, this is how a conclusion is reached in which Finland has an impeccable educational and labor model that is "easy" to apply due to this multicultural lack that exists and little problematization found. However, contemplating eugenics as an option and a means of hygiene or "disinfection" leads to more problems, such as the perspective that the indigenous people of Ecuador had for a long time and the loss of the country's identity, marking discriminatory solutions without considering account the needs of the people as such (Vásquez, 2017).

As previously mentioned, the derogatory perspective towards indigenous people is a consequence of a eugenics process installed in Latin America, which was installed in the first half of the 20th century, however, it had a great difference from the European one, which was based in war conflicts; on the other hand, on this side of the world, the towns were segregated to the "correct miscegenation" as Bonifaz refers to in his book. *The indigenous peoples of high altitude in Ecuador*. Said text assimilates Ecuadorian eugenics in such a way that it reduces it to a miscegenation between whites and mestizos, resulting in the social belief, which continues to this day, of "improving the race."

Above all, these kinds of conversations deep within families, which wanted their descendants to do their best not to darken the skin tone of future generations of their families. Giving rise in the same way to a process of marriages between cousins to which some families submitted, with the purpose of "not staining the blood" and conserving family land. (Burguete Cal., *et all* 2011) Ecuadorian eugenics had as its main propaganda to make the indigenous people look sick, someone dirty who does not work well, so that they tend to seek not to be perceived in that way with the objective of "the correct mix" inculcated in them marriage of whites and mestizos, with the purpose of social whitening, already mentioned above.

Likewise, in the eugenics process, misogynist thoughts were promulgated as an idea of forced sterilization of indigenous women, especially due to the belief that their womb resulted in another undesirable indigenous woman. This is how they had a deepened idea about the elimination of the indigenous people, from the placement of an intrauterine spiral. (Locatelli and Giovanni, 2019). In the same way, it was proposed that the indigenous should be rooted in the countryside, since it is conceived as impure, due to the idea that it should be what they ate and someone coming from the land should be that for most of their life.

In this way, the indigenous people were exposed to ill-treatment, considering that this type of perspective continues to this day, since they continue to be underestimated and socially left aside. The oppression only brought with it a series of colony behaviors for the indigenous people, which have been based on the loss of ancestral practices and a progressive loss of their identity, having to live at the expense of the upper, white class of Ecuador, earning the minimum and sometimes not even having basic rights. (Espinosa, 1996). Going through a series of discrimination and mistreatment day by day due to the beliefs impregnated in our society.

From this, world-renowned artistic movements were created, which are based on showing the suffering of this people, putting pain and hard peasant work in the first instance make visible traditions, worldview, among others; without fear of the discomfort or disagreement that the viewer may have when viewing certain works. Opening a critical debate about social inequality, racism and little empathetic social attitudes towards peoples and nationalities.

Indigenism in pictorial art

The most representative artistic manifestations in Ecuador at the time of the first half of the 20th century respond to a production of pictorial works with themes that show the population and the national environment, with an expository intention of the Ecuadorian reality towards the outside world. Linked to this, representations are expressed that allude to costumers and end up leading to the social realism of indigenism. Obtained as the primary purpose of the works, the narration of social aspects of injustice towards the excluded ethnic groups and even a cultural communication of the indigenous nationalities of Ecuador is generated. These characteristics are condensed in the themes of indigenous art by pictorial artists such as Camilo Egas and Eduardo Kingman, who implement the representation of national peoples, as well as elements that allude to landscaping. This to make a social complaint, as well as a cultural expression of the characteristics of the indigenous people, within an internal context of mestizo domain (Sánchez, 2021). In relation to this, there are other authors of indigenism such as Eduardo Kingman and Oswaldo Guayasamin; artists who use a style of distortion in their works and communicate pain, oppression, and injustice towards the indigenous through a metaphorical production.

Camilo Egas

To carry out the documentation of the influence of indigenism in the pictorial manifestations, the work of Ecuadorian authors is provided with emphasis on the

cultural, political, and social characteristics that led to the conformation of an indigenist style. In the first instance we have the artist from Quito Camilo Egas, being considered the precursor of indigenism as an artistic current, in Ecuadorian painting. The social context of said character in the world of art places him in an environment of early artistic training, increasing his pictorial talent through institutions such as the School of Fine Arts in his hometown or the Royal Academy of Fine Arts of San Fernando located in Madrid. The knowledge about techniques and artistic styles, led Camilo Egas to develop an attachment to Landscaping, having a relationship with the, about the representation of the fauna of an Andean national environment. It is through this artistic practice that an interest in the national component originates for its representation in his pictorial works. Taking the indigenous as the favorite theme for their expression and cultural communication, against a doctrine of eugenics in force in Ecuador during the middle of the 20th century (Panchi, 2019).

Camilo Egas's interest in the representation of the national indigenous culture, has a change from the nationalist communication of the characteristic of the Ecuadorian people, towards a disclosure of the cultural components of the indigenous peoples of the Sierra. This as a method of poetic protest, which challenged the opinions established by the character of eugenics present in Ecuador. It is for this reason that indigenism emerges as an influence that is linked to the work of Camilo Egas, by representing indigenous cultural practices and the geographical position in which they were found. As a theme of full prominence in the paintings, without the need to provide deformities in the bodies, nor the mestizo as a character within the context that was shown. These works acquired their own style that arises as a response to the theme and the characteristic to be represented, using bright colors for nature, as well as earth tones for the Andean backgrounds. On the other hand, the implementation of stylized positions in the indigenous people is observed, when representing them in the practice of different rites of their culture. In addition, emphasis is placed on their features and clothing, having a great success in the form and concepts of these elements. This is due to the exhaustive ethnographic study carried out by the artist Camilo Egas prior to the creation of his works (Chávez, et al, 2022).

Eduardo Kingman

The pictorial artist Eduardo Kingman participates to a great extent, in the confirmation of important aspects at an aesthetic and conceptual level of indigenism as an artistic current. This, due to the humanizing character that his paintings have due to the structuring of a concept that implements deformation, as a technique that allows the communication of a complex message, which can intercede in the perception and decision of the viewer. The indigenous works of this artist are characterized by generating an impression that penetrates the senses and generates a dialogue between the communicated message and its reflection with the real aspects that the work comprises. Using the reality of the indigenous as an element that converts aspects such as work or subjugation, into a representation of the internal and personal world of the same, through the deformation of the bodies, through a metaphorical element that communicates the social characteristics that they shape the indigenous into visual components (Greet, 2015).

Oswaldo Guayasamin

Oswaldo Guayasamin's indigenous art connects with themes of indigenous reality that merge with the artist's own identity. This is because said author has indigenous heritage in his identity, even recognizing himself as an "Indian", to reinforce his interest in the creation of indigenous art. The pictorial works of Oswaldo Guayasamin express pain, despair, sadness, reflecting using straight lines, the reality of the indigenous person as an oppressed character in a society that discriminates against him. On the other hand, the work of said artist was reinforced to a great extent, due to the political relations in which he became involved during his artistic training, an element that promoted the recognition of his aesthetics in a certain way. However, the reality that is presented in his works and the national character that it denotes in cultural communication in its pictorial manifestations, maintains a great influence and contribution to Ecuadorian indigenism (Ordoñez, 2015).

Indigenism in literature

At its peak, indigenism began to be promoted and considered one of the most definitive social movements of the 20th century. Several authors noted for their literary creation began to promote the ideals and foundations that constituted indigenism in different places within Ecuador. We could mention the Yucatecan Antonio Mediz Bolio with his work *"The land of the pheasant and the deer"*, (1922) Regarding the Mayans, another representative of this narrative is Eduardo Luquín, with his novel titled "El Indio" (1923), constituting another manifestation of social, economic, and political protest.

Indigenous pre indigenism

In Ecuador, there was a great differentiation between social classes, a marked discrimination between the elites of society and all those working and working classes. As Antonio Sacoto explains, The Ecuadorian Indian of the 1930 novel is the residue of almost five centuries of bestialization; a being if not primitive if on a sub-human level (1991). This thought begins to work a lot during the 20th century, but it begins to evolve towards the humanization of this social class. As León, Pozo and Estrada indicate, this process of rupture of current thought and a reinvention of the story, focused on issues of social and indigenous justice, began to strengthen during the decades of the twenties, thirties, and forties of the twentieth century, constituting itself as an era of gold of the Ecuadorian narrative. (2019, p. 70).

G. H Surface

Gonzalo Humberto Mata (1920 - 1950) is a Cuenca writer, artist, and novelist who rose to prominence in the 20th century. GH Mata is credited as one of the first promoters of the indigenous movement in his locality, but an indigenism carried out from his perspective, as indicated by Miguel Novillo and María Teresa Arteaga, is considered to carry out a very biased indigenism and from a vision of the Indian as a being violent and vengeful (2018). In the texts proposed by G.H Mata we find texts that indicate this characterization, as it is.

Indian: When you have a longo / baptize it with blasphemies, give it a name of a beast / combative, / feed it dynamites with revenge, / make your female act on her nerves / the sign of the cross with the machetes, / that she teaches to pray hatred without defeat / against the pale citizen puppets.

This demonstration became one of the main foundations of the author in his creative elaboration, since it was very indicative of the belief and the social stratum that the Indians had in the 20th century, again citing Novillo and Arteaga, for their part, the structure Cuenca's social status was marked by different social factions that made up the city (2010, p. 8). Thus, by living with these different social groups and seeing their collective interaction, G.H Mata in his literature began to rescue several of the problems and themes in his books. Novillo and Arteaga establish that G. H Mata was one of the first promoters of daily life within the city, with works such as *Sal* (1963), *Chorro Cañamazo* (1968), among others (2018, p. 4). Having this perspective, GH Mata became one of the main promoters of the indigenous movement within the city of Cuenca in the literary field, but he did not consider himself the most important.

Command

Work written by the author Juan León Mera, is one of the pillars for the growth and development of the indigenous movement within Ecuador. At the time of writing *Cumandá's* work, Juan León Mera focused on making a representation of indigenism in the 19th century (Mora, 2020). Considering the influences and powerful social trends that existed at the time, a literary work presenting the lifestyle and beliefs of the indigenous community was something revolutionary.

Huasipungo

The work entitled *Huasipungo* is one of the most outstanding literary works for the indigenous movement. Being written by Jorge Icaza, it is one of the works that socially transforms the Indian from an animal being to a more humanistic description. Placing the Indian as a human being (for the first time in the novels), creating a revolution in the social perception of the Indian in Ecuador. From this work, one begins to have a perspective and a social realization of the Indian as a human being and not a beast as previously considered.

Indigenism today

Throughout the article it was possible to read about indigenism in Ecuador, and the influence that it had, as well as the consequences that said movement brought to the country's society at that time, and it is that it greatly changed thought, attitudes, and how the indigenous people were seen at that time, and of course, as the years went by, all this became more embedded in Ecuadorian society. In the following paragraphs, indigenism will be addressed today and how it has managed to remain in force.

It should be noted that in order to talk about indigenism today, it is necessary to mention its greatest influence, and that is that the same author has been mentioned several times throughout the article: Camilo Egas, who was the most

representative artist of indigenism in the Ecuador, and it would be the one that would establish a school that later more artists were in charge of following, it is worth mentioning that it was not just from one day to the next, since it was influenced by the changes that existed throughout Latin America, not only in the country, in addition to this was always close to the situation of the indigenous people and the injustices they endured (Paocarina, 2021).

The influence of Egas was extremely beneficial for indigenism in Ecuador, and had it not been for the previously mentioned artistic works of the author, nothing we have today would be in front of us. However, despite what was previously mentioned, has the situation of the indigenous people really managed to change during all these years? Well, the answer is not so simple.

Within this order of ideas, we can state that discrimination against indigenous peoples is extremely present within the country, indigenous peoples have a lifestyle that consists of working all day in an inhumane manner, since they are under the sun, working at totally illegal ages (both children and the elderly), and receiving a salary that is not equivalent to all the work they do for the country. (Larrea, *et al.*, 2007). This shows that the situation of the indigenous people has not changed, but now there are even new ways to make fun of the situation that these peoples have to face on television, through the radio, in the so-called "memes" In social networks, and in other forms of communication, indigenous people are represented as not very smart people, as people who do not speak Spanish, with poor hygiene, or even mocking the color of their skin, these representations being widely accepted by a certain social sector of the country (León, 2010). Therefore, it can even be assumed that the purpose of indigenism changed little by little during the social progress of the country, and that is that, as already explained, it sought to represent the indigenous people to show their reality and expose the injustices they experienced; At present they are still shown to society, although unfortunately, as León mentions, it is done with the purpose of making fun of the life they lead.

In the last two years, 2021 - 2022, the situation of the country with the president has been totally stormy and it is that a large number of decisions have been made that have not been well regarded by the Ecuadorian community at all, and those who have raised their voices To claim these irregularities, it has been the indigenous people, carrying out strikes, asking that they be taken into consideration, noting their obvious usefulness in the country, and showing the power that their union is capable of achieving. However, even though what they claim was a common problem, they were highly criticized, discriminated against and even made a subject of ridicule.

After what has been mentioned, it is even somewhat conflictive to say that the indigenous movement has really helped those affected in a really effective way, however, it was practically obligatory to mention the injustices that the indigenous people continue to experience, since, otherwise, it would be like denying everything that is happening, a way to continue with the lie that in today's society they are seen as equals. In addition, even though part of Ecuadorian society still discriminates heavily against indigenous people, another

large part constantly supports their struggle to be seen as equals, to try to leave behind this existing cultural bias.

It is equally necessary to mention that although they were victims of all the aforementioned, they still had great support from another part of the country, bringing pure indigenism and as represented by Egas and all the other artists who got involved in this movement, and it is who, in the form of recognition, received songs, video dedications on different social networks, songs where everything they are creating is related, support for artists who do not abandon their roots, since they sing in Kechwa and have support from both their fans and by different organizations, murals where they were painted as the heroes the country needed, and even asylum from the citizens when the march lasted too long.

This could be exemplified in an excellent way when Rafael Correa was the president of the country, since he was in charge of giving them political powers to have a voice, and expressing all their concerns (something that had not been done until years ago), gave way to more representations artistic creations created by them, more attention to their cultural movements, dances, traditions and food, achieving an alliance never seen before in the country (Ospina, 2012). Added to this, they have received in recent years, the so-called indigenous insurance, which allows them to receive a salary and free medical help from the government, since as previously explained, they work individually, so they do not have a boss responsible for the basic rights of the worker.

It is thus, that the indigenous still fight for their rights and to be seen as equals without being victims of discrimination, this can be seen in a notorious way with the progress that the Plurinational Federation of Community Tourism of Ecuador, because over the years, they established a optimal indigenous identity, following the guidelines of an NGO, in order to help indigenous peoples and nationalities, while proudly showing the worldview of their peoples, even activating the economy in towns that the government had somewhat forgotten (Orlando, 2020).

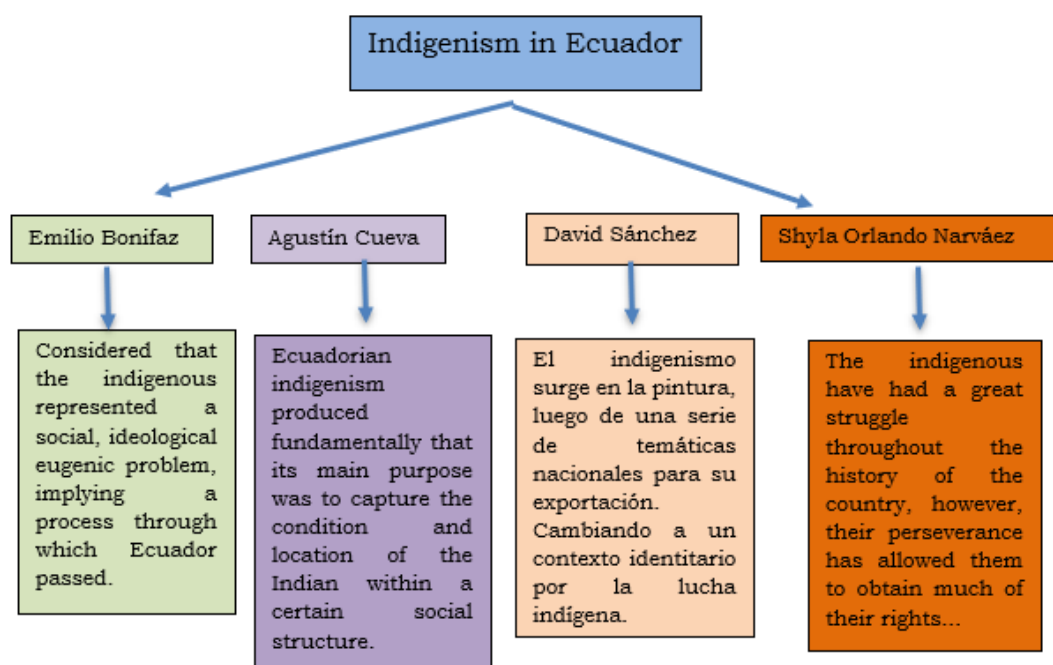


Figure 1. Thought of the different authors on indigenism

Based on what was presented by the different authors, it can be said that the indigenist movement meant a great step for the indigenous people, since it allowed them to present their life through different artistic languages, this in turn allowed them to advance by leaps and bounds. , and it is that, from their representations in paintings where their customs, their food or simply their daily life were shown, or literature, the lives of many of them were used as a tragedy worthy of entertainment, or to be seen as people who had to disappear based on a selection of which person was most attractive according to the European canon. Currently, they have managed to reach the point of being able to exercise political powers (as mayors, councilors, prefects, assembly members, etc.), recognized artists with highly appreciated paintings by collectors around the world, or as teachers, doctors, etc.

Conclusion

The indigenous people are the base that sustain the country for their contribution in agriculture, tourist crafts, textiles, among others, they have provided most of the customs that are celebrated until today, who with a smile sell you the food that you will consume in your daily life and those who fight for a fairer world where everyone can be seen as equal, without having to change to achieve it, but sharing what each one has to offer, and although this fight continues, there is no doubt that always and when this continues, a better tomorrow will be achieved.

The indigenous people have had a great influence in the artistic world, as well as in the political world, since they have brought to the table strong debates about

how they are treated, same in which the entire country has been participating for decades.

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