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Political Representation for Indigenous Peoples in the Andes

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Master's Thesis

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Abstract

For years, there has been a lack of representation for indigenous peoples in communities, and most importantly in parliament. This is a very common trait in the South American Andes, which houses the largest number of indigenous groups in the continent. This thesis focuses on Ecuador and Bolivia due to their indigenous population and their history, or lack thereof, with indigenous people in parliament. For my hypothesis, I argue that parliamentary representation of indigenous peoples, can help ensure that their rights are protected, and their unique interests are heard and translated into relevant policies, while at the same time preventing conflict. I also argue that underrepresentation is likely due to a combination of actual barriers to participation and an overall sense of alienation from mainstream electoral processes. While Bolivian democracy was more stable and inclusive under the Morales government than under previous ones, this study finds that the influence of other government officials and economic needs played a part in changes for the rights of the indigenous. The study shows that Bolivian politics revolved around the increase, and then decrease, in indigenous rights under their first indigenous president, Evo Morales. In this thesis, I also follow Ecuadorian politics involving indigenous groups. Lastly, the thesis examines a comparison between the two states and how they relate historically and politically to each other.

Political Representation for Indigenous Peoples in the Andes

CHAPTER ONE: Introduction

The representation of indigenous peoples in parliament is first and foremost a reflection and symbol of the State's recognition of the unique interests, needs and rights of indigenous peoples. Such representation presupposes the recognition of indigenous peoples as a distinct identity and legal category in each country. Indigenous peoples are all too often lumped together with minorities or other vulnerable sectors of society. Traditional and historical discrimination against indigenous candidates, the limited impact that indigenous representatives have had on indigenous peoples' lives, and a general lack of confidence in national decision-making bodies, where experience may be at odds with existing indigenous decision-making institutions, may explain the relative apathy of indigenous voters and the low representation of indigenous peoples in parliament.

I argue that parliamentary representation of indigenous peoples, a traditionally underrepresented and historically marginalized group, can help ensure that their rights are protected, and their unique interests are heard and translated into relevant policies, while at the same time preventing conflict between government officials and the Indigenous constituents they represent. Indigenous representation in parliament can also benefit society at large, because indigenous practices and knowledge can provide solutions to complex environmental, developmental and governance problems that all societies face today.

I also argue that underrepresentation is likely due to a combination of actual barriers to participation and an overall sense of alienation from mainstream electoral processes. Barriers to participation include, but are not limited to, undue conditions for voter registration, access to the

voting booth in rural areas, the political parties' unwillingness to find indigenous candidates or place them high on their party lists, and a lack of adequate political party funding.

The methodology for this paper will consist of a Qualitative Study. The sources I have included in this research are books regarding South American politics. There are also journal articles based on indigenous rights, Ecuadorian and Bolivian politics, as well as United Nations declarations and forums that have discussed Indigenous heritage and definitions.

The Andes is a region that spans across South America from Colombia through Chile. It has been historically and culturally attached to many indigenous populations surrounding those countries. Their rich culture and dialects have been passed on through many generations, even through the colonization period by Spain and Portugal. Although many aspects of South American life have become Europeanized, indigenous groups still try to maintain the familiarity of their ancestors through much of their daily activities. Today, there are about 30-40 million indigenous people in South America, yet they are underrepresented in their respective governments. Andean indigenous groups are an inherently complex issue, especially in Bolivia and Ecuador which have similar colonial legacies and have developed along comparable political and economic trajectories. Indigenous communities need political access to fight for their rights and to hold their governments accountable. The key to the actualization of human rights for indigenous peoples lies within their greater political inclusion. The significance of political access for indigenous people's human rights is threefold. First, the existence of relatively stable democracies in Bolivia and Ecuador present opportunities for indigenous communities to participate politically through legitimate means. Second, only the indigenous communities truly know the unique challenges they face and must have political representation to voice these concerns and to ensure legislative change. Finally, without the specific knowledge that is held by

indigenous peoples, outsiders have few opportunities to appropriately and accurately represent them. I argue that greater participation by indigenous people in political life has a direct effect on their human rights protection and land protection from corporations. This thesis will examine the hierarchical status of indigenous peoples in Bolivia and Ecuador, the status of their human rights, and the obstacles that must be overcome for them to have full political access.

In 2007, the United Nations put forth the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. According to Article 43 of the declaration, it is made to enshrine the rights that “constitute the minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the indigenous peoples of the world” (UNDRIP, 2008, p. 14). The UNDRIP establishes a universal framework of minimum survival standards for the dignity and well-being of the world's indigenous peoples. It is the most comprehensive international instrument on indigenous peoples' collective rights, including the rights to self-determination, traditional lands and culture. The Declaration is the product of almost 25 years of deliberation by U.N. member states and indigenous groups. It is responsible for the thousands of indigenous groups worldwide who may feel unheard or misrepresented.

Because of the diversity of indigenous peoples, the U.N. body has not officially adopted a definition for the term indigenous. However, they have developed an understanding of this term based on the following:

- Self- identification as indigenous peoples at the individual level and accepted by the community as their member.
- Historical continuity with pre-colonial and/or pre-settler societies
- Strong link to territories and surrounding natural resources
- Distinct social, economic or political systems

- Distinct language, culture and beliefs
- Form non-dominant groups of societies
- Resolve to maintain and reproduce their ancestral environments and systems as distinctive peoples and communities (UNDRIP, 2008, p. 14).

According to the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, “the term ‘indigenous’ has prevailed as a generic term for many years. In some countries, there may be preference for other terms including tribes, first peoples/nations, aboriginals, ethnic groups, adivasi, janajati., etc., but for all practical purposes can be used interchangeably with ‘indigenous peoples’ (United Nations, 2006, pp. 1-2). However, in some cases, the notion of being termed “indigenous” has negative connotations and some people may choose not to reveal or define their origin. We should be able to respect those choices all the while working against the discrimination of indigenous peoples.

CHAPTER TWO: Literature Review

Deborah Yashar, professor of politics at Princeton, examines the changing terms, and scope of ethnic representation in Bolivia and Ecuador. Her chapter, “Indigenous Politics in the Andes: Changing Patterns of Recognition, Reform, and Representation”, discusses how these Latin American states wrote indigenous people out of formal politics only to be confronted at the end of the twentieth century with the rise of significant indigenous movements demanding recognition, representation and reform. Yashar argues that the mobilization of indigenous and popular communities is both a means of widening the democratic spectrum and a deep source of political tension and highlights the desire of some indigenous groups to be represented by officials with the same ethnicity as them (Yashar, 2006, pp. 257-292).

As indigenous groups move toward inclusion and equality in politics, their respective governments are facing criticism for the stances they take that fail the interest of indigenous people. John Crabtree’s article states that the “governments of both Andean countries face criticism for policies which seek to boost investment but fail adequately to take into account the interests of local people, who say these projects threaten their physical and social environment” (Crabtree, 2012, pp.1). The governments elected with the support of indigenous populations have taken steps to enshrine indigenous rights in their respective legal codes. In Ecuador, President Rafael Correa reformed his country’s constitution, extending indigenous rights. As in Bolivia, the 2008 constitution in Ecuador states - in an echo of the International Labor Organization's convention no. 169 - that indigenous peoples should have the right to "free, informed and prior consultation" where development projects take place on or under their lands. Crabtree also states that “the governments of Bolivia and Ecuador reflect aspects of what has been called the "pink

wave" in Latin America, a reversion against the free-wheeling neo-liberal policies in vogue up until the early years of the new millennium" (Crabtree, 2012, pp.1). Both countries have pursued policies highly critical of the United States and its policies towards Latin America.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) is an international instrument adopted by the United Nations on September 13, 2007, to enshrine, according to Article 43, the rights that "constitute the minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the indigenous peoples of the world." The UNDRIP protects collective rights that may not be addressed in other human rights charters that emphasize individual rights, and also safeguards the individual rights of indigenous people. However, it is not a legally binding document under international law (United Nations General Assembly, 2008, pp.14).

The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues provided an information sheet on the proper understanding of the term indigenous. There is no specific definition provided by the UN for the word indigenous, instead it has key terms that can be used to help identify these groups. It includes, self-identification as indigenous peoples at the individual level and accepted by the community as their member, historical continuity with pre-colonial and/or pre-settler societies, strong link to territories and surrounding natural resources, distinct social, economic or political systems, distinct language, culture and beliefs, form non-dominant groups of society, and lastly, resolve to maintain and reproduce their ancestral environments and systems as distinctive peoples and communities (United Nations, 2006, pp. 1-2).

Aside from the United Nations, there are many organizations that work on improving and fighting for the rights of underrepresented groups. Most of the time they are non-governmental organizations. Minority Rights Group International is an international human rights organization founded with the objective of working to secure rights for ethnic, national, religious and

linguistic minorities and indigenous peoples around the world. Their website provides data and critical information that can help us better understand the circumstances these groups face daily. Because many of us can be so out of touch with this topic, they provide the knowledge that can keep us informed (Minority Rights Group International, n.d, minorityrights.org/country/ecuador).

The Sheffield Institute for International Development is another group that provides research on indigenous groups from developing countries. In a Bolivian census conducted in 2012, it showed that there was a 20% decrease in indigenous self-identification. Researcher Lorenza Fontana worked with SIID to map the hypothesis of the dramatic decrease that occurred in a heavily indigenous country. She had found that the wording of the census questions could have thrown many of those answering off. However, there are others who believe that the questioning was a tactic move for the government to seem more mestizo as opposed to indigenous (Fontana, 2013, para.1).

Peter DeShazo concisely summarizes a series of expert panels on the status of indigenous politics in the Andean region (DeShazo, 2009, pp. 4-13). Each panel addressed a country in the region, namely Bolivia, Peru, or Ecuador. The consensus of the panelists is that conditions have been more favorable in Bolivia and Ecuador for indigenous groups to mobilize than in Peru. The impediments to indigenous groups in Peru include: President Garcia's "anti-indigenous policy;" media portrayal of this group as violent and disinterested in dialogue; and the geographical divide between indigenous groups in the highlands and those in the Amazon region. The panelists also conclude that indigenous mobilization creates a great backlash against neo-liberal policies that have been adopted by their governments. Ultimately, the future for indigenous political participation looks stable in Bolivia and Ecuador but some experts do not foresee

indigenous parties having a successful presidential candidate anytime soon, even after Evo Morales in Bolivia. DeShazo creates a fascinating summary of this prestigious conference.

In 2019, the Waorani indigenous group of the Ecuadorian Amazon won a landmark case. After long protesting oil extraction in its territory, the community is suing three government bodies - the Ministry of Energy and Non-renewable Natural Resources, the Secretary of Hydrocarbons and the Ministry of Environment - for violating their rights and putting their territory up for an international oil auction. The group marched to the court house with supporters dressed in their traditional clothing made of tree materials on their land. Kimberly Brown, a reporter for Al Jazeera covered the historic win for the Waorani (Brown, 2019).

A very valuable source of information are the country reports in the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR) website. It shows reports from visits made by the Special Rapporteur about human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people. This article informs the public about the status of indigenous people in Ecuador and how oil exploration is impacting their wellbeing. According to the Special Rapporteur, Jose Amaya, “the purpose of the visit was to better gain an understanding of the situation of the human rights of the indigenous peoples of Ecuador through discussions with various social players on issues such as the effects of the 1998 Ecuadorian Constitution, which recognizes the collective rights of indigenous peoples; their access to justice; their rights to land and natural resources; the impact of the oil industry on their communities; and concerns over negotiations on the free trade agreement with the United States of America” (Amaya, 2009, pp.5).

The Federation of Human Rights is a non-governmental federation for human rights organizations. Founded in 1922, FIDH is the second oldest international human rights organization worldwide after Anti-Slavery International. In 2018, they conducted a case study

based on 18 projects that were supported by Chinese banks for development on indigenous lands in countries such as Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, and Peru. Along with various social organizations from Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru, Argentina and Brazil, FIDH has produced a report that reveals human rights and environmental abuses by Chinese mining and oil corporations with the complicity of the states of the region. The report, entitled Evaluation of the Extraterritorial Obligations of the People's Republic of China: Case Studies from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador and Peru, denounces some "knowingly violating behaviors" and the lack of willpower of the Asian State for monitoring and enforcing the minimum standards required by its companies and banks (International Federation for Human Rights, 2012).

The Ministry of the Netherlands developed a study through their Policy and Operations Evaluation Department about the equity, accountability and effectiveness in decentralization policies in Bolivia. A section in the paper is specifically on the Law of Popular Participation. The Law of Popular Participation, announced in 1994, came at a time when local government in Bolivia was relatively non-existent. This law established a new standard for resource allocation, mandating 20 percent of national tax revenue to be transferred to municipalities; more responsibilities regarding health and infrastructure shifted to the municipalities; local representatives oversaw decision making processes; lastly, additional municipalities were created to include suburbs and rural areas (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, 2012, p. 13).

In "Losing Members and Winning Votes?" Diana Davila Gordillo examines the representative capacity of the Ecuadorian party Pachakutik, formed in 1996 as the political branch of Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE), deemed the "most consequential indigenous movement in Latin America" (Yashar, 2005, p.260). The party was very successful in its first years such that in 2002 the candidate the Pachakutik party supported in

an electoral alliance won the presidency. However, the alliance dissolved six months after the candidate took office, and Pachakutik revised its policy of forming electoral alliances (Davila-Gordillo, 2018).

In 2008, Morales implemented the Family, Community, and Intercultural Health (SAFCI) model. SAFCI is a health policy which is constituted in the new way of feeling, thinking, understanding and doing health. Reciprocally, it complements and articulates the health personnel and traditional doctors of the Native Peasant Nations and Indigenous Peoples with the person, family, community, mother earth and cosmos (Ministerio de Salud y Deportes, 2013, pp.1). In 2013, the Bolivian Ministry of Health distributed a report that described a general framework for the implementation and application of specific strategies and policies aimed at different vulnerable populations and age groups. The goals of the policy include: strengthened primary health care; full participation and empowerment of the community in health-related issues; and reduced morbidity and mortality for women and children (United Nations Population Fund/Every Woman Every Child, 2016).

Under the Morales administration, indigenous healthcare beliefs and practices stepped out from long shadows cast by colonialism and racism. Along with his implementation of more diversity and inclusion of indigenous people in parliament, he promoted the fusion of indigenous medicine to be practiced along with Western biomedicine. Morales's revolutionary objective was to create a new plurinational healthcare system (Hartmann, 2019). In Hartmann's article, he explains how Morales achieved this during his presidency and how the healthcare system is under threat under Bolivia's new government.

The indigenous movement in Ecuador notoriously lost its political influence during Rafael Correa's government, which is counterintuitive, as both actors – in theory – shared a

similar political agenda. In “The Indigenous Movement in Ecuador: Resource Access and Rafael Correa’s Citizens’ Revolution”, Jima-Gonzales and Paradela-Lopez analyze how the exchange relationship between resource types and resource access mechanisms of the Ecuadorian indigenous movement were affected under Rafael Correa’s administration ((Jima-Gonzalez and Paradela-Lopez, 2018). The results indicate that the exchange relationship between co-optation and appropriation employed by Correa’s regime altered the indigenous movement’s resource access during 2007–2017, resulting in the movement’s loss of influence and legitimacy within the Ecuadorian political arena.

In 2008, voters in Ecuador approved a new and progressive constitution. Indigenous leaders questioned whether the new document would benefit social movements or strengthen the hand of President Rafael Correa, who appeared to be occupying political spaces that they had previously held. Marc Becker argues that “Correa's relations with indigenous movements point to the complications, limitations, and deep tensions inherent in pursuing revolutionary changes within a constitutional framework” (Becker, 2011, pp. 47). Although indigenous movements, as well as most social movements, shared Correa's stated desire to curtail neoliberal policies and implement social and economic strategies that would benefit a majority of the country's people, they increasingly clashed over how to realize those objectives. The political outcome of the new constitution depended not on the actions of the constituent assembly but on whether organized civil society could force the government to implement the ideals that the assembly had drafted (Becker, 2011, pp. 47).

CHAPTER THREE: Ecuador

Ecuador is home to 1.1 million indigenous people out of a population of more than 17 million inhabitants. There are currently 14 indigenous nationalities living in the country, grouped into local, regional, and national organizations. According to the last recorded census in 2010, 6.8 percent of the Ecuadorian population self-identify as indigenous, which is an increase from 6.1 percent in 2001 (Minority Group International, 2018).

Ecuador has a very ethnically diverse population. As of 2014, the largest ethnic group remains Mestizos, descendants of Spanish colonists and indigenous people, who make up 71.9 percent of the population. Until the 1950s, the geography of ethnicity in Ecuador remained very well-defined until a jump in migration. Just decades ago, most Mestizos lived in small rural towns in the countryside, indigenous people made up much of the rural Sierra population, black residents lived in Esmeraldas, Carchi and Imbabura provinces, while the white population resided mostly in the large cities. Due primarily to pressure on the Sierra land resources, some indigenous groups began migrating to the cities and many began switching their ethnic identity to Mestizo beginning in the 1980s.

The indigenous people of Ecuador have made tremendous strides since their first mobilizations in the 1970s and 1980s. They only comprise 20 percent of the total Ecuadorian population, yet they are “the strongest indigenous group in the Americas” (DeShazo, 2009, p. 5). This is mainly due to the formation of CONAIE in the 1990s. It is a political umbrella group founded in 1986 that became a more prominent actor in local and national politics. CONAIE was the result of an alliance between three regional indigenous organizations: Confederation of Peoples of Kichwa Nationality (ECUARUNARI), from the Ecuadorian highlands; Confederation

of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon (CONFENIAE), from the Amazonian zone; and the Confederation of the Indigenous Nationalities and Peoples of the Ecuadorian Coast (CONAICE), from the coast (Jima-Gonzalez and Paradela-Lopez, 2018, pp. 3). CONAIE realized that different agendas within the Ecuadorian indigenous organizations could divide their movement and avoid its national consolidation. CONAIE then functioned as the voice of the indigenous movement, representing dozens of different indigenous organizations and identities, and its confederative nature ensured that it maintained the spirit of the movement (Jima-Gonzalez and Paradela-Lopez, 2018, pp. 3). CONAIE's efforts were often directed toward recovering abandoned State competencies that affect indigenous populations. The organization fostered a cultural agenda that focused on the recognition of Ecuador as a Plurinational State in order to embed the indigenous culture within Ecuador's cultural richness (Jima-Gonzalez and Paradela-Lopez, 2018, pp. 4).

In 1995, CONAIE joined the Movimiento de Unidad Plurinacional Pachakutik, (the Pachakutik party) because of the shared goal of uniting minority voices under a single umbrella political party. The Pachakutik party was remarkably successful in its first legislative election in 1996, winning ten percent of the seats in Ecuador's National Assembly and at one point, nominating a candidate for the presidency (DeShazo, 2009, pg 1). The success of the Pachakutik was significant but short-lived. The elections in April 2009 revealed that most of the larger parties won seats, but the Pachakutik party was not mentioned in the results and in 2013, they only received 3.26 percent of the votes. Despite the view of CONAIE being one of the most successful indigenous movements in Latin America, much remains to be achieved in terms of their political representation and access to the political arena. For example, Ecuador drafted and passed a new constitution in 1998, including provisions for indigenous political participation, yet

this reform has not brought any substantial policy changes for them. Also, many indigenous Ecuadorians face discrimination at the polls. The Supreme Electoral Court was reported by the United Nations Human Rights Council as “promoting discriminatory practices against the country’s indigenous citizens” (Amaya, 2008, p.18). This illustrates that CONAIE is making progress, but remains an inadequate remedy to the issue.

The indigenous movement in Ecuador has been among the most successful new social movements in Latin America since the late 1980s (Jameson, 2011, p. 63). However, the movement had been weakened during the Correa era. An effective strategy of his government was to “financially asphyxiate indigenous organizations” (Martinez Novo, 2019, p.141). The first year of Correa’s government generated great expectations among CONAIE’s leaders, especially in the second round of the presidential election, in which Alianza PAIS was impressively supported by CONAIE (Jima-Gonzalez and Paradela-Lopez, 2018, pp. 5). However, Correa’s government pushed for state expansion which included natural resource extraction from indigenous territories. While Correa’s government justified it as a way of financing social politics, the main indigenous organizations considered it a threat to their culture and values. In fact, several authors believe that the extraction conflict deepened the degradation of the relationship between the Ecuadorian government and CONAIE, which increased personal animosities among several indigenous leaders and Rafael Correa (Jima-Gonzalez and Paradela-Lopez, 2018, pp. 6).

Once Correa won the presidential election, it created more crises for indigenous movements who were losing their credibility. Correa’s Citizens’ Revolution main goal was creating solid institutions, hence the disruptive power of the indigenous movement – under this newfound institutional logic – was no longer needed (Jima-Gonzalez and Paradela-Lopez, 2018,

pp. 9). Through the creation of new ministries, secretaries, and governmental bodies, the politics of the indigenous movement were openly rejected by Correa's regime, oftentimes erasing the movement's strategy of defending its rights on the streets. The strengthening of both institutions and the rule of law, located at the heart of the Citizens' Revolution, were the aspects that clashed the most with the "corporatist" organizational strategies employed by CONAIE and other indigenous organizations, often equated by Correa as corrupt and illegitimate practices.

Another tactic used by the Correa administration was the use of cultural appropriation to promote an amicable image towards the indigenous people. On his extensively known TV program "Enlace Ciudadano," Correa made a public display of central cultural indigenous markers: clothing, language, and folklore (Jima-Gonzalez and Paradela-Lopez, 2018, pp. 11). Under this logic, even though Correa maintained confrontations with the indigenous movement on other topics, in the eyes of his TV audience he was boosting and supporting the movement's agenda. He later wore indigenous clothing and used ethnic decorations on his shirt as a part of a personal marking worn in public to depict "pride" in his heritage. Gabriela Rivadeneira, the National Assembly President from 2013–2017, adopted a similar clothing style, revealing a sense of pride absent from previous administrations. The appropriation of these subtle cultural markers by the most prominent public officials made a strong statement: indigenous clothing is a symbol of Ecuadorian pride, and indigenous people are no longer the only ones entitled to proudly depict their culture by wearing their traditional clothing publicly (Jima-Gonzalez and Paradela-Lopez, 2018, pp. 11). The timing of this played to Correa's favor because by the time he started to use indigenous cultural symbols, the indigenous agenda was already settled through self-production. In the eyes of his supporters and bystanders, however, Correa openly embraced the indigenous cultural agenda and was considered a pioneer in this regard. As a result, indigenous people could

no longer employ their own cultural markers with the same initial force, mainly because the progressive figure of Correa already appropriated these markers (Jima-Gonzalez and Paradela-Lopez, 2018, pp. 12). Under the Correa administration, indigenous people's cultural resources were selectively appropriated by the regime, which served to strengthen Correa's positive image towards the movement and gradually reduced the movement's potential mobilizing resources.

Aside from appropriation, the Correa government regulated the financial operations and development work of foreign and national NGOs to control development money and the ability of civil society to resist the regime. Under Correa, the new Organic code of Territorial Organization, Autonomy and Decentralization (COOTAD) failed to "recognize the indigenous community, the backbone of the indigenous movement, as a fundamental unit of the state with a right to a budget allocation" (Martinez Novo, 2019, p.142). Instead Mestizo towns surrounded by indigenous communities were recognized. These Mestizo councils were politically and financially rewarded by Correa's government and became an important social base for the regime. The government created parallel organizations that did receive funding and state support, meanwhile the indigenous movement lost control over their sources of funding and jobs.

Not only did the Correa government try to deplete the indigenous community's resources, it tried dividing them politically. Martinez Novo writes about an instance in which Marcelino Chumpi, a Shuar leader affiliated with the indigenous left-wing Pachakutik party, "won elections in Morona Santiago and became the province's governor in 2009" (Martinez Novo, 2019, p.143). Correa's political party, Alianza PAIS, made efforts to "divide the Shuar organization by distributing computers, boat motors and chickens to its membership" (Martinez Novo, 2019, p.143). This resulted in a group breaking away and supporting Correa. The government also made a large investment in the region and Correa frequently traveled to speak to the Shuar. Even

with all the effort from Correa's party, Chumpi was re-elected in 2014. Furthermore, the government's representatives began to travel to indigenous communities, diminishing the interlocutor attribute traditionally enjoyed by CONAIE. The government started to directly fund local communities' projects, and establish direct contact with the movement's grassroots in exchange for political loyalty (Jima-Gonzalez and Paradela-Lopez, 2018, pp. 15). Clientelist exchanges are very common during the election period in South American countries. Poor areas, especially those with very minimal resources and exposure to commercial goods, are bribed and bought out by financially stable parties. Past presidential candidates have brought bags of rice, toys for small children, and some had even given out CDs with their music. This type of campaigning minimizes the chances of indigenous candidates with very little support and money. Martinez Novo has stated that the exacerbation of internal divisions, as well as the cooptation of bases and leaders, could explain CONAIE's crisis:

Correa has carried on the strategy of distributing money to the communities, through social programs such as the Bono de Desarrollo Humano, subsidies for housing and other programs such as Socio Páramo and Socio Bosque (subsidies for environmental protection), in order to coopt the bases of the movement without acknowledging CONAIE. Indigenous leaders state that this governmental penetration divides communities and destroys grassroots organizations (Martinez Novo, 2019, pg. 143).

Data for indigenous participation in parliament is very scarce because it is sometimes not reported at all. According to a 2014 Survey Report conducted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, it was found that Ecuador had 7 indigenous representatives in parliament. Five were male and

two were female. However, the rest of the information is unfortunately “not available” and these numbers were found to be a secondary source for the report. This situation brings many questions to the table in terms of misrepresentation and if it was being done purposely by the Correa administration.

At the beginning of his presidential period, Correa named Mónica Chuji, a Sarayaku leader, as Head of the Communication Secretariat in his first cabinet. After a short period of time, she became an Assembly candidate under Correa’s political party. When she won the election, Chuji remained antagonistic towards the president, often criticizing him for turning his political program to the Right (Jima-Gonzalez and Paradela-Lopez, 2018, pp. 11). After her resignation from Alianza PAIS in September 2008, Chuji became an active member of the opposition and, in 2011, she faced a very polemic trial in which she was accused of slandering the Communication Secretary, Vinicio Alvarado. Considering these events, Chuji herself has recognized that indigenous people’s participation in the government has an adverse effect on communities, who often feel confused by their leader’s role and tend to reject the movement’s organization and structure (Jima-Gonzalez and Paradela-Lopez, 2018, pp. 11).

The Ecuadorian indigenous movement’s strength developed due to the inaction of the State and, when neo-liberal administrations were in power, the indigenous movement could freely spread, becoming a relevant actor within the national scene. The arrival of Correa’s Citizens Revolution (Revolución Ciudadana), however, the main purpose of which was the institutionalization of the State, ended this period of influence for the indigenous movement, which had begun to compete with the Ecuadorian government in both material and ideological spheres. The movement’s once influential and persistent stance against the government was unfortunately left in a fragile state during the Correa period. Ecuador still participated in

exclusion, violence and discrimination towards indigenous people regardless of Correa's appropriation and political programs of inclusion that did not serve them. The idea of institutionalization and labeling indigenous people as citizens implied the suppression of their demands which is the recognition of their identities. This emphasis on individual rights excluded indigenous peoples, with their communal-based societies. His citizens' revolution deemphasized social movements and reinforced colonial ideologies that oppressed and erased the unique histories of indigenous nationalities.

CHAPTER FOUR: Bolivia

There are currently 38 recognized indigenous groups that reside in Bolivia. With the adoption of UNDRIP and a change in their constitution, Bolivia adopted the status of a plurinational state. Nevertheless, the country's indigenous population still experiences challenges. As of 2012, the Bolivian census recorded that many recognized peoples reside in the Andes and are Quechua and Aymara, who self-identify as sixteen nations. Other groups include, Chiquitano, Guarani, and Moxeno, as well as Afro-Bolivians, and interestingly, small communities of Japanese and German Mennonites.

However, their 2012 census recorded a significant drop in people identifying as indigenous from 66.4 percent in 2001 to 41 percent (Minority Rights Group International, 2018). After results were finalized, it was hypothesized that the modification of the 2012 census question on ethnic identification could have changed the data. In 2001, the question asked whether the person identified him/herself with an 'indigenous or native people', while in 2012 the term 'indigenous native peasant' was used instead. The question was "As a Bolivian, do you belong to an indigenous native peasant nation or people?" with a tick-box 'Yes' or 'No' answer" (Fontana, 2013)

The decrease in the indigenous population recorded in relation to the form of the question in the census sheds light on the discursive gaps between the rapid urbanization of the Bolivian population and the progressive rural lifestyle of the indigenous. According to the Sheffield Institute for International Development, "a whole debate has been going on between those who consider that indigenous identities are relentlessly diluted as a result of increased internal migration, and those who consider urbanization as an experience that reshapes, rather than

destroying, indigenous identities (Fontana, 2013). Their cultures, social structures, livelihoods, music, and languages have been shamed and discredited, and assimilation to Western cultural norms is often considered the only way to be taken seriously in our modern world.

The status of the Bolivian indigenous, as the political minority, stands in contrast to the fact that they are the statistical majority, making up 60 percent of the population. The 2006 election of Evo Morales was a major indigenous landmark in Bolivia's history, as was the new Bolivian Constitution in 2007, which includes many provisions for indigenous peoples. Indigenous Bolivians have also aligned with a well-established political party, the Socialist Movement Party (MAS) which led to the election of Morales. The MAS party is currently the majority in the Chamber of Deputies. Significant legislation concerning government decentralization reform was also passed supporting the political rights of the indigenous Bolivians, with the aim of encouraging their political participation. The Law of Popular Participation was adopted in 1994, leading to the creation of new municipalities (314 in total), direct election of municipality officials, and a general increase in available resources and power to these municipalities (Ministry of Foreign Affairs-Netherlands, 2012, p.13). This created many opportunities for the marginalized indigenous groups to participate in decision-making processes at the local level. Instead of political majorities dominating at the federal level, the political arena has expanded in a more participative and democratic way.

As the largest ethnic group in Bolivia, the indigenous communities had unions that represented them. Two of the most influential are the National Council of Ayllus and Markas of Qullasuyu (CONAMAQ) and Unified Syndical Confederation of Rural Workers of Bolivia (CSUTB). CONAMAQ is a confederation of traditional governing bodies of Quechua, Aymara and Uru-speaking highland indigenous communities in the departments of La Paz, Oruro, Potosí,

Cochabamba, Chuquisaca and Tarija, Bolivia. CSUTB is the largest union of peasants in Bolivia. The CSUTCB was formed in 1979 in opposition to government sponsored peasant unions. These two groups were heavily involved in creating proposals for participation of indigenous peoples in the new constitution prior to Morales's election.

Both groups had the proposal for the creation of a Plurinational State as their main vision for the new constitution. According to former Ecuadorian president, Rafael Correa, the term "plurinational" can be defined as the co-existence of several different nationalities within a larger state. In 2005, before Morales's election, indigenous groups published their projects based on their visions and expectations of the new Bolivian constitution. The CSUTCB proposed the introduction of indigenous autonomies, based on right to self-government, indigenous political and administrative systems, territorial control (Poweska, 2013, pp. 256). They did not limit this proposal to the municipal level, but claimed that in the territories where the large territorial political structures of indigenous majority (Aymara, Quechua) remained, indigenous peoples should have the right to organize large regional and even supra-regional autonomies. The union also proposed that the indigenous have the right to elect their representatives to the national congress according to their cultural traditions, or uses and customs, and without the interference of the party system (Poweska, 2013, pp. 257). Finally, the union claimed the right of indigenous peoples to be consulted by the state regarding all decisions that would affect indigenous peoples and their territories, including the eventual exploitation of non-renewable resources in their territories, and that this consultation should be in advance, obligatory to the state, and legally binding. These proposals and claims seem self-explanatory for people who have lived on the land for centuries and are the largest ethnic group in the country, however, after years of colonization these rights have been stripped from them. They believed that with the help of a

fellow indigenous person running for president they could regain these rights under the new constitution.

The CONAMAQ proposals went further in claiming a radical indigenous vision for the new state. Apart from everything postulated by the CSUTCB, CONAMAQ wanted indigenous peoples to have an indisputable right to control all the natural resources in their territories, including gas, oil, and other non-renewables (Poweska, 2013, pp. 257). The group proposed their governing to be based on Andean cosmology, which is a binary unity of oppositions, system of rotation on the national scale, and a system of pairs known as ‘chacha-warmi’. CONAMAQ, for example, wanted the president and vice-president to represent indigenous peoples and non-indigenous inhabitants of Bolivia in rotation. This means that in one term the president would be indigenous and vice-president non-indigenous, and in the next term it would be the other way around.

Besides important similarities, indigenous movements disagreed on some of the demands presented by other movements, so the various indigenous organizations decided to develop a common proposal for the new constitution. The result was the Pacto de Unidad (Unity Pact), presented in August 2006. Given that the Pacto de Unidad emerged from a consensus between different movements, the most radical demands of CONAMAQ were rejected, particularly those that were clearly inspired by the Andean point of view and did not reflect the vision of the lowlands of Bolivia. A proposal that was rejected included the introduction of ‘Qullasuyu’ as the new official name for the country (Poweska, 2013, pp. 258). Similarly, the two groups proposed the claim for proportional, direct representation of indigenous peoples in the national power, without mediation of the partisan system. However, the following year, MAS assemblymen withdrew all the entries about direct participation from the projected texts for the new state. It

was said that the decision about the withdrawal of the concept came from the presidential palace (Poweska, 2013, pp. 267). Morales was already elected president during this time so to the indigenous representatives it felt disloyal.

Although the groups agreed on this claim for direct participation, they still disagreed when it came to the withdrawal of their entries. Some members of the CSUTCB accepted the withdrawal and felt that that the direct representation of the indigenous “was not necessary because indigenous peoples are in majority anyway, so no special systems of election are needed” (Poweska, 2013, pp. 267). The comment made by the CSUTCB was rejected by CONAMAQ:

It is not about being majority or minority. And how are we going to count us? According to skin color? It is not about being indigenous or Aymara (...) we want the circumscriptions corresponding to our territorial system. It does not matter whether 60 per cent of Bolivians declare themselves indigenous or not. We want to choose our representatives from our territory and let the others choose their candidates in their territories (...). The principle was that the political parties could not control us anymore, that we do not want manipulation and corruption. When we choose our representatives directly from the grassroots, then we control the system and not some partisan mechanisms. (Poweska, 2013, pp. 267).

The group protested that the government and the president were betraying indigenous peoples and that the decision to withdraw their proposal weakened the purpose of a plurinational state, since without direct representation there would be no recognition of the plurality of politics

existing within the country. The conflict between the indigenous groups and MAS was causing animosity and MAS quickly changed its position and the right to direct representation was included in the constitutional text.

Despite progress since the first indigenous mobilization in the 1980s, the need for improvement remains, as evidenced by the lack of adequate indigenous representation in the Bolivian legislative bodies, the Chamber of Deputies and the Chamber of Senators. There are only seven of 130 seats in the Chamber of Deputies reserved for representatives from indigenous areas, indicating that pro-indigenous rhetoric surrounding increased representation proved to be worthless. Though MAS is supported by most indigenous groups, this support emerged from the lack of political access in the 1990s rather than from the fact that MAS accurately reflects indigenous peoples' views. Furthermore, information about the Law of Popular Participation has yet to reach rural areas; therefore, indigenous peoples are unaware of its existence and the corresponding details that apply to them, such as their available options for participation. This proves as no surprise that indigenous peoples have not yet been elected as municipal officers. Ultimately, indigenous Bolivians now have many codified laws to protect and to encourage their rights, yet the legislation does not accurately reflect the reality of indigenous political access.

Evo Morales had served as president of Bolivia for nearly 14 years, creating history by becoming the first indigenous president in the plurinational state. His first major effort was to decolonize the state and provide an opportunity for indigenous peoples to participate in politics. Once in office, he filled 14 of 16 positions of his cabinet with people of indigenous descent; this included women. The women in the office were *de pollera*, those who wear the colorful gathered skirts and bowler hats associated with highland indigenous descent throughout the Andean world. Morales's political party, the Movement toward Socialism, became the country's

dominant political force. It opened opportunities for indigenous leaders to enter politics as town and city mayors, and at the regional and local levels. It would soon become the majority party in the national legislature. Morales's movement is in large part responsible for a massive increase of indigenous participation in the national political process at all levels. Morales made it possible for indigenous people not to be viewed as second-class citizens and instead be enfranchised as indigenous.

Indigenous people have the worst socio-demographic indicators and the largest inequalities in terms of access to social services and health in the Latin American region, including Bolivia. Attempts to implement policies that support indigenous people's health rights led to the development of intercultural health approaches. Under Morales's leadership he made the healthcare system inclusive to indigenous peoples who have different beliefs and traditions and don't participate in Western medicine. Article 18 guarantees the right to health and to a free, intercultural, and participatory universal healthcare system. It's a rebuke to the colonial and neoliberal eras that excluded poor and Indigenous people from accessing and participating in the public healthcare system (Hartmann, 2019).

In 2008, Morales implemented the Family, Community, and Intercultural Health (SAFCI) model. SAFCI is a health policy which is constituted in the new way of feeling, thinking, understanding and doing health. Reciprocally complements and articulates the health personnel and traditional doctors of the Native Peasant Nations and Indigenous Peoples with the person, family, community, mother earth and cosmos (Ministerio de Salud y Deportes, 2013, pp.1). SAFCI created a paradigm shift because it intentionally attempted to decolonize an unequal medical system which had rooted itself into Western biomedical practices. Bolivia legally recognized Indigenous medicine in 1985, meaning providers no longer faced imprisonment for

practicing traditional methods. Under Morales, the Vice Ministry of Intercultural Health certified more than 5,000 Indigenous naturopaths, herbalists, and midwives. Most revolutionary is that Indigenous medicine and practices entered the national health system (Hartmann, 2019).

Although there had been progress made, skepticism remains throughout the Bolivian medical establishment. In a survey conducted in 2018, many indigenous healers “expressed feeling misunderstood, underappreciated, and poorly integrated into the local health system” (Hartmann, 2019). An indigenous healer shared that “Medical doctors don’t take us seriously. They kick us to one side, right? I say that we should be equal because we cure people too. Although we don’t have a medical degree, we cure people like they do” (Hartmann, 2019). The rights and inclusiveness of indigenous peoples has been a tumultuous ride for many of them throughout many sectors of the government.

The second half of Morales’s tenure, however, saw more conflict with indigenous constituencies, often over competing indigenous and state priorities. Most notable among these was the 2011 Isiboro-Sécure Indigenous Territory and National Park (TIPNIS) controversy. Morales’s plan to facilitate trade with Brazil by building a highway through a national park, also containing indigenous territories, provoked a backlash. Indigenous advocates saw the highway as a betrayal privileging the country’s extraction-based national economic model over the rights of particular indigenous groups. Morales never successfully resolved this conflict of interest during his years in office. At the same time, a growing number of mobile city dwellers of indigenous descent, while appreciative of Morales’s efforts, over time grew disgruntled with his administration’s perceived exclusive focus on indigenous questions rather than economic opportunities for all, and with his disinclination to leave office.

Throughout Latin America, the only way for indigenous people to gain access to land reforms, social services and several other state-organized reforms was by joining a “peasant” organization and channeling their demands through these federations. However, according to Yashar, “indigenous people had strong incentives to publicly forsake their ethnic identities and to assume a class-based identity in union organizations and exchanges with political officials” (Yashar, 2006, p. 260). They also complemented corporatist measures with educational programs designed to promote assimilation. In Bolivia, “such assimilationist programs were put into place...to incorporate people perceived as backwards into the ranks of a new, and presumably more civilized nation” (Yashar, 2006, p. 260). She also notes that, “states encouraged indigenous men and women to discard any public display of indigenous identity, [and] encouraged the adoption of mestizo identities” (Yashar, 2006, p. 261). By changing their ethnic status from indigenous to mestizo, it allowed them to “depoliticize ethnic cleavages” (Yashar, 2006, p. 261).

CHAPTER FIVE: Ecuador and Bolivia, A Comparison

Indigenous populations in the Andean region of Latin America have played an increasingly larger role in local politics in the past two decades, with some successes at the national level as well. In Ecuador and Bolivia, people who self-identified as indigenous profited from political reforms aimed at decentralization, promotion of greater autonomy for local and municipal government, and expanded political participation.

Both countries had the opportunity to change their constitutions, giving indigenous groups the chance to propose new platforms and programs for the advancement of their movements. On September 28, 2008, voters in Ecuador approved a new constitution by a wide margin. This was the country's twentieth constitution since becoming an independent republic in 1830. Under the guidance of the young and charismatic president Rafael Correa, the constitution promised to bring an end to neoliberal policies that had shifted wealth from marginalized peoples to elite corporate interests (Becker, 2011, pp. 47). The 2008 constituent assembly provided a turning point for indigenous movements by introducing a historic opportunity to decolonize the country's political structures. Indigenous leaders emphasized that the revisions they had proposed to Ecuador's constitution would benefit everyone in the country, not just indigenous peoples.

Correa's political movement Alianza Pais had won 70 percent of the vote for the assembly. Its margin of victory was due, in part, to some activists who broke from the indigenous-led Movimiento Unidad Plurinacional Pachakutik (United Plurinational Pachakutik Movement, referred to as Pachakutik) and joined Correa's party (Becker, 2011, pp. 50). Two of the prominent indigenous members who had joined Correa's party were Monica Chuji, one of the more radical members of Correa's party who declared her allegiance to CONAIE's

movement, and Pedro de la Cruz, the president of the Confederacion Nacional de Organizaciones Campesinas, Indigenas, y Negras (National Confederation of Peasant, Indigenous and Negro Organizations, FENOCIN). De la Cruz had been an alternative congressional deputy for the socialist party and won the election to become a delegate for Alianza Pais. Many indigenous activists believed that they could most effectively influence the content of the constitution by working within Correa's government. However, as seen in other instances, Leftist parties and social movements did not fare any better than their conservative opponents in gaining seats in the assembly. Pachakutik won only four seats and, together with the traditional parties, was left behind as an increasingly marginalized and irrelevant political force. Correa's opponents complained that his approach favored liberal, individualistic politics and that decision-making processes in Alianza Pais were highly centralized and authoritarian. Correa "acted in a more strategic, although highly 'top-down fashion" than Evo Morales's Movimiento al Socialismo (Movement Toward Socialism) in Bolivia (Becker, 2011, pp. 51). There would not have been true structural change without the participation of social movements. Indigenous groups feared that Correa's victories would come at their expense.

As in Bolivia, the idea of a plurinational state for indigenous peoples emphasized inclusion of their culture and identity. They did not want to assimilate, but instead be recognized as a partner in the state. Indigenous activists reinforced the importance of political changes, specifically the demand for acknowledgement of the plurinational characteristic of the country. Aside from the recognition of the 14 indigenous nationalities, they wanted acknowledgement of the systems of life, education and economy that were different from those of the dominant society (Becker, 2011, pp. 51-52). Cecilia Velasque, former public attorney with the national

Department of Indigenous Peoples and Communities, and Coordinator of REMPE (the Network of Political Women of Ecuador), says:

Plurinationality signifies the recognition and self-determination of indigenous peoples; that there will be a political sphere of government by and for indigenous peoples. But plurinationality has been forgotten in the economic model, has been forgotten in environmental policy and in the management of natural resources, has been forgotten in the area of water, has been forgotten in the area of culture, has been forgotten in the area of the decolonization of public and private institutions. Because colonialism still thrives in Ecuador; there is discrimination against indigenous people, it marginalizes us, it expresses itself through racism, it excludes and it minimalizes the existence of indigenous peoples (Llewellyn, 2014).

CONAIE had proposed for the following statement, "Ecuador constitutes a plurinational, sovereign, communitarian, social and democratic, independent, secular, solidarity, unitary state with gender equality", to be the definition for the state in its new constitution. However, the constituent assembly refused to begin the definition with the word "plurinational" and instead agreed to include the word in the text (Becker, 2011, pp. 53). Article 1 of Ecuador's constitution declared that it was a: "constitutional state of rights and justice, social, democratic, sovereign, independent, unitary, intercultural, plurinational, and secular (Republica del Ecuador, 2008). The term raised controversy as a radical interpretation of it was perceived as separatist. Monica Chuji argues "that interculturality and plurinationality are not opposite concepts. While interculturality recognizes the differences within a society, the recognition of a Plurinational State would allow the translation of that recognition into concrete rights, and the implementation and enforcement

of concrete policies” (Jima-Gonzalez, 2018, pp. 18). Similar to Bolivia, there were many debates on the language and how to really define the term “plurinational.” CONAIE wanted the word to be used to empower indigenous peoples, including granting them control over their lands. Unlike Bolivia, who took the actual word and made it a dominant factor in its state, Ecuador simply desired to leave the term vaguely defined, essentially ensuring that it would remain on the level of rhetoric without any significant substance (Becker, 2011, pp. 54). This ultimately affected the way that the indigenous movements were viewed during Correa’s administration, which lasted a decade. Legally, Ecuador is a plurinational state that recognizes indigenous peoples’ collective rights, languages and traditional forms of justice. The constitution celebrates the contributions of indigenous peoples and guarantees rights to self-determination, including to ancestral territories. Yet, they are still treated as second-class citizens whose concerns seem irrelevant in Ecuadorian politics.

In Bolivia, their indigenous groups had to go through the same struggle. However, what makes Bolivia different is the nomination of their first indigenous president which has not happened in Ecuador. The debates in their constitution, as mentioned earlier, also dealt with the language that would be used and the definition for the term plurinational. This was also their general demand that they wanted viewed as a concept binding all other indigenous claims together. Comparable to Ecuador, Bolivia’s MAS party approached the proposal with ambivalence because they did not want to “antagonize the middle-class, which viewed the proposal with great reservation, or even hostility, because of the anxiety that the ‘plurinational state’ would lead to ethnic resentments and provoke division of the country” (Poweska, 2013, pp. 260). While the indigenous were not able to win every proposal brought forth for the new

constitution, they did manage to change Bolivia's name to the Plurinational State of Bolivia which increases their empowerment and their right to be perceived.

The two Andean states are predominantly Spanish speaking, but with a major indigenous population in both countries, indigenous groups tried to propose the inclusion for one of their languages to be considered a main language. Ecuadorians' struggle in the assembly was whether Kichwa and other indigenous languages would be granted official status. CONAIE argued that interculturality is a matter for every Ecuadorian and when a language is lost "a vision of the world disappears" (Becker, 2011, pp. 55). Alianza Pais, Correa's party, voted against the proposal to grant the language official status. Correa's belief was that, in much of the country, learning English was more important than learning Kichwa (Becker, 2011, pp. 56). Nevertheless, the proposal underwent review again after backlash from indigenous government officials. Article 2 of the constitution now states "Spanish is Ecuador's official language; Spanish, Kichwa and Shuar are official languages for intercultural ties. The other ancestral languages are in official use by indigenous peoples in the areas where they live and in accordance with the terms set forth by law. The State shall respect and encourage their preservation and use" (Republica del Ecuador, 2008). While some considered it just as vague as the wording of plurinational in the constitution, it did mark progress in the way indigenous groups refused to back down on matters that are important to them. They used the same tenacity that brought them into the spotlight during the 1990s. Bolivia's constitution also includes Spanish as the main language for the country. During their constitutional process, there were some groups, like those from Potosi, who proposed that "all the politicians and state administration should speak indigenous languages" (Poweska, 2013, pp. 197). Their main goal was for their range of indigenous languages to be included in the constitution and officially recognized on all administrative and institutional levels

of the Bolivian state. Their constitution had initially recognized 36 languages. According to Article 5 Section 1 of the Bolivian constitution:

The official languages of the State are Spanish and all the languages of the rural native indigenous nations and peoples, which are Aymara, Araona, Baure, Bésiro, Canichana, Cavineño, Cayubaba, Chácobo, Chimán, Ese Ejja, Guaraní, Guarasu'we, Guarayu, Itonama, Leco, Machajuyai-kallawaya, Machineri, Maropa, Mojeñotrinitario, Mojeño-ignaciano, Moré, Masetén, Movima, Pacawara, Puquina, Quechua, Sirionó, Tacana, Tapiete, Toromona, Uruchipaya, Weenhayek, Yaminawa, Yuki, Yuracaré and Zamuco (Plurinational State of Bolivia, 2009).

The constitution does make it a point to enforce that Spanish must be used:

The Pluri-National Government and the departmental governments must use at least two official languages. One of them must be Spanish, and the other shall be determined taking into account the use, convenience, circumstances, necessities and preferences of the population as a whole or of the territory in question. The other autonomous governments must use the languages characteristic of their territory, and one of them must be Spanish (Plurinational State of Bolivia, 2009).

As of 2019, Bolivia had added three more indigenous languages to be included in the constitution, making the number of languages 39. For a country that was electing its first

indigenous president, it was important for the indigenous movements to be recognized and honor the culture Morales grew up in.

Aside from issues of identification, one of the biggest issues affecting indigenous groups in both Ecuador and Bolivia are the violations of their respective governments regarding their land and human rights by investment projects that threaten their social and physical environment. For decades, indigenous groups have taken to the streets (or wherever they can be heard) to protest these violations of their rights.

In Ecuador, the focus of recent protests has been the proposed development of the mining potential in the highlands. Ecuador, up to now, has not been a mining country, but it has come under increasing interest from international companies, especially from Canada and China, which are keen to take advantage of the strong demand for minerals and high global prices. According to Crabtree,

[T]he development of mining has raised serious questions about rights to water and protection from environmental hazards, and threatens traditional ways of life. There have been several protest movements in recent years about who should control water distribution: the central government, local governments or local communities.

(Crabtree, 2012).

The government, despite its left-wing discourse and laws on prior consultation, has firmly defended its right to enter concession agreements with foreign mining companies. In 2008, Correa made changes to the constitution to further include participation of the indigenous; however, the constitution includes some ambiguities regarding natural resources. There has been “confirmation that nonrenewable resources belong to the state and that indigenous communities

have no special power over decision-making on their use” (De Shazo, 2009, p. 6). This violates both national and international law, in which governments are required to undergo a free, prior and informed consent process with communities before beginning any extraction projects near their territory to warn them of the negative repercussions and seek their consent.

In Bolivia, President Evo Morales won the votes of the indigenous because of his indigenous background and the protections he promised them. Years into his presidency, he fell into the same cycle as Ecuador by joining forces with China to expand development. According to a report conducted by the International Federation of Human Rights, Bolivia imposed oil exploration projects such as the oil block “Nueva Esperanza” (New Hope), which overlaps with one of the three territories of the Tacana indigenous people. This territory is home to an indigenous people who live in voluntary isolation, the “Toromona.” Although the Tacana opposed the state exploration, in 2013 the Bolivian State won and reached an agreement with the oil companies BGP Bolivia, and the state company China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), in charge of exploration, to safeguard the territory and protect the Tacana and Toromona peoples. However, BGP ignored the agreements and caused environmental damage affecting the indigenous people’s livelihoods. (International Federation of Human Rights, 2018).

Another incident occurred soon after the formation of the Plurinational State of Bolivia in 2009. The Isiboro Sécure National Park and Indigenous Territory (TIPNIS) became the epicenter of a conflict over the construction of a road, initiated by Evo Morales’ administration, that would run through the park. Initially undertaken by the Brazilian company OAS, and funded by the Brazilian Development Bank (BNDES), the project was justified on the grounds that it would link the Departments of Beni and Cochabamba, and bring development to an isolated locality. However, indigenous peoples from the lowlands opposed this development proposal and,

together with their counterparts in the Andean region, organized a march that was violently dispersed by the Bolivian armed forces.

Nevertheless, indigenous groups are fighting and making strides to oppose the corporate greed that the countries are participating in. In early April 2019, more than 200 Waorani people marched to the court in the Ecuadorian city of Puyo to begin their hearing against the Ecuadorian government. After long protesting oil extraction in its territory, the community sued three government bodies - the Ministry of Energy and Non-renewable Natural Resources, the Secretary of Hydrocarbons and the Ministry of Environment - for violating their rights by conducting a faulty consultation process with the community and putting their territory up for an international oil auction. According to both national and international law, communities must be consulted before any extraction process is planned on or near their territory in what is called the free, prior and informed consultation process. The Waorani community said the consultation process was only a series of presentations by the government about how oil money would benefit their community, but said nothing about the negative environmental effects of extraction projects. Because of the 2012 consultation process with the Waorani, and seven other indigenous nationalities, the Amazon rainforest was divided into 16 different oil blocks and put up for sale in an international oil auction. Last year, the government reduced the size of the oil auction to two blocks, removing block 22 that overlaps Waorani territory, but it quickly added that the region would not be exempt from future drilling plans. Lina Maria Espinosa is the community's lawyer and has said that "the life of the Waorani is closely linked to its territory, and this territory is threatened by extractive activities, and the perspective of a Western world that ignores and denies interculturality and the relationship of these peoples with their territory,"(Brown, 2019). This has been a recurring issue throughout many indigenous territories

in developing countries because of outside countries coming in to build, or in Ecuador's case, drill for oil. Oil has always been an important part of Ecuador's economy, contributing to much of its growth from 2006 to 2014, according to the World Bank. The socialist policies of former President Rafael Correa, and investments in education and social programs, funded largely from oil revenues, helped lower the poverty rate by 15 percent. But this economy has also angered indigenous communities in the Amazon rainforest, who have seen the oil industry cause contamination and community displacement.

In the historic ruling, the judges highlighted several ways in which the consultation process was inadequate and violated the community's right to self-determination. According to the tribunal, during these consultation meetings: There was no real dialogue with communities, they were called without enough prior notice, there were not enough elders present, and there were no clear translations into the local Waorani language, among other problems. However, this is the second community to win a major lawsuit against the Ecuadorian government in recent years. Last year, the indigenous Kofan community in the northern Amazon sued the same three government bodies for allowing mining operations to continue near their territory, without undergoing a consultation process. Four judges ruled in the community's favor and 52 mining concessions were cancelled.

These types of rulings can give indigenous communities aspirations that their hard work and rights should matter regardless of their economic, cultural or social standing. Governments try to take advantage of these situations and the lack of resources these communities may have, but with the help of organizations they can be properly represented.

Currently, both Correa and Morales are out of office in their respective countries. While they tried to continue their presidencies, their citizens ultimately decided they were done with

their governing and it was time for change. President Correa finished his term in 2017 after 10 tumultuous years. Their current president, Lenin Moreno, has implemented policy changes aimed at repairing damage suffered by democratic institutions during former President Rafael Correa's decade in power. The changes have fostered a climate of open debate, but structural reforms are still needed. Albeit, President Moreno has been more active in allowing indigenous peoples to protest and voice their opinions for change, unlike Correa who had prohibited demonstrations as well as jailed the demonstrators. In 2019, Indigenous groups took to the streets to protest austerity measures imposed by Moreno that disproportionately affected them. This policy has benefited multinational corporations, the banks, and in general, powerful economic groups, at the expense of the middle and working classes, who are being pushed toward poverty and extreme poverty (Salgado, 2019). Moreno reached an agreement with indigenous groups to cancel the decision to eliminate fuel subsidies that sparked the protests, but the spirit of the movement also represents much more. Indigenous groups are taking back the political space that was taken away under Correa's administration.

Presently, Correa has been convicted on corruption charges and sentenced to eight years in prison. Correa was among 20 people, including his vice president, Jorge Glas, accused of accepting \$8 million in bribes in exchange for public contracts from 2012 and 2016. The former president left Ecuador three years ago to Belgium, and his conviction, which he can appeal, leaves him subject to arrest if he returns (Leon Cabrera, 2019). The Court also banned him from participating in politics for the next 25 years. Correa denied the charges, describing them as a form of political persecution intended to prevent him and his allies from running in future national elections. Although he had vowed to retire from politics in 2017, he had shown interest in running for office in 2021 but if his conviction stands, that would be prevented. It is not

uncommon in Latin American countries for former presidents to be convicted on charges of bribery. It has happened many times before, in many countries, and this is one aspect that Latin Americans wish would change and stop for the betterment of the country and the people in it.

Bolivia's former president Morales fled the country in November 2019, with just the clothes on his back and without a passport, to Mexico. He was accused of trying to steal an election, and the country's military chief publicly suggested that he resign. Since then, Bolivia had been fiercely divided. His departure brought an abrupt end to one of the most historic presidencies. Several of his highest-ranking officials resigned along with him, including the three people after him in the line of presidential succession. The office was claimed by conservative Jeanine Añez, who is a former television presenter and had a brief position in the Bolivian Senate. Within two days, Añez was endorsed by the military and proclaimed herself president, donning the sash of office as generals looked on approvingly. She alienated the indigenous population just as quickly, leading a group of followers to the Presidential Palace, where she raised an oversized Bible and declared that she was "returning the Bible to the palace" (Anderson, 2020), despite the constitution proclaiming Bolivia to be a secular nation. Añez then named an all-white cabinet, setting all the work accomplished by Morales and Bolivian indigenous groups many steps back. In addition, she signed a decree prohibiting "personality cults" in Bolivia's institutions, and made it clear that she intended to purge Morales's legacy and his presence from public life (Anderson, 2020). Most egregious in the aftermath of Morales's ouster is the indiscriminate killing of approximately 30 peaceful protesters, many indigenous. The military opened fire after Añez issued a decree exempting the army and police from criminal responsibility for actions taken to restore order; after much internal outcry and international pressure, the decree has since been annulled (Hartmann, 2019). For many, Añez stokes fears of

colonialism and repressive dictatorships that silenced indigenous cultures. However, Añez believes that she is the liberator that Bolivia needs from Morales's politics of class division.

According to Añez:

This was fourteen years of dictatorship, fourteen years of lies, fourteen years of oppression, from which we are trying to free Bolivians, to bring about a transition that can become a new starting point, a place where no one prohibits us from thinking differently.

(Anderson, 2020).

Previously, Bolivia's presidents had been forbidden to serve consecutive terms, but a new provision allowed two in a row. In 2013, as Morales approached his two-term limit, he convinced the courts that his first term, which came before the constitution was amended, shouldn't count toward his total; the following year, he won office again. In 2016, Morales tried yet another ploy - he held a referendum asking Bolivians to overrule the constitution and allow him a fourth term. Voters rejected his request, but the constitutional courts ruled that not allowing Morales to run would violate his human rights (Anderson, 2020). His opposition held protests, however, he still held widespread support among indigenous and poor citizens. On election night, he was leading in votes but needed just ten more votes to avoid a second round of voting. He called a halt on the election and 24 hours after it resumed, he had coincidentally reached the margin of votes needed. There was outcry of fraud, and after an investigation from the Organization of American States (OAS), he knew it was time to resign.

Currently, Morales has moved to Argentina and continues to support candidates running for elections in May. Similar to Ecuador, there have been at least a hundred and sixty people, including senior officials from Morales's party, that have been prosecuted or detained, on accusations that range from corruption and terrorism to "making illegal appointments" (Anderson, 2020). Until elections are over, the indigenous people are in the hands of interim president Añez. They must fight and sustain that determination to keep their plurinationality for years to come.

Indigenous people have seen struggle and have fought through these adversities in both Bolivia and Ecuador. Their oppression and marginalization continues, but with each protest and demonstration they get closer to their goal and the bright future they see for themselves. Recognition seems like the easiest task a state can offer, however after years of colonization and colonial mentalities, it is hard to leave those ideals behind. Ultimately, with the help of human rights and indigenous groups, the original people of Ecuador and Bolivia can continue to practice their culture, language, beliefs, education and medicine without the fear of being persecuted or misrepresented with each passing presidential administration.

CHAPTER SIX: Conclusion

As illustrated above, the indigenous people of Bolivia and Ecuador have extremely different political statuses; however, they all face the same key impediments to having adequate political representation and access. These obstacles are either developmental or cultural. Developmentally, the indigenous people lack physical infrastructure, adequate healthcare, and access to education. Because the majority of indigenous people live in rural and geographically hard-to-reach areas, there needs to be a way by which information can reach the indigenous communities; this deficiency is illustrated by the lack of knowledge regarding the Law of Popular Participation in Bolivia. If the indigenous are not in good health and are illiterate, becoming politically involved becomes nearly impossible. The fact that “indigenous” has become synonymous with “impoverished” and “poor” ultimately demonstrates the developmental obstacles that have impeded their political participation. Culturally, the hegemonic discrimination faced by the indigenous people even by federal institutions has proven to be extremely problematic. The highly complex nature of this issue suggests it will not be solved soon unless drastic economic and cultural changes are made. It is only with perseverance and dedication on the part of the indigenous, with support from the international community, that human rights may finally be realized for this vulnerable population. The key to actualizing human rights for indigenous peoples lies in their legitimate and successful political participation.

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