

May 13, 1808

King Joao VI of Portugal declared a war of extermination against the Botocudo Indians of Minas Gerais and Goias which resulted in widespread massacres. Hostilities did not officially end until a century later with the establishment of the government's "Service for the Protection of Indians" in 1911.

May 18, 1781

This is the date of the execution of Tupac Amaru, who led the Quechua-speaking Indians of southern Peru in revolt against Spanish colonialists. In the main plaza in Cuzco, Tupac Amaru's tongue was cut out and his body was pulled apart by horses tied to his arms and legs. His family witnessed his execution and was then brutally murdered in the same fashion. Their heads were posted along the main roads to the city as a warning to other Indians.

May 29, 1980

The Guatemalan army massacred more than one hundred Kekchi Indians including five children in the town of Panzos, Alta Verapaz. More than 1,000 Indians marched on Panzos to obtain information from the Mayor on three missing Indian leaders as well as their land titles that had been promised by the government. When they arrived at the town square, they were met by 150 soldiers who local landowners had sent to Panzos from the military base at Zacapa. The troops fired on the crowd, killing more than 100, wounding 600, and sending others into the surrounding mountains.



On May 22 a group of over 30 people working on indigenous concerns using film, video, and still photography met in Berkeley to discuss the prospects of sharing resources and information. Nilo Cayuqueo of SAIIC spoke, stressing the need for indigenous people and others to find means to work together on concerns that effect all humanity. Alvaro Vasquez of the Asamblea del Pueblo Zapoteco in Mexico described the video work he and others in his community are carrying out. He urged all those working with indigenous people to thoroughly examine their motives and methods to assure both that people with a shared vision, regardless of race, work together and that the results of this work represent a positive effort for the goals of indigenous people. If you wish to obtain more information regarding the Zapotec video work, or if you wish to lend much-needed support, Alvaro may be reached at Apdo. Postal 1137, C.P. 68 000, Oaxaca, Oaxaca, Mexico. The next meeting of the group will be on June 19. For information about the time and place, contact Leanna Wolfe (415) 841-3563.

